

# JESUS' MISSIONAL TEACHING MINISTRY IN THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

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This study aims to examine the nature and practice of Jesus's teaching ministry. Some scholars emphasize that Matthew does not describe Jesus as a teacher, but as a Prophet, a Savior, Lord, Messiah, or the Son of God.<sup>1</sup> However, Matthew characterizes Jesus' figure as a teacher who trains his disciples for their missional identity, role, and life pattern in the Kingdom of God. My proposal is that the essence of the Matthean Jesus is a teacher and his teaching ministry is missional. Here, the term missional is rooted in God's sending act which explains the identity and activity of the Sent one(s). Matthew demonstrates that Jesus, as a model of an outstanding teacher, taught his disciples.<sup>2</sup> Jesus sends them to all nations for the fulfillment of his mission. As Jesus did, they should also teach and train all nations to keep his commands and teachings.

## JESUS AS A TEACHER

Quite a few scholars regard Jesus's identity as the "Prophet," "Savior," "Lord," and "Messiah," but not as "Teacher."<sup>3</sup> In particular, J. D. Kingsbury argues that the Matthean Jesus is not a teacher but the "Son of God." For Jesus, the title teacher is used by only Judas Iscariot, opponents, and strangers.<sup>4</sup> These characters are categorized into the opponent group in the Gospel. Kingsbury sharply points out a set of antitheses in two passages 8:19-20 and vv. 21-22.<sup>5</sup>

- a. Scribe (8:19) vs Disciple (8:21)
- b. Jesus as a teacher (8:19) vs Jesus as Lord (8:21)
- c. The scribe decides to follow Jesus (8:19) vs Jesus summons a disciple to follow him (8:22)

Kingsbury makes two points. Firstly, a scribe calls Jesus a teacher, whereas his disciples designate him as Lord.<sup>6</sup> Secondly, this antithetic structure manifests Jesus's divine authority over his calling and the sacrifice of disciples.<sup>7</sup> Here, Jesus' discipleship ("follow," 4:18-22) does not highlight his identity as a teacher. Kingsbury argues that Matthew employs the verb ἀκολουθέω ("coming or going after a person in time, place, or sequence") more than 25 times from the

ecclesiastical perspective.<sup>8</sup> That is, the word should be construed in terms of discipleship (4:25; 8:1, 10, 19, 22; 19:21; 10:38; 16:24; 20:29).<sup>9</sup> For Kingsbury, the central theme of discipleship is that to follow Jesus means personal sacrifice such as "the loss of family or goods or breaking with a former way of life (cf. 4:20, 22; 9:9; 19:28)."<sup>10</sup> Warren Carter supports Kingsbury by stating that the verb follow implies "the nature of discipleship as one of call and response" to a new way of life and an eschatological destiny (3:12).<sup>11</sup>

However, in my estimation, Matthew identifies Jesus as a teacher in both senses. First, calling Jesus a teacher cannot be written off as a typical title for a hostile group. Robert H. Stein appropriately points out that the original Aramaic title "Rabbi" ("teacher," 23:7, 8) is not merely used 45 times in the gospels, but also that Jesus designates himself as a teacher (23:8; cf. 10:24-25) who proclaimed the divine law and taught in the synagogues like other rabbis.<sup>12</sup> There is no room to suspect that Matthew intends to format his writing in terms of Jesus' teaching ministry with divine authority (4:23 and 9:35; cf. διδάσκων "teaching" of the phrase "And when Jesus finished these things" in terms of his instructing act, 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; "discourses" 5:1-2; 13:1-2; 24:3-4).<sup>13</sup> To put it clearly, Jesus identifies himself as a teacher (26:18; cf. 23:8). The term διδάσκαλος ("teacher") is used 11 times (8:19; 9:11; 12:38; 17:24; 19:16; 22:16, 24, 36, 23:8; 26:18). Jesus expresses himself directly (26:18) and indirectly in his teaching four times (10:24-25; 23:8). The other seven times he is addressed by religious authorities. Although the scribe who is eager to follow Jesus has the same view on Jesus as his contemporaneous rabbis and students, there is no doubt that Matthew portrays Jesus's public ministry as a teaching ministry.

In chapter 4:23, Matthew highlights Jesus's public activity in the threefold ministry of teaching, preaching, and healing (διδάσκων, κηρύσσων, and θεραπεύων).<sup>14</sup> The author repeats Jesus's "teaching"

8. Kingsbury, "AKOLOURTHEIN," 56-57.

9. Kingsbury, "AKOLOURTHEIN," 58, 61-62.

10. Kingsbury, "AKOLOURTHEIN," 58.

11. Warren Carter, "Matthew 4:18-22 and Matthean Discipleship: An Audience-Oriented Perspective," *CBQ* 59 (1997): 61-62, 66-67.

12. Stein, *Method*, 1, 5; Craig S. Keener, "Matthew's Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matthew 28:19-20)," *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 12:1 (2009): 15. Craig S. Keener rightly points out that Jesus's disciples should teach disciples "only for Jesus, the only true 'Rabbi' (23:8), but not for their own students as their contemporaneous rabbis did (4 Bar 2:4, 6, 8; 5:5; t. Sanh 7:9; Sipre Deut 34:3, 5; 305.3.4).

13. John Yueh-Han Yieh, *One Teacher: Jesus' Teaching Role in Matthew's Gospel Report* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 25-27.

14. William G. Thompson, "Reflections on the Composition of MT 8:1-9:34," *CBQ* 33 (1971): 366-67.

1. Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 1; J. D. Kingsbury, "The Place, Structure, and Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount Within Matthew," *Int* 41 (1987): 134.

2. David B. Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story: A Study in the Narrative Rhetoric of the First Gospel* (JSNTSup 42; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 251-59.

3. cf. Stein, *Method*, 1.

4. Kingsbury, "Place," 134.

5. J. D. Kingsbury, "The Verb AKOLOURTHEIN ('To Follow') as An Index of Matthew's View of His Community," *JBL* 97/1 (1978): 60.

6. Kingsbury, "AKOLOURTHEIN," 60.

7. Kingsbury, "AKOLOURTHEIN," 60.

and “preaching” in 11:1 (διδάσκειν and κηρύσσειν) while using the term “healing” (θεραπεύειν) in the previous chapter in the narrative of his sending of the disciples (10:1). The author intends to put the words in the infinitive form, so that his reader can perceive Jesus’s ongoing three-fold activity throughout his gospel. Our attention is paid to the “teaching” in 28:19-20 (διδάσκοντες). Jesus commands the disciples to teach their disciples and keep all the teachings of Jesus. Therefore, Jesus and his disciples’ main ministry is teaching as a teacher.

**Therefore, Jesus is portrayed as a teacher in the Gospel of Matthew. He introduces himself to his disciples as a teacher, who teaches and trains his disciples. His followers first had to learn from him (23:8). They learn the lifestyle of the kingdom of God. Jesus presents the life pattern to them. At the same time, they are trained by him as the teachers (or “scribes”) of the Kingdom (13:52).**

Second, Jesus was a teacher who trains them to live in the Kingdom of God (10:5, 16 and 28:19-20). As Kingsbury and Carter argue, Jesus certainly emphasizes his discipleship as the new family (6:33; 19:16-30).<sup>15</sup> The usage of the word “brother” in Matthew 4:18-22 characterizes a group of disciples to be called on their familial relationships as a new family, which is born in obedience to God’s will (12:46-50).<sup>16</sup> The nature of Jesus’s discipleship is to live a life in light of the fulfillment of God’s eschatological salvation (11:27; cf. 6:9).<sup>17</sup> It is appropriate that Matthew intended to teach Jesus’s discipleship to an early church community. However, it should not be neglected that Jesus simultaneously focuses on training and educating his disciples in the Gospel. He makes a learning group. Matthew pays attention to two imperative verbs in 11:28-29.

δεῦτε πρὸς με (“Come to me,” v. 28)  
μάθετε ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ (“Learn from me,” v. 29b)

Matthew echoes Jesus’s statement (“Come after me,” 4:19) in this passage by using the phrase “Come to me.” Those who respond to Jesus’s invitation should learn from him. In a word, they should become *disciples*.<sup>18</sup> Leon Morris appropriately points out that

15. Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew* (NAC 22; Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 90; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 85.

16. Carter, “Matthew 4:18-22,” 68, 69-70.

17. Kingsbury, “Place,” 137, 141.

18. Juan Luis Segundo, *The Historical Jesus of the Synoptics*

the verb μάθετε stems from μαθητεύω in the same cognition of μαθητής; as a result, those who come to Jesus are devoted to his learning process.<sup>19</sup> Jesus’s teaching and discipline start from the bottom of the disciples’ holistic lifestyle by going beyond the broad sense of a dominant rabbinic training pattern such as accompanying a teacher, listening and learning from him, and living with him.<sup>20</sup> To be sure, disciples’ segregation from their lives is their first step to participate in Jesus’s intensive discipleship for three years in sharing another lifestyle with each other. In a word, Jesus lived with his disciples. They could not mutually have concealed their word-deed habit, life pattern, temper, or even bad habit, earthly desire, wrong spiritual life, and so forth. Jesus’s discipline models a teacher’s life to his disciples and he follows it intellectually and spiritually. As Jesus recognizes disciples’ imperfections in terms of “less-than-perfect,”<sup>21</sup> he helps them actualize the life of ideal disciples appearing in his teaching.<sup>22</sup>

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#### JESUS’ MISSIONAL TEACHING MINISTRY

The teaching ministry of Jesus is missional. The concept of the term missional is rooted in God’s identity, life, and actions, who sends his son into the world (10:40). Jesus taught and trained his disciples to live with God in his Kingdom.

#### Jesus’ Missional Life

The central theme of Jesus’s teachings is about the life of God’s Kingdom.<sup>23</sup> What the disciples learned from Jesus was how he lives as the sent one of God in the missional context (5:16). They learned by seeing, feeling, and experiencing Jesus and the kingdom of God, which Jesus is realizing in him (12:28).<sup>24</sup> In accompanying his disciples wherever (8:18-19, 20, 24), He shows himself to them in the course of teaching and training in order that they can feel, meditate, speculate, understand, convict, and practice through

(trans. John Drury; New York: Orbis Books, 1982), 134.

19. Morris, *Matthew*, 296.

20. Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13* (WBC 33A; Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 216.

21. Howell, *Matthew’s Inclusive Story*, 234-35.

22. cf. Stein, *Method*, 10.

23. Larry W. Hurtado, “Following Jesus in the Gospel of Mark and Beyond,” in *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (ed. Richard N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 10; Richard N. Longenecker, *Patterns of Discipleship in the New Testament* (ed. Richard N. Longenecker; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 2; Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 14-28* (WBC 33B; Dallas: Word Books, 1995), 887.

24. Jesus’s teaching entails a model of missional or missionary teachers. F. Thielman, *The Law and The New Testament Question of Continuity* (New York: Crossroad, 1999), 49.

holistic personal transformation. Stein observes that Jesus' teaching corresponds with his personality and immediate authority (5:21-45).<sup>25</sup>

Jesus teaches his disciples about a missional life pattern in God's Kingdom through the Sermon on the Mount (5:16, 38-42; 7:1, 3-5).<sup>26</sup> There are two different understandings of Jesus' Sermon. On the one hand, F. J. Matera notes that the Matthean Jesus proclaims the righteousness in the Sermon on the Mount which is pleasing to God, and realized it in his life.<sup>27</sup> He understood Jesus on the ethical aspect.<sup>28</sup> On the same level, Stanley Stowers tries to examine a moral figure in the depiction of the Matthean Jesus as a teacher of ethics. He observes the Matthean Jesus differently than other gospels ("a teacher of mysterious teachings about the coming kingdom of God in Mark," and "a teacher of teachings about his [Jesus] own identity in John"). In his article, Stowers examines "the idea of universal ethic for individuals and the demand for perfection" from a Stoic inspiration point of view,<sup>29</sup> for he postulates that Matthew reflected Jesus' teachings on the Law in association with the divine will (Stoic) to perfect all actions of humans in their life justly, courageously, wisely, and lovingly.<sup>30</sup> Basically, Stowers' view is opaque in that Matthew does not highlight in Stoicism. Nonetheless, it is significant that he connects the concept of the term "perfection" (τέλειος 5:48) with that of the term "righteousness" which is "not simply the performance of actions that in themselves are generally accepted as morally good, but rather that such actions be done with the right moral disposition that is the equivalent of doing God's will."<sup>31</sup>

On the other hand, Donald A. Hanger rejects the moral understanding of "righteousness." He argues that the concept of "righteousness" should be construed in the sense of the saving activity of God but not in the ethical sense (3:15; 5:6).<sup>32</sup> In particular, he notes that the "righteousness" in Matthew 5:6 ("Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled") connotes the eschatological 'justice'.<sup>33</sup> To be sure, he does not repudiate the validity of the moral teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, but

25. Stein, *Method*, 8.

26. Edgar Krentz, "Missionary Matthew: Matthew 28:16-20 as Summary of the Gospel," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 31:1 (February 2004): 30.

27. F. J. Matera, *New Testament Ethics: The Legacies of Jesus and Paul* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 53.

28. Cf. John B. Webster, "The Imitation of Christ," *TynB* 37 (1986):100.

29. Stanley Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Stoicism in Early Christianity* (eds. Tuomas Raismus, troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Ismo Dunderberg; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 59-62.

30. Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher," 60-61, 66.

31. Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher," 66.

32. Donald A. Hanger, "Law, Righteousness, and Discipleship in Matthew," *Word & World* vol. XVIII, Number 4 (Fall 1998):367-68; "Righteousness in Matthew's Theology," in *Worship, Theology and Ministry in the Early Church: Essays in Honor of Ralph P. Martin* (eds. M. J. Wilkins and T. Paige; Sheffield: JSOT, 1992), 101-20.

33. Hanger, "Law," 367.

rather by setting apart the meaning of "demands for salvation,"<sup>34</sup> he highlights the recipients (people) of the kingdom of God who should obey God's commandments.<sup>35</sup> These commandments (22:40, "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind" and "love your neighbor as yourself") were handed over to Jesus' disciples through his mouth (28:19, "everything that I have commanded you"). Therefore, Jesus' disciples' righteousness originates from the obedience of His teachings ascribed from the observation of the Torah.<sup>36</sup> The phrase "being perfect" does not mean holiness or being blameless, but living with a whole heart in the realm of God's kingdom (5:20; 6:33).<sup>37</sup> In other words, true disciples should pay homage to God by being subordinated to His eschatological sovereignty according to a new covenant in Jesus Christ (5:3, 10; 7:21).<sup>38</sup>

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In this sense, Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is concerned about the disciples' ethical life in the sphere of God's rule. Specifically, they should live God wholeheartedly and love their neighbor as themselves.<sup>39</sup>

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Differences in these scholars' interpretation might be problematic in the soteriological approach. Ethically, Jesus' disciples will not be able to live in the kingdom of God unless his disciples are perfect. On the other hand, if God allows the disciples to enter his kingdom by his grace, Jesus' teachings are not about the demand for salvation, but about the way his people live. To me, Jesus' teachings mean that those who live in the kingdom of God certainly live in a community of salvation under God's present and futuristic kingship. It must be ethical and moral for them to live holy lives by the word of God. Their holiness is already demanded from the moment they belong to the holy God. They must live a holy and righteous life in God's Kingdom. For this, Jesus teaches and educates his disciples to reach God's holiness, even if it has an incomplete form of life. Relatively, if those

34. Robert A. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 172.

35. Hanger, "Law," 368.

36. Hanger, "Law," 369-70.

37. Kingsbury, "Place," 137.

38. Kingsbury, "Place," 138; Don Garlinton, "The 'Better Righteousness': Matthew 5:20," *BBR* 20.4 (2010): 480, 488. For further study, see P. J. du Plessis, *TEΛΕΙΟΣ: The Idea of Perfection in the New Testament* (Kampen: Kok, 1959), 94; Kent L. Yinger, *Paul, Judaism, and Judgment according to Deeds* (SNTSMS 105; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 281; Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 271.

39. Kingsbury, "Place," 138.

who would follow Jesus and believe in God do not keep Jesus' teachings, they are neither living in the realm of Jesus' rulership nor will live in his futuristic Kingdom.

In this sense, Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is concerned about the disciples' ethical life in the sphere of God's rule. Specifically, they should live God wholeheartedly and love their neighbor as themselves.<sup>40</sup> This means "doing greater righteousness." It is convincing that Matthew makes sense of the cause and the result of eschatology in the same way. In Matt 25:31-46, Matthew focuses on the criterion (deeds of love) of the final judgment to separate between the true disciples and the false disciples. "Love" in Matthew is the essence of Law-observance (5:43-48; 7:12; 21:1-8, 9-14; 18:12-35; 22:34-40).<sup>41</sup> Jesus's disciples accomplish the greatest commandments of God: "You shall love the Lord with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." And "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (22:37-39)." R. Mohrlang observes as follows:

Matthew's formulation of the golden rule and the two great commandments roots love in law (7:12; 22:34-40; cf. 19:19b); here the expression of charity and compassion is both shaped by and interpreted within the framework of the law and the more basic demand for righteousness. For Matthew, therefore, the second great commandment is properly understood only when viewed within the context of the more fundamental demand of the first (22:37-39), with love for God expressed primarily in terms of obedience (cf. 4:1-11).<sup>42</sup>

For this reason, Jesus' true disciples must practically carry out God's will (12:46-50; cf. 3:8-10; 5:19; 6:1-3; 7:12-26; 12:2, 3, 12, 33).<sup>43</sup> Here, the focus is that Jesus' teaching aims to make the disciple participate in the life of God's Kingdom. They are the people of God who live according to God's will. Their lives must be missional (5:48; 6:33; 28:18-20). In 5:16, the disciples' lives let people glorify God. These people mean ones outside Jesus' disciples community. The disciples' righteous lives lead people to God the Father (5:45, 48).<sup>44</sup> They are the light of the world (5:14). Just as Jesus bears witness to God and his Kingdom in teaching and doing in daily life, so, too, should the disciple live a life of the people of the heavenly Kingdom (5:1; 8:19; 6:24; 20:26-27).<sup>45</sup> When Jesus called them to "follow after me" in the process of his mission, they should always live his life pattern and mission appearing in

his doings and words (16:24-26). This fact is certainly clear in the story of Jesus's sending of the disciples (28:19-20). Matthew links "teaching" with "doing" by accentuating "obeying" and "keeping."<sup>46</sup> In particular, Matthew repeats the particular verb "doing" (ποιέω) 83 times, so that he underlines Jesus's new teaching.<sup>47</sup> The climax of Jesus' training appears in Matthew 16:24 ("If anyone would come after me [ὀπίσω μου], let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me [ἀκολουθεῖτω]). Specifically, the preposition ὀπίσω μου ("come after") and the verb ἀκολουθεῖω ("follow") echo Jesus' calling and teaching in Matthew 4:19 and in 10:38 respectively. Simultaneously, the preposition is articulated in 16:23, so that the expression "following after [Jesus]" means to carry out the things of God that Jesus himself is undertaking. For this, Jesus denies himself and abandons his life (26:36). Therefore, the statement "following" prerequisites Jesus states "take up his cross and follow me" (10:38 and 16:24). The phrase "his (disciple) cross" is paralleled to Jesus' own cross. That is to say, Matthew highlights that disciples certainly do the same way as their teacher showed an example. When they take over Jesus' teaching ministry (28:16-20), their calling must presuppose them living according to Jesus' lifestyle.<sup>48</sup> As Jesus live a life of the Sent One for the fulfillment of his mission, so must the disciples achieve their mission in life. This is the essence of discipleship and their teaching ministry in missional contexts (28:20).

Therefore, Jesus teaches the disciples to follow his life pattern in the Kingdom of God. He continues to train them to be the light of the world (5:14). Those who see their lives will know God and glorify him (5:16). Jesus' teaching ministry purports to educate the missional disciples in this world.

### The Disciples' Missional Teaching Ministry

Jesus' teaching ministry must be the disciples' ministry to continue his missional work. His mission in light of God's calling was to bring the Kingdom of God into the world and realize it on earth (4:17, 23; 9:35-38; 10:1, 5; 28:19-20). His teaching, proclaiming, and healing ministries focus on the achievement of his mission. And Jesus called the disciples to "a single defined group,"<sup>49</sup> who are chosen and trained as successors of his three-fold activity (διδάσκων ["teaching"]. . . καὶ κηρύσσων ["proclaiming"] . . . καὶ θεραπεύων ["healing"], 4:23 and 9:35; cf. 10:1-28; 28:16-20).<sup>50</sup> Then, Jesus sent them into the world, which is their mission in light of Jesus' calling and sending act. First of all, the mission of the disciples is involved with the specific task, "I will make you fishers of men"

40. Kingsbury, "Place," 138.

41. Richard A. Burrige, *Imitating Jesus: An Inclusive Approach to New Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 203.

42. R. Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 99.

43. Warren Carter, *Matthew and the Margins* (JSNTSup 204; Sheffield: Sheffield Press, 2000), 279.

44. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2007), 242.

45. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 239; Howell, *Matthew's Inclusive Story*, 255.

46. J. D. Charles, "Garnishing with the 'Greater Righteousness': The Disciple's Relationship to the Law (Matthew 5:17-20)," *BBR* 12.1 (2002): 9, 11-12.

47. Charles, "Garnishing," 5; Yieh, *One Teacher*, 29.

48. Keener, "Matthew's Missiology," 18.

49. Paul S. Minear, "Disciples and the Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew," *Anglican Theological Review* (March 1974): 28.

50. Minear, "Disciples and the Crowds," 30, 32; Hagner, *Matthew* 1-13, 76.

(4:19; cf. “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest,” 9:37-38). He trains the disciples for the task.<sup>51</sup> Matthew repeats the phrase of 4:23 (teaching-proclaiming-healing) in 9:38 so that he associates “making you fishers of men” with “harvesters.”<sup>52</sup> Jesus sets up his disciples as the harvesters for God (10:1-4). This is the characteristic of Matthew, the so-called “missionary instructions” (compare Matt 10:17-25 with Mk 13:9-13; Matt 10:26-33 with Lk 12:2-9; Matt 10:34-36 with Lk 12:51-53; Matt 10:37-39 with Lk 14:26-27; 17:33).<sup>53</sup> Matthew highlights that Jesus starts to reveal his ministry from the moment he dispatches his disciples.<sup>54</sup> When Jesus gave authority over unclean spirits and a variety of diseases, he expects his disciples to eagerly obey him.<sup>55</sup> Their obedience must go beyond all tribulations and even death (Matt 10:26-31). This is because Jesus sends them out for the sake of the proclamation of the present sovereignty of God (10:29-31).<sup>56</sup>

Unquestionably, they must proclaim the gospel to all nations to enter God’s Kingdom. They should heal them to live the life of God’s restoration. That is why Matthew describes that by taking over Jesus’s ministries, the disciples’ mission begins with being sent into Judea and then the world (9:35-38). That is, when Jesus sent the disciples to the “house of Israel”, it is tied with his sending of them to “all nations” (10:6 and 28:19; for the sending statement, 10:16, ἀποστέλλω ὑμᾶς and 28:19, πορευθέντες). Peter Stuhlmacher significantly observes that the mission story in Matthew 10:5-6 has not yet finished. Matthew did not report the disciples’ returning differently than Luke 9:10a and 10:17.<sup>57</sup> This means that Matthew 10:5-6 is bound up with 28:16-20 in the sense of the extension of the missional scope. Ulrich Luz suggests the story of 28:16-20 as a ‘programmatic text’ through which Jesus

51. As to a missional perspective on understanding of Matthew 28:19-20, see David J. Bosch, “The Scope of Mission,” *International Review of Mission* Vol. 73, No. 289 (January 1984): 17-32.

52. Grant R. Osborne, *The Resurrection Narratives: A Redactional Study* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984), 91.

53. Daniel G. Reid, ed. “Matthew,” in *The IVP Dictionary of the New Testament* (Illinois, Leicester: InterVarsity, 2004), 789.

54. Michael J. Wilkins, “Matthew,” in *The NIV Application Commentary* (ed. Terry Muck; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 396.

55. Just as Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God with the authority over all unclean spirits, every kind of disease and every kind of sickness (10:1), so do they. Just as Jesus was repudiated by the Jewish people, so they will have to be persecuted the Jews and the Gentiles (10:14-25, “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. It is enough for the disciple that he becomes like his teacher and the slave like his master”). See C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the kingdom* (London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd., 1935), 41; Bo Reicke, “A Test of Synoptic Relationships: Matthew 10:17-23 and 24:9-14 with Parallels,” in *New Synoptic Studies* (ed. Wklliam R. Farmer; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1983), 225.

56. All activities of Jesus’s disciples are subordinate to God’s providence (vv. 30-31) and eschatological judgment (v. 26). This idea should be understood within the particular structure of Matthew, the so-called kingdom of God. Matthew depicts the kingdom of God in two phases: the present kingdom (6:33; 11:12; 12:28; 13:24-30, 36-43; 16:19; 23:13) and the future kingdom (4:17; 5:19; 8:12; 16:28; 25:1-13; 26:29). See Kingsbury, *Matthew*, 128-60; Reid, “Matthew,” 795.

57. Peter Stuhlmacher, “Matt 28:16-20 and the Course of Mission in the Apostolic and Postapostolic Age,” in *The Mission of the Early Church to Jews and Gentiles* (eds. Jostein Adna and Hans Kvalbein; Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 30.

changes his disciples’ mission from exclusively “Jews” to “Gentiles.”<sup>58</sup> However, his theory is not supported by Matthew. The disciples must bear witness in the synagogues and among the Gentiles (10:17-18).<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, Matthew describes the continuity of their witness for the house of Israel and the Gentiles. In the literary structure of the disciples’ mission, my proposal is that Matthew places three ministries of Jesus in 10:1 (“healing”), 10:7 (“proclaiming”), and 28:20 (“teaching”).

Matthew 10:1-16 presents that Jesus gave his twelve disciples authority (ἐξουσία) over unclean spirits to “heal” every disease by sharing one of his activities, as the pericope in 28:16-20 describes his eleven disciples’ participation in two remaining activities of Jesus (“preaching” and “teaching”) allowed under Jesus’s authority (28:18, ἐξουσία). In a word, Matthew not only highlights the realized kingdom of God, in which the disciples of Jesus are acting as agents for God’s redemptive work (10:1-4; 16:18-19; 28:18-20) but also highlights God’s absolute sovereignty to which the coming kingdom and the ultimate accomplishment of the gospel (10:31; 24:10, 43; 25:19; 28:20).

Therefore, the goal of the disciples’ ministry of “making disciples” is “to observe all that I have commanded you” under Jesus’s kingship (28:18-20). As Jesus did, so must the disciples teach people to keep Jesus’s commands by living their lives in the Kingdom of God (28:19-20).<sup>60</sup> The method of their teaching ministry is certainly identical to Jesus’s method in terms of “the example of a teacher and the following of the disciples” (5:1; 8:19; 6:24; 20:26-27).<sup>61</sup> As Jesus did, the disciples continue to teach and show the Kingdom and its life pattern (10:1-4; 28:19-20).

### Implications for Today’s Christian Mission

Jesus’s ministry as a teacher in the Gospel of Matthew suggests two points for Christian missions today. First, the teaching ministry during the mission is the act of teaching the kingdom of God and the discipleship of Jesus. The purpose of the disciples’ mission was to spread the Gospel of Heaven and heal so that those who gathered could live as God’s people. Second, Jesus taught the kingdom of God through his life and the way of life in it. The disciples were also sent to teach Jesus and his kingdom and his teachings throughout their lives.

Today we have a variety of educational programs. We are developing textbooks, established curriculum, and effective educational activities. However, without denying their need, we must examine the nature of our teaching ministry. We must explain the kingdom of God in our place of life and show how to live in the Kingdom. If our missional work focuses only on the delivery of the message of the gospel, it can be written

58. Ulrich Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 16.

59. cf. Hagner, *Matthew* 14-28, 886.

60. Scot McKnight, *Interpreting the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 111; Reid, “Matthew,” 798.

61. Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 239.

off as the share of those who hear how to live. There is a high possibility that it will fall into the lame excuse that it is not the responsibility of the messenger. The mission must be life itself.

## CONCLUSION

Matthew describes Jesus as a teacher. The author testifies that Jesus calls himself a teacher. The role of Jesus as teacher is to train and teach his disciples to continue his missional work. He taught his disciples the kingdom of God and how to live in it. And he himself showed the pattern of life in the heavenly kingdom through life. The disciples, like Jesus, must proclaim the kingdom of God at the site of their missional work and exercise the power of his authority. They should teach people to know God and live in him. They should show what it is to live in the pattern of life of God's Kingdom in their lives as Jesus did. That is the role of a true missional teacher. Therefore, the teaching ministry in our missions must be missional.

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