

The Gospel of Matthew

Lesson One: Introduction to the Book

The Necessity of Different Perspectives

- More perspectives give a fuller view of the facts
- More perspectives reduce the possibility of misinterpretation
- More perspectives emphasize key moments
- More perspectives can minister to a larger audience
- More perspectives corroborate the Gospel narrative

Who wrote the book of Matthew?

- Matthew, one of the 12 Apostles
- Although not explicitly stated, Matthew is traditionally accepted as the author
- Early manuscripts contain a title which ascribes authorship to Matthew

Who was the intended audience?

- Jewish Christians, possibly in Antioch
- The book contains a tremendous amount of Old Testament references
- The “Kingdom of Heaven” is used versus the “Kingdom of God” found in other Gospels
- Papias contends that the book was originally written in Hebrew

When was it written?

- Generally speaking, this book was written in the mid-first century
- Some date it as early as the mid-50s (immediately following Mark), some as late as the 70s (after the destruction of Jerusalem)

Why does all of this matter?

- This knowledge helps us understand the overall context of the book
- It enriches and adds depth to our understanding
- It helps us navigate “problems” or differences in the text when compared to other accounts