

Session Outline: St. Matthew’s Gospel – The Keys to the Kingdom

Session Description

This session explores the Gospel according to St. Matthew, highlighting its unique themes, structure, and theology. Special attention will be given to Matthew’s presentation of Jesus as the Messiah, the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, and the “keys to the Kingdom” entrusted to the Church.

I. Introduction to Matthew’s Gospel

1. Who was Matthew? The Evangelist and Apostle
2. Historical and cultural context of Matthew’s Gospel
3. Audience and purpose – written for Jewish Christians
4. Major themes: Kingdom of Heaven, fulfillment of prophecy, discipleship

II. The Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew

1. The meaning of “Kingdom of Heaven” vs. “Kingdom of God”
2. The centrality of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7)
3. Parables of the Kingdom (Matthew 13)
4. Living as citizens of the Kingdom

III. The Authority of Jesus and the Church

1. Jesus as the New Moses and Teacher
2. Peter and the Keys to the Kingdom (Matthew 16:13–20)
3. Authority to bind and loose (Matthew 18:15–20)
4. Discipleship and mission in Matthew 28:16–20 (The Great Commission)

IV. The Structure of Matthew’s Gospel

1. The Infancy narratives (Matthew 1–2): Jesus as Emmanuel
2. Five great discourses of Jesus (mirroring the five books of Moses):
 - Sermon on the Mount (Ch. 5–7)
 - Mission discourse (Ch. 10)
 - Parables discourse (Ch. 13)
 - Community discourse (Ch. 18)
 - Eschatological discourse (Ch. 24–25)

3. Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ

V. Matthew's Portrait of Jesus

1. Jesus as Messiah and Son of David
2. Jesus as Emmanuel – “God with us”
3. Jesus as the fulfillment of the Law and Prophets
4. Jesus as King and Judge of all nations

VI. Keys to the Kingdom: Lessons for Christian Life

1. Faith and obedience to God's Word
2. Forgiveness and mercy in community life
3. Service and humility as the path to greatness
4. Hope in the final coming of the Kingdom

VII. Practical Application

1. Living the Beatitudes in today's world
2. The challenge of discipleship in modern society
3. Building the Kingdom in family, parish, and community
4. Sharing the Gospel through mission and witness

VIII. Conclusion

1. The enduring message of Matthew's Gospel
2. The Kingdom of Heaven as both present and future
3. Our call to carry the Keys of the Kingdom in daily life