

Quick Facts about the Book of Matthew:

- Written by one of Jesus' disciples – Matthew (who was a tax collector)
- Originally believe to be the first Gospel –though now many scholars believe Mark is the oldest now. Was written in the first century AD and was in completed for within a few decades of Jesus' death. A very fresh history.
- Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience (whereas Luke wrote to a very Greek audience). Note the many references to Old Testament prophecy (very important to Jews) and that the genealogy in Matthew 1 only goes back to Abraham (the Father of the Israelite people). Luke's genealogy goes all the way back to Adam to emphasize Jesus' universal impact.
- The famous Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew 5-7

Quick Facts about the Book of Acts:

- Really the Acts of the Apostles (those who saw the resurrected Jesus)
- Best history of the early church – from a handful of believers in Jerusalem to 5,000 in just a short time to having Christianity spread all across Asia Minor and into Europe in less than one generation. Unprecedented spread of a faith by a persecuted people through peaceful means.
- First half focuses on Peter. The last half focuses on Paul and his journeys.
- Was written by Luke who was a doctor and went with Paul on several of his mission trips.
- Acts is really Part II of the Gospel of Luke (continues the story) that we will read later this semester.

Matthew 2 – Jesus and family relocating

1. From Joseph's responsiveness of going to Egypt what do you learn about faith and obedience? How long would it take you to say "yes" if God asked you to relocate? What is your story of relocating to New York?

Matthew 3

2. How do you handle temptations? How did Jesus? What did he tell the Devil?
3. Who has been a John the Baptist in your life? How did he or she prepare you to meet Jesus? Is there someone who is pointing you to Jesus as you consider Him?

Matthew 5 – Sermon on the Mount

4. This past week, did you feel more blessed or stressed? What can you do to be more focused on God's blessings in your life?

Matthew 6 – Sermon on the Mount

5. What causes you the most worry? What is God saying to you through this passage about handling your particular worry or disappointment?

Acts 14

6. What was one of the biggest misunderstandings about Christianity you had to overcome before you could believe?

Matthew 11

7. In what specific way can you be an encourager to someone in church leadership? In your family? Among your friends?
8. How often do you judge other people, and what does the Bible say to do?