Confirmation Week 7

The Gospel of Matthew

Read Matthew 1:22-23

Why is it important to point out that Jesus’ birth coincides with the Old Testament prophesies about the Messiah?

What parts of the birth story would have been important to Matthew’s Jewish audience?

Emmanuel means “God is with us.” What does that mean to you today?

Read Matthew 5:1-12

Does this seem backward to you? Have you ever seen evidence of these sayings in your own life?

What does it mean to be “blessed?”

If you have to choose to live out one of the Beatitudes (these statements of Jesus that begin “Blessed are…”), which would you choose and why?

Discussion

If someone asked you to explain what Jesus has to do with the Jewish faith, what would you say?

If we didn’t have the Old Testament, what sources would you look to for verification of Matthew’s claims that Jesus is God?

Matthew makes a great effort to present Jesus as “the one” for whom the Jewish people have waited. Share a time when you were waiting for something important? What did it feel like to wait?

Matthew’s story shares a lot with Luke and Mark---80% of Mark’s Gospel shows up in Matthew. Mark was written first. Why do you think the book of Matthew was written if a Gospel already existed? There is almost two times as much content in Matthew than Mark? Why do you think that might be?

Look up the following verses and notice how they refer to the Old Testament

Matthew 2:13-18

Matthew 4: 1-11

Matthew 5:21-48

Matthew 13:34-35

Matthew 21:12-17

Matthew 22:41-46

Do you think writer of the book of Matthew might have been writing to a Jewish audience?

If you were organizing a group of followers, what rules would you make?

If you could start your own church, how would you organize it?

If you were recording a Gospel, what three stories of Jesus would you be absolutely certain to include? Which three stories do you think are the most important?

Matthews Gospel has plenty of overlap with Mark.

Compare Matthew 5:1-12 and Luke 6:20-22

What does Matthew include that Mark doesn’t

Bonus Question: How many wise men or kings visited Jesus?

Read Matthew 2:13-18 to find out.

Matthew often uses contrast to teach.

Read the following passages.

What metaphors does Matthew use for two different groups of people in each reading? How are the groups different?

Matthew 13:24-43

Mathew 21:22-32

Matthew 25:1-13

Matthew 25:31-46

Now read the following passages and write down some rules for discipleship.

Matthew 5:21-26

Matthew 5:43-48

Matthew 6:5-15

Matthew 7:1-5

Matthew 18:21-35

Matthew 19:16-30

What are these rules? Can we live up to them? What happens if we can’t? Why are they a big deal in Matthew?