

Jesus is God with us. From the first chapter to the last, this is what Matthew tells us. God is with us in Jesus.

This is Matthew in 5.

The gospel of Matthew concentrates on God with us in Jesus. The end of chapter one introduces us to Jesus as Immanuel which means God with us, and chapter 28 concludes with Jesus saying, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

From the beginning to the end of Matthew, God is with us. And Jesus is God. Now this gospel is quite shocking because the first thing we learn about God with us is that he is with us in a person!

Chapters 1 to 4 tell us about him. This person has a genealogy. He has parents. He is born of the virgin Mary and has Joseph as his earthly father. The magi visit him. He has to flee. He is in danger. He grows up. He is tempted. And this person is the one prophesied about in the Old Testament. This person is Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. He is the very son of God. In fact, Matthew goes to great pains to demonstrate to us how Jesus is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah. In these first four chapters alone, there are seven separate references to prophecies fulfilled in Christ. God has kept His promise in Christ. God is with us! He is Jesus.

In chapters 4-15, Jesus begins teaching what it looks like when God is with us. The "kingdom of heaven," Jesus' phrase for God with us, looks different than you would ever expect.

He presents this Kingdom of heaven through teaching. Consider the Sermon on the Mount in chapters 5, 6 and 7. Consider his parables, especially the kingdom parables in chapter 13. He teaches with the authority of "God with us."

He shows us the Kingdom of heaven through healing the blind, casting out demons, feeding the 5000, walking on water and even raising the dead. He does miracles with the power of "God with us."

And he forgives sins as only God with us can do.

The main pivot point in Matthew comes in Chapter 16 with Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Here we learn that Jesus will DO something to bring about the kingdom of heaven. It's not only a future thing, as he talks about it in chapters 24 and 25. It's also a present reality that will be brought about by the death and resurrection of Jesus. He immediately tells Peter and the disciples that in order to accomplish his mission as the Messiah, the Christ, and bring about the kingdom of heaven, as the son of God, he will suffer and die and rise.

However, this means that when God reigns, it's not all good news. There is also Law. There will be a final judgement, when Jesus returns one last time — his second coming. Sin is punished. Sinners are kicked out of the kingdom to suffer eternally. When God is with us, when Jesus reigns in the kingdom of heaven, if you trust in Jesus as God with us, then you will receive all

the benefits of His kingdom. But if you reject Jesus as God with us then you will receive all the curses that come with God reigning.

The final three chapters of Matthew are Jesus' death, resurrection and final words. Jesus, having taught with the authority of God with us, having healed with the power of God with us, having forgiven sins as only God with us can, and having taught that God with us would suffer and die to bring about the kingdom of heaven, finally arrives in Jerusalem to face his Passion. But before he does that, he has one last meal with his disciples where he institutes the Lord's Supper. He gives this gift of himself, God with us, to the Church, for the forgiveness of sins until he returns again.

And in chapter 27, Matthew tells us how God with us suffers and dies to reconcile this creation and all sinners to God, and to reign as the King of the Kingdom of heaven. With great irony, the one who is God with us, cries out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" And because he was forsaken, now those who live in His kingdom will never be forsaken, but live forever with God in Jesus.

Chapter 28 concludes the Gospel of Matthew with Jesus' resurrection and his final words. With his final words, he institutes the Church through his Word and Sacrament. In baptism, God's name is placed on us. God is with us. In the Word of Jesus' teachings God is with us. The Church is the kingdom of heaven, God with us on earth through His Word and Sacrament. God with us in Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ in his Church.

And my dear friends, Matthew is good news because God is with us now! Jesus is God with us - the Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham, the son of the living God. He is the savior the Old Testament promised in whom all God's promises are kept. And he is your savior as well. Your sins are forgiven and you have the hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Believe this and have salvation in his name. Believe this and live in the Kingdom of heaven, now, and to the end of the ages.

Jesus Christ. God with us.

That's Matthew in 5. Read it. Learn it. And pass it on.