



FAITH INTO THE FUTURE

**JESUS AS THE
SERVANT OF GOD IN
THE GOSPEL OF
MATTHEW**

SESSION 1

SEAN GOAN

THE PLAN

- **Session One: Introductory Remarks on Culture and Context of Matthew**
- **Session Two: Matthew - The Shape of the Gospel and Dominant Themes**
- **Session Three: Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven in Word**
- **Session Four: Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven in Deed**
- **Session Five: Jesus and his Kingdom Community**
- **Session Six: Jesus as the Servant of God - Inspiration for his Church**



FAITH IN CONTEXT

Our words create our worlds

"We are living not so much in an era of change as in a change of era."

-Secularism

- Technology

-Social Media

-Climate Change

- Pandemic_s

Vision



2020

**WHEN WE
SPEAK THE
LANGUAGE OF
FAITH
WHAT WORDS
DO WE
CHOOSE?**

The Search for Meaning

The Fear of Eternal Damnation

Desire for Eternal Salvation

Sin and Evil

Coping with Suffering

Awareness of the Transcendent



FAITH - A HUMAN RESPONSE TO THE MYSTERY OF EXISTENCE

Throughout human history people have sought to give expression to their experience of life and death, the mystery of their existence.

These expressions emerged in different contexts and cultures and they were couched in the language of their time and place.

This is true of Christianity, which emerged from first century Judaism and in response to the person of Jesus of Nazareth whose followers proclaimed him their crucified and risen Messiah.

The only language they could use for this proclamation was the language of their time, their culture and their religious context.

As Christians we seek to understand that language and interpret it for our time.



THE WORLD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

- Ministry of Jesus (27-30)
- Council of Jerusalem (50)
- Martyrdom of Peter and Paul (63-65)
- Jewish War (66-70)
- Emergence of Rabbinic Judaism (75-85)
- Emergence of the Gospels - Mark first and used by Matthew and Luke



CONTEXT FOR MATTHEW – WHO SPEAKS FOR JUDAISM AFTER THE WAR?

- The Rabbis rooted in the Pharisee tradition
- Torah and its interpretation defines Judaism
- The authentic interpreters are the rabbis who assert the authority of the written and the oral tradition of Torah
- The early Church asserts initially that Jesus crucified and risen is the awaited Messiah and the fulfilment of the Scriptures
- This view takes on different expressions with ministry of Paul and the spread of gospel among the Gentiles (non-Jews)
- Matthew's Community of Messianic Jews finds itself in head on conflict with the leadership of the Jewish community after the destruction of the Temple.

MATTHEW ?

- A Jewish Scribe (expert in the Torah) who has become a Christian.
- Well versed in the Jewish tradition yet steeped in a resurrection faith
- Understands Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish Messianic hopes and more. (infancy narrative)
- Uses Mark, “Q” and “M” as sources.
- Writes a “ bios” – a biography of Jesus according to classical norms.



GOSPEL AS BIOGRAPHY - BIOS

- **In the ancient world biography did not attempt a detailed and comprehensive presentation of the subject.**
- **Readers expected a narrative account of the career and contribution of a notable figure usually spanning from birth to death.**
- **Alexander the Great, Caesar Augustus**

FUNCTION OF THE BIOS

The ancient audience expected a bios:

- **To present the figure's life and teaching as an inspiration and a possible model for its own living.**
- **To legitimate important community values and practices and to discredit opponents.**
- **To shape the identity and guide the audience's way of life**

MATTHEW'S ANTIOCH AUDIENCE

- **A minority Jewish Christian community in Antioch - a large and culturally diverse city in the Roman Empire.**
- **Recently separated from the synagogue as part of the fallout from the Jewish War and the destruction of the Temple**
- **Seeking to secure an identity and lifestyle with words of legitimation, explanation and direction.**
- **On the margins both in relation to Empire and synagogue.**



WHO IS HE?

- **Matthew the Apostle? (9:9)**
- **Why rely on Mark?**

Perhaps a signature in 13:52,

“Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

- **Like us Matthew is a human being in a time and a place trying to answer a question – who is Jesus and what does it mean for me to believe in him?**

