

A black and white, upside-down photograph of a city skyline with various skyscrapers and buildings. The image is inverted, with the top of the buildings at the bottom of the frame.

MATTHEW

The Upside umog Kingdom

Matthew 4

Jesus is the Son of God who came to bring light into the darkness,
we should devote ourselves entirely to following Him



Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus is focused on the kingdom

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Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- This scene is the second of Jesus' preparatory events – the first was being baptized by John and now being tempted by Satan.
- It is here in the desert that Jesus is offered a shortcut to a kingdom, bypassing the pain that He would experience in the future, including His sacrifice on the Cross.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- This experience in the wilderness provides Jesus with the opportunity to demonstrate His obedience and resolve to complete the mission that He has been given.
- The same Spirit that had anointed Jesus for the work of the ministry now leads Him into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil.



↑ جبل التجربة
1.3km (دير قرنطل)
Mount of Temptation



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- The Devil tempts Jesus, not the Spirit.
- God does not tempt us to sin (James 1:13).
- Although Satan will be taking action against Jesus, the temptation is permitted by God Himself (the story of Job, Job 1:6–2:7).
- God will use this event to allow the faithfulness of Jesus to be proven.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Jesus fasted, as many Jewish people did, to greater focus on prayer and be more attuned to the things of God.
- Modern-day hunger strikes have ended after 21–40 days.
- These ended due to the life-threatening side-effects of the participants



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Satan seeks to take advantage of Jesus' weakened physical state and tempts Him to satisfy His own physical hunger.
- The stakes are high for the Devil at this moment.
- He knows that Jesus' victory on the Cross will ultimately result in Satan's destruction.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Water was taken from rocks during Israel's time in the wilderness.
- John the Baptist stated that rocks could become heirs of Abraham.
- Why not transform rocks into food?
- What's so crafty in this temptation is that there appears to be no sin in turning the stones to bread.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Jesus responds with a quote from Deuteronomy 8:3.
- This portion of the law reminds the people of Israel of God's faithfulness to provide manna during their time in the wilderness.
- This was a lesson in relying on God's provision instead of one's own ability.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Satan takes Jesus to the highest point of the temple and tempts Him to demonstrate His ability to preserve His own life.
- The Devil quotes Psalm 91:11–12, a promise that God will protect “he who dwells in the shelter of the most high” (Psalm 91:1), but he misapplies it; the Psalm is in no way encouraging the faithful to put themselves in harm’s way willingly.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Jesus once again meets the tempter with Scripture to refute his attack, this time quoting Deuteronomy 6:16 – man should not put the Lord to the test.
- The last temptation attempts to entice Jesus by offering instant power – the Devil would give Jesus all of the kingdoms of the world if the Son would only worship the tempter.



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- These things would be coming to Jesus, after His death and Resurrection, but here an offering is made for Jesus to bypass the sacrifice and immediately enjoy the victory.
- Jesus pushes back with a quote from Deuteronomy 6:13: “You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.”



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Jesus was tempted in three ways, similar to Adam and Eve: an appeal to physical appetite, to personal gain, and to power/glory.
- We are reminded that “we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15).



Jesus is focused on the kingdom

- Satan preyed on Jesus' physical weakness, manipulated Scripture, and offered a way to circumvent the pain that was necessary to accomplish the mission.
- How did Jesus respond? He knew the Scriptures, not just repetitious memorization, but understood them to the point that they shed clarity on the decisions that Jesus would make.



Matthew 4:12-16

Jesus brings light into darkness

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Jesus brings light into darkness

- Jesus leaves Nazareth and now returns to Galilee, specifically the town of Capernaum.
- This city was more significant than Nazareth
- It was larger and located next to the Sea of Galilee. It would become His base of operations for the remainder of His ministry



Jesus brings light into darkness

- Capernaum would have been around 50 percent Gentile.
- Although Jesus' offering of salvation was first to the Jews.
- This area was home to a trade route that ran into the Mediterranean sea, a place to expose travelers, even Gentiles, to the ministry that would change the world.







Jesus brings light into darkness

- It was described as “Galilee of the Gentiles.”
- This far north territory was quite removed from Jerusalem.
- It had been captured by Assyria in 722 B.C. and had mostly remained in the control of Gentiles until the second century B.C.



Jesus brings light into darkness

- This was the land Isaiah had prophesied in Isaiah 9:1–2 that a great light would be experienced by those who walked in darkness.
- Jesus would bring the light to the Jewish people in this area who had been walking in darkness.
- Light refers to the knowledge of and obedience to God, compared to darkness or the ignorance or disobedience to God



Matthew 4:17-25

**A call to follow the King demands an
immediate and total response**

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A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- The message of Jesus is a mirror of John's message: both men announcing the arrival of the kingdom of heaven, both pointing to the reality of the Messiah (verse 17).
- The Messiah collects two fishermen, Peter and Andrew.
- Andrew was no stranger to Jesus as he had been a disciple of John the Baptist



A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- A disciple was an “adherent or follower of a master, an intimate companion in some common endeavor, often learning and promoting a particular ideology.”
- Matthew would use the term to describe the 12, and outside of that small collective, the word was assigned to followers of Jesus who were more devoted than the large fickle crowds.



A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- Typically, a disciple would confront a master, asking for permission to become a disciple.
- In this case, Jesus instead calls the brothers.
- He calls them to abandon their work of seeking fish from the sea in exchange for pursuing people from a lost world to the life-giving message of the Messiah.



A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- Jesus repeats His call this time to James and John. Notice that Zebedee is present in this story; these two weren't just leaving their work, they were leaving their father and the family business.
- Matthew would record in 10:37 the words of Jesus: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."



A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- Verses 23 through 25 provide a summary of the public ministry of Jesus.
- His message (verse 17) was such good news (the word *euangelion* translates to Gospel) that “gospel” became synonymous with the message and the title given to the books that tell His story.



A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- The message was accompanied by miraculous events: healing of the sick, those oppressed by demons, those plagued by seizures and paralytics – he healed them all.
- This work brought crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis (the “ten cities” that were east and south of the Sea of Galilee), Jerusalem, Judea and west of the Jordan.



A call to follow the King demands an immediate response

- A call to Jesus demands an immediate response and one of complete devotion.
- If you are a believer, Jesus has also called you to radical and immediate discipleship – to hear His voice and respond in full.
- Leave behind your concern for your future. Leave behind the concern for your own comfort. Follow Jesus.

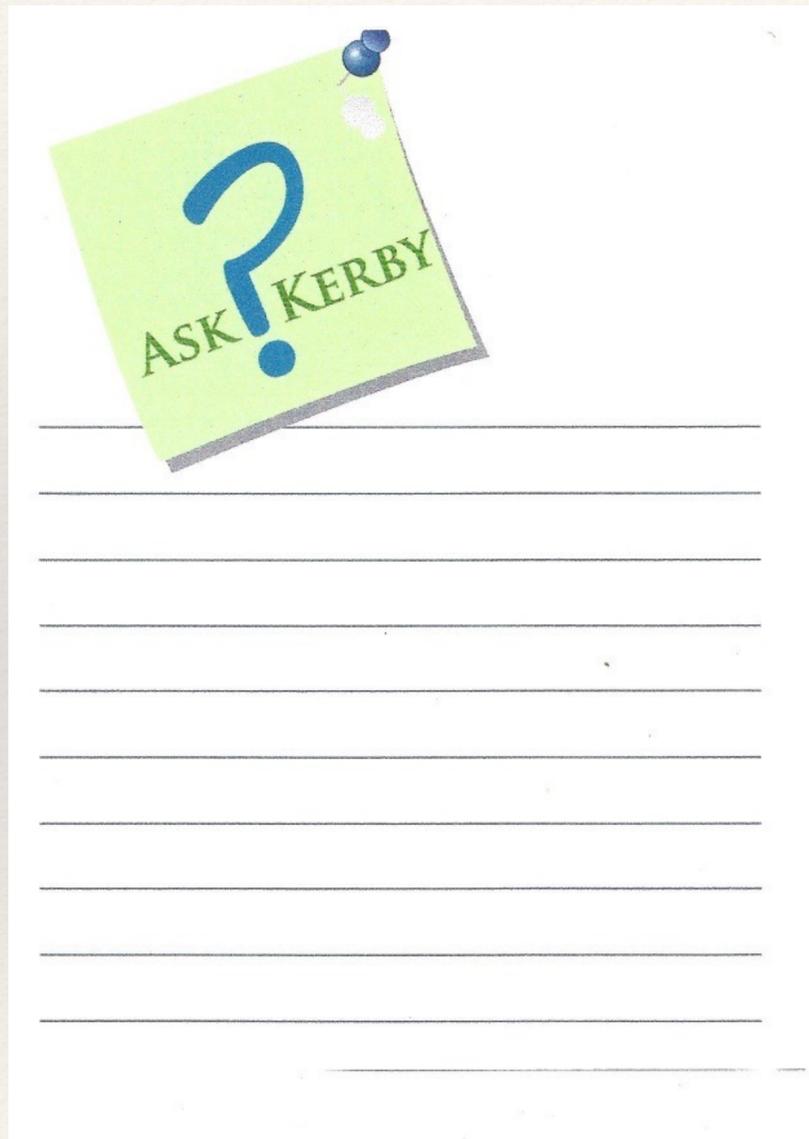


What Story Did Matthew Leave Out?

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Ask Kerby



The Southern Baptist Convention adopted critical race theory in the platform. I thought it didn't match biblical teachings. Would you be able to explain it?

America, Critical Theory, and Social Crisis

Douglas Groothuis



September 2020

“These are times that try men’s souls,” wrote Thomas Paine in 1776 in his essay, “The Crisis.” Paine wanted to rally

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. that they are endowed by

Critical Race Theory

- Professor Derrick Bell taught critical theory at Harvard Law School before he became the Dean of the University of Oregon Law School.
- Critical race theory traces all social injustice to inequities of power, which are unfairly based on class, race, gender, and sexual orientation. Everyone must get “woke” to this fact for progress to be made.
- It is a form of cultural Marxism that seeks a radical transformation of society by uprooting present social authorities. Cultural Marxism retains basic Marxist assumptions but advocated a “long march through the institutions,” to quote a leading thinker, Antonio Gramsci.

Critical Race Theory

- Critical theory, like Marxism, sees societies as fundamentally made up of power struggles among various groups.
- But critical theory considers more than economic class as determining power.
- Race, gender, sexual orientation, and other aspects of identity are determinative as well.
- Today in America, white, heterosexual males are taken to be the elite of the oppressors. All whites partake in “white privilege,” which is tantamount to the older Marxist idea of decadent bourgeois power.

Critical Race Theory

- This view is sometime called identity politics.
- You are defined by your group or intersection of your groups.
- This has been labelled intersectionality.
- If you are in power, you are privileged and undeserving.
- If you are out of power, you are underprivileged and entitled.

Critical Race Theory

- The views of the underprivileged are immune from criticism and are unfalsifiable because the privileged suffer from false consciousness.
- The book, *White Fragility*, by Robin J. DeAngelo, claims that all whites are racists and that no evidence counts in favor of the opposite.
- This claim then becomes unfalsifiable.
- The underprivileged can make demands, but they need not make arguments, since the whole system, including basic rationality, is rigged against them.

Critical Race Theory

- President Trump issued an order to “cease and desist from using taxpayer dollars” for the dissemination of Critical Race Theory via mandatory instructional courses for government workers, including the military.
- The order directs federal agencies to begin the process of identifying and eliminating “all contracts or other agency spending related to any training on ‘critical race theory,’ ‘white privilege,’ or any other training or propaganda effort that teaches or suggests either (1) that the United States is an inherently racist or evil country or (2) that any race or ethnicity is inherently racist or evil.”

Critical Race Theory

- “Racism” is unconquerable and ubiquitous; it is the singular evil that underlies virtually everything wrong with our culture. It is “the stain that will never be removed.”
- “White supremacy so permeates our institutions, policies, practices, and ways of knowing that it is nearly impossible to think outside it.”
- All white people are racists, whether they want to be or not.
- “Whiteness” is therefore an evil that must be confessed and repudiated, but without any guarantee of forgiveness.

Response

- It removes the centrality of Christ and the cross.
- It turns the hearts and minds of Christians from things above to things on this earth.
- It obscures the promise of forgiveness for hopeless sinners by telling people they are hapless victims of other people's misdeeds.
- It is devoid of love.

Response

- I pray that evangelical leaders will rethink their support for such divisive deception and return to proclaiming the true unity that is found in Christ, who already “broke down the barrier of the dividing wall” between ethnicities (Ephesians 2:14).
- For those who have put their trust in Him, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).