

THE
New Testament
HANDBOOK

New Testament Handbook
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Letter from the Publisher

The Bible has a lot to say about beauty and how beauty might serve as a means leading to the praise and worship of God. In fact, just looking at the Old Testament narratives involving the construction of the tabernacle and the temple, we come to realize that there is a lot of specificity and detail surrounding their craftsmanship. The detail of these designs and the level of craftsmanship involved were not merely meant to create a place that instructs God’s people—those designs and the beautiful creations that resulted were also meant to point the congregation to God’s glory. When the Lord told Moses, “Make holy garments for your brother Aaron,” he said to make these “for glory and beauty” (Exod 28:2). In other words, these craftsmen and artisans of the Old Testament were instructed to complete their tasks for the combined effect of both glory and beauty.

Unfortunately, too often the notion of beauty is overlooked in Christian culture. However, it is good to be reminded that the medium should always be commensurate with the message. Since Christians have the most beautiful message, the one found in the pages of Scripture, it is incumbent upon us to create beautiful mediums that relay that message in hopes that they also point others to the glory of God.

The *New Testament Handbook* before you seeks to do just that in a creative and informative way. Intended to be used as a stand-alone reference work and/or companion to individual Bible reading and study, the *New Testament Handbook* focuses on presenting important biblical themes, theological concepts, and individual book summaries in a visually compelling way. Its presentation of synthesized biblical material through intentional design and infographics helps deepen one’s understanding of the historical, literary, and theological context of each book of the New Testament. Features include the following:

- One-Sentence Summaries
- Book Introductions, Outlines, and Genre Indicators
- Word Studies
- Maps
- Timelines
- Charts and tables connecting Christ and key themes across Scripture
- Infographics about key figures and events
- Key Verses and Key Quotes

The *New Testament Handbook* is intended to enhance your reading and understanding of the beauty found within the pages of the New Testament and ultimately point you to “God’s glory in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor 4:6).



Andy McLean
Publisher

Connecting and Completing the Story:

THE ORIGIN AND CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Imagine walking into a play at the beginning of the third act. Not an ideal experience, right? You might be able to pick up on certain elements of the plot and piece together who the most important characters are, but no matter how well you paid attention to the third act—and unless you had already seen the play—you could never compensate fully for what you missed during the first and second acts. Sure, there are some prominent themes you might be able to delineate, and you might piece together something about the conflict based on seeing the resolution emerge. Nevertheless, you still would not have the acquired familiarity with the whole story that the playwright intended. Much the same could be said about how we should approach the New Testament in view of the Old Testament.

To understand what the New Testament (NT) is, then, we need to understand what the Old Testament (OT) is. That may seem obvious enough. After all, how can we have a *new* without an *old* (see Heb 8:7–13)? And despite how some might treat the the OT and NT as two separate stories, when understood properly, they come to us telling one unified story: creation, fall, promise, and fulfillment.

The OT presents us with a personal, self-sufficient God making a good world (e.g., creation) that was

then corrupted through humanity’s rebellion (e.g., fall). Rather than leaving this world in its self-afflicted misery or immediately destroying it, God in his grace enacted a plan to redeem and restore his creation and to do so primarily through the family of Abraham, who later became known as the Israelites (e.g., promise). This earlier part of the story constitutes what we call the OT. Following the high-stakes drama that befell this family-become-nation, Israel, over the centuries, God would bring his Son, Jesus the Messiah, into the world to complete his plans of redemption and restoration (e.g., fulfillment). This latter part of the story constitutes what we call the NT.

So, when we think of the NT’s relationship to the OT, we should not think of it like a spin-off TV series or even a movie sequel. Instead, we should see the content of the NT as the final act of a play, the climax and resolution of the Bible’s larger storyline. In other words, the NT sees itself as the completion of the OT story, a story that is from beginning to end centered on Jesus. As the apostle said regarding Christ and the promises of God: “For every one of God’s promises is ‘Yes’ in him” (2 Cor 1:20).

OT	NT
CREATION →	NEW CREATION (not yet)
FALL →	REDEMPTION (accomplished and applied)
PROMISES →	FULFILLMENT (already)
MESSIAH (Jesus)	

TOWARD A DEFINITION: GOD'S (INSPIRED) WORD ABOUT GOD'S (INCARNATE) WORD

In the introduction to the *Old Testament Handbook*, we considered the following definition for the OT: *God's timely and inspired Word*. The latter adjective, "inspired," refers to the process by which the Holy Spirit supernaturally and concurrently worked in the human authors of Scripture to produce the message God desired down to the words themselves (2 Tim 3:16–17; 2 Pet 1:19–21). Inspired authors wrote inspired texts, giving these writings a unique identity and a unique authority as God's Word.

The former adjective, "timely," possesses multiple senses when used to describe Scripture. God's Word is timely, first, because it functions as a record of God's speech and revelatory acts in history: an eternal, infinite God communicating in time and space (2 Kgs 17:13; Jer 7:25; Dan 9:6; Hos 12:10; Luke 1:1–4; Heb 1:1–2; cp. Acts 26:26–27). Second, God's Word is timely because God's authoritative revelation always comes at the "right" time regarding his redemptive purposes (Deut 30:11–16; cp. Rom 5:6; Gal 4:4). Third, God's Word is timely because it is forever relevant as God's authoritative revelation for all time to his people and to humanity in general (Gen 1:26–30; 2:15–17; Pss 1–2; 1 Cor 10:6–11).

Because God's revelation of himself in Christ took place "when the time came to completion" (Gal 4:4), we can see how it is especially timely in the second sense. As the completion of the OT story, the NT affords us the capacity to build on the previous definition when taking the full corpus of Scripture into consideration. Yes, from the OT we may observe that Scripture is God's inspired and timely Word. However, in view of the NT and its claims about Jesus, we can expand our definition to the following: *God's timely and inspired Word in the form of a collection of writings that bear witness to Jesus the Messiah, God's eternal and incarnate Word*. The NT, in other words, is the timely climax

and decisive conclusion of God's special revelation that indicates to us that all of Scripture, OT included, is centered around the person and work of Jesus the Messiah (Luke 24:25–27,44–47; John 5:39–40,46; 2 Tim 3:15). Jesus, the eternal Word who was with God and who was God, became human both to reveal and to redeem (John 1:1,14). Accordingly, the inscripturated Word centers on the incarnate Word.

How then does this definition help us think about what the NT is, where it came from, and which books truly belong to this portion of the Bible? We will consider this in three stages. First, we will look at how the NT sees itself in continuity with the OT. Rather than as an abrupt interruption to the OT story, the NT presents Jesus's coming as the Messiah and his institution of the new covenant as the conclusion to this story. In other words, the story of the OT was left unfinished, and the NT came about to finish the story. The writings of the NT accordingly operate as the announcement that God's ancient promises have found their zenith in Jesus and the new-covenant community that he established.

Second, with the establishment of the new covenant, it follows naturally that a body of literature would emerge to govern this new-covenant community, defined by their allegiance to Jesus and heeding his commands (Matt 28:19–20). In short, a covenant requires a canon of sorts, or a set of governing documents, so to speak. This is precisely the reason a particular set of books became what is known as the NT. But how do we know which books should be regarded as authoritative covenant literature?

When we get to the third stage of our discussion, we will consider how the NT canon commends itself as God's self-authenticating Word and how the Holy Spirit works within the life of God's people to bring about widespread recognition of the NT writings' divine origin and status. Before considering the scope of the NT's content (i.e., canon), however, we should first consider the substance of the NT's content (i.e., claims).

“SEE, THE NEW HAS COME”: THE GRAND FINALE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT STORY

As discussed above, the NT came into existence because the OT leaves its readers with an unfinished story. The OT is a play looking for its final act. It is a collection of books that instill the reader with expectation and longing. From the onset of sin, God promised an offspring that would defeat the serpent’s toxic grip on humanity. He would soon promise to extend blessing to all peoples and nations through this offspring and later would promise to manifest his sovereign and just rule through a righteous king who would come from this same lineage.

Perhaps the following list of questions regarding God’s purposes and promises can help us see the apparent continuity and intentional incompleteness of the OT story:

- Who will *rule* over the earth (Gen 1:26–28)?
- Who will strike the *serpent’s* head (Gen 3:15)?
- Who will *reenter* the garden through fiery judgment for us (Gen 3:23–24)?
- Who will be *Abraham’s offspring* who will bless the nations (Gen 12:1–3; 17:3–8)?
- Who will be the ruler from the line of *Judah* (Gen 49:8–10)?
- Who will be the *prophet* like Moses (Deut 18:18)?
- Who will be the king from *David’s line* who will bring about an everlasting age of justice and peace (2 Sam 7; Ps 89)?
- Who will be the *Suffering Servant* who will bear our iniquities (Isa 52–53)?
- Who will establish a *new covenant* with God’s people (Jer 31:31–34; Ezek 36:24–27)?

Given the portrait of the Messiah and his eschatological work that the OT paints for its readers, it should not seem like a stretch to anyone to see why the NT authors perceive Jesus as the subject behind the portrait. He is the true image of God

who conquered Satan, death, and sin (Col 1:15; 2:14–15; Heb 2:5–9, 14–15; 1 John 3:8), Abraham’s true offspring who came to bless all nations (Gal 3:16), David’s greater son who has come to rule his kingdom with righteousness and justice (Matt 1:1–17; 22:41–46; Luke 1:32–33), and the mediator of a new and better covenant (Luke 22:20; Heb 8:6–13; 9:15–22).

Furthermore, as the old covenant established through Moses came with a body of covenantal revelation to constitute the people’s relationship with God, likewise, covenantal revelation came along with Jesus’s institution of the new covenant. Stated less tersely, the events of the first exodus with Moses were recorded and presented in covenantal terms: “Moses took the blood, splattered it on the people, and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you concerning all these words’” (Exod 24:8). Correspondingly, the events of the final exodus with Jesus, which came about through his atoning death on the cross, were also recorded and presented in covenantal terms: “In the same way he also took the cup after supper and said, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you’” (Luke 22:20; see also 9:31; John 1:17). The OT came into existence as a record of God’s covenant acts in the history of the people of Israel along with being revealed instruction to them as a covenant community. The NT similarly came into existence as a record of Jesus’s life, death, resurrection, and ascension along with being revealed instruction to the church as the new-covenant community. In short, the OT announced to Israel that Yahweh is King and what that meant for the people; the NT announced to the world that Jesus is King and what this means for the church.

In a dramatic (yet not completely unanticipated) turn of events, the coming Messiah was revealed to be the Creator himself, Israel’s God known as Yahweh (e.g., Pss 45:5; 110:1; Isa 9:6; Dan 7:7–14). The Messiah, then, was sent from God yet also God (e.g., John 1:1). Accordingly, as Yahweh commissioned the Israelites to be a “light to the nations”

(Isa 42:6–7; 49:6), Jesus charged his followers to proclaim his dominion and authority over all nations as Lord (Matt 28:18–20). As participants in the third act of the story, our roles primarily involve living as ambassadors for our once-crucified, now risen and ascended King (Acts 1:8; 2 Cor 5:20–21).

APOSTLES AND PROPHETS: THE CANONICAL SELF- AWARENESS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORS

Given God’s past covenant dealings with his people, we should expect a covenant body of literature akin to the NT so that God’s new-covenant people would have something that would function like a covenant document as their standard for faith, life, and worship. Though not comprised of a law code like the Mosaic covenant found in the Pentateuch, the NT nonetheless serves as a diverse, authoritative collection of writings that record formational events pertaining to the new covenant as well as providing instruction rooted in the church’s new-covenant identity.

We see such an awareness of this reality regarding the writings of the apostles and their associates within the NT. As the apostle Paul articulated, the apostles saw themselves as “ministers of a new covenant” in contrast to the old (2 Cor 3:6). The Gospels, written from the perspective of these new-covenant ministers, are presented as something of the “authorized version” of the Jesus story, even based on their introductions and conclusions (see Matt 1:1–17; 28:16–20; Mark 1:1; 15:39; Luke 1:1–4). The apostle John’s writing indicates an apostolic self-awareness as well, such as in 1 John 1:1–3:

What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have observed and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—that life was revealed, and we have seen it and we testify and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—what we have seen and heard

we also declare to you, so that you may also have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. (See also John 21:24.)

Additionally, Paul placed his writing to be on par with that of a prophet: “If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, he should recognize that what I write to you is the Lord’s command. If anyone ignores this, he will be ignored” (1 Cor 14:37–38; see also 7:12). Indeed, according to Paul, the teaching of the apostles was to be received not merely as human words but also as the word of God: “When you received the word of God that you heard from us, you welcomed it not as a human message, but as it truly is, the word of God, which also works effectively in you who believe” (1 Thess 2:13).

Moreover, when the NT authors acknowledged other writings from the NT, they regarded them as Scripture. Peter spoke this way of Paul’s writing for instance:

Also, regard the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our dear brother Paul has written to you according to the wisdom given to him. He speaks about these things in all his letters. There are some things hard to understand in them. The untaught and unstable will twist them to their own destruction, as they also do with the rest of the Scriptures. (2 Pet 3:15–16)

Observe these last six words: “with the rest of the Scriptures.” This indicates that Peter thought of Paul’s writings as Scripture because he referred to parts of the Bible other than Paul’s letters as “the rest” of Scripture. There were Paul’s letters, which some twisted and mishandled, and there were “the rest of the Scriptures” that these same persons also mishandled.

Similarly, we see this dynamic of equating NT writing with the OT Scriptures in Paul’s quoting Deuteronomy 25:4 alongside Jesus’s statement from Luke’s Gospel: “For the Scripture says: Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,

and, “The worker is worthy of his wages” (1 Tim 5:18). While we should not be surprised that Paul would refer to a verse in Deuteronomy as Scripture, we should take note that he would put a statement from Jesus found in Luke 10:7 as being Scripture on the same level as the Pentateuch.

As shown above, long before definitive canon lists were discussed at any council or mentioned in any patristic letters, the NT writings already carried a functional canonical authority throughout the Christian community, at least where they were available, during the first several generations of Jesus followers. Nevertheless, the NT provides us with the grounds for confidence that the church came to recognize the correct books as Scripture while rejecting others. In short, the NT provides a theology of canon.

CONCEIVING OF THE CANON: WHEN AND HOW DOES A BOOK GAIN CANONICAL STATUS?

When does someone become a parent? At the moment of conception? Once a pregnancy test or ultrasound confirms there is life in the mother’s womb? In the delivery room? Or perhaps there are some who feel that no one earns their parenting card until they’ve had to deal with toddlers and/or teenagers. While someone might not feel the weight of parenting until sometime after bringing their newborn home, there are varying stages of “parenthood status” (if we may coin a new term).

Even when a couple is not aware that conception has taken place, in a strict, technical sense, they are parents because they have brought new life into the world that previously did not exist. However, they do not have a way of knowing until the mother shows symptoms of pregnancy or a pregnancy test shows positive. In a documented sense though, parents do not legally name the child or receive a birth certificate until after the birth takes place. Moreover, on an experiential level, life as new parents might not feel like it has begun until they bring the firstborn into the house for the first time. So, then, how does

all this parenting paradigm talk relate to the NT canon? What hath Jerusalem to do with obstetrics?

Originating from a Greek term meaning “rod” (as in a straight stick used as a standard for measurement), the term *canon* refers to an approved list of sacred or authoritative writings. When applied to the Bible, the concept of canon relates to books that are given by God and uniquely inspired in their composition and status. The canonical status of the NT books can be conceived of (pun definitely intended) in an analogous way to the above examples of parenthood status. Just as when a child is conceived in the womb and the parents have no way of knowing immediately that they are biological parents, the writing of an inspired text would not be known to the church at large at its moment of composition but would be known only to God and, at least on some level and in certain cases, to the human author. Nonetheless, the inspired writing *is* canonical in a sense because of its inspired origin and status. Either the Holy Spirit inspired a text or he did not, and this is the case before any church or group of churches recognized its inspired status.

Further, before a book in the NT could be recognized widely as an inspired text, copies of the text had to first be distributed. Even before copies of all or most of the NT books were made available to churches across the Mediterranean world of the first three centuries, the churches that had access to some of them nonetheless regarded them as possessing inspired, apostolic authority regardless of whether churches in other regions had seen them. In this sense, a book carried canonical status in a functional way. The churches were not waiting around until formal councils were held and official lists were drafted to treat the books they had received as inspired, authoritative, and consequentially canonical. These books already held a canonical status in a functional and practical sense even if portions of the NT were not available everywhere for a time.

Finally, there is a more formal sense that the canon came into fruition on an institutional level

once universal access to all 27 books became a reality. Among the writings of the church fathers of the first four centuries, for instance, we find an awareness of most of and sometimes all the 27 books with which we're familiar today. During the late first century, Clement of Rome likely had access to all 27 writings, and during the second and third centuries, Irenaeus of Lyon and Tertullian of Carthage each listed 22 of the books based on what we can observe. Eusebius of Caesarea, an early church historian, named all 27 books, and by the fourth century, Athanasius of Alexandria, the biblical scholar Jerome, and Augustine of Hippo each affirmed the same 27 books. The church fathers thus reflect both the reality of a functional canon existing among the churches as well as a formal canon taking shape through their naming and listing the authoritative books.

Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*: Four Categories of Christian Writings¹

- 1) Recognized Books (Universally Received)
 - First century (connected to the apostles)
 - Four Gospels, Acts, Paul's Epistles (where Hebrews was included), 1 John, 1 Peter, Revelation
- 2) Disputed Books (Some Disagreement but Eventually Accepted by Most)
 - James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2–3 John
- 3) Rejected Books (Generally Orthodox but Not Seen as Inspired Canon)
 - *Acts of Paul*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, *Apocalypse of Peter*, *Epistle of Barnabas*, *The Didache*, the *Gospel of the Hebrews*
- 4) Heretical Books (Widely Considered as Unorthodox, Forgery, and Impious)
 - Gnostic Gospels (second century): the *Gospel of Thomas*, the *Gospel of Peter*, the *Gospel of Mary*, the *Gospel of Philip*, *Gospel of Truth*, etc.
 - *Infancy Gospel of Thomas*, *Apocalypse of Peter*, *Acts of Andrew*, *Acts of John*, etc.

We should be sure to note, also, that no singular council of the first several centuries ever sought to determine the canon for all churches everywhere once and for all. No council would have seen itself as conferring inspired status or apostolic authority on any set of books; instead, the councils saw themselves as facilitating a discussion about which books had been regarded as Scripture among various churches. Despite what *The Da Vinci Code* might tell us, the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) did not determine which books became part of the NT, and for this matter, neither did the Councils of Hippo (AD 393) or Carthage (AD 397). While the canon was not a topic of discussion at Nicaea, the latter two councils merely affirmed the same 27 books that most churches in their geographic regions had already accepted as authoritative because of their apostolic origins and content by sometime in the fourth century.

We can now move from the *when* to the *how* related to the NT canon. We know something about the development of the process, so now we should consider *why* we should trust the process. In short, the same text inspired by the Holy Spirit is also illuminated by him in the hearts and minds of God's people so that they would be moved to heed it once exposed to these apostolic texts. The same Holy Spirit who worked in the authors also worked in the audience. Furthermore, Scripture, being the Word of God, cannot defer to any source outside of itself to derive its authority. Otherwise, God's Word would depend on something other than God himself and it would not be an ultimate authority. So, no criteria or council can determine Scripture's inspired status; these conventions can only recognize its inspired status.

Another way of putting things, the canon must be self-authenticating; otherwise, it must look to another "canon" (or standard) of sorts to support its claims of supernatural authority. Then we would need to know what makes this standard an authority and so forth, leaving us in a never-ending pursuit of verification for each external standard we might

refer to. The canon instead must commend itself. Thankfully, the canon not only makes claims for itself, as we saw above regarding the NT authors' apostolic and canonical awareness, but for our sake, the canon also provides the basis for how we can rest assured that the collective church affirmed the right canon. Consider Jesus's words: "My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27).

Put more descriptively, God works supernaturally within the hearts and minds of his people so that his Word will resonate with them (see 1 Cor 2:10–14; 1 Thess 2:13). Jesus likened this process to sheep recognizing their shepherd's unique voice. While there is no precise formula or advance metric for assessing whether a text is inspired, the strong consensus over the 27 books that emerged during the early centuries should give us great confidence that Jesus's sheep did indeed hear his voice uniquely in the 27 books that make up the NT.

The church thus was adequately faithful in this process not because of her own infallibility but because of the Spirit's illuminating and affirming work among her members. God's Word alone is infallible among texts, but the Spirit, who also is infallible, can work effectively even within a fallible and flawed church. The sovereign God who

inspired his Word can ensure that it will not return empty; it will accomplish what he pleases (Isa 55:10–11). Part of God's purpose in inspiring and sending his Word is so that his people will know where to find it (Deut 30:11–14; Rom 10:6–8,17).

CONCLUSION

If God has ordained a role for us in his redemptive drama, we should trust him to provide the script and everything else we need to perform our respective tasks (Eph 2:10; 4:11–13; 2 Pet 1:3). And that's what the NT offers us: the message and mission that is the third and final act. The Bible presents to us one cohesive story centered around the person and work of Jesus the Messiah, the OT pointing forward to him and the NT announcing his arrival as King. Accordingly, the content of the *New Testament Handbook* is designed to give readers the same quality of content offered in the *Old Testament Handbook* with its literary analysis, word studies, timelines, tables, and infographics. These items have been designed and curated to deepen readers' understanding of and appreciation for the Bible as God's timely and inspired Word that bears witness to Jesus, God's eternal and incarnate Word.



Matthew

Genre | GOSPEL, HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Jesus is the Messiah—the true offspring of Abraham, Son of David, and end of exile—who was promised in Israel’s Scriptures and who presented himself as the new Moses in his teaching and in leading a new exodus for God’s people through his death and resurrection.

INTRODUCTION

- AUTHOR** The author did not identify himself in the text. However, the title that ascribes this Gospel to Matthew appears in the earliest manuscripts and is possibly original. Titles became necessary to distinguish one Gospel from another when the four Gospels began to circulate as a single collection. Many early church fathers (Papias, Irenaeus, Pantaeus, and Origen) acknowledged Matthew as the author. Even if Papias was wrong about the original language of the Gospel of Matthew, this does not imply that he and other early church leaders were wrong to identify Matthew as the author of this Gospel. In fact, the early church unanimously affirmed that the Gospel of Matthew was authored by the apostle Matthew. It would require impressive evidence to overturn this early consensus.
- BACKGROUND** Determining the date of composition of Matthew's Gospel depends largely on the relationship of the Gospels to one another. Most scholars believe that Matthew utilized Mark's Gospel in writing his own Gospel. If this is correct, Matthew's Gospel must postdate Mark's. However, the date of Mark's Gospel is also shrouded in mystery. Despite Matthew's apparent dependence on Mark, Matthew may have been written any time beginning in the mid-50s once Mark was completed. The earliest historical evidence is consistent with this opinion, since Irenaeus (ca. AD 180) claimed that Matthew wrote his Gospel while Peter and Paul were preaching in Rome (early AD 60s).
- MESSAGE AND PURPOSE** Matthew probably wrote his Gospel in order to preserve written eyewitness testimony about the ministry of Jesus. Matthew's Gospel emphasizes certain theological truths. First, Jesus is the Messiah, the long-awaited King of God's people. Second, Jesus is the new Abraham, the founder of a new spiritual Israel consisting of all people who choose to follow him. This new Israel will consist of both Jews and Gentiles. Third, Jesus is the new Moses, the deliverer and instructor of God's people. Fourth, Jesus is the Immanuel, the virgin-born Son of God who fulfills the promises of the Old Testament.
- SUMMARY** This Gospel was written from a strong Jewish perspective to show that Jesus is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.
- STRUCTURE** Matthew divided his Gospel into three major sections. He introduced new major sections with the words "from then on Jesus began to" (4:17; 16:21). These transitional statements divide the Gospel into the introduction (1:1–4:16), body (4:17–16:20), and conclusion (16:21–28:20). Matthew also divided his Gospel into five major blocks of teaching, each of which concludes with a summary statement (8:1; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1).

Outline

- I. Birth and Infancy of Jesus (1:1–2:23)**
 - A. Genealogy (1:1–17)
 - B. Birth narratives (1:18–2:18)
 - C. Settlement in Nazareth (2:19–23)
- II. Beginning of Jesus’s Ministry in Galilee (3:1–4:25)**
 - A. Ministry of John the Baptist (3:1–12)
 - B. Baptism of Jesus (3:13–17)
 - C. Temptation of Jesus (4:1–11)
 - D. Summary of Galilean ministry (4:12–25)
- III. Discourse One: The Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29)**
 - A. The Beatitudes (5:1–12)
 - B. Character of kingdom righteousness (5:13–48)
 - C. Practice of kingdom righteousness (6:1–7:12)
 - D. Choice of the kingdom (7:13–27)
 - E. Manner of Jesus’s teaching (7:28–29)
- IV. Jesus’s First Miracles (8:1–9:38)**
 - A. A series of miracles (8:1–9:8)
 - B. The kingdom and the old order (9:9–17)
 - C. More miracles (9:18–38)
- V. Discourse Two: Ministry of Jesus’s Disciples (10:1–42)**
 - A. The preachers and their mission (10:1–15)
 - B. The response to be expected (10:16–42)
- VI. Responses to Jesus’s Ministry (11:1–12:50)**
 - A. The kingdom and John the Baptist (11:1–15)
 - B. Challenge to the present generation (11:16–30)
 - C. Opposition to the kingdom (12:1–45)
 - D. Fellowship in the kingdom (12:46–50)
- VII. Discourse Three: Parables about the Kingdom (13:1–58)**
 - A. Parable of the Sower (13:1–9)
 - B. The parable method explained (13:10–23)
 - C. Other parables (13:24–52)
 - D. Response to Jesus’s parables (13:53–58)
- VIII. Close of Jesus’s Ministry in Galilee (14:1–17:27)**
 - A. Crisis of opposition (14:1–15:20)
 - B. Withdrawal to the north (15:21–39)
 - C. Further conflict (16:1–12)
 - D. Crisis of faith (16:13–20)
 - E. Preparation of Jesus’s disciples for his death (16:21–17:27)
- IX. Discourse Four: Character of Jesus’s Disciples (18:1–35)**
 - A. Humility (18:1–20)
 - B. Forgiveness (18:21–35)
- X. Jesus’s Ministry on the Way to Jerusalem (19:1–20:34)**
 - A. Teachings on the way to Jerusalem (19:1–20:28)
 - B. Healing at Jericho (20:29–34)
- XI. Jesus’s Ministry in Jerusalem (21:1–23:39)**
 - A. Events in Jerusalem (21:1–22)
 - B. Controversies with the Jews (21:23–22:46)
 - C. Denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees (23:1–39)
- XII. Discourse Five: Olivet Discourse (24:1–25:46)**
 - A. Prophecy of the coming of the kingdom (24:1–35)
 - B. Exhortations to readiness (24:36–25:30)
 - C. Judgment of the nations (25:31–46)
- XIII. Betrayal, Crucifixion, and Burial (26:1–27:66)**
 - A. The plot to betray Jesus (26:1–16)
 - B. The Last Supper (26:17–30)
 - C. Events in Gethsemane (26:31–56)
 - D. The trials (26:57–27:26)
 - E. Crucifixion and burial (27:27–66)
- XIV. Resurrection and Commission (28:1–20)**
 - A. Women and the angel at the tomb (28:1–10)
 - B. False witness of the guards (28:11–15)
 - C. Jesus’s Great Commission (28:16–20)

WORD STUDY

pleroō

Greek pronunciation:
[play RAH oh]

CSB translation:
fulfill

Uses in Matthew: 16
(Mark, 2; Luke, 9; John, 15)

Uses in the NT: 86

Focus passage:
Matthew 8:17

Pleroō (*to fill*) refers to the action of filling up an item with some object (Matt 13:48; Acts 2:2; 5:28) and metaphorically to the filling of persons with certain qualities or powers (Luke 2:40; Acts 2:28; Rom 15:13–14; 2 Tim 1:4) or to the completion (i.e., filling up) of some time period (Mark 1:15; Acts 9:23) or activity (Luke 7:1; Acts 12:25; 13:25). By extension, *pleroō* may also mean *to fulfill* and often indicates the fulfillment of OT prophecies. Prophecies may be directly prophetic (a predicted event is fulfilled; e.g., Jesus’s Galilean ministry; Matt 4:13–16; cp. Isa 9:1–2), or they may be indirectly fulfilled by the correspondence of two historical events (the first event foreshadows the second; Matt 27:9; cp. Jer 32:6–9; Zech 11:12–13), or they may be based on parallels between Israel’s history and Jesus’s life (Israel and Jesus being called out of Egypt; Matt 2:15; cp. Hos 11:1).

stauroō

Greek pronunciation:
[stow RAH oh]

CSB translation:
crucify

Uses in Matthew: 10
(Mark, 8; Luke, 6; John, 11)

Uses in the NT: 46

Focus passage:
Matthew 27:31

Stauroō originally referred to building a fence by driving stakes into the ground. Stakes could easily be used as instruments of death, and impalement became an early form of execution. Through the Roman practice of crucifixion, *stauroō* eventually came to refer primarily to the common form of execution—tying or nailing someone to a cross and leaving them hanging until they died. The vast majority of the occurrences of *stauroō* refer to the manner of Jesus’s death, though the NT mentions others who died by *crucifixion* (Matt 23:34; 27:38). Crucifixion was occasionally used as a metaphor for the Christian life (Matt 16:24; Gal 5:24; 6:14), an image emphasizing the believers’ identification with Christ and his suffering and death. It thus became a subject of boasting among Christians (Gal 6:14), for their *crucified* Savior was also the risen Lord and Messiah (Acts 2:36; 4:10; 1 Cor 1:23; 2:2; 2 Cor 13:4).

matheteuō

Greek pronunciation:
[mah they TYOO oh]

CSB translation:
make disciples

Uses in Matthew: 3

Uses in the NT: 4

Focus passage:
Matthew 28:19

The verb **matheteuō** (*to make disciples*) is derived from the noun *mathētēs*, which occurs more than 250 times, entirely in the Gospels and Acts. *Mathētēs* means disciple, pupil, one who learns from another and typically indicates a person whose life is bound up with that of Jesus, his master. *Matheteuō* means *to become a disciple* (Matt 13:52; 27:57). In another two occurrences it means *to make disciples* (Matt 28:19; Acts 14:21). In the Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20), the particular Greek construction (aorist participle followed by aorist imperative; this construction is relatively common in Matthew, Luke, and Acts) indicates that the primary weight of Jesus’s command in the Great Commission is to *make disciples*, while the act of “going” is a necessary prerequisite to accomplishing this task.

Timeline from Abraham to Jesus

FROM ABRAHAM TO DAVID

2200–1800 BC

2166–1991
Abraham

2066–1886
Isaac

2006–1859
Jacob

1915–1805
Joseph

1526–1000 BC

1526–1406
Moses

1490?–1380?
Joshua

1446
Exodus

1406
Destruction of Jericho

1380?–1060?
Judges

1175?–1125?
Ruth

1105?–1025?
Samuel

1080?–1010
Saul

FROM DAVID TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE

1000–586 BC

1050?–970
David

990?–931
Solomon

971?–913
Rehoboam

971–909
Jeroboam

722/721
Fall of the northern kingdom

587/586
Fall of the southern kingdom

FROM THE EXILE TO THE MESSIAH

586–63 BC

586–538
Babylonian exile

516
Temple completed

479
Greeks thwart Persian expansion into Europe with victories at Plataea and Mycale.

445
Jerusalem's walls completed

334
Alexander the Great invades Persia.

323–167
Greek control of Palestine

167–63
Years of Jewish independence

63
Roman dominance begins.

THE MESSIAH

5 BC–AD 33

5 BC
Jesus's birth

4 BC
Herod the Great's death

AD 29
John the Baptist's ministry begins.

AD 29
Jesus's ministry begins.

AD 33
Jesus's final week (March 28–April 3)

AD 33
Jesus' resurrection (April 5)

AD 33
Jesus's ascension (May 14)

AD 33
Feast of Pentecost (May 24)

Herod's Family Tree

NAME	FAMILY RELATIONSHIP	REALM OF RESPONSIBILITY	DATES OF REIGN	BIBLICAL REFERENCE
Herod I (the Great)	Son of Antipater	King of Judea	37–4 BC	Matt 2:1–22; Luke 1:5
Herod Archelaus	Oldest son of Herod the Great	Ethnarch of Judea	4 BC–AD 6	Matt 2:2
Philip*	Son of Herod the Great and Cleopatra of Jerusalem	Tetrarch of territories north and east	4 BC–AD 34*	Luke 3:1
Herod Antipas	Youngest son of Herod the Great; second husband of Herodias	Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea	4 BC–AD 39	Matt 14:1–11; Mark 6:14–29; Luke 3:1,19; 13:3–33; 23:7–12
Herod Agrippa I	Grandson of Herod the Great	King of Judea	AD 37–44	Acts 12
Herod Agrippa II	Great-grandson of Herod the Great	Tetrarch and king of Chalcis	AD 44–100 (became king in AD 48)	Acts 25:13–26:32

*Not to be confused with Herod Philip, who was also mentioned in the New Testament. Herod Philip was the son of Herod the Great and Mariamne and was the first husband of Herodias (see Matt 14:3; Mark 6:17; Luke 3:19).

Jesus's Discourses in Matthew

SCRIPTURE	KEY SECTION	NARRATIVE PURPOSE
<i>Matthew 1-4</i>	Opening Narrative	The Introduction
Jesus's Discourses (Sermon Teaching), <i>Matthew 5-25</i>	Sermon on the Mount <i>Matthew 5-7</i>	The Kingdom Constitution
	Commission of the Twelve <i>Matthew 10</i>	The Kingdom's Foundational Leaders
	Kingdom Parables <i>Matthew 13</i>	The Pursuit of the Kingdom (in the King's Absence)
	Teaching on the Church <i>Matthew 18</i>	The Relational Principles in the Kingdom
	Olivet Discourse <i>Matthew 24-25</i>	The Kingdom's Future
<i>Matthew 26-28</i>	Closing Narrative	The Climax

Miracles of Jesus in Matthew

Healing of a Leper	Matt 8:1–4
Healing of the Centurion’s Servant	Matt 8:5–13; 7:1–10
Healing of Peter’s Mother-in-Law	Matt 8:14–15
Healing of Many Sick	Matt 8:16–17
Calming of the Storm	Matt 8:23–27
Demons Driven Out	Matt 8:28–33
Healing of a Paralytic	Matt 9:1–8
Raising Jairus’s Daughter from the Dead	Matt 9:18–26
Healing of the Bleeding Woman	Matt 9:20–22
Healing the Blind	Matt 9:27–31
Healing of a Demon-Possessed Man	Matt 9:32–34
Healing of a Withered Hand	Matt 12:9–14
Healing of a Blind and Mute Man	Matt 12:22–23
Jesus Feeds 5,000	Matt 14:13–21
Walking on Water	Matt 14:22–33
Healing of Many Sick at Gennesaret	Matt 14:34–36
Feeding of the 4,000	Matt 15:32–39
Healing of a Demon-Possessed Boy	Matt 17:14–20
Paying of the Temple Tax	Matt 17:24–27
Healing of the Two Blind Men	Matt 20:29–34
The Barren Fig Tree	Matt 21:18–22

Jewish Sects in the New Testament

	BELIEF	SELECTED BIBLICAL REFERENCES	ACTIVITIES
PHARISEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monotheistic • Viewed Torah, Prophets, and Writings as authoritative • Accepted both the written and oral law • Focused on keeping of the Sabbath, tithing, and purification rituals • Believed in life after death and the resurrection of the body • Revered humanity and human equality • Missionary-minded toward conversion of Gentiles • Believed individuals were responsible for how they lived 	<p><i>Matthew</i> 3:7–10; 5:20; 9:14; 16:1,6–12; 22:15–22,34–46; 23:2–36</p> <p><i>Mark</i> 3:6; 7:3–5; 8:15; 12:13–17</p> <p><i>Luke</i> 6:7; 7:36–39; 11:37–44; 18:9–14</p> <p><i>John</i> 3:1; 9:13–16; 11:46–47; 12:19</p> <p><i>Acts</i> 23:6–10</p> <p><i>Philippians</i> 3:4b–6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developers of oral tradition • Taught that the way to God was through obedience to the law • Changed Judaism from a religion of sacrifice to a religion of law • Opposed Jesus because he wouldn't accept the teachings of the oral law as binding • Established and controlled synagogues • Served as religious authorities for most Jews • Emphasized ethical action over theological; legalistic and socially exclusive
SADDUCEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigidly conservative toward the law • Stressed strict observance of the law • Observed past beliefs and tradition • Opposed oral law as obligatory or binding • Believed that people could do as they wished without attention from God • Denied divine providence, the concept of life after death and the resurrection of the body, and the concept of reward and punishment after death 	<p><i>2 Samuel</i> 8:17; 15:24</p> <p><i>1 Kings</i> 1:34</p> <p><i>1 Chronicles</i> 12:26–28</p> <p><i>Ezekiel</i> 40:45–46; 43:19; 44:15–16</p> <p><i>Matthew</i> 3:7–10; 16:1,6–12; 22:23–34</p> <p><i>Mark</i> 12:18–27</p> <p><i>Luke</i> 20:27–40</p> <p><i>John</i> 11:47</p> <p><i>Acts</i> 4:1–2; 5:17–18; 23:6–10</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politically active • Exercised great political control through the Sanhedrin, of which many were members • Supported the ruling power and the status quo • Leaned toward Hellenism • Opposed both the Pharisees and Jesus • Opposed Jesus for fear their wealth and position would be threatened if they supported him
ZEALOTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to the Pharisees with this exception: believed strongly that only God had the right to rule over the Jews; patriotism and religion became inseparable • Believed that total obedience (supported by drastic physical measures) must be apparent before God would bring in the Messianic Age • Were fanatical in their Jewish faith and in their devotion to the law—to the point of martyrdom 	<p><i>Matthew</i> 10:4</p> <p><i>Mark</i> 3:18</p> <p><i>Luke</i> 6:15</p> <p><i>Acts</i> 1:13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely opposed to Roman rule over Palestine and to peace with Rome • Refused to pay taxes • Demonstrated against the use of the Greek language in Palestine • Engaged in terrorism against Rome and others with whom they disagreed politically • Sacarii (or Assassins) were an extremist Zealot group who carried out acts of terrorism against Rome
HERODIANS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a religious group—but a political one • Membership likely comprised of varied theological perspectives 	<p><i>Matthew</i> 22:5–22</p> <p><i>Mark</i> 3:6; 8:15; 12:13–17</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported Herod and the Herodian dynasty • Accepted Hellenization • Accepted foreign rule

Disciples of Jesus

This chart indicates the order in which each disciple appears in biblical lists.

MATTHEW 10:2-4	MARK 3:16-19	LUKE 6:13-16	ACTS 1:13-14, 26
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Peter
Andrew	James the son of Zebedee	Andrew	John
James the son of Zebedee	John	James	James
John	Andrew	John	Andrew
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
Matthew the tax collector	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus
Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Simon who was called the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot	Judas the son of James (cp. John 14:22)	Judas the son of James
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Matthias, replaced Judas Iscariot (v. 26)

Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus in Matthew

ASPECTS OF JESUS'S MINISTRY	FULFILLMENT PASSAGE IN MATTHEW	OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY
His virgin birth and role as God with us	Matt 1:18,22–23	Isa 7:14
His birth in Bethlehem and shepherd role	Matt 2:4–6	Mic 5:2
His refugee years in Egypt and role as God's Son	Matt 2:14–15	Hos 11:1
His upbringing in Nazareth and messianic role (the Hebrew term for <i>branch</i> is <i>nezer</i>)	Matt 2:23	Isa 11:1
His preaching ministry in Galilee and role as Light to the Gentiles	Matt 4:12–16	Isa 9:1–2
His healing ministry and role as God's Servant	Matt 8:16–17	Isa 53:4
His reluctance to attract attention and his role as God's chosen and loved Servant	Matt 12:16–21	Isa 42:1–4
His teaching in parables and his role in proclaiming God's sovereign rule	Matt 13:34–35	Ps 78:2
His humble entry into Jerusalem and role as King	Matt 21:1–5	Zech 9:9
His betrayal, arrest, and death and role as Suffering Servant	Matt 26:50,56	The prophetic writings as a whole

Seeing Jesus in the Exile and Return

<p>GOD PROMISED A Seed to Abraham (<i>Gen 12; 15; 17</i>)</p>	<p>JESUS The Son of Abraham, the Seed (<i>Matt 1:1; Gal 3:16</i>)</p>
<p>GOD PROMISED A Descendant on David's Throne Forever (<i>2 Sam 7</i>)</p>	<p>JESUS The Son of David, the Son of God (<i>Matt 1:1; Luke 1:32</i>)</p>
<p>IMMANUEL A Sign Conceived by a Virgin (<i>Isa 7:14</i>)</p>	<p>GOD WITH US The Son Born to Mary, a Virgin (<i>Matt 1:18-23</i>)</p>
<p>FROM BETHLEHEM Would Come God's Ruler over Israel (<i>Mic 5:2</i>)</p>	<p>IN BETHLEHEM The Messiah Was Born (<i>Matt 2:1-6; Luke 2:1-6</i>)</p>
<p>A STAR From Jacob, a Scepter from Israel (<i>Num 24:17</i>)</p>	<p>THE KING OF THE JEWS Heralded by a Star (<i>Matt 2:1-2,9-10</i>)</p>
<p>ISRAEL God's Son Called out of Egypt (<i>Exod 5-14; Hos 11:1</i>)</p>	<p>JESUS God's Son Called out of Egypt (<i>Matt 2:13-15</i>)</p>
<p>A VOICE One Crying Out in the Wilderness (<i>Isa 40:3-5</i>)</p>	<p>JOHN THE BAPTIST Prepared the Way for the Lord (<i>Matt 3:1-3</i>)</p>
<p>GOD'S INSTRUCTION For Israel to Obey (<i>Deut 6-8</i>)</p>	<p>GOD'S WORD Fueled Jesus's Obedience (<i>Matt 4:1-11</i>)</p>
<p>THE MESSIAH His Mission Proclaimed (<i>Isa 61:1-2</i>)</p>	<p>JESUS CHRIST The Scripture Fulfilled (<i>Luke 4:17-21</i>)</p>
<p>THE BRONZE SNAKE Lifted Up for the Healing of Those Who Looked (<i>Num 21:4-9</i>)</p>	<p>THE SON OF MAN Lifted Up for the Eternal Life of Those Who Believe (<i>John 3:14-15</i>)</p>
<p>RESTITUTION BY LAW Repay in Full Plus a Fifth, or a Fourth (<i>Exod 22:1; Num 5:7</i>)</p>	<p>RESTITUTION IN GRACE Zacchaeus Repaid Fourfold What He Extorted (<i>Luke 19:8</i>)</p>