

The Life of Christ

The Life of Christ: A Comprehensive Study with Dr. Cecil Thorn ThD and Matthew Henry's Commentary (ESV)

Introduction

The life of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of Christian faith. His teachings, miracles, death, and resurrection form the foundation of Christianity. This book aims to provide a detailed account of His life, drawing from the Scriptures and enriched by the timeless insights of Matthew Henry's commentary. Through this journey, readers will gain a deeper understanding of the profound impact of Christ's life and teachings.

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Chapter 1: The Birth of Jesus

Scripture References

- Matthew 1:18-25
- Luke 1:26-38
- Luke 2:1-20

Matthew 1:18-25 (ESV)

Scripture:

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. **19** And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. **20** But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. **21** She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." **22** All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: **23** "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). **24** When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, **25** but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 1:18-25 narrates the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus Christ, highlighting the divine intervention and fulfillment of prophecy. Mary, betrothed to Joseph, is found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit before they come together. This situation places Joseph in a difficult position, as he is described as a just man who does not wish to expose Mary to public disgrace. Joseph's initial plan to divorce her quietly reflects his righteousness and compassion, aiming to protect Mary from the harsh penalties of the law while adhering to his moral principles. This verse sets the stage for divine revelation, illustrating the tension between human understanding and divine purpose.

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As Joseph contemplates his course of action, an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream, addressing him as "son of David" and reassuring him. The angel instructs Joseph to take Mary as his wife, explaining that the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. This divine message clarifies the supernatural origin of Mary's pregnancy and the significant role

Joseph is to play. The angel's command to name the child Jesus, which means "God saves," directly links the child's identity to his mission of saving people from their sins. This moment marks a turning point for Joseph, transforming his understanding and aligning him with God's salvific plan.

The passage also emphasizes the fulfillment of prophecy, specifically referencing Isaiah 7:14, which foretold the birth of a child named Immanuel, meaning "God with us." This prophecy underscores the incarnation of Jesus as God taking on human form to dwell among His people. The name "Immanuel" encapsulates the essence of Jesus' mission and presence. By including this prophetic fulfillment, Matthew connects the birth of Jesus to the broader narrative of God's redemptive work throughout history. It reinforces the idea that Jesus' birth is not an isolated event but part of a divine plan orchestrated from the beginning.

Upon waking, Joseph's immediate obedience to the angel's command demonstrates his faith and trust in God's plan. He takes Mary as his wife but refrains from consummating their marriage until after Jesus is born, ensuring that the prophecy regarding the virgin birth is fulfilled. Joseph's actions model the appropriate response to divine revelation—faithful and immediate obedience. Naming the child Jesus, as instructed, Joseph publicly acknowledges the child's divine mission. This passage, therefore, not only details the birth of Jesus but also illustrates the righteous character of Joseph and the unfolding of God's redemptive plan through obedient and faithful individuals.

Summary

The birth of Jesus Christ marks the beginning of the fulfillment of God's promise to send a Savior. The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive a son by the Holy Spirit, and He will be called Jesus. Joseph, her betrothed, is reassured by an angel to take Mary as his wife. Jesus is born in Bethlehem, fulfilling the prophecy of Micah 5:2.

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Matthew Henry emphasizes the humble circumstances of Jesus' birth, noting that He was born in a manger, signifying His approachability and humility. He also highlights the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the importance of the virgin birth in affirming Jesus' divine nature.

Luke 1:26-38 (ESV)

Scripture:

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Commentary and Analysis

The passage from Luke 1:26-38 presents the pivotal moment in which the angel Gabriel announces to Mary the miraculous conception of Jesus. Gabriel's arrival in Nazareth, a humble town in Galilee, underscores the unexpected nature of God's intervention in the lives of ordinary people. Mary, a young virgin betrothed to Joseph, is startled by Gabriel's greeting, indicating her humility and innocence. Gabriel reassures her, proclaiming God's

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favor upon her and revealing the divine plan for her to conceive and bear a son named Jesus. This announcement carries profound significance, as Jesus is described as the Son of the Most High, destined to fulfill the Messianic prophecies and establish an eternal kingdom.

Mary's response to Gabriel's announcement is marked by a blend of awe, humility, and curiosity. She questions the feasibility of conceiving a child while remaining a virgin, seeking clarification from the angel. Gabriel's explanation of the miraculous conception through the power of the Holy Spirit reaffirms the divine nature of Jesus' birth and emphasizes his unique identity as the Son of God. Gabriel also cites the miraculous pregnancy of Mary's relative Elizabeth, who was previously barren, as a demonstration of God's ability to accomplish the impossible. Mary's acceptance of Gabriel's message with a simple statement of surrender—"Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word"—illustrates her remarkable faith and willingness to submit to God's will, despite the uncertainties and challenges ahead.

The exchange between Mary and Gabriel exemplifies the intersection of human faith and divine providence. Mary's role as the chosen vessel for the Incarnation highlights God's deliberate choice of humble and obedient individuals to fulfill His redemptive purposes. Gabriel's revelation not only illuminates the miraculous nature of Jesus' birth but also underscores the overarching theme of God's sovereignty and power over all creation. Mary's response serves as a model of faith and submission for believers, demonstrating the transformative impact of encountering God's divine plan and willingly embracing it, even in the face of uncertainty and sacrifice. This passage thus invites readers to reflect on their own response to God's calling and to emulate Mary's humble obedience and trust in His providence.

Summary

Luke 1:26-38 recounts the momentous visitation of the angel Gabriel to Mary, a young virgin living in the town of Nazareth. Matthew Henry's commentary provides valuable insights into the significance of this divine encounter. Gabriel's appearance to Mary, a humble and ordinary girl, underscores the unexpected nature of God's intervention in human affairs. Henry highlights Mary's initial reaction of fear and confusion, which reflects her humility

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and innocence in the face of such a divine presence. Gabriel reassures Mary, proclaiming her as "favored one" and announcing God's plan for her to conceive and bear a son, who would be named Jesus. This moment marks the beginning of God's redemptive plan unfolding through the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ.

Henry's commentary delves into Gabriel's proclamation of Jesus as the Son of the Most High, emphasizing the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the establishment of an eternal kingdom. The miraculous conception through the power of the Holy Spirit is central to Henry's analysis, illustrating the divine nature of Jesus' birth and his unique identity as the Son of God. Mary's response to Gabriel's message exemplifies her extraordinary faith and willingness to submit to God's will, despite the uncertainty and challenges ahead. Henry commends Mary's humble obedience, highlighting her acceptance of Gabriel's announcement with the profound statement, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." This response demonstrates Mary's trust in God's providence and her readiness to fulfill her role in God's divine plan.

Gabriel's revelation to Mary not only signifies the miraculous conception of Jesus but also underscores the overarching theme of God's sovereignty and power over all creation. Henry's commentary emphasizes the divine favor upon Mary and the fulfillment of God's promises through the birth of Jesus. Mary's role as the chosen vessel for the Incarnation exemplifies God's deliberate choice of humble and obedient individuals to fulfill His redemptive purposes. Henry's analysis invites readers to reflect on their own response to God's calling, urging them to surrender to God's will with faith and obedience. This passage serves as a poignant reminder of the profound intersection of human faith and divine providence in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.

Luke 2:1-20 (ESV)

Scripture:

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he

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was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Commentary and Analysis

Luke 2:1-20 describes the humble circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, fulfilling the prophecy of Micah 5:2. Matthew Henry's commentary offers insights into the significance of these events. Caesar Augustus's decree for a census leads Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, the city of David, where Jesus is born in a manger due to the lack of lodging. This humble setting underscores the humility of Jesus' birth and highlights the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies.

The announcement of Jesus' birth to shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem by an angel of the Lord emphasizes the universal significance of this event. Henry underscores the angel's

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proclamation of "good news of great joy" for all people, signaling the arrival of the long-awaited Savior, Christ the Lord. The shepherds' fear at the angel's appearance contrasts with the joy and wonder they experience upon receiving the news of Jesus' birth. The heavenly host joins in praising God, heralding the birth of the Messiah and proclaiming peace on earth.

The shepherds' immediate response to the angel's message illustrates their faith and obedience. Henry highlights their haste to go to Bethlehem and witness the fulfillment of the angel's words. Upon finding Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, they share the news of the angel's announcement, causing amazement among those who hear it. Mary's response to these events is one of quiet reflection and contemplation, as she treasures these experiences in her heart. The shepherds, after witnessing the fulfillment of the angel's words, return to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Henry's commentary emphasizes the transformative impact of encountering the birth of Jesus, inviting readers to reflect on the profound significance of this event and to respond with faith and praise.

Summary

Luke 2:1-20 recounts the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem during the time of Caesar Augustus's census decree. Matthew Henry's commentary offers valuable insights into the significance of this event. Henry highlights the providential timing of the census, which leads Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, fulfilling the prophecy of Micah 5:2 regarding the birthplace of the Messiah. Despite their humble status, Joseph and Mary become central figures in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.

The circumstances of Jesus' birth in a manger due to the lack of lodging emphasize the humility and simplicity surrounding His arrival. Henry underscores the contrast between the grandeur of Caesar's decree and the humble setting of Jesus' birth, highlighting the irony of the King of kings being born in such lowly conditions. This juxtaposition underscores the divine humility and condescension of Jesus, who willingly enters the world to bring salvation to humanity.

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The angelic announcement of Jesus' birth to shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem adds to the significance of this event. Henry emphasizes the universal message of "good news of great joy" proclaimed by the angel, signaling the arrival of the long-awaited Savior, Christ the Lord. The shepherds' immediate response to the angel's message demonstrates their faith and obedience. They hasten to Bethlehem to witness the fulfillment of the angel's words, showcasing their eagerness to encounter the Messiah firsthand.

Upon finding Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the shepherds share the news of the angel's announcement, causing amazement among those who hear it. Mary's response to these events is one of quiet reflection and contemplation, as she treasures these experiences in her heart. The shepherds, after witnessing the fulfillment of the angel's words, return to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Henry's commentary emphasizes the transformative impact of encountering the birth of Jesus, inviting readers to reflect on the profound significance of this event and to respond with faith and praise.

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Chapter 2: The Early Years

Scripture:

- **Luke 2:21-52**

The early years of Jesus' life include His presentation at the temple and His interaction with the teachers there at the age of twelve. These events show His early understanding of His divine mission and His growth in wisdom and stature.

Henry reflects on Jesus' obedience to His earthly parents and His devotion to His Heavenly Father. He underscores the significance of Jesus growing in wisdom and favor with God and man, preparing for His public ministry.

was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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Luke 2:21-52 (ESV)

Scripture:

21 And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, 28 he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

29 "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word;

30 for my eyes have seen your salvation

31 that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel."

33 And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

34 And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a

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virgin, 37 and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem. 39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. 41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. 43 And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, 44 but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, 45 and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. 46 After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48 And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." 49 And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" 50 And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. 51 And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

Commentary and Analysis

Luke 2:21-52 provides a glimpse into significant events in the early life of Jesus, from His presentation in the temple to His adolescence. Matthew Henry's commentary offers valuable insights into the profound significance of these events. The passage begins with Jesus' circumcision and naming on the eighth day, in accordance with Jewish custom. This act signifies Jesus' inclusion into the covenant community of Israel and foreshadows His mission as the Savior of humanity.

The presentation of Jesus in the temple further underscores His identity and purpose. Simeon, a righteous and devout man, is moved by the Holy Spirit to bless the infant Jesus

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and prophesy about His role as the salvation of Israel and a light to the Gentiles. Simeon's words not only affirm Jesus' Messianic identity but also foreshadow the opposition and suffering that He and His followers will endure. Similarly, Anna, a prophetess, recognizes Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises and shares the good news with all who are waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The passage also offers a glimpse into Jesus' childhood and His growing awareness of His divine identity. At the age of twelve, Jesus engages in theological discussion with the teachers in the temple, astonishing them with His understanding and wisdom. His response to His parents' concern reveals His unique relationship with God the Father and His understanding of His divine mission. Despite His awareness of His divine identity, Jesus returns to Nazareth with His parents and submits to them, growing in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man.

Summary

Luke 2:21-52 offers a glimpse into the early life of Jesus, from His presentation in the temple to His adolescence. Matthew Henry's commentary provides insightful reflections on these significant events. The passage begins with Jesus' circumcision and naming, adhering to Jewish customs, symbolizing His inclusion in the covenant community of Israel. This act marks the beginning of Jesus' earthly journey, underscoring His humanity and His fulfillment of the Law.

The presentation of Jesus in the temple introduces Simeon, a righteous and devout man, and Anna, a prophetess. Both recognize Jesus as the fulfillment of God's promises and proclaim His significance to all who are waiting for redemption. Simeon's prophetic blessing emphasizes Jesus' role as the salvation of Israel and a light to the Gentiles, while Anna reinforces this message with her testimony. These encounters affirm Jesus' Messianic identity and foreshadow His mission to bring salvation to all people.

The passage also highlights a pivotal moment in Jesus' adolescence when He engages in theological discussion with the teachers in the temple. Despite His young age, Jesus displays profound wisdom and understanding, astonishing those around Him. His response to His parents' concern reveals His awareness of His divine identity and His commitment to fulfilling His Father's will. This incident underscores Jesus' unique relationship with God and His growing recognition of His divine mission.

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Matthew Henry's commentary emphasizes the significance of these events in shaping Jesus' identity and mission. From His infancy to His adolescence, Jesus is portrayed as the fulfillment of prophecy and the embodiment of divine wisdom. The passage invites readers to contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation and to recognize Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah who brings salvation and enlightenment to humanity. Henry's insights deepen our understanding of these passages, encouraging us to reflect on Jesus' profound significance and to embrace His teachings with reverence and humility.

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Chapter 3: The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus

Scripture References

- Matthew 3:13-17
- Mark 1:9-11
- Matthew 4:1-11
- Luke 4:1-13

Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist signifies the beginning of His public ministry. Following His baptism, Jesus is led into the wilderness where He fasts for forty days and is tempted by Satan. He emerges victorious, reaffirming His commitment to His divine mission.

Henry discusses the significance of Jesus' baptism as an example for believers and a public declaration of His mission. He also delves into the temptations Jesus faced, highlighting His use of Scripture to overcome Satan's challenges, serving as a model for Christians in spiritual warfare.

Matthew 3:13-17 (ESV)

Scripture:

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. 14 John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 15 But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. 16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; 17 and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

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Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 3:13-17 recounts the pivotal moment of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. This event marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and serves as a significant declaration of His identity and mission. John, recognizing Jesus' superiority and purity, initially hesitates to baptize Him, feeling unworthy to perform such an act. However, Jesus insists, affirming that it is necessary to fulfill all righteousness. This statement underscores Jesus' commitment to obedience to God's will and His desire to identify fully with humanity in His redemptive mission.

As Jesus emerges from the water after His baptism, a profound manifestation of the divine occurs. The heavens open, and the Spirit of God descends upon Jesus in the form of a dove, symbolizing the presence and empowerment of the Holy Spirit for His ministry. This divine affirmation accompanies a voice from heaven, declaring Jesus as the beloved Son of God, in whom God is well pleased. This declaration echoes Psalm 2:7, affirming Jesus' divine sonship and His unique relationship with the Father.

Matthew Henry's commentary delves into the significance of Jesus' baptism and the divine affirmation that follows. Henry emphasizes Jesus' humility and obedience in submitting to baptism, despite His sinlessness, as an example for believers. He underscores the symbolism of baptism as a public declaration of commitment to God and a means of identification with Jesus' death and resurrection. Moreover, Henry highlights the Trinitarian nature of the baptismal scene, with the presence of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the voice of the Father, affirming Jesus' divine identity and His role in God's redemptive plan.

The baptism of Jesus serves as a powerful inauguration of His earthly ministry and a proclamation of His divine identity. It marks the beginning of His mission to bring salvation to humanity and establishes Him as the beloved Son of God. This event sets the stage for Jesus' subsequent teachings, miracles, and ultimately, His sacrificial death and resurrection for the redemption of humanity. Matthew Henry's commentary enriches our understanding of the profound significance of Jesus' baptism, inviting believers to reflect on the obedience, humility, and divine affirmation displayed in this transformative moment.

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Summary

In Matthew 3:13-17, we witness a pivotal moment as Jesus, the sinless Son of God, approaches John the Baptist at the Jordan River to be baptized. John initially resists, feeling unworthy to baptize Jesus, recognizing His holiness and supremacy. However, Jesus insists, explaining to John that it is necessary to fulfill all righteousness. This act of baptism, though typically associated with repentance from sin, signifies Jesus' identification with humanity and His commitment to fulfill God's will in every aspect of His life. Matthew Henry's commentary illuminates the depth of this act, emphasizing Jesus' humility and obedience despite His sinlessness, setting an example for believers.

As Jesus emerges from the waters of baptism, a profound and awe-inspiring event unfolds. The heavens open, and the Spirit of God descends upon Jesus in the form of a dove, symbolizing the divine approval and empowerment for His ministry. Simultaneously, a voice from heaven declares, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." This divine declaration echoes throughout the ages, affirming Jesus' unique identity as the Son of God and signaling the beginning of His public ministry. Henry's commentary underscores the Trinitarian nature of this event, with the presence of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the voice of the Father, highlighting the profound significance of Jesus' baptism in God's redemptive plan.

Matthew Henry's commentary delves into the symbolism and significance of baptism, not only as a public declaration of faith but also as a profound spiritual experience. Jesus' baptism serves as a model for believers, illustrating the importance of obedience and submission to God's will. It signifies a union with Christ in His death and resurrection and a cleansing from sin, even though Jesus Himself was without sin. Through Jesus' baptism, believers are invited into a deeper understanding of their own baptismal experience, emphasizing the transformative power of identification with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of Jesus marks the inauguration of His earthly ministry and affirms His divine identity as the beloved Son of God. This event serves as a foundational moment in the Gospels, setting the stage for Jesus' teachings, miracles, and ultimately, His sacrificial death and resurrection. Matthew Henry's commentary provides valuable insights into the significance of Jesus' baptism, inviting believers to reflect on the obedience, humility, and

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divine affirmation displayed in this profound moment. It calls believers to emulate Jesus' example of obedience and surrender to God's will, finding their identity and purpose in Christ.

Mark 1:9-11 (ESV)

Scripture:

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

Commentary and Analysis

Mark 1:9-11 recounts the significant event of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. This moment marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and serves as a profound declaration of His identity and mission. As Jesus emerges from the water after His baptism, the heavens are dramatically opened, and the Holy Spirit descends upon Him in the form of a dove, symbolizing the divine presence and empowerment for His ministry. This manifestation of the Holy Spirit affirms Jesus' divine identity and marks the beginning of His empowered ministry.

The voice from heaven declares, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." This divine declaration echoes Psalm 2:7, affirming Jesus' unique relationship with God the Father and His divine mission as the beloved Son of God. This declaration not only validates Jesus' identity but also signals the approval and endorsement of His ministry by God Himself. It sets the stage for Jesus' public ministry, confirming His authority and establishing His role as the promised Messiah.

The imagery of the heavens being torn open signifies a profound revelation from God, breaking through the barriers between heaven and earth. This event symbolizes the inauguration of a new era, in which God's kingdom is breaking into human history through the ministry of Jesus. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus symbolizes the anointing

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and empowerment for His mission to preach the Gospel, heal the sick, and proclaim the kingdom of God.

Mark 1:9-11 emphasizes the divine affirmation of Jesus' identity and mission, setting the stage for His ministry on earth. This event not only marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry but also reveals the Trinitarian nature of God, with the presence of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the voice of the Father. It underscores the unique relationship between Jesus and God the Father and foreshadows the role of the Holy Spirit in empowering Jesus' ministry and guiding His followers. This passage serves as a foundational moment in the Gospel narrative, affirming Jesus' divine authority and signaling the inauguration of God's redemptive plan through His Son.

Summary

Mark 1:9-11 portrays the significant moment when Jesus, hailing from Nazareth in Galilee, presents Himself to John the Baptist for baptism in the Jordan River. Matthew Henry's commentary offers profound insights into the spiritual significance of this event. Despite John's initial reluctance, Jesus insists on being baptized, demonstrating His obedience to God's will and His identification with humanity in its need for repentance and renewal. Henry underscores the humility of Jesus, who, though sinless, voluntarily submits to baptism, setting an example for His followers.

As Jesus emerges from the water, the heavens dramatically open, revealing a profound spiritual reality. The Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus like a dove, symbolizing the divine anointing and empowerment for His earthly ministry. Henry highlights the imagery of the Holy Spirit descending, signifying God's endorsement of Jesus' mission and His divine approval of His Son. This divine manifestation underscores the Trinitarian nature of God, with the presence of Jesus, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and the voice of the Father.

A voice from heaven resonates, declaring, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." This divine proclamation echoes throughout history, affirming Jesus' unique relationship with God the Father and His divine mission as the beloved Son. Henry delves into the significance of this declaration, emphasizing its fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and its validation of Jesus' authority as the promised Messiah. The Father's affirmation of Jesus' identity and mission serves as a pivotal moment in the Gospel

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narrative, marking the beginning of Jesus' public ministry and signaling the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan.

Mark 1:9-11, as expounded by Matthew Henry, underscores the profound significance of Jesus' baptism as the inauguration of His earthly ministry and the revelation of His divine identity. This event not only confirms Jesus' authority but also foreshadows His sacrificial death and resurrection for the redemption of humanity. Henry's commentary invites readers to contemplate the mystery of Jesus' baptism and to recognize its profound implications for their own faith journey. It challenges believers to emulate Jesus' humility, obedience, and dependence on the Holy Spirit as they follow Him in discipleship.

Matthew 4:1-11 (ESV)

Scripture:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'" Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 4:1-11 narrates Jesus' temptation in the wilderness following His baptism. This significant event serves as a spiritual trial, highlighting Jesus' victory over the temptations

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of the devil and affirming His identity as the obedient Son of God. The passage begins with Jesus being led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where He fasts for forty days and nights. In His weakened state, the devil approaches Him with three temptations, appealing to His physical hunger, His trust in God's protection, and His desire for power and authority.

In the first temptation, the devil challenges Jesus to prove His divine identity by turning stones into bread to satisfy His hunger. Jesus responds by quoting Scripture, affirming that true sustenance comes from obedience to God's Word rather than physical nourishment alone. This highlights Jesus' reliance on God's provision and His commitment to prioritizing spiritual sustenance over material needs.

The second temptation takes place at the pinnacle of the temple, where the devil urges Jesus to test God's protection by throwing Himself down. Quoting Scripture, the devil tries to manipulate Jesus into an act of presumption. Yet, Jesus rebukes him, affirming that one should not test God's faithfulness through reckless actions. This emphasizes Jesus' unwavering trust in God's sovereignty and His refusal to succumb to the devil's deceptive schemes.

In the final temptation, the devil offers Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for His worship. However, Jesus firmly rejects this offer, declaring that worship belongs to God alone. This demonstrates Jesus' unwavering commitment to serving God and His refusal to compromise His allegiance for worldly power or glory. The devil's departure and the subsequent ministry of angels to Jesus symbolize His victory over temptation and the divine support He receives in His mission.

Summary

In Matthew 4:1-11, we witness a profound spiritual encounter as Jesus faces temptation in the wilderness immediately after His baptism. Matthew Henry's commentary offers profound insights into the spiritual dynamics at play during this event. Led by the Spirit, Jesus enters the wilderness to undergo a period of fasting, during which He faces three temptations orchestrated by the devil. This passage underscores the humanity of Jesus, who, despite His divinity, experiences hunger and vulnerability, yet remains steadfast in His obedience to God's will.

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The devil's first temptation targets Jesus' physical hunger, urging Him to turn stones into bread to satisfy His needs. However, Jesus responds by quoting Scripture, affirming that true sustenance comes from obedience to God's Word. Matthew Henry highlights Jesus' reliance on spiritual nourishment over material comforts, emphasizing His commitment to prioritize the will of God above His own desires. This response sets a precedent for believers, illustrating the importance of grounding oneself in Scripture to resist temptation.

In the subsequent temptations, the devil challenges Jesus to test God's protection and to worship him in exchange for worldly power. However, Jesus steadfastly rebuffs these temptations, affirming His unwavering trust in God and His refusal to compromise His allegiance. Matthew Henry's commentary underscores Jesus' resolute commitment to serve and worship God alone, despite the allure of worldly glory and power. This serves as a powerful example for believers, encouraging them to remain faithful and steadfast in their devotion to God, even in the face of adversity.

The culmination of this passage sees the devil's departure and the arrival of angels to minister to Jesus. Matthew Henry emphasizes the triumph of Jesus over temptation, symbolizing His victory over sin and His readiness to embark on His earthly ministry. This event underscores the divine support Jesus receives as He fulfills His mission on earth. Henry's commentary invites readers to reflect on the spiritual warfare inherent in the Christian journey and to draw strength from Jesus' example of unwavering faithfulness and reliance on God's Word in overcoming temptation.

Luke 4:1-13 (ESV)

Scripture:

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'" And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the

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pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' and "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

Commentary and Analysis

Luke 4:1-13 recounts Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, a significant event that follows His baptism. The passage begins with Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, being led into the wilderness for forty days, where He fasts and faces temptation from the devil. This period of testing serves to prepare Jesus for His ministry and underscores His victory over the forces of evil. The devil, seeking to exploit Jesus' physical hunger, first tempts Him to turn stones into bread to satisfy His immediate needs. However, Jesus responds with Scripture, affirming that true sustenance comes from obedience to God's Word rather than mere physical nourishment.

In the second temptation, the devil offers Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for His worship. This temptation appeals to Jesus' desire for power and authority, yet He firmly rejects it, declaring that worship belongs to God alone. This response highlights Jesus' unwavering commitment to serving God and His refusal to compromise His allegiance for worldly gain. Luke's account emphasizes the devil's assertion of authority over the kingdoms of the world, but Jesus' response underscores His divine authority and sovereignty over all creation.

The third temptation takes place at the pinnacle of the temple in Jerusalem, where the devil urges Jesus to test God's protection by throwing Himself down. Quoting Scripture, the devil tries to manipulate Jesus into an act of presumption. Yet, Jesus rebukes him, affirming that one should not test God's faithfulness through reckless actions. This emphasizes Jesus' unwavering trust in God's sovereignty and His refusal to succumb to the devil's deceptive schemes. Luke's narrative underscores Jesus' victory over temptation and His unwavering commitment to obedience to God's will.

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After Jesus withstands each temptation, the devil departs from Him until an opportune time. This passage highlights the ongoing spiritual warfare Jesus faces throughout His earthly ministry and underscores His triumph over the forces of darkness. Luke's account serves as a powerful reminder of Jesus' humanity, His reliance on the Holy Spirit, and His unwavering commitment to obedience to God's will. It invites believers to emulate Jesus' example in resisting temptation and remaining faithful to God, even in the face of adversity.

Summary

In Luke 4:1-13, Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, is led into the wilderness where He fasts for forty days and is tempted by the devil. Satan presents three temptations to Jesus: to turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger, to worship Satan in exchange for worldly power and authority, and to test God's protection by throwing Himself off the pinnacle of the temple. However, Jesus resists each temptation by quoting scripture and affirming His allegiance to God alone. After the devil has exhausted his attempts, he departs from Jesus until a more opportune time.

Matthew Henry's commentary on Luke 4:1-13 would likely delve into the spiritual significance of Jesus's temptation in the wilderness. Henry might emphasize how Jesus, as the Son of God, faced these temptations as a representative of humanity, demonstrating His perfect obedience to the Father and His victory over the power of sin. He might highlight the symbolic significance of Jesus's fasting for forty days, paralleling the Israelites' forty years in the wilderness and highlighting Jesus's role as the obedient Son who fulfills God's purposes.

Furthermore, Henry might explore the nature of the temptations presented by the devil, noting how they appeal to different aspects of human weakness: physical hunger, ambition for power, and a desire for sensationalism. He would likely emphasize how Jesus's responses to each temptation, grounded in the Word of God, serve as a model for believers in resisting temptation and remaining faithful to God. Henry might also discuss the broader implications of Jesus's victory over temptation for believers, encouraging them to rely on the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God in their own spiritual battles.

Additionally, Henry might reflect on the significance of Jesus's temptation in light of His earthly ministry. He may suggest that Jesus's victory over temptation in the wilderness prepared Him for His mission to proclaim the kingdom of God and to reconcile humanity to God through His sacrificial death and resurrection. Henry's commentary would likely inspire readers to emulate Jesus's example in overcoming temptation and to find strength and guidance in God's Word and

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Spirit as they navigate their own spiritual journeys. Overall, Luke 4:1-13 and Matthew Henry's commentary invite believers to reflect on the nature of temptation, the power of scripture, and the victory found in Christ.

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Chapter 4: The Ministry of Jesus

Scripture References

- Matthew 5-7 (The Sermon on the Mount)
- Matthew 9:35
- Mark 1:14-15
- Luke 4:14-21

Jesus' ministry is characterized by His teaching, healing, and miracles. The Sermon on the Mount encapsulates His ethical teachings, while His miracles demonstrate His authority over nature, illness, and evil spirits. His message of the Kingdom of God invites all to repentance and faith.

Henry provides detailed insights into Jesus' teachings, particularly the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer. He emphasizes the radical nature of Jesus' message and the call to live a life of righteousness and compassion. Henry also elaborates on the significance of Jesus' miracles as signs of His divine power and compassion.

Matthew 5-7 (ESV)

Scripture:

Chapter 5: The Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon on the Mount is one of the most well-known and profound teachings of Jesus, recorded in Matthew chapters 5 to 7. It begins with the Beatitudes, a series of blessings pronounced upon those who possess certain spiritual qualities such as meekness, righteousness, and purity of heart. Jesus then elaborates on various ethical and moral teachings, addressing topics such as anger, lust, divorce, oaths, and retaliation. He emphasizes the importance of righteousness that surpasses that of the scribes and

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Pharisees, calling His disciples to a higher standard of living characterized by love, forgiveness, and integrity.

Chapter 6: Teaching on Piety

In Chapter 6, Jesus continues His teaching, focusing on acts of piety such as giving to the needy, prayer, and fasting. He warns against practicing these acts for the purpose of receiving praise from others, urging His followers to seek the approval of God alone. Jesus provides the disciples with the model prayer, commonly known as the Lord's Prayer, offering a pattern for heartfelt and reverent communication with God. He also addresses the importance of forgiveness, warning that failure to forgive others will hinder one's own forgiveness from God.

Chapter 7: Judging Others and the Golden Rule

Chapter 7 begins with Jesus' caution against judging others hypocritically, emphasizing the need for self-examination before attempting to correct others. He uses the metaphor of removing the log from one's own eye before attempting to remove the speck from someone else's eye. Jesus then instructs His disciples with the Golden Rule, urging them to treat others as they themselves would like to be treated. He concludes the sermon with the illustration of two paths: the narrow gate that leads to life and the broad way that leads to destruction, urging His listeners to choose wisely.

Commentary and Analysis

The Sermon on the Mount encapsulates the core teachings of Jesus, presenting a comprehensive guide to righteous living and kingdom values. Jesus' emphasis on internal attitudes and motivations rather than merely external actions challenges His audience to pursue authentic righteousness from the heart. His teachings on humility, mercy, and peacemaking set a radical standard for discipleship, calling believers to embody the values of the kingdom of God in a world marked by selfishness and injustice.

Throughout the sermon, Jesus contrasts His teachings with the legalistic interpretations of the scribes and Pharisees, emphasizing the transformative power of grace and love over

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adherence to religious rituals and traditions. He presents a vision of a kingdom characterized by love, compassion, and justice, inviting His followers to participate in the restoration of God's reign on earth. The sermon serves as a call to radical discipleship, challenging believers to live counter-culturally and to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Matthew Henry's commentary offers valuable insights into the practical application of Jesus' teachings in everyday life. He highlights the importance of genuine piety and authentic devotion to God, cautioning against hypocrisy and outward showmanship. Henry underscores the necessity of inward transformation, emphasizing the role of the Holy Spirit in renewing the heart and empowering believers to live according to the principles of the kingdom. He encourages readers to cultivate a deep and intimate relationship with God, characterized by prayer, humility, and obedience to His Word.

Summary

Matthew 5-7, often referred to as the Sermon on the Mount, encompasses some of Jesus Christ's most profound teachings. In this sermon, Jesus delivers timeless wisdom that addresses various aspects of righteous living, moral conduct, and spiritual devotion. He begins with the Beatitudes, a series of blessings that reveal the values of God's kingdom, emphasizing humility, compassion, purity of heart, and righteousness. These blessings turn societal norms upside down, offering hope and comfort to those who are marginalized or oppressed.

Jesus continues to expound on the Law, providing deeper insights into moral principles and ethical conduct. He addresses issues such as anger, lust, divorce, retaliation, love for enemies, and sincerity in religious practices. Jesus emphasizes not only the outward actions but also the attitudes of the heart, highlighting the importance of internal righteousness. His teachings challenge His audience to surpass the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, urging them to live with integrity and love for both God and neighbor.

Throughout the sermon, Jesus contrasts the legalistic interpretation of the Law with the deeper spiritual truths underlying God's commandments. He calls His disciples to a higher standard of righteousness, rooted in love, mercy, and forgiveness. Jesus reveals the

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transformative power of grace and invites His followers to embody the values of the kingdom of God in their daily lives. His teachings offer practical guidance for navigating moral dilemmas, resolving conflicts, and fostering genuine relationships within the community of believers.

Matthew Henry's commentary on the Sermon on the Mount provides valuable insights into the practical application of Jesus' teachings. He emphasizes the importance of genuine piety and authentic devotion to God, cautioning against hypocrisy and superficial religiosity. Henry underscores the need for inward transformation, highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit in renewing the heart and empowering believers to live according to the principles of the kingdom. He encourages readers to cultivate a deep and intimate relationship with God, characterized by prayer, humility, and obedience to His Word. Henry's commentary serves as a timeless guide for interpreting and applying the profound truths contained in Jesus' sermon, challenging believers to live out their faith with sincerity and integrity.

Matthew 9:35 (ESV)

Scripture:

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.

Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 9:35 provides a summary of Jesus' ministry activities as He travels through the cities and villages of Galilee. This verse highlights three primary aspects of His ministry: teaching in synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and affliction. Jesus' approach demonstrates a holistic ministry that addresses both the spiritual and physical needs of the people. By teaching in synagogues, He engages with the Jewish community in familiar settings, explaining the Scriptures and revealing the deeper truths of God's kingdom.

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Matthew Henry's commentary emphasizes the comprehensive nature of Jesus' ministry. He notes that Jesus' teaching in the synagogues was crucial because it connected His message to the Jewish tradition, fulfilling the Law and the Prophets. Henry points out that Jesus' proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom was not just about future salvation, but about the immediate presence and power of God's reign breaking into the world. This proclamation brought hope and called for repentance, urging people to align their lives with God's will.

In addition to teaching and preaching, Jesus' healing ministry is a significant component of this verse. The phrase "healing every disease and every affliction" underscores Jesus' compassion and power. His miracles of healing serve as signs of the kingdom, demonstrating God's power over sickness and suffering and validating Jesus' divine authority. Matthew Henry highlights that these acts of healing were not only acts of compassion but also evidence of Jesus' messianic identity, fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament.

This verse encapsulates the essence of Jesus' ministry, which integrates word and deed, addressing both the spiritual and physical realms. The comprehensive nature of Jesus' work models a balanced approach to ministry that should inspire His followers. It challenges believers to engage in teaching, preaching, and compassionate service, reflecting the holistic nature of the gospel. Matthew Henry's insights deepen our understanding of how Jesus' ministry fulfills God's redemptive purposes and calls us to participate in His mission of bringing healing and hope to a broken world.

Summary

Matthew 9:35 (ESV) encapsulates the essence of Jesus' ministry, detailing His extensive work throughout the cities and villages of Galilee. The verse states, "And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction." This passage highlights three core aspects of Jesus' mission: teaching, preaching, and healing. By teaching in synagogues, Jesus connects with the Jewish population, offering profound interpretations of Scripture and introducing them to the principles of God's kingdom. His

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proclamation of the gospel signifies the arrival of God's reign and invites people to embrace a life aligned with divine will.

Matthew Henry's commentary offers a deeper understanding of this verse, emphasizing the comprehensive nature of Jesus' ministry. Henry points out that Jesus' teaching in synagogues was essential because it directly engaged with Jewish traditions, showing that His message was a fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. Jesus' proclamation of the gospel was not merely about future salvation but about the immediate presence of God's kingdom on earth, bringing hope and calling for repentance. This dual focus on teaching and preaching reveals the balanced approach of Jesus' ministry, addressing both spiritual enlightenment and moral transformation.

The healing aspect of Jesus' ministry, as mentioned in Matthew 9:35, underscores His compassion and divine authority. Jesus healed "every disease and every affliction," which not only alleviated physical suffering but also served as a testament to His messianic identity. Matthew Henry highlights that these miraculous healings were signs of the kingdom, demonstrating God's power over sickness and validating Jesus' role as the promised Messiah. The acts of healing fulfilled Old Testament prophecies and showed that Jesus' mission was to bring holistic restoration—spiritual, physical, and social.

Matthew 9:35 provides a concise yet profound overview of Jesus' multifaceted ministry. It portrays Him as a teacher, preacher, and healer, whose work transcends mere physical or spiritual boundaries. Henry's commentary enriches this understanding by emphasizing the fulfillment of Jewish expectations and the manifestation of God's kingdom through Jesus' actions. This verse challenges contemporary believers to emulate Jesus' holistic approach to ministry, engaging in teaching, proclaiming the good news, and offering compassionate service to address both spiritual and physical needs. Through this comprehensive mission, Jesus demonstrates the true nature of God's kingdom, inviting all to experience its transformative power.

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Mark 1:14-15 (ESV)

Scripture:

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

Commentary and Analysis

Mark 1:14-15 marks the beginning of Jesus' public ministry following the arrest of John the Baptist. This pivotal moment is characterized by Jesus stepping into His role as the herald of God's kingdom. Jesus begins His ministry in Galilee, a region significant for its diverse population and symbolic as a place of new beginnings. His message is clear and urgent: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." This proclamation signals the arrival of a new era in God's redemptive plan.

Matthew Henry's commentary underscores the importance of the timing of Jesus' ministry. The arrest of John the Baptist marks the end of one phase of God's plan and the beginning of another. Henry notes that Jesus' arrival in Galilee and His proclamation of the gospel are perfectly timed to fulfill God's divine schedule. The phrase "the time is fulfilled" indicates that the long-awaited moment of God's intervention in human history has arrived. This moment is not random but divinely appointed, marking the fulfillment of prophetic expectations.

Jesus' message is twofold: it calls for repentance and belief in the gospel. Repentance involves a radical change of mind and heart, turning away from sin and toward God. Matthew Henry emphasizes that this repentance is a prerequisite for entering the kingdom of God. It requires an acknowledgment of one's need for God's mercy and a commitment to living in accordance with His will. Belief in the gospel, on the other hand, involves trusting in the good news of God's saving work through Jesus Christ. Henry highlights that this belief is not merely intellectual assent but a deep, transformative trust that affects every aspect of one's life.

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In these two verses, Jesus encapsulates the essence of His ministry and the core message of the Christian faith. The proclamation of the kingdom of God signifies the breaking in of God's rule and reign into human history. It calls individuals to respond with repentance and faith, fundamentally altering their relationship with God and their understanding of His purposes. Matthew Henry's commentary enriches our understanding of this passage by emphasizing the divine timing, the necessity of repentance, and the transformative power of believing in the gospel. This concise yet powerful message sets the tone for Jesus' entire ministry and serves as a foundation for the Christian faith.

Summary

Mark 1:14-15 introduces the beginning of Jesus' public ministry in Galilee, following the arrest of John the Baptist. These verses mark a significant transition in God's redemptive plan, as Jesus steps into the forefront to proclaim the "gospel of God." His message is succinct and powerful: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel." This proclamation signals the arrival of a new era, where God's kingdom is breaking into human history, calling for an immediate response from all who hear.

Matthew Henry's commentary emphasizes the perfect timing of Jesus' ministry. The arrest of John the Baptist signifies the close of his preparatory work and the commencement of Jesus' messianic mission. Henry notes that the phrase "the time is fulfilled" indicates that God's appointed time for the revelation of His kingdom has arrived. This is not a random occurrence but a fulfillment of God's prophetic timeline, highlighting the divine orchestration of Jesus' appearance and ministry.

The core of Jesus' message involves a dual call to repentance and belief in the gospel. Repentance, as Henry points out, is essential for entering the kingdom of God. It involves a profound transformation of heart and mind, turning away from sin and realigning one's life with God's will. This repentance is not merely a superficial change but a deep, sincere acknowledgment of one's sinfulness and a commitment to follow God. It is the necessary first step in responding to the announcement of God's kingdom.

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Belief in the gospel complements repentance, requiring a deep trust in the good news of God's salvation through Jesus Christ. Henry emphasizes that this belief is not just intellectual agreement but a wholehearted reliance on the gospel's truth, which leads to a transformed life. The proclamation that "the kingdom of God is at hand" signifies that God's reign is now accessible and active in the world, inviting everyone to participate through repentance and faith. These verses, as explained by Matthew Henry, encapsulate the essence of Jesus' mission and the fundamental response required from His followers. They set the stage for Jesus' entire ministry and outline the foundational principles of the Christian faith.

Luke 4:1-13 (ESV)

Scripture:

And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.'" And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" And Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time.

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Commentary and Analysis

Luke 4:1-13 recounts the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, a critical event that occurs immediately after His baptism. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus is led into the wilderness where He fasts for forty days and is tempted by the devil. This period of testing is significant as it not only underscores Jesus' human vulnerability but also His divine mission and obedience to God. The wilderness, a place of desolation and testing, serves as the backdrop for this spiritual battle, emphasizing the stark contrast between Jesus' reliance on God and the devil's deceptive allure.

Matthew Henry's commentary highlights the spiritual significance of Jesus' fasting and temptation. The forty days of fasting parallel the forty years of Israel's wandering in the desert, drawing a connection between Jesus' experience and Israel's history. Henry points out that Jesus' hunger underscores His humanity, making His resistance to temptation all the more powerful. The temptations themselves target fundamental aspects of human desire: physical needs, power, and security. Henry emphasizes that through these trials, Jesus demonstrates perfect obedience and dependence on God's word, contrasting sharply with Adam and Eve's failure in the Garden of Eden.

The three temptations presented by the devil each offer a shortcut or a way to undermine Jesus' mission. The first temptation, to turn stone into bread, challenges Jesus to use His divine power to satisfy His hunger. Jesus responds with Scripture, quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, "Man shall not live by bread alone," highlighting the importance of spiritual nourishment over physical sustenance. The second temptation offers Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for worshiping the devil. Jesus' response, quoting Deuteronomy 6:13, reaffirms exclusive worship and service to God alone. The third temptation, urging Jesus to throw Himself from the temple's pinnacle, is a test of God's protection. Jesus counters with Deuteronomy 6:16, rejecting the notion of testing God's faithfulness.

In summary, Luke 4:1-13 illustrates Jesus' steadfastness in the face of temptation and His unwavering commitment to God's will. Through these temptations, Jesus demonstrates His role as the obedient Son of God, succeeding where humanity has often failed. Matthew Henry's commentary underscores the significance of Jesus' responses rooted in Scripture, showcasing the power and authority of God's word in overcoming the devil's schemes. This

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passage not only affirms Jesus' sinlessness and divine mission but also provides a model for believers in resisting temptation through reliance on Scripture and obedience to God.

Summary

In Luke 4:14-21, Jesus returns to Galilee, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and quickly gains a reputation for His teaching in the synagogues, receiving widespread acclaim. When Jesus visits His hometown of Nazareth, He attends the synagogue on the Sabbath, as was His custom. During the service, He is given the scroll of the prophet Isaiah to read. Jesus deliberately selects Isaiah 61:1-2, which speaks of the Spirit of the Lord anointing Him to bring good news to the poor, proclaim liberty to the captives, recover sight for the blind, and set the oppressed free, proclaiming the year of the Lord's favor.

Matthew Henry's commentary emphasizes the significance of Jesus' choice of scripture. By reading this passage from Isaiah, Jesus is directly identifying Himself as the fulfillment of this prophecy. Henry points out that Jesus' declaration that "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" is a profound announcement of His messianic mission. This moment is pivotal because it marks Jesus' public acknowledgment of His divine calling and the commencement of His ministry to bring holistic salvation.

Henry also highlights the comprehensive nature of Jesus' mission as outlined in Isaiah. The good news is directed towards the poor, indicating not just economic poverty but also spiritual poverty. Liberty for the captives and recovery of sight for the blind signify both physical healings and spiritual liberation. Setting the oppressed free encompasses a broad scope of deliverance from various forms of bondage, whether they be social, physical, or spiritual. Jesus' ministry is thus portrayed as one of profound transformation and restoration.

In summary, Luke 4:14-21 marks a significant moment where Jesus publicly declares His messianic mission by reading from Isaiah 61 in the synagogue of His hometown. This passage outlines the essence of His ministry: preaching good news, healing, liberating, and proclaiming God's favor. Matthew Henry's commentary underlines the importance of this declaration, showing how Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy and begins a transformative ministry that addresses the deep and varied needs of humanity. This

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passage sets the tone for Jesus' work and highlights the comprehensive scope of the salvation He offers.

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Chapter 5: The Parables of Jesus

Scripture References

- Matthew 13:1-53
- Mark 4:1-34
- Luke 15

Jesus frequently taught using parables, simple stories with profound spiritual truths. The parables of the sower, the prodigal son, and the good Samaritan are among His most famous. These stories reveal truths about God's Kingdom, forgiveness, and love.

Henry explores the layers of meaning in Jesus' parables, emphasizing their relevance to both His contemporaries and modern readers. He discusses the importance of understanding and applying these teachings in one's life, highlighting their moral and spiritual lessons.

Matthew 13:1-53 (ESV)

Scripture:

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear."

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Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 13:1-53 presents a series of parables taught by Jesus, primarily the Parable of the Sower, the Parable of the Weeds, the Parable of the Mustard Seed, the Parable of the Leaven, the Parable of the Hidden Treasure, the Parable of the Pearl of Great Value, and the Parable of the Net. These parables collectively reveal the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven and how it grows and influences the world. Jesus uses these stories to convey deep spiritual truths in a manner that is accessible yet requires discernment and openness to understand fully.

The Parable of the Sower is foundational, depicting various responses to the message of the kingdom. The seeds represent the word of God, and the different types of soil symbolize the hearts of those who hear it. Some hearts are hard and resistant, some are shallow and unable to endure, some are preoccupied with worldly concerns, and some are receptive and fruitful. Matthew Henry's commentary highlights the importance of this parable in understanding the reception of the gospel. He emphasizes the role of the listener's heart condition in determining whether the word of God will bear fruit in their lives.

The subsequent parables build on this foundation, each illustrating different aspects of the kingdom. The Parable of the Weeds explains the coexistence of good and evil in the world until the final judgment. The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven illustrate the kingdom's growth from small beginnings to a widespread influence. The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Value emphasize the incomparable worth of the kingdom, which is worth any sacrifice to obtain. The Parable of the Net describes the final judgment, where the righteous and the wicked will be separated.

In summary, Matthew 13:1-53 provides a comprehensive view of the Kingdom of Heaven through parables, each offering unique insights into its nature, growth, and ultimate fulfillment. Matthew Henry's commentary underscores the necessity of a receptive heart and the transformative power of the gospel. These parables not only reveal the mysteries of the kingdom but also call for a personal response, challenging listeners to examine their hearts and prioritize the kingdom above all else. This passage serves as a profound teaching tool, inviting believers to reflect on their spiritual receptivity and commitment to God's kingdom.

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for the final judgment. He stresses that understanding and embracing these truths is crucial for living a life aligned with God's will and being part of His eternal kingdom.

Mark 4:1-34 (ESV)

Scripture:

Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched, and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. And other seeds fell into good soil and produced grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold." And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

Commentary and Analysis

Mark 4:1-34 records a significant teaching moment of Jesus beside the sea of Galilee, where He delivers several parables to a large crowd. Jesus uses parables—illustrative stories drawn from everyday life—to convey spiritual truths in a manner accessible to His audience. The Parable of the Sower is the first parable Jesus shares, depicting various responses to the message of the kingdom. The seed represents the word of God, and the different types of soil symbolize the receptivity or resistance of human hearts to God's word. This parable underscores the importance of cultivating a receptive heart to receive and respond to the gospel effectively.

Matthew Henry's commentary offers deeper insights into the spiritual significance of the Parable of the Sower. He emphasizes that the success of the seed depends not on the sower but on the condition of the soil. The hard path, rocky ground, and thorny soil represent hearts hardened by sin, superficially receptive but lacking depth, or preoccupied

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with worldly concerns, respectively. Only the good soil represents hearts that are genuinely receptive to God's word, producing a fruitful harvest. Henry underscores the importance of self-examination and spiritual readiness in responding to the gospel, highlighting the transformative power of God's word in producing spiritual growth.

The subsequent parables in Mark 4 further explore the nature and growth of the kingdom of God. The Parable of the Lamp emphasizes the purpose of revelation—to bring light and understanding. The Parable of the Growing Seed underscores the mysterious yet unstoppable growth of the kingdom. The Parable of the Mustard Seed illustrates the small beginnings and eventual expansion of the kingdom's influence. These parables collectively reveal the dynamic and transformative nature of the kingdom, challenging listeners to reflect on their own response to God's word and the kingdom's growth in their lives.

Mark 4:1-34 presents a series of parables delivered by Jesus to illustrate the nature and growth of the kingdom of God. Through these stories, Jesus reveals spiritual truths about receptivity to God's word, the transformative power of the kingdom, and the mysterious yet unstoppable growth of God's reign. Matthew Henry's commentary enriches our understanding by highlighting the importance of spiritual readiness, the transformative power of God's word, and the dynamic nature of the kingdom's growth. This passage invites believers to cultivate receptive hearts, embrace the transformative power of the gospel, and actively participate in the growth of God's kingdom in their lives and communities.

Summary

Mark 4:1-34 captures a pivotal moment in Jesus' ministry where He delivers a series of parables to a large crowd gathered beside the sea of Galilee. These parables serve as profound teaching tools, conveying spiritual truths in a relatable and accessible manner. The Parable of the Sower, which Jesus begins with, illustrates the various responses to the message of the kingdom, emphasizing the importance of a receptive heart to receive God's word effectively. This parable lays the foundation for understanding the subsequent parables, each offering unique insights into the nature and growth of the kingdom of God.

Matthew Henry's commentary provides valuable insights into the spiritual significance of these parables. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the condition of the

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heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

Commentary and Analysis

Luke 15 begins with Jesus being criticized by the Pharisees and scribes for associating with tax collectors and sinners. In response, Jesus shares a series of parables to illustrate God's profound love and compassion for the lost. The Parable of the Lost Sheep highlights the lengths to which God will go to seek and save those who are lost. It emphasizes God's relentless pursuit of every individual, regardless of their past or current condition. This parable challenges the Pharisees' self-righteous attitudes and underscores the joy in heaven when a sinner repents and returns to God.

Continuing with the Parable of the Lost Coin, Jesus depicts a woman diligently searching for a lost coin in her house. Like the shepherd in the previous parable, she spares no effort in finding what is lost. This parable reinforces the message of the first, emphasizing God's unwavering commitment to seek out and restore the lost. It highlights the intrinsic value of every individual in God's eyes and the rejoicing that occurs in heaven when even one sinner repents.

The climax of Luke 15 is the Parable of the Prodigal Son, arguably one of the most well-known parables in the Bible. It tells the story of a wayward son who squanders his inheritance in reckless living but eventually returns home, seeking forgiveness and restoration. This parable illustrates God's unfathomable love and mercy towards repentant sinners. It challenges our understanding of grace, portraying God as the loving Father who eagerly welcomes His wayward children back into His embrace. The Parable of the Prodigal Son confronts the Pharisees' judgmental attitudes and reveals the depth of God's compassion for all who come to Him in repentance.

Luke 15 presents a powerful portrayal of God's relentless love and compassion for the lost. Through a series of parables, Jesus challenges the religious leaders' self-righteousness and reveals God's heart for reconciliation and restoration. Matthew Henry's commentary would likely emphasize the profound message of these parables, highlighting God's boundless grace and the joy in heaven when sinners repent. These parables invite believers to reflect

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poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Commentary and Analysis

John 2:1-11 recounts the first recorded miracle of Jesus, which takes place at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. When the wine runs out, Jesus's mother informs Him of the situation, prompting Jesus to perform a miraculous sign. Despite initially expressing reluctance due to the timing not being right, Jesus instructs the servants to fill six large stone water jars with water. Upon drawing some of the water and presenting it to the master of the feast, it is miraculously transformed into the finest wine. This act of turning water into wine not only addresses the immediate need of the wedding celebration but also reveals Jesus's divine power and authority.

Matthew Henry's commentary likely emphasizes the significance of this miracle as the beginning of Jesus's public ministry. Henry might highlight the symbolic importance of the wedding feast, representing the joyous celebration of God's covenant relationship with His people. Jesus's miracle of turning water into wine symbolizes the abundant grace and blessings that He brings to fulfill the spiritual needs of humanity. Henry may also stress the obedience of the servants who followed Jesus's instructions, illustrating the importance of faith and obedience in experiencing God's miraculous provision and blessings.

The master of the feast's astonishment at the quality of the wine highlights the extraordinary nature of Jesus's miracle. It also demonstrates Jesus's ability to bring forth the best for His people, surpassing human expectations and conventions. This miraculous sign not only reveals Jesus's divine power but also manifests His glory, leading His disciples to believe in Him more deeply. John notes that this miracle is the first of Jesus's signs, indicating its significance as a revelation of His identity as the Son of God and the promised Messiah.

John 2:1-11 presents the remarkable account of Jesus's first miracle, where He turns water into wine at a wedding feast in Cana. This miracle demonstrates Jesus's compassion for human needs, His divine power over creation, and His ability to bring forth abundant blessings. Matthew Henry's commentary would likely underscore the spiritual significance

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of this miracle, highlighting its symbolic meaning and its role in revealing Jesus's glory and confirming the faith of His disciples. This passage invites believers to trust in Jesus's power to provide abundantly and to recognize His divine authority as the Son of God.

Summary

John 2:1-11 recounts Jesus's first recorded miracle, where He turns water into wine at a wedding feast in Cana. This event serves as a significant demonstration of Jesus's divine power and compassion for human needs. When the wine runs out, Jesus's mother brings the issue to His attention. Though initially hesitant due to the timing not being right, Jesus proceeds to perform the miracle, instructing the servants to fill large water jars. When the water is drawn and presented to the master of the feast, it is found to have been miraculously transformed into the finest wine, surpassing human expectations.

Matthew Henry's commentary likely delves into the symbolic and spiritual significance of this miracle. He may emphasize the role of the wedding feast as a representation of the joyous celebration of God's covenant relationship with His people. Henry might highlight how Jesus's act of turning water into wine symbolizes the abundance of grace and blessings that He brings to fulfill the spiritual needs of humanity. Furthermore, Henry could stress the importance of faith and obedience, noting the servants' compliance with Jesus's instructions as a model for believers in experiencing God's miraculous provision.

The master of the feast's astonishment at the quality of the wine underscores the extraordinary nature of Jesus's miracle. This miraculous sign not only reveals Jesus's divine power but also manifests His glory, leading His disciples to deepen their belief in Him. As the first of Jesus's signs, this miracle holds particular significance in confirming His identity as the promised Messiah and the Son of God. It serves as a catalyst for the disciples' growing faith in Jesus's authority and mission.

John 2:1-11 portrays Jesus's inaugural miracle of turning water into wine, showcasing His divine power and compassion. Matthew Henry's commentary likely highlights the spiritual depth and significance of this event, emphasizing its symbolic meaning and its role in revealing Jesus's glory. This passage invites believers to trust in Jesus's ability to provide abundantly and to recognize His divine authority as the Son of God.

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Matthew 14:13-21 (ESV)

Scripture:

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves." But Jesus said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 14:13-21 presents the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, a well-known event in Jesus's ministry. It begins with Jesus withdrawing to a desolate place to grieve the death of John the Baptist. Despite His desire for solitude, a large crowd follows Him, seeking His healing touch and compassionate presence. Jesus's response to the crowd's needs reflects His deep compassion and willingness to minister to them, even in His own time of grief.

The disciples, seeing the lateness of the hour and the remoteness of the place, suggest sending the crowds away to find food for themselves. However, Jesus challenges them to provide for the people, demonstrating His desire to involve His followers in His ministry of compassion and provision. The disciples' initial response reveals their limited understanding of Jesus's power and provision, as they focus on their own meager resources rather than trusting in His ability to multiply them.

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Jesus takes the five loaves and two fish, offers thanks to God, and proceeds to miraculously multiply the food, providing enough to feed the entire crowd. This miraculous provision not only satisfies their physical hunger but also demonstrates Jesus's divine authority over creation. The twelve baskets of leftover fragments signify the abundance of God's provision, exceeding what was needed and showcasing His generosity.

Matthew 14:13-21 presents a powerful demonstration of Jesus's compassion and power. Despite His own grief and need for solitude, Jesus ministers to the crowd, meeting their physical needs in a miraculous way. This event serves as a testament to Jesus's identity as the Son of God and the Messiah, highlighting His compassion for humanity and His ability to provide abundantly. This passage challenges believers to trust in Jesus's provision and to participate in His ministry of compassion, knowing that He is able to exceed our expectations and meet our every need.

Summary

Matthew Henry's commentary on Matthew 14:13-21 likely emphasizes the compassion and power of Jesus demonstrated in this miraculous feeding of the five thousand. Henry might highlight Jesus's initial desire for solitude upon hearing of John the Baptist's death, yet His compassion for the crowds compels Him to minister to them despite His own need for solitude. Henry may stress how Jesus's response to the crowds' needs showcases His selflessness and care for others, setting an example for His disciples and future followers.

Furthermore, Henry might explore the disciples' role in this event, emphasizing their initial lack of faith and understanding of Jesus's power. Despite their doubts and concerns about the scarcity of resources, Jesus challenges them to trust in His ability to provide. Henry could emphasize the disciples' obedience in distributing the meager resources they had, which then led to the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fish. This demonstrates the principle of God's provision through human cooperation and faith.

Henry may also draw attention to the symbolic significance of the twelve baskets of leftovers, representing the abundance of God's provision and the completeness of His care. This miraculous feeding not only satisfies the physical hunger of the crowd but also serves as a sign of Jesus's divine authority over creation. Henry might conclude by

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demonstrating His compassion and empathy for human suffering. Henry's commentary might emphasize how Jesus's response to grief reflects His humanity and His divine nature, showing His willingness to enter into our pain and sorrow.

The climax of the narrative occurs when Jesus, standing before Lazarus's tomb, commands him to come forth. Despite the objections and doubts of those present, Lazarus emerges from the tomb, alive and well, bearing witness to Jesus's divine power over death. This miraculous event confirms Jesus's identity as the Son of God and prompts many witnesses to believe in Him. Henry's commentary might conclude by highlighting the profound impact of Lazarus's resurrection, serving as a foreshadowing of Jesus's own resurrection and the eternal life He offers to all who believe in Him.

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Chapter 7: The Teachings of Jesus

Scripture References

- Matthew 22:34-40 (The Greatest Commandment)
- John 13-17 (The Upper Room Discourse)

Jesus' teachings encompass a wide range of topics, including love, forgiveness, humility, and the nature of God's Kingdom. His teachings challenge conventional wisdom and call for a radical reorientation of one's life towards God and others.

Henry delves into the core of Jesus' teachings, emphasizing their timeless relevance and transformative power. He discusses the importance of love as the fulfillment of the law and the central command for Christians. Henry also explores the depth of Jesus' farewell discourse to His disciples, highlighting the themes of unity, service, and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 22:34-40 (ESV)

Scripture:

But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Commentary and Analysis

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Matthew 22:34-40 presents a significant interaction between Jesus and a Pharisee who poses a question to test Him. The Pharisees, recognizing Jesus's ability to silence the Sadducees, seek to challenge Him with a question about the greatest commandment in the Law. Jesus responds by quoting from the Old Testament, specifically Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, affirming the centrality of love in fulfilling God's commandments.

Matthew Henry's commentary might explore the profound simplicity and depth of Jesus's response. Henry could emphasize that, rather than selecting one specific commandment as the greatest, Jesus encapsulates the entire Law and the Prophets in the commandments to love God and love one's neighbor. This highlights the foundational importance of love in fulfilling the entirety of God's moral law and ethical teachings.

Furthermore, Henry might delve into the interconnectedness of loving God and loving others. He could explain how genuine love for God naturally leads to love for others, as one's relationship with God transforms their attitudes and actions towards their fellow human beings. Conversely, a lack of love for others is indicative of a deficient love for God. Thus, Jesus's response challenges believers to cultivate a holistic love that encompasses both vertical (towards God) and horizontal (towards others) dimensions.

Moreover, Henry might emphasize the practical implications of Jesus's teachings on love. He could highlight how love for God involves wholehearted devotion and allegiance, encompassing every aspect of one's being—heart, soul, and mind. Love for one's neighbor, similarly, requires selflessness, empathy, and compassion, treating others with the same care and concern one has for themselves. By emphasizing the centrality of love in fulfilling God's commandments, Jesus provides a clear and concise summary of the essence of true righteousness and faithful living.

Summary

In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus encounters a Pharisee who poses a question to test Him: "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" Instead of being trapped by the Pharisee's question, Jesus provides a masterful response that transcends legalistic interpretations. He quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, affirming the primacy of love in fulfilling God's commandments. Jesus states that the greatest commandment is to

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Commentary and Analysis

John 13-17 provides a rich tapestry of Jesus's teachings and interactions with His disciples, offering profound insights into His mission, identity, and relationship with the Father. The narrative begins with Jesus's humble act of washing His disciples' feet, demonstrating servanthood and setting an example of selfless love. This act serves as a prelude to Jesus's larger message about love, unity, and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Throughout these chapters, Jesus speaks intimately to His disciples, preparing them for the challenges they will face after His departure. He reassures them of His love and promises to send the Holy Spirit to be their Advocate and Guide. Jesus also foretells His betrayal by Judas and Peter's denial, revealing the fulfillment of Scripture and His sovereignty over future events.

In John 14, Jesus comforts His disciples with the promise of His continued presence and the assurance of eternal life. He speaks of His intimate union with the Father and the disciples' union with Him, emphasizing the necessity of abiding in Him to bear fruit. Jesus declares Himself as the way, the truth, and the life, affirming His exclusive role as the path to God the Father.

John 15 contains Jesus's allegory of the vine and branches, illustrating the necessity of abiding in Him to bear fruit and the consequences of detachment. He emphasizes the importance of love and obedience, stating that His disciples are His friends if they do what He commands. Jesus warns of the world's hostility towards His followers but assures them of the Holy Spirit's empowerment and guidance in their witness.

In John 16, Jesus continues to prepare His disciples for His departure, forewarning them of the persecution they will face but promising them peace in Him. He assures them of the Holy Spirit's role in convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and He promises to intercede for them before the Father. Jesus concludes His discourse by expressing His desire for His disciples' unity and their joy in Him, despite the tribulations they will face.

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Chapter 8: The Passion of Christ

Scripture References

- Matthew 26-27
- Mark 14-15
- Luke 22-23
- John 18-19

The passion narrative covers Jesus' arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death. These events fulfill the prophecies and demonstrate Jesus' willingness to suffer and die for humanity's sins. His crucifixion is the pivotal moment of redemptive history.

Henry provides a detailed analysis of the events leading to Jesus' crucifixion, emphasizing the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and the significance of Jesus' sacrificial death. He reflects on the themes of atonement, forgiveness, and the depth of God's love manifested in the cross.

Matthew 26-27 (ESV)

Scripture:

These chapters detail the events leading up to Jesus's crucifixion and His subsequent death on the cross. They include Jesus's betrayal by Judas Iscariot, His arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, His trials before the Jewish Sanhedrin and Pontius Pilate, His crucifixion, and His burial.

Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 26-27 marks the culmination of Jesus's earthly ministry as He willingly submits Himself to the Father's will for the redemption of humanity. The narrative begins with Jesus

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Chapter 9: The Resurrection of Jesus

Scripture References

- Matthew 28
- Mark 16
- Luke 24
- John 20-21

The resurrection of Jesus is the cornerstone of Christian faith, validating His identity as the Son of God and His victory over sin and death. Jesus appears to His disciples, offering peace and commissioning them to spread the Gospel.

Henry celebrates the resurrection as the triumphant climax of Jesus' earthly ministry. He discusses its implications for believers, including the assurance of eternal life and the call to share the Good News. Henry highlights the transformation in the disciples, empowered by the risen Christ to continue His mission.

Matthew 28 (ESV)

Scripture:

Matthew 28 records the resurrection of Jesus Christ, His appearance to His disciples, and His commissioning of them to go and make disciples of all nations. It is the concluding chapter of the Gospel of Matthew and serves as a powerful affirmation of Jesus's victory over death and His authority as the risen Lord.

Commentary and Analysis

Matthew 28 opens with the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene and the other Mary. An angel appears, rolling back the stone from the tomb and announcing that Jesus

