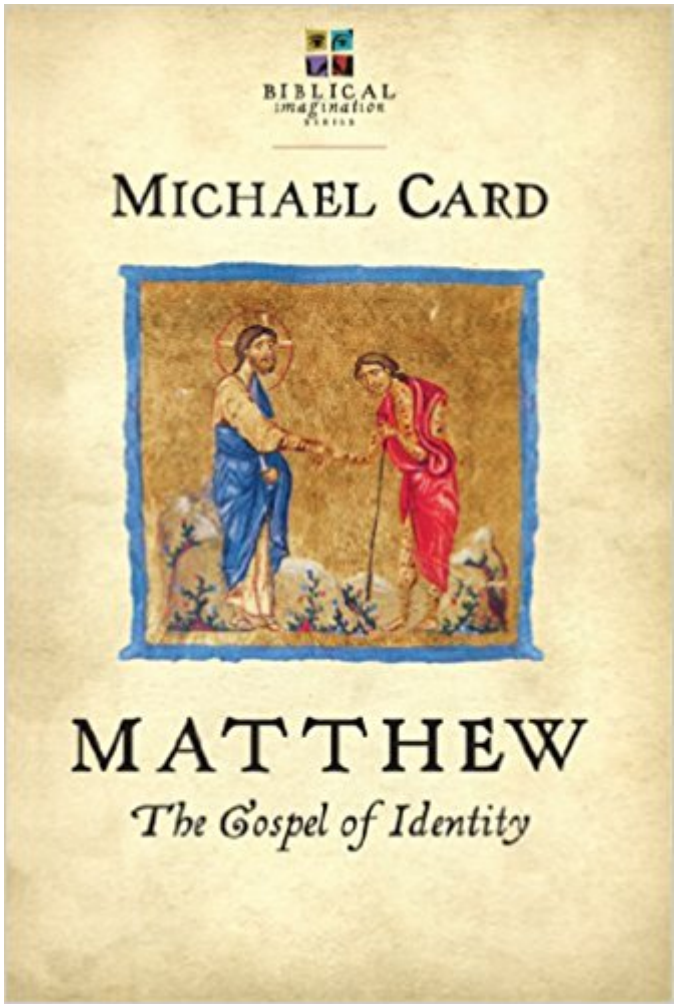
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Matthew: The Gospel Of Identity (Biblical Imagination)



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Synopsis

"You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world." Matthew 5:13-14 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church." Matthew 16:18 The world tries to define us in different ways. We try to define ourselves one way or another. But who are we really? How does God define us? The Gospel of Matthew was written to a group of Christians who didn’t yet know who they were. They were faithful Jews in the synagogue community in Galilee who had found the Messiah. Jesus had changed everything. But how should they think of themselves now, as Jewish or Christian? What did it all mean? Matthew writes his Gospel to help his readers define their new identity as followers of Jesus the Messiah. Michael Card unpacks how Matthew’s emphasis on fulfillment confirms their Jewish connection to the Torah, while his focus on the kingdom helps them understand their new identities in Christ. Matthew presents this process of redefinition as an exercise of the imagination, in which Jesus reshapes who we are in light of who he is. Come alongside Matthew in this pilgrimage, and discover how your new identity in Christ fulfills all that you are meant to be.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Matthew: The Gospel of Identity shimmers with life: spirit and truth, emotion and intellect, dramatic storytelling, evocative dialogue and imagery. Michael Card has captured our imaginations with his books centering on the four Gospels, this being the third in the series. Providing the backstory,

historical, and emotional context, he connects and weaves together the 'Story' from the two testaments and places us squarely in the middle of the actionÃ¢â ¬â ¢a distillation that reads like a Bible and a film script. Dull hearts feel, blind eyes see, and disengaged minds connect to passages heard or read many timesÃ¢â ¬â ¢and to the person of Jesus. Because Card guides us through every verse in the Book of Matthew, this would be ideal, either as an individual, small group, or a community-wide centerpiece for study and immersion." (Worship Leader Magazine, July/August 2013)

In a career that spans 30 years, Michael Card has recorded over 31 albums, authored or co-authored over 24 books, hosted a radio program, and written for a wide range of magazines. An award-winning musician and performing artist, he has penned such favorites as "El Shaddai," "Immanuel" and many other songs. He has branched his ministry beyond music and written numerous books, including A Sacred Sorrow, A Violent Grace, The Parable of Joy and Sleep Sound in Jesus (a children's book). He has also written the Biblical Imagination Series, with a book and accompanying music CD for each of the four gospels. A graduate of Western Kentucky University with a bachelor's and master's degree in biblical studies, Card also serves as mentor to many younger artists and musicians, teaching courses on the creative process and calling the Christian recording industry into deeper discipleship. Card lives in Tennessee with his wife and four children.

Despite being a long time fan of Michael Card as a musician, I was completely unaware that he had written a series of commentaries on the Gospels. When attending a Christmas concert this past year where he performed with another perennial favorite artist of mine named Phil Keaggy, I happened to wander by the table where the artists were selling CDs, hoping to pick up some music I did not have. It was then I discovered the Biblical Imagination Series by Michael Card of which his book Matthew: The Gospel of Identity is a part.What exactly is this Biblical Imagination Series of commentaries all about? Matthew Card addresses his perspective of a biblical concept of imagination, noting in the preface to this commentary on Matthew the following statement:ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å"On one side are those who study Scripture with their minds. They engage intellectually, puzzling over the text as if it were only a cipher to be solved. They tend to gravitate toward theology. They revel in being ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å"right.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• On the other side are those who engage the Bible predominantly with the heart. They lean toward the emotional, even mystical understanding of the Scripture. Rather than theological, I would describe them as devotional in their approach. Neither approach is wrong, but both are incomplete. God has given us

hearts with which to feel and minds for reasoning. He longs to recapture them both with the truth of the Word.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â•It is the recapturing of the imagination and the refocusing of the mind and heart to a thorough and complete studying of GodÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s word that is behind the concept of the Biblical Imagination Series.As I began to read through CardÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s commentary on Matthew, I was immediately struck by the simplistic profundity by which he engages Scripture. Keep in mind this series of commentaries is not scholarly in nature yet it is scholarly in its depth of thought. This means that Card exegetes Scripture with a view to the layman without sacrificing when needed the engagement of what could be termed more scholarly material.An example is his discussion of the background of the area known as Galilee, noting important geographical matters that impact the story, issues that many may overlook such as the size of the Sea of Galilee and the rocky shores that surround this lake. While avoiding a deep dive into all the various geographical or historical elements that comprise more lengthy style commentaries, Card provides the reader with valuable information that relates to the message at hand in a manner that is informative yet does not get overly bogged down in minutia.Card walks through the entire book of Matthew one chapter at a time, devoting a chapter in this book to the events that Matthew records in his gospel. The commentary is written in such a way that the reader can work through several chapters at one time or they can journey through the Gospel of Matthew slowly. Either approach will work as again the text is written in such a manner as to not be too overwhelmingly scholarly while still providing much food for thought. CardÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s exegesis is theologically sound and the passion for the Word of God that for many years was reflected in his music is clearly evident throughout this commentary. I was really struck by the attention paid by Card to how Jesus interacted with those around him and why that matters. Additionally, I appreciated the manner in which Card elucidated why Matthew included certain elements of JesusÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ life in his Gospel, points which may have received a passing submission or even a longer look by the other gospel writers. Understanding the author, in this case the Gospel of Matthew is important for understanding why some things are included and Card does an excellent job of outlining those important issues.At the end of this commentary, Card provides several short yet helpful appendices that help the reader engage in more detail some aspects of MatthewÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Gospel. Appendix A lists the five major blocks of JesusÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ teaching found in Matthew, Appendix B lists content found only in MatthewÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s gospel, Appendix C provides a very interesting look into the flogging endured by Jesus in the Synagogue, Appendix D is a discussion of the historical notation made by the Jewish historian Josephus regarding John the Baptist, and Appendix E provides a quick but helpful examination of what was considered to be

work on the Sabbath.I highly recommend Michael CardÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s commentary, Matthew: The Gospel of Identity for scholars and layman alike. Additionally, I recommend the accompanying music CD called Matthew: The Penultimate Question. As with all of Michael CardÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s music, this CD is biblically sound and musically excellent, providing a wonderful supplement to the commentary. Both are well worth your time. I greatly look forward to reading the other books in this series and listening to the other CDs that Michael Card has produced to go along with the other books in his wonderful Biblical Imagination Series.

The author presents a new look at Matthew in this third in the Biblical Imagination series. Studying scripture intellectually or emotionally is incomplete; imagination bridges the gap and provides a complete picture. Matthew uses two themes: Galilee in Crisis and the question of identity. Written for Christians who didn't yet know they were Christians, Matthew records the sayings of Jesus as well as the parables in five "blocks" of scripture, revealing the identity of Jesus so his followers could understand who they were.

I'm thoroughly enjoying this book. The subject matter is, of course, the gospel of Matthew, but the style is nothing like a dry commentary. It feels much more like a lecture on the book of Matthew, with the speaker pointing out cool, geeky, parenthetical facts about the book of Matthew. I especially liked his comments about how Matthew was writing to the Jewish Christians who were suffering an identity crisis. This very much mirrors the American church as we struggle to adapt to postmodernism, and an increasingly pagan/secular culture

Michael Card is a great writer, in that he helps those of us who aren't particularly imaginative to use our imagination and dig deeper into what's really going on. He helps you to really notice the details that you would ordinarily skip over. You can't go wrong with anything he's written

I liked Mark and Luke better (that's the only reason there are four stars instead of five), but this is still a tremendous "commentary" on Matthew (without it really being a commentary!

This is an easy to read commentary on Matthew. Michael Card does a great job of providing relevant cultural background information in a way that brings the text to life on academic and emotional levels.

As with all of his books, this is a insightful book that is easy to recommend to anyone desiring to explore this book of the Bible. Well worth the price.

Clear, concise and easy to understand. Includes Bible verses most important making it unnecessary to keep referring back to the text all the time.

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