

The Gospel of Matthew by M.C. Conti

1. Jesus
2. Matthew
3. Jospeh
4. Gabriel/Mary
5. Herod
6. John
7. Peter

Matthew 1

Matthew (*opens a big book*): The family tree of Jesus Christ, David's son, Abraham's son: Abraham had Issac, Issac had Jacob, Jacob had Judah had... (*he continues to read the list but silently, as if he has been put on mute. Jesus enters*)

Jesus: Hello, my name is Jesus. And this is my family tree. We're just gonna let him keep reading while I talk real quick. And it's not that it's not interesting.

Matthew: Salmon had Boaz. His mother was Rahab.

Jesus: I mean, it's the only genealogy that lists women. Go Matthew. Girl Power! It's just that it's long and you can read that on your own. So, while he's doing that, I'll jump in and say a few words. Housekeeping things: Please silence your phones, no flash photography, don't talk during the show, exits are here and there (*points*).

Matthew: Jesse had David.

Jesus: There is a name you all probably recognize. Now some things pertinent to this particular show: we are telling the gospel of Matthew with 7 actors. To help that be less confusing, here are some simple things we'll do: My disciples will wear crosses (*Peter stands up and shows a large cross hanging around his neck and wave*). The Pharisees will wear black capes and a crew member will hold up a "boo" sign when it's they are in the scene. Feel free to boo. They weren't ALL villains, of course, Nicodemus was a Pharisee. But they *are* the people group who had me killed.

Peter: Dude! Spoiler alert!

Jesus: Oh. Oops. Sorry. And the agnel Gabriel (*Mary walks up and waves*) You can't play Gabriel; all the angels are male. (*She looks annoyed and slaps on a mustache*) will wear a mustache. Anyway, for all the rest of the characters, we'll do our best to point out who is who along the way. You will have to keep up and use your imagination some, though.

Matthew: And that's when the people were taken into the Babylonian exile.

Jesus: Dark times. (*shakes his head*) Second, we are telling 33 years of history in 2 hours Oh, I actually have a note form the playwright here about that. (*He takes it out and reads it*) Welcome to our show.. already did that.. blah blah.. We are telling 33 years... skip skip.. oh, here it is!. "Dear Gentle Audience Member – Welcome to my retelling of The Gospel of Matthew. Obviously, not all the stories are going to make it into the show. This is more about seeing the whole picture, not each detail.. The theme has already been set by Matthew, Jesus as the Messiah King. So I just went with that and picked my favorite stories to go along with it. That's it. No deeper meaning.

Matthew: And Jacob had Joseph, Mary's husband, the Mary who gave birth to Jesus, the Jesus who was called Christ. There were fourteen generations from Abraham to David, another fourteen from David to the Babylonian exile, and yet another fourteen from the Babylonian exile to Christ.

Jesus: And then I was born.

Matthew: Well, first –

Joseph (*on the phone*): Yes, hello? Yeah, I'm calling to cancel my reservation at the event hall next week. Yeah, my name is Joseph. Why am I cancelling? Because I just found out that my fiancé Mary is – (*Gabriel comes on stage behind Jospeh. He should be standing on something, so he is much taller than Joshep*)

Gabriel: JOSEPH!

Joseph (*swings around about to yell and then is frozen in fear when he sees the very tall man angel standing in front of him*): Ummm... I'm gonna have to call you back.

Gabriel: Joseph, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. Her pregnancy is spirit-conceived, and she is carrying the savior of the world, just as Isaiah foretold: Behold a virgin shall conceive. You'll marry her, sleep in separate rooms til He is born, then name Him Jesus. Got it?

Joseph (*still somewhat frozen in fear*): Got it.

Matthew 2

Matthew: And Joseph did just that. Now we meet the wise men. (*mockingly shocked voice*) What?? Right to the wisemen? What about the manger and the shepherds and all that?? (*back to normal*) That's not in my version. Moving on. There is some debate as to when the wisemen actually show up. Not everyone thinks they were there at the actual birth. Some scholars think they didn't show up for months, others say it was years later.

Peter (Wiseman 1): I hate to interrupt, but I think the thing to focus on is that we were there at some point.

John (Wiseman 2): So, can we just get on with our part of the story.

Matthew: Oh. Of course. Shouldn't there be 3 of you?

John (Wiseman 2): Show me where it says 3 wisemen.

Jesus (*taking the book from Matthew and reading*): Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, in the province of Judea, at the time when King Herod reigned. Not long after Jesus was born, magi, wise men or seers from the East, made their way from the East to Jerusalem. These wise men made inquiries.

Matthew: See... Not long after... it's really wide open for interpretation.

Peter (Wiseman 1): Well, I happened to be there. So I'll take it from here. Our story starts with Herod. (*Herod runs on stage.*)

Herod: Herod at your service (*Gabriel comes on stage with a sign that says "boo"*) How can I help you?

Peter (Wiseman 1): Well, we heard that there is a new king, greater than all other kings.

Herod: Word really gets around. You heard correctly. I am he!

Wiseman 1: No, we heard he was just born recently.

John (Wiseman 2): And you don't look like you were just born recently.

Herod: What!?! When I get my hands on him - I mean... oh, isn't that exciting. Go and find this king. And when you do, please make sure you come back this way and tell me EXACTLY where he is.

John (Wiseman 2): Why?

Herod: I'd like to pay my respects, obviously.

Wisemen: Riiiiight...

Matthew: So off they went!

Peter (Wiseman 1): Our story!

Matthew: Sorry.

Wisemen: So off we went.

Gabriel (Wiseman 2): And when we found him, we gave him gifts.

Peter (Wiseman 1): I hate to go all diva here, since we're *just* the wiseman, but could we possibly have someone out here to GIVE the gifts to??