

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

16- The Message of the King

Church June 12, 2022

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen*

Now you may remember when I began our "Journey" through Matthew's Gospel Record- I told you that this Gospel Record is *decisively* Jewish in Nature. And so, if you don't look at this Book from a 1st Century Jewish Perspective- you going to try to cast the Garment of your own 21st Century American Evangelicalism on top of what Matthew wrote here- and you will forget about the "Context" of the Verses and Passages and Chapters of this marvelous Book. And when you do that- you will get things out of this Book that Matthew did NOT say and did NOT mean. So, to avoid that Problem- we need to remind ourselves, when we read this Book- about the Context in which the Apostle Matthew wrote these 28 Chapters.

Also, I told you that the Apostle Matthew is very sorrowful that, as a Lost person- he *abandoned* his Family and friends and went to work for the pagan Romans as a tax-collector. And now that Jesus has forgiven him; saved him; and put him into the Ministry of being an Evangelist and Apostle- Matthew is interested in doing everything he can to help his fellow-Jews come to the Lord; be saved; and for them to become a part of the "*Kingdom of Heaven.*"

And so, Matthew *begins* his Gospel Account by teaching that Jesus was the *continuation* of everything the Jews held dear from the Old Testament. So, Matthew wants the Jews (and us) to know that Jesus is:

1. "*The Messiah*" from the lineage of both David and Abraham
2. "*The new Moses*"- bringing in the *fulfillment* or the *completion* of the *first* Covenant
3. "*God with Us*"- Immanuel

... and Jesus will bring His people into the “*Kingdom of Heaven*”.

Now the phrase, “*Kingdom of Heaven*” is ONLY used in Matthew’s Gospel Record; and it is used here- 32 times in 31 verses. John Mark’s Gospel Record and Dr. Luke’s don’t use this phrase at all. They use, the phrase, the “*Kingdom of God*”- which Matthew also uses 5 times as well.

Now through the Centuries- some have tried to make this a big deal as though the “*Kingdom of Heaven*” and the “*Kingdom of God*” are different. I just read a very elaborate paper written about 150 years ago- that says the two terms are different and even involves the Millennial and other nonsense. But there is a single Passage that utterly destroys that thinking- **Matthew 19:23&24** that says:

23 And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

24 Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

Notice that Matthew uses *both* phrases here- even though these two verses involve the same thought and idea. So, with all due respect to all the hard work that was put into that paper- it simply isn’t true.

So, what we are left with is what I will share with you today: A major part of the Jewish mindset about God and Salvation and the Kingdom back in the 1st Century- involved the physical Nation of Israel. So, as Matthew was taught by Jesus- the Kingdom of Heaven is NOT an earthly Kingdom *in the same sense* that they were familiar with. And so, Jesus taught many different Parables all through this Book- that gives one or more aspects of the Kingdom of Heaven- so that His followers could get a grasp of just what the Kingdom was like.

So, to cause his fellow-Jews to look *upward* rather than toward a natural and geographical and political area of land- like Israel and Jerusalem- Matthew *primarily* uses the phrase, the “*Kingdom of Heaven*”- as opposed to the “*Kingdom of God*”.

Also, as was true both then and now- as a Jew- Matthew was very reluctant to use the title, “*God*” in his speech and writing. For example, even today, in the Jerusalem newspaper, when the Name of God needs to be printed- they write: “*G_d*”. And this goes back to the ancient scribes, who considered the Name of God to be so holy and so sacred- that even when they were copying the Scriptures- they would take a bath and wear certain clothing before writing God’s Name.

Also, Matthew wants the Jews to understand, that, unlike the Nation of Israel- which they became a part of through Birth; Nationality; Ethnicity and

Circumcision- people become part of the Kingdom of Heaven through Repentance and Belief.

Now a lot is usually made about whether we are supposed to interpret this Gospel Record “Literally” or “Figuratively”. The Truth about the 66 Books of the Bible is that some verses and Passages are meant to be taken Literally. But some are meant to represent other things and should be taken Figuratively. And which verses are “*Figurative*” or “*Symbolic*”; and which are “*Literal*” is very easy to see- most of the time. But there are times when that is much harder to know. And it is in those verses and Passages where people get different concepts about what to understand.

But the *best* Way to interpret the Bible is to interpret it- *biblically*; which is to constantly realize that ALL the verses are connected to ALL the Passages; and ALL the Passages are connected to ALL the Chapters; and ALL the Chapters are connected to ALL the individual Books that make up the Bible. And that means that each individual Book of the Bible is connected to all the other Books.

So, the Jewish manner of reading the Scriptures is to read all 66 Books as one single continual “*Story*”. But the Gentile manner of reading Scripture is to read a single verse- and then go about to try to use that verse as what is called, a “Stand- alone” verse; or as a “Proof-text” verse. And this is done to try to prove a point or to verify a particular Doctrine. And it is done- even when it SHOULD’N’T be done.

For example, a very common example of this is when people read **Matthew 24:13**, that says:

But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

... and they use this verse to try to prove that Salvation is eternal; or as a “Proof-text” verse to verify the “Doctrine of the Eternality of Salvation”- that teaches that saved people will *stay saved*- by *persevering* or *enduring* in Humility and Holiness and Purity and Obedience until the end of their lives.

And look, Salvation IS eternal. And there are literally *hundreds* of verses and Passages – all through the Bible- that teach that. And so, we should believe that Salvation is eternal and teach that- without fear of contradiction. But **Matthew 24:13** does NOT teach that Salvation is eternal. And it was NEVER meant to be used in association to Salvation. Neither was it meant to be taken by itself.

So, in context- this verse is a Divine Promise from the Lips of Jesus Himself- to the Jewish believers, *who were actually standing there that day and hearing Him speak*- about the frightening and powerful End of the “Age” of the 1st Covenant- and the bringing in of the New Covenant. So, **Matthew 24:13** is meant

to be seen as a comforting Promise that comes after Jesus has given twelve verses before it- that speaks about all that God was going to do to judge the Jewish Covenant-breakers- who had rejected Jesus; such as: destroying the Temple in Jerusalem; and bringing an End to the Jewish way of Life as they knew it through the teachings of Moses- before the End of the 1st Century.

And the Promise of **Matthew 24:13** says that those, who obey Jesus; and run *away* from the city of Jerusalem; and run into the mountains will be spared the total Destruction of all that the Jews held dear- by the hands of the pagan Romans- that God was going to use to carry out His Will.

So, the word, “**End**” in **Matthew 24:13** has to do with the “End” of the time of Divine Judgement against those who had rejected Jesus as being the Messiah. And the word, “**saved**” in this verse has to do with being literally and physically “*rescued*”; or “*delivered*”; or even “*spared*” from all the terrible things Jesus said was going to come before that Generation died out. So, the Context of this verse has NOTHING to do with Salvation in the first place.

And History teaches us that when the Roman Army- that was being used by God to bring Judgment upon the Jewish people, who had broken God’s Covenant and said that Jesus was of satan- when they rode in from the North to destroy everything in their path- the Jews ran into Jerusalem- wrongly believing that God would NEVER allow pagans to destroy the “*Habitation of Peace*”.

And both the Jewish historian, Josephus and the Church historian, Eusebius wrote that upwards of 1.1 million Jews were slaughtered; the city of Jerusalem was sacked; and the Temple was utterly destroyed- with not one stone standing on top of another- in fulfillment of what Jesus prophesied in **Matthew 24:2**.

But the Christians fled into the Mountains- and they were spared; rescued; and delivered from that slaughter. And when the historians asked the Christians *why* they didn’t flee into the Capitol City for safety- they responded that they had been told by Jesus Himself in **Matthew 24:16**:

then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

... and they had comforted each other during that terrible time by *constantly* repeating and holding on to the Promise by Jesus, found in **Matthew 24:13**:

... the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

So, to speak to his fellow-Jews- Matthew *begins* this Gospel Record by giving them (and us) a genealogy of Jesus’ background from his earthly father’s (Joseph) side to show His connection to both David and Abraham.

And then, Matthew designed EVERYTHING in this Book to *appeal* to the Jewish mind-set- even in the way Matthew *physically* constructed the Book itself. So, Matthew designed this Gospel Record with a “*Beginning*” (Chapters 1-3) and an “*Ending*” (Chapters 26-28) that serve as a Frame that acts like a Border around five separate Pillars of Jesus’ powerful Teachings in between the top and bottom. And this physical set up of this Book would remind his Jewish readers of the first five Books of Moses- called the “*Torah*”.

The Beginning: Chapters 1-3

Now we have already traveled through this Section. And we found out that Chapters 1-3 are designed to bring the reader up to date after having lived through 400 years of Silence. Ever since Malachi wrote his Prophecy- God has not spoken to His people for four Centuries. There has been no Sign; no Wonder; no Miracle; no Angel; no heavenly Voice; no Prophet; and no Word from God. Nothing but deafening Silence for over 400 years! And to compare- that Silence lasted about 155 years LONGER than the United States has been a Nation!

So, Chapters 1-3 are designed to show that God has NOT forgotten His people- and has fulfilled His Promise to send Messiah. And this Messiah does NOT bring in a *new* Religion- but a *completion* of the *partial* Revelation of God that began with Adam. So, **Matthew** begins this Record with a Genealogy- certifying Jesus’ link with both Abraham and David and thus with both the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants.

Then **Matthew** gives us the narrative of Jesus’ miraculous Birth from a Virgin- showing that Jesus is NOT a mere Man- but is *Immanuel*- God with Us! And that gave the Jew of his day- the three main Themes of what Matthew wanted them to know:

1. Jesus is of the *physical* lineage of both David and Abraham; and is the spiritual *fulfillment* of both the Davidic and Abrahamic Covenants
2. Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah
3. Jesus is “God with Us” (Immanuel)

... and that is just **Matthew’s** “*Introduction.*”

But now Matthew links Jesus as being the “new Moses” with five Separate Sections of Teaching that *fulfills* or *completes* what Moses began in the first five Books of the Scriptures. So, Matthew tells his Jewish readers that, like Moses:

- Jesus was born as a Jew
- A wicked Ruler tried to kill Jesus as a Baby

- Jesus came up out of Egypt
- Jesus “passed through the water” (Baptism)
- Jesus was “in the Wilderness” for 40 Days
- Jesus delivers His Teaching from a Mountain (Mt. of Olives)

... and through all of this- **Matthew** is showing the Jews that Jesus is the “*new Moses*”- the “*2nd and final Moses*”- who is going to:

- Deliver God’s people from Slavery (Sin)
- Give them [New] Divine Teaching
- Lead them out of Egypt’s Bondage (Deliver them from their Sinful ways that they learned while in Egypt)
- Establish a [New] Covenant Relationship with them

You see, many Jews- both then and now- see Christianity as trying to *undermine* or even *destroy* Judaism. So, to many Jews- Christianity is an Enemy- every bit as deadly as any they have faced in their long history. So, Matthew’s Gospel deals with that Fear by showing his Jewish readers that the New Covenant is simply the logical *Completion* of the First Covenant; and that Jesus Himself so honored the Law of Moses - that He personally lived His Life in perfect *fulfillment* of it.

And then Matthew portrays Jesus as the “*Perfect Teacher*” in five Sections that mirror the five “*Books of Moses.*”

Section 1: Chapters 4-7

Here Jesus announces the arrival of God’s Kingdom. And Jesus has come to:

1. Confront Evil
2. Restore God’s Reign
3. Create a “new” people of God- the saved

... then Jesus delivers His first major Section of Teaching- the “*Sermon on the Mount*” (Chapters 5-7)- where he illustrates two major themes:

1. What it looks like to be “Lost”
2. What it looks like to be “Saved”

... which is what “*living in the Kingdom of Heaven*” is all about.

Section 2: Chapters 8-10

This is where Jesus brings the Reality of living day-to-day in the Kingdom of Heaven. And He does that by giving 9 different Teachings- 3 groups of 3 Truths- all about hurting and broken and sinful people being redeemed. And in between these 3 groups- Jesus repeats a common Theme: “*Follow ME!*” Chapter 10 is the huge block of Teaching and where He calls and sends out the 12 Apostles.

Section 3: Chapters 11-13

Here we see Teaching about people either *accepting* or *rejecting* Jesus. And in this Section, we see three groups of Jews:

1. **The Positive Jews:** Jesus IS the Messiah
2. **The Neutral Jews:** Jesus MIGHT BE the Messiah
3. **The Negative Jews:** Jesus is NOT the Messiah

... and in Chapter 13 we see a large block of Parables about what the “*Kingdom of Heaven*” looks like.

Section 4: Chapters 14-20

This Section shows all of the Expectations that the Jews had about “Who” the Messiah would be and “What” the Messiah was supposed to do when He got here. And we will see that *most* of those Expectations were flat-out wrong.

But we must remember that the Expectations of Who the Messiah would be and What He would do when He got here- *as far as they were concerned*- was their “*Eschatology*”. It is what these Jews believed and taught about the Future- or “*Last Things*”.

But we will see that their Eschatology, for the most part, was dead wrong. And it was wrong because they had grossly misunderstood the Old Testament. And that is amazing since they supposedly studied the Old Testament- *fastidiously*. But Jesus never gave them an “out” about this; and He constantly rebuked the Jews and *confronted* them by asking them,

“... have you not read...?”

And we should see this Rebuke by Jesus as a Warning to ourselves as well. Because this Section of Teaching shows us how *easy* it is for us to place our *own*

Ideas; and our *own* Thoughts; and our *own* Beliefs onto the Scriptures. People do this all the time- *especially* concerning Last Things. So, we need to humble ourselves and agree that *more* people; have been *more* wrong; for a *longer* period of time; about Eschatology than any other Issue in the entire Bible. And so, we must guard our hearts that we don't make the same mistake.

Now the highlight of this Section is Chapter 16- which defines WHO Jesus is and WHAT Jesus will do. So, this Section is where MOST of the modern- day Jews *categorically* reject Jesus as the Messiah- because Jesus teaches that He is God in human flesh and that, as a King over His Kingdom- Jesus sovereignly rules and reigns- NOT *militarily* and NOT politically- but He rules and reigns by and through two Ways:

1. By Suffering
2. By Serving

... so, Chapters 18-20 illustrate the “upside-down” Nature of Jesus’ Kingdom- such as God’s people GAIN Honor- by Serving; and we ACHIEVE Revenge against our Enemies- by Forgiving them; and we GAIN true Wealth by NOT loving Money and by giving.

Section 5: Chapter 21-25

It is in this Section where we will see the titanic Clash of the two Kingdoms: The “*kingdom of Man*” and the “*Kingdom of Heaven*”. And 1700 years ago, Augustine called this the clash between the “*city of Man*” and the “*City of God*.”. And it represents the great Distinction between the earthly and the heavenly; between that which Man built and what God has created; and between that which is temporary- and that which is eternal.

And it is in this Section that we will see Jesus riding into Jerusalem; and He turns the money changer’s tables over- picking a fight with the wicked Rulers- because it is now time for Him to die.

And the huge block of Teaching here is Chapters 23- 25, where Jesus condemns the Jewish Covenant-breakers and promises an eternal “End” of the *Original* Covenant- highlighted by the Destruction of the Temple- which is a Symbol of His Own Crucifixion and the Promise of His Resurrection.

The Ending- Chapters 26-28

The End of Matthew’s Gospel gives us the Last Supper; the Prayer

in the Garden; the Arrest; Trial; Crucifixion; and the Resurrection. And then Matthew gives his Jewish readers the final Words and Commands of Jesus that culminates in **Matthew 28:18-20** that says:

**18 ... "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."**

... and this showed the Jews (and us) that Jesus has ALREADY been given ALL Authority BEFORE He ascended. And that proves that Jesus IS the long-awaited Messiah and the Savior of the world! And it is the fact that Jesus ALREADY HAS all Authority as to why the "Great Commission" will be *successful*- culminating in the Great Victory of the 2nd Coming!

But many of us have been conditioned over the decades in Church to *limit* the Gospel; the Good News- to very *narrowly* mean: Jesus came to save ME by what He alone did for ME. And many believe and say, "*That is what the 'Good News' is.*" And look, Jesus saving us- IS Good News, indeed.

But with the Statement that Jesus made in **Matthew 28:18**- we simply CANNOT *limit* the Gospel to our own *personal* Salvation. And we can't- because Jesus didn't. So, when Jesus said in verse 18:

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth

... He was saying that BEFORE He ascended into Heaven- God the Father had ALREADY given Jesus, "ALL AUTHORITY". And that phrase leaves NOTHING excepted that Jesus does NOT have All Authority over. And then Jesus said He had all Authority "IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH". NOT just Heaven- but the earth also. And Jesus said He had that Authority- BEFORE He ascended.

Now it is very hard to read that and then reconcile what Jesus said here with the way that many people in the modern church see and understand and talk about the Future. You have this massive; victorious; all-inclusive Statement *behind* us- about the TOTAL (all) AUTHORITY that Jesus "has [already] been given" BEFORE He ascended; and then you have this amazingly successful and victorious 2nd Coming in *front* of us. And, yet, for the most part- the modern church holds to a Vision of a very bleak and negative Future for themselves and for the Church.

Many today see and understand the Church to be an island surrounded by man- eating sharks- where we are told to just "hang on" until Jesus comes back.

How could *anybody* get that Picture from what Jesus just said? It is also very hard to use the Statement by Jesus in the “*Great Commission*” as a rallying cry for the Church to “circle the wagons” and try to survive the horrendous Future that the devil has for us.

Yet when we read Matthew’s Gospel- we see a completely different Picture. For example, in **Matthew 13**- we read that Jesus said that the Kingdom of Heaven was like a mustard seed. It begins very small and very insignificant at first. But when that seed is planted- it grows so large- the birds of the air can put nests in its branches. That is NOT a Parable of hiding or weakness or survival. That Parable foresees a Church- a Kingdom- that is ever-growing; ever- conquering; and ever- victorious- as it gets larger and larger- across the entire earth!

So, in **Matthew 28**- when Jesus said, “THEREFORE”- GO! The “going” into all the earth by the Church- preaching the Gospel to every creature- seeing the Grace of God transform lives and families- even Governments- Matthew wanted the Jews of his day to understand that this victorious Expansion of the Kingdom of Heaven through the New Covenant Command to NOT remain in Israel- but GO- into every nation and tribe- IS the *fulfillment* of the Parable of the Mustard Seed!

The Kingdom of Heaven that started with a rag-tag group of fishermen and other assorted people in Galilee- will result in the Nations rejoicing because of the Grace of God that has visited them! And that is the tiny mustard seed growing into a huge tree!

You simply CANNOT read Matthew’s Gospel Record with any degree of honesty and then hold on to a “survivalist” Mentality. It is impossible. The Divine Command for us to GO into ALL the world and preach the Gospel to every creature; baptize those who believe; and then teach those that believe to obey what Jesus said- is predicated on the word, “THEREFORE” in **Matthew 28:18**. So, the driving Force behind WHY believers can go into the pagan Nations of the world and see the Grace of God convert them and bring them into the Kingdom of Heaven and under subjection to King Jesus- is that Jesus ALREADY had been given ALL Authority in both Heaven and Earth- BEFORE He ever left.

So, for example, I was born again and justified in June of 1971- precisely because the Message, “*Repent- for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*” that had begun with a handful of scared and vacillating men in 1st Century Palestine had *expanded* from the Middle East to Europe. And from Europe the INCREASE of God’s Kingdom went across the Atlantic Ocean to North America. And from North America- the Rule and Reign of Jesus’ Government and Peace came to southern Mississippi. And this morning- that very SAME Message about that very SAME always increasing and never shrinking Kingdom of Heaven- is being heralded from this very Pulpit in a building that used to be a den of iniquity.

So, what is the “Information”; what is the “NEWS” that Jesus gave us that *elicits* the Command for us to “get up”; and “go”; and “preach and teach”; and “baptize” and then hold accountable?” His Statement:

All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth

... because Moses NEVER said that. Abraham NEVER said that. And David NEVER said that. Jesus said it. And Jesus ALONE said it!

And I would suggest to you that this, “Statement”; this powerful, victorious; all-inclusive “Declaration”; this wonderful “Information”; this glorious “NEWS”- is also PART of the “GOOD” in the “Good News” of the Gospel. So, the “Good News” is that guilty sinners will be saved- yes, absolutely! But we must go on and finish it by ALSO saying that as those saved people then go into the world to live their redeemed lives- they will live according to “Kingdom Principles”; “Biblical Principles” and NOT in accord with the Ways of the lost and fallen World.

And so, as Christians live as Christians- we will *transform* our Families; and our Churches; and our Neighborhoods; and our Regions; and our Cities; and our States. And from there- we will transform the Nations and bring them into alignment with the King! Jesus said that His Kingdom will EVER expand and ALWAYS increase.

Now we won’t do this with military might or by force- we won’t artificially *impose* biblical Morality on those who are not saved. But we WILL do it through Persuasion and through Preaching and Teaching and through the Miracle of Conversion. And that IS making God’s enemies a Footstool for His Feet!

Now what we need to realize- is that what I just said- about the Good News including the transformation of the Nations- represents a very small Minority of the modern church. In other words, the overwhelming Majority of those in the modern church *disagree* with what I just said. But you need to know that- until the mid- 20th Century- what I just said- WAS the majority Position in the Church. So, what changed? Well, there aren’t any more Scriptures to look at than were available when this View was in the Majority. So, what changed? Several things like:

- Real bad Teaching
- An almost total collapse of biblical Morality
- Two World Wars (I and II)
- Israel becoming a State

... and the Result was that today, far too many people develop what they think about “*Last Things*” from the Evening News rather than from the Bible. And 21st Century Man has become so isolated from each other and so individualistic that it is much harder to teach and preach “authoritatively”; and to actually apply the “one another” verses in the Bible with any lasting effect.¹ The Reality is that what we believe about Eschatology will affect how we see Salvation- because they are connected. So, putting forth an Effort to arrive at a wholly biblical Eschatology should be one of our highest Priorities.

Yet, there are encouraging Signs that God may be moving to awaken the modern church. For example, in my lifetime- so many people have experienced the Miracle of the New Birth in South Korea- that they have been *re-designated* as a “Christian Nation”. Back in the 1970’s there were not ANY Meetings or Conferences that had a purely “Reformed” flavor. Today there are at least two per month. And the result is that there has been an explosion of *learning*; and *believing* and then *applying* the Doctrines of Grace (along with its emphasis on “*Exegesis*” rather than “*Eisegesis*”²) among many in the modern Church that is very hopeful.

For example, even though the *Southern Baptist Convention*, as a whole, has been going through *painful* and even *sinful* Struggles lately- many SBC churches have become fully “Reformed” in my lifetime- or at least have become serious about “reformING”.

Some of the *largest* and fastest growing churches on earth (Asia, Africa, and the Middle East) have been visited with a great Hunger to “get the Gospel right”; and have converted to be Elder led- something unheard of- just 20 years ago. One Church in South Korea holds early morning Prayer Meetings at 5am with around 250,000 people in attendance. While several churches in Africa have so many people in attendance- that some have to stand in line all night just to get a seat.

With the reformed Emphasis in Bible Study of “*Sola Scriptura*”- it is much easier to see the Fallacies of what many teach concerning “*Last Things*.” And this has helped bring about an interest in long-forgotten Views like both “*A*” and “*Post*”-Millennialism and an *abandonment* of the popular *Pre-millennialism* as well as *Dispensationalism*. And I pray that by going carefully through every verse of Matthew’s Gospel- we will be better able to understand what Jesus meant by what He famously said in Chapters **23-25**.

¹ “**Teaching authoritatively**” is NOT about abuse or controlling what other people think. It is about agreeing that, while every verse may have many different Applications- each verse has ONLY a single Meaning. And arriving at that one Meaning is one of the Goals of Bible Study. **Applying the “one another” verses** will cause a radical shift from living individually to living with the entire Church in mind.

² **Exegesis** has to do with “*taking out of*” Scripture what the biblical writer put into it. And that can ONLY be carried out by carefully examining the Words and Context that the writer used. **Eisegesis** has to do with “*putting into*” the Scriptures what the Preacher or Teacher wants them to say and mean.

For example, almost every year at Christmas- somebody will read the wonderful and comforting Promise of **Isaiah 9:6** that says:

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

... and many songs and Sermons and Teaching will center on this glorious verse- which is wonderful. But very few will go on and read and examine verse 7 that says:

There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

And this verse tells us that when this Child- that has been born; and this Son- that has been given to us- *grows up*- He will not only be our own *personal* Savior- but He will ALSO be the King, Who will rule and reign over His Kingdom. So, when Isaiah said in verse 6:

... the government will rest on His shoulders

... he was referring to Jesus- NOT merely saving individual souls- but actually carrying the Burden and the Weight of the Government. The Government of what? Not merely the Government of Israel- but the Government of the whole world! And then, in verse 7- God, through Isaiah, gives us an unfailing Promise about two things:

1. Jesus' Government
2. Jesus' Peace

... when Isaiah said,

There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace...

Now make sure that you understand that Isaiah did NOT say there will be no End to Jesus' Government or His Peace. This says there will be NO End to the **INCREASE** of Jesus' Government or His Peace. In other words, the Government- or the Kingdom of Heaven- that Jesus brought with Him when He came- 2,000

years ago- and the PEACE that all who live in that Kingdom have- that “mustard seed” of **Matthew 13**- will be *ever-expanding; ever-growing; and ever-increasing!*

The Kingdom of Heaven- Jesus’ Government- and the Peace that goes with it- will NEVER be *less* than it was. It will NEVER *diminish*; NEVER get smaller; and NEVER stop- but it will grow *larger and larger*- increasing *wider and deeper*; absorbing *more and more* people; gaining more and more aspects of Life; and it will *continue* to INCREASE- until the Kingdom of Heaven becomes the *dominate* Reality on earth! In other words, the “Great Commission” will be successful.

But then look at the remainder of verse 7. Isaiah infallibly said,

... On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore.

Now we know from the entirety of the New Testament that Jesus sits in the Throne of David- right now- by Him sitting at the “*Right Hand*” of God the Father Almighty. And by Jesus saying in **Matthew 28:18** that He already had been given ALL Authority in both heaven and earth- 2,000 years ago- He has already established His Kingdom on the earth (The Church) and He rules over it- with both Justice and Righteousness.

In other words- Jesus ruling and reigning over Heaven and Earth BEFORE He ascends into Heaven- is absolutely *fantastic* News! So, at a minimum- we need to widen our understanding of the Gospel to include what David wrote in **Psalms 110:1**

The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”

God the Father says to God the Son- “**Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.**” And just HOW is God the Father going to MAKE Jesus’ enemies a Footstool for His Feet? By at least seven things:

1. Jesus having ALL Authority in both Heaven and Earth
2. Jesus sending the Church into ALL the world- preaching the Gospel
3. Jesus GUARANTEEING His Church that He will NEVER leave them nor forsake them (as they obey Him)
4. That through the foolishness of the Message that is Preached- ALL of God’s elect will be saved

5. Genuinely saved people will then cast off their “death robes” and put on “robes of Righteousness” by loving Jesus enough to strive to obey Him in ALL that He said
6. Saved Men will teach their Children; love their Wives; hate Sin; and do Good Works before Men- so God will be glorified
7. Those who are saved will live the Christian Life- and these Meek ones (the saved) will literally inherit (transform) the earth

... and through this- Evil men will become godly; Sinful women will become holy; Godless children will become obedient; Wicked businessmen will run their businesses according to biblical Principles; Worldly media persons will speak Truth; and Ungodly Politicians will pass Laws reflecting Jesus’ Authority over all the Nations.

And when that happens- Policemen will fill their day with helping the Elderly; Jails will be empty and used to house the homeless; War Machines will be silent; and Violent Crime will be a distant memory. Another way of stating it- is that Jesus is reigning right now and WILL reign supreme- UNTIL:

... I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.

And just in case you think I am putting forth a Fantasy here- I got the above Information from the secular newspaper accounts of the 1st Great Awakening in this Country (1730’s & 40’s) that saw over 1 million souls saved and that transformed this entire Nation!³

So, when we are asked, “*What is the Gospel?*”, we should respond, “*It is the Good News that Jesus has come and lived and died and rose again so that sinners, who trust in Him, can escape the Damnation of God- and never die- AND- it is ALSO that Jesus- not the devil- is reigning right now in absolute Authority over both Heaven and Earth; and He will CONTINUE to reign until,*

... the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, As the waters cover the sea. (Habakkuk 2:14).

... and Jesus knows this. And that is why He begins His Ministry here on earth- by heralding a very simple but very profound Message:

Repent- for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!

³ The Government of this Nation as outlined in the Constitution was, in large part, articulated by men who had actually experienced the “Awakening” of the early 18th Century first hand; and who used the Bible as a blueprint to have a President (rather than a King); a House (where the people spoke); and the Senate (patterned after Church Elders).

Amen. Let's pray

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.