

THRU THE BIBLE SYNTHESIS
"Part XXXVI: Matthew - God's Relentless Pursuit Of The Individual"

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

Is it possible that Americans will one day even be able to find out God's truth and believe it for his benefit?! Consider the following:

(1) G. Brock Chisholm, co-founder of the World Federation for Mental Health announced in 1945 a plan for the future of psychiatric practice by saying: "**To achieve world government, it is necessary to remove from the minds of men their individualism, loyalty to family traditions, national patriotism and religious dogmas.**" (Psychiatry Destroying Morals, Citizens Com. on Human Rights, p. 16)

(2) Additionally, a 1986 survey by the American Journal of Psychiatry "found that 95 percent of psychologists and the majority of psychiatrists acknowledge that they are atheist or agnostic, compared to the 90 percent of the general public who do believe in God." (Ibid.)

With such biases against belief in God coming from the field of psychology alone, and with so many being exposed to its influence, what chance is there that future Americans will hear God's truth?!

(3) David Briggs of the Associated Press reported that a number of renowned Evangelical leaders signed a pact with Roman Catholic leaders advocating the uniting of Catholics and Evangelicals to oppose abortion on demand and pornography. However, Galatians 1:8-9 commands believers to separate from those who teach a faith plus works gospel as Catholicism promotes, and such separation prohibits their even eating together according to 1 Cor. 5:11! Yet, as we can document a number of times, such union is now patently promoted by leaders of some national Evangelical movements, seminaries and by numerous churches. **A generation from now, besides disobeying Galatians 1:8-9, will we Evangelicals still believe that salvation is by faith alone in Christ alone?!**

(4) A Roman Catholic priest was asked by a local Evangelical Church to preach a sermon from its pulpit. After he did, the priest concluded that his belief of salvation by faith plus the sacraments was correct or this Evangelical church wouldn't have let him preach there!

In view of the puzzling affiliations of Evangelicals just described, how are we able to disciple people who are ALREADY confused on HOW to have their sins forgiven and go to heaven?!

What is going on, and what does God expect from us?!

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: "I would like to see a party come to Christ or a needy believer overcome erring ways and beliefs! Problem: his background and environment are real barriers to that end! Any suggestions?!"

- I. **Throughout the Old Testament, God's institutions of men were so sinful that they repeatedly failed to disciple the world for God:**
 - A. Though God created the world and set man up as His deputy, sin deposed him, and Satan became ruler on earth, Gn. 1-5; 2 Cor. 4:4.
 - B. The Lord renewed history through the Noahic flood, Gen. 6:1-9:7.
 - C. Yet, Noah's descendant, Nimrod, began an apostasy opposing God's rule on earth, Gen. 10:8-10; 11:1-9; Rev. 12:1-3.
 - D. God thus chose Abraham to start a nation to check his sin, Gn. 12:1-3.
 - E. Yet, the Old Testament records not only that nation, Israel's repeated failure to curb Nimrod's error, but her tendency to be corrupted by it in spite of God's discipline to the contrary, Gn. 12:4-Malachi.
- II. **In FACT, even when God sent Israel's long-awaited MESSIAH to install the Messianic Kingdom, Israel's sinfulness moved her as a nation to REJECT Him, and that halted the Kingdom's advent!**
 - A. Matthew's Gospel is written specifically for the **Hebrew people** to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was their long-awaited **Messiah**:
 1. Matthew's introductory genealogy of Jesus of Nazareth highlights him as being the son of **David**, and the son of **Abraham**, Mtt. 1:1. This emphasis reveals the **royalty** of Jesus as **Israel's King** in keeping with the **Abrahamic Covenant**, Genesis 12:1-3; 17:16!
 2. Matthew also emphasizes Jesus' fulfillment of many Old Testament prophecies of Israel's **KING**, 1:18-2:23, B.K.C., N.T., p. 16.
 3. Matthew 1:1-11:1 accordingly reports how Jesus of Nazareth was revealed to Israel as her King through His words and works.
 - B. However, Matthew 11:2-12:50 shows that the artificial spirituality present in Old Testament Malachi's era had blossomed into apostasy so that **Israel REJECTED** her Messiah, Jesus when He came!
 1. The last Old Testament book before Matthew is Malachi, and it records an artificial spirituality rising in Israel (see previous notes)!
 2. That artificial spirituality continued to develop until it led to a hardness where Israel **rejected** Jesus as her Messiah:
 - a. Israel rejected Christ's Forerunner, John who had been promised by Malachi to present Messiah, Mal. 3:1; 4:5-6 & Mtt. 11:2-15.
 - b. She rejected the authenticating works of Jesus, claiming **one day** that He **did** do miracles, but by **Satan's** power, 11:16-12:50.
- III. **With the NATION Israel rejecting Christ, God installed a formerly hidden plan to PRESERVE His outreach to INDIVIDUALS:**

- A. On that predicted day of Christ's rejection (Zec. 11:11 with Mtt. 13:1), Matthew 13 records Jesus' parables that announced a previously hidden divine plan to **sidestep** Israel's **rejection** of His reign:
1. **SINCE** Jesus was rejected by Israel's **majority** (Par. of the Sower), 13:3-23, God would disciple **believing individuals** in a **world** of **unbelievers** in Messiah's **absence**. (Par. Wheat & Tares), 13:24-30.
 2. As God's people would organize into Christendom in Satan's world, Satan would counter God's disciples by **infiltrating** Christendom with the **leaven** of error, 13:31-33, Walvoord, Matthew, p. 102ff.
 3. **HOWEVER**, God would resist Satan's counter by (a) redeeming **Israel** at the cross to supply a **latter era** salvation for her (Par. Hidden Treasure), 13:44 **AND** (b) save **individual** Jews **AND** Gentiles to build the **true** Church, (Pearl of Great Price), 13:45-46!
 4. The Parable of the Net predicts the last judgment of **individuals**, Jewish **AND** Gentile, **before** Messiah's reign, 13:(37-43) 47-50.
 5. Mtt. 13:51-52 is Jesus' admonition to His followers to **update** their **Old Testament** insight on Messiah's Kingdom with this news of the **postponement** of Messiah's Kingdom by way of the **Church era**!
 6. Thus, God would **bypass** the **NATION Israel**, an unsuccessful vehicle of countering Nimrod's world apostasy to keep reaching the world's **INDIVIDUALS**, Jew **AND** Gentile, by **faith in Messiah**!
- B. Matthew continues to record an increasing conflict between Jesus and lost Israel until she finally crucified Him & He rose again, 13:53-28:9.
- C. Christ instituted God's **worldwide** outreach of **individuals** through the **Church** as He predicted in Matthew 13:1-52, cf. Mtt. 28:10-20!
- IV. **Matthew's input to the "thread of redemption" is the fact that God KEEPS ON reaching out to INDIVIDUALS through HISTORY regardless how evil are their ORIGINS or SURROUNDINGS!**

Concluding Application: *If concerned about the hurdles of discipling anyone, make sure WE are right with God by (1) believing on Christ for salvation from sin (Jn. 3:16) and (2) fellowship with Him via (a) confession of sin (1 Jn. 1:9) and (b) dependence on the Spirit (Gal. 5:16-23) (c) to obey Scripture, 1 Jn. 2:1-6; Jn. 14:21-23. (3) Then, recalling God's relentless effort to reach individuals in spite of world apostasy that hinders their being disciplined, pray the "Lord of the harvest" to send forth a worker for the needy one, Mtt. 9:37-38!*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon's lesson . . .)

In the summer of 1725, a boy named John was born in London, England. His mother was a godly woman, and his father an often-absent sea captain. But when John was almost 7 years old, his mother died, and John was taken to live with distant relatives.

These relatives mocked John's belief in God. They so badly ridiculed his childlike faith that, lonely and unhappy, he ran off as a young teen to become an apprentice on his father's sailing ship.

On board ship, John's father rejected him. John left his father's ship and went from ship to ship, often being fired for insubordination and rehired by other shipmen who needed young men for their boats.

After a stint in the British Navy, John ended up in Africa to seek his fortunes in the slave trade. While there, he ended up in the care of a vindictive slave trader's wife who imprisoned him and made him eat his food from the floor like a dog.

John escaped and made it down to the seacoast where he was picked up and hired again on another ship. While there, he broke into the ship's supply of rum, got drunk and fell overboard.

One of the ship's officers, either out of pity or spite, saved John from drowning by spearing him in his thigh with a harpoon and reeling him back aboard like a fish!

John went down into the hold of the ship to think hard about his life. While there the ship encountered a frightening storm, so John finally made a life-transforming decision to believe in Christ as Savior.

We know John better as John Newton. We know his song, too:

"Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see."

(Pamela J. Kennedy, Hymns of Faith and Inspiration (Ideals), p. 80)

John Newton later pastored a church in England, and was instrumental in getting William Wilburforce of the British Parliament to pass legislation outlawing the slave trade in England!

God relentlessly reaches out to individuals. Case in point: John Newton. Be encouraged with that wayward, confused party needing to be disciplined! God is not finished with him yet!