

Sermon series on the Gospel of Matthew: Following Jesus and sharing the good news of the Kingdom in today's world.
Jacob Haasnoot, 2016/7 (context: International Church in Kampala, Uganda)

#	Text	Topic	Focus & questions to consider
1 Christmas Day	Matthew 1:18-25	The Birth of Jesus	Always a bit of a challenge to find a fresh angle for the Christmas sermon. Do also think about the people that come to Church only at Christmas day. Matthew stresses that Jesus is the Messiah that Israel has been waiting for. He will save his people from their sins. He is Immanuel.
2 New Year's Day	Matthew 2:1-12	In need of direction	What will the New Year bring? Where do we go for direction? The magi were looking in the right place. Do we want to worship Jesus in everything we do or are we focused on other things? Good time to recommit ourselves to Him.
3	Matthew 3:1-17	Loved by the Father	John the Baptist prepares as an OT prophet the way for Jesus to show that He is the Messiah we have been waiting for. Jesus was baptized to show He was one of us. His position as Son is confirmed by the Father and He receives the Spirit. We are loved by the Father because of Him. Do we live as those who are loved? (cf. Henri Nouwen with focus on 'the beloved').
4	Matthew 4:1-11	Lead us not into temptation	Jesus was tested in the wilderness before he starts his ministry. He resists the devil by quoting the Word of God. How are we tested? Do we know the Word of God in order to resist temptation? What does it mean if we don't experience temptation?
5	Matthew 5:13-16	Sermon on the Mount (1): Salt & Light	Introduce Sermon on the Mount. Why did Jesus give us this teaching which is so radical? Explain salt & light metaphors. They talk about being a minority. What does that tell us? How can we be salt & light as a church? And personally in our daily lives? What is our motivation?
6	Matthew 6:5-14	Sermon on the Mount (2): How to pray?	How can the Lord's Prayer be a model for prayer and for our lives? Why do we struggle with prayer? Why is prayer so important? How do we encourage prayer in our church?
7	Matthew 7:1-6	Sermon on the Mount (3): Don't judge!	Why do we judge so easily, especially as Christians? What should be our focus? What would our Church look like if we put this in practice?
8	Matthew 8:14-22	Following Jesus is costly	Yes, Jesus heals many but following Him is costly. Prosperity Gospel only talks about the bright side but to be a disciple means to set the right priorities and that is not always easy. What does it mean for us to follow Jesus? Do we find it costly or not? If we find it easy, do we have our priorities right?
9	Matthew 9:35-38	Vacancy: Harvest worker	What do we see when we look around us? Do we see the crowd that needs Jesus? Do we see the harvest? Are we willing to be a harvest worker? Jesus asks us to pray. What does it mean for us in Kampala?
10	Matthew 10:16-39	Lent (1): Jesus came to disturb	Jesus' teaching is not always what we expect it to be. He is challenging us to deeper faith and discipleship. Someone said: "Jesus came to disturb the comfortable and comfort the disturbed". On the other hand: this doesn't mean that Christians and their behaviour are above reproach.
11	Matthew 11: 25-30	Lent (2): Jesus reveals	In our journey towards Easter we look at why Jesus came to this earth and why he died on the

		the Father	cross and rose from the grave. This passage tells us about the intimate relationship between the Father and the Son. Only through Jesus we get to know the Father. That is why we want to learn from Him (his yoke). His yoke is easy because He is carrying it together with us.
12	Matthew 12:15-21	Lent (3): Jesus brings justice to the nations	Our faith in Jesus is very personal (He died for my sins) but that is not the whole picture. The bigger framework is that He inaugurated the Kingdom of God. He brings justice to the nations. What did this mean in the OT context? What does it mean in Matthew and in our context today?
13	Matthew 13:31-34	Lent (4): Jesus announces the Kingdom of heaven	Two short parables about the Kingdom. Small initiatives can have a great effect in the Kingdom. Give examples in our context. Don't be discouraged about small beginnings. We are working FOR the Kingdom but God is the one who builds His Kingdom.
14 Palm Sunday	Matthew 21:1-11	The King on a donkey	The Gospel is different from worldly standards. We serve a King on a donkey. Yes, He is the King but he chose to the path of suffering. This is a paradox that we can only understand if we are a disciple of Jesus. How do we follow in his footsteps?
15 Good Friday	Matthew 27:32-61	Surely He was the Son of God	
16 Easter Sunday	Matthew 28:1-10	He has risen!	Easter is the high point in the church calendar! We have new life through the resurrection of Jesus. How do we live our lives as Easter-people?
17	Matthew 28:16-20	I am with you always	We are commissioned to make disciples but it goes together with a promise: I am with you always! We can't do it by ourselves. We need the Spirit of Jesus to give us strength.

Some features of the Gospel of Matthew:

- The author is uncertain.
- Because of its Jewishness, it seems likely that the author was a Jewish Christian writing to Jewish Christians. Because of its fierce criticism of the Pharisees (chapter 13) it is likely that there was a conflict going on between Jewish Christians and non-Christian Jews when Matthew was writing.
- Matthew includes a lot of Jesus' teaching. This is arranged in five blocks each with its own theme and ending 'When Jesus had finished all these sayings.'
- **Key Themes:** (a) Jesus fulfils the Old Testament Story; (b) Jesus fulfils the Law; (c) Jesus brings Good News to the world; (d) Focus on The Kingdom of God.
- Matthew stresses continuity with the Old Testament. Jesus fulfils God's work in the history of Israel. Yet Jesus also begins a new surprising and exciting phase in God's work.

* Outline:

Genealogy & Infancy Narrative: 1-2

Narrative: 3-4

First Discourse: "Sermon on the Mount": 5-7

Narrative: 8-9

Second Discourse: "Missionary Instructions": 10

Narrative: 11-12

Third Discourse: "Parables Collection": 13

Narrative: 14-17

Fourth Discourse: "Community Instructions": 18

Narrative: 19–22

Fifth Discourse: “Sermon on Eschatology”: 23–25

Passion & Resurrection Narrative: 26–28