

# Matthew's Biography of Jesus Christ

**The account of the life of Jesus Christ is found in biographic form in Matthew's gospel.**

Matthew tells the story of Jesus' birth, life, death and burial.

In a normal human biography anything that is written after the burial is **not** biographic but comment.

It may be an editorial comment, the summary of the person's teachings, a eulogy, but it is **not** biography.

The person is gone and that is the end.

No matter how loved the person was they write no more, travels no more, speaks no more to their friends.

The last chapter of the person's biography has been written.

Matthew's account begins with the ancestors of Jesus back to Abraham and then forward to Mary the mother of the human Jesus.

Matthew's account tells of birth, baptism, Satan's temptations, public ministry, including feeding of 5000, raising of the dead, stilling of waves and calming of winds.

There is a clear picture of Jesus' conflict with the hypocritical religious leaders and His slow decline of popularity with the people.

Then follows the account of Jesus by His detractors and the manner in which He was turned over to the Romans to be crucified.

It is in Matthew chapter 27 that Jesus is taken to be crucified, still wet with the bloody sweat of the previous night's agony, is nailed to the cross.

We learn in some detail the story of the six hours on the cross followed by the humiliation of Jesus' death.

The bowing of His wearied head and the words "*it is finished*" as He gave up His spirit and He was dead.

The human biography comes to an end.

This human man who had proved to be the seed of Abraham according to the flesh.

This human man who had been declared to be the very Son of God and had proved it by His wonders and miracles and words.

This human man who had lived, full of kindness, gentleness and love among those who had hated Him.

This human man who because of His love for all humanity had died for His enemies.

Matthew ended this man's human biography in the 27<sup>th</sup> chapter of his account.

**But amazingly we find another chapter of this human's biography, His authentic biography is extended beyond His death.**

**Never before in human history has this happened.**

Matthew chapter 28 is **not** a footnote or summary.

It is **not** an editorial comment or human eulogy, it is an authentic chapter in the biography of this man who had died in the previous chapter.

How can this be?

**We find record of this man who had died, talking, eating, walking, making a journey with His friends on the Emmaus road.**

He is recorded sharing truths about the Kingdom of God, and His own coming back to earth and telling His disciples to go into all the world preaching the gospel message of forgiveness of sins and witnessing to eternal life beyond the grave.

**In this new chapter of His biography Jesus Christ, the Son of God, upset all the old patterns of human life and existence.**

**Jesus Christ took life into the grave and brought life out of the grave again.**

**He who had been dead now lives again.**

**For that reason, and for the first and only time in human history, it was necessary for Matthew the writer of this biography of Jesus Christ to add a chapter that has no ending.**

**Jesus Christ is alive again!**

This is the great truth that suddenly brought frantic confusion to those who had counted upon the old reliable logic of death.

Many people had seen Jesus alive again, heard Him talk, touched Him. They knew He was there among them, He ate with them.

**As a result of this extra chapter in Matthew's biography of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have certain proof of victory over death and life beyond the grave for all of humanity, who believe and trust in Jesus Christ for their Saviour from eternal death.**

Death need **not** be the end, there is more that can follow the end of our human biography.

The apostle Paul confused his human biographers, he knew exactly what he was saying and doing, in his letter to Timothy.

**2 Timothy 4:6-8** [King James] *"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."*

Paul was writing this from a prison in Rome.

Paul's judges, jailers and executioner, would all have said that Paul was in **no** position to talk about "henceforth", in their eyes Paul was a man with **no** future.

**But for Paul, as for Jesus Christ, he knew there was going to be a chapter in his biography that was to yet be written the other side of his death.**

Paul in his letter to the Church in Corinth taught about what happened to Jesus Christ could also happen to them.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-8** [NIV] *“Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.”*

**There will always be people who say that Jesus Christ did not rise from the dead. Paul assures us that many people saw Jesus Christ after His resurrection.**

**The resurrection of Jesus Christ is an historical fact.**

This is the hope that Paul was giving the Church at Corinth and all believing Christians throughout the generations of human existence.

**1 Corinthians 15:12** [NIV] *“But if it is preached that Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead?”*

**In Paul’s day most people were influenced by Greek culture and thinking which included a disbelief of a resurrection of the body in an eternal form. Only the “soul” had an afterlife and was not linked to a body.**

**Thus it was difficult for believers to accept a bodily resurrection. Corinth was a centre for Greek culture.**

**Paul was writing this letter to clear up the confusion about the resurrection.**

**1 Corinthians 15:13-19** [NIV] *“If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith. More than that, we are then found to be false witnesses about God, for we have testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead. But he did not raise him if in fact the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men.”*

**The resurrection of Jesus Christ is central to Christian faith. Because Jesus Christ rose from the dead, as He promised, we know that what He said was true, He is the Son of God, our Creator and Sustainer.**

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23** [NIV] *“But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.”*

**This is the basis of our faith in life after death, the chapter in our biography that comes after death, a chapter that is without end.**