REL110 RS - Module 3 AVP

**Slide 1**
Title slide

**Slide content:**
REL 110RS Module 3

**Slide 2**
**Slide title:**
The Gospel According to Matthew

**Slide content:**
[Picture depicting a family tree]

**Narrator:**
Matthew’s Gospel intends to show Jesus as fulfillment of Jewish hope. Unlike Mark’s, it begins with a genealogy. This is designed to link Jesus with King David whose descendant was prophesied to rule Israel. Identify in Chapters 1 and 2 how often there are references to fulfilling prophecies.

**Slide 3**
**Slide title:**
Sermon on the Mount

**Slide content:**
- Chapters 5-7
- Portrays Jesus as going beyond or fulfilling Jewish law

[Picture of Jesus delivering the Sermon on the Mount]

**Narrator:**
A major section which portrays Jesus as going beyond or fulfilling Jewish law is the Sermon on the Mount, Chapters 5-7. The sermon begins on a mountain evoking the image of Moses on the mountain from Exodus. It begins with blessing and witnessing and moves to a long section on law. Read Matthew 5:17 to 5:48 and notice all of the times Jesus quotes the law and then says “but I say to you.” This phrase “but I say to you” indicates how Jesus is portrayed as going beyond the religious laws of his day and the level of authority he was asserting. Jesus is like Moses but has greater authority in the willingness to go beyond the Law of Moses quoted in the sermon.

**Slide 4**
**Slide title:**
Sermon on the Mount, continued

**Slide content:**
- “Whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.” (5:17)
- “Whoever says ‘you fool’ shall be liable to hell fire.” (5:18)
- Alms, prayer, and fasting (Ch. 6)
- Treasures, unsound eye, money, anxiety about life, and judging others (6:19–7:5)

**Narrator:**
The Sermon on the Mount is more than an opportunity to show Jesus as going beyond Jewish teaching. Some of the statements are deeply challenging, such as “whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment” and “whoever says ‘you fool’ shall be liable to hell fire” (5:17 and 18). These heavy-duty
demands might well inspire fear. Chapter 6 of the sermon is about standard modes of Jewish piety: giving alms to the poor, prayer, and fasting. In each case, Jesus tells his audience to do these things in relation to God, not in order to gain human approval. From 6:19 through 7:5, Jesus lists a number of problems: treasures, unsound eye, money, anxiety about life, judging others. Take some time to read these and reflect on how they are all similar. Again, that is from 6:19 to 7:5. All of these problems indicate lack of trust in God. Either trust in earthly treasure or in God. Judge others or let God take care of others. The emphasis here is on trusting in God’s care. This section of the sermon is in tension with the section on laws which involves some frightening demands. Saying “you fool” could lead to hell fire. That type of demand will generate fear, most likely; yet, the later part of the sermon counsels don’t worry! How can one resolve this tension? Various interpretations have appeared in Christian history to handle this sermon. One interpretation is to say that the laws represent impossible ideals. This takes the demands of the sermon as ways to expose the weakness of the hearer who ultimately needs to depend on the mercy of God rather than on his or her own record. This makes Jesus a preacher of repentance.

**Slide 5**

**Slide title:**
Sermon on the Mount, continued

**Slide content:**
“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (5:43-48)

**Narrator:**
Another approach to interpreting the sermon says the entire sermon hinges on 5:43-48: “You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same? So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Here the focus is on God’s indiscriminate love, and the readers will already believe in God’s love applied to themselves. Their confidence in that acceptance by God will lead to a more secure sense of self which in turn would diminish the need to manipulate others, to put down others, or to hurt others. However one wants to interpret the Sermon on the Mount, it remains one of the most popular and influential sections of the New Testament.

**Slide 6**

**Slide title:**
Parables

**Slide content:**
- Parables are extended metaphors.
- The “kingdom of God” is the ruling power of God.
- “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.” (13:44)

[Picture of man with outstretched arms in sunlit field with tall grass]

**Narrator:**
Another section that Matthew adds to Mark’s Gospel is the collections of parables of the kingdom in Chapter 13. Parables are extended metaphors. The kingdom of God, better translated as the ruling power
of God rather than a place, expresses a central message of Jesus' preaching. His notion of the ruling power of God was not tied to changing the government (as the Zealots would have liked), nor with keeping the laws (which would have been the emphasis of the Pharisees), nor with ritual purity (the priestly concern). Contemporary Christians might associate the kingdom of God with heaven, but this does not come through the parables in Matthew 13. The kingdom of God is like a treasure hidden in a field. Matthew 13:44 reads “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy he went and sold all he had and bought that field.” This parable gives a scene with surprise and joyful discovery of something hidden. God’s kingdom is unexpected and may generate joy in discovery as well as a willingness to change one’s life as the man sold all that he had and bought the field.

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**Slide 7**
**Slide title:**
Parables, continued

**Slide content:**
- “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened.” (13:33)
- The word “mixed” is better translated “hid.”

**Narrator:**
In Matthew 13:33, we see the parable of the woman making dough: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed with three measures of wheat flour until the whole batch was leavened.” Sometimes the word “mixed” is used, but it is better translated as “hid,” as that is the meaning in Greek. The word there is enekrypsen, from which we have the English word “encrypt.” She “hides” the yeast. This is strange language for a baker. What is the parable saying? When a person makes dough, the yeast is dissolved in water and then mixed with flour. The yeast is no longer seen, but its effects are evident. God is not directly seen, and God’s action is below the surface. For more on parables of the kingdom, consult the text *Portraits of Jesus*, chapter on Matthew’s Gospel.

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**Slide 8**
**Slide title:**
Jesus Understood by the Disciples

**Slide content:**
Mk. 8:14-21

14 The disciples had forgotten to bring bread, except for one loaf they had with them in the boat. 15 “Be careful,” Jesus warned them. “Watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees and that of Herod.” They discussed this among themselves and said, “It is because we have no bread.” 17 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? 18 Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don’t you remember? 19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” “Twelve,” they replied. 20 And when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?” They answered, “Seven.” 21 He said to them, “Do you still not understand?”

Mt. 16:5-12

5 When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. 6 “Be careful,” Jesus said to them. “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” 7 They discussed this among themselves and said, “It is because we didn't bring any bread.” 8 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, “You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? 9 Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 10 Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 11 How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast
of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

**Narrator:**
Matthew changes the way the disciples are portrayed in Mark’s Gospel. You may remember how Mark showed the disciples to be misunderstanding Jesus (remember Mark Ch.8, 9, and 10) and they never acknowledge him as son of God. Matthew has the disciples understanding Jesus and calling him “son of God.” A specific example occurs in Mark Chapter 8 and Matthew Chapter 16. In Mark, the disciples never understand, whereas in the same story in Matthew they understood. How do you account for this difference?

**Slide 9**
**Slide title:** Differences to Mark’s Gospel

**Slide content:**
- Differing intentions
- Introduces the word “church” (Ch. 16, 18)
- Gives Peter authority (Ch. 16)
- Presents church as a source of moral guidance (Ch. 18)

**Narrator:**
Differences between Matthew and Mark appear to be a function of differing intentions. Neither writer was an eyewitness. They were not news reporters. The subtle differences in wording show Matthew was changing Mark’s Gospel. Matthew introduces the word “church” in chapters 16 and 18. In chapter 16 he gives Peter authority and in chapter 18 he presents church as a source of moral guidance. Church is maturing and it does not serve Matthew’s intention to maintain the consistent lack of understanding by church leaders that Mark has. He tones down the misunderstanding of the disciples to promote respect for church and its leaders.

**Slide 10**
**Slide title:**
Death of Jesus

**Slide content:**
“The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus’ resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.” (27:52-53)

**Narrator:**
The death of Jesus in Matthew’s Gospel comes with a depiction of tombs opening and the bodies of the saints appearing. Why is Matthew presenting this and the other gospels are not? If one looks into the Old Testament, one finds similar language in Ezekiel 37:1-11 where the dry bones come back to life. There Ezekiel was giving hope to his Jewish community in exile that God would bring life out of death. Matthew is showing fulfillment of that hope in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The portrait of Jesus as fulfilling Jewish hope permeates this Gospel. The disciples as acquiring authority is another function of Christianity emerging.