

PEOPLE, PARTIES AND SECTS

/ Craig Rees

On
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the

In seasons of clear disagreement and open division, Jesus models stepping in and living out not stepping back and closing rank.

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Matthew 5

p.968

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A Special Person with a Special Message (5:1b)

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“He went up on a mountainside and sat down.”

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Moses	Jesus
Born while God's people were suffering under a cruel leader (Ex. 1:8)	Born while God's people were suffering under a cruel leader
Leader tried to kill babies (Ex. 1:16-22)	Leader tried to kill babies (Matt. 2:16)
Hid in Egypt as a child (Ex. 2:2)	Hid in Egypt as a child (Matt. 2:13)
Raised by a man who was not his father (Ex. 2:9-10)	Raised by a man who was not his father (Matt. 1:18-25)
Remained in a foreign land until the ruler died (Ex. 2:23; 4:19)	Remained in a foreign land until the ruler died (Matt. 2:20)
Ascended a mountain to receive the Law (Ex. 19:3; 24:16-17; Deut. 9:9)	Ascended a mountain to bring a new commandment (Matt. 5:1)
Fasted for forty days and nights (Ex. 34:28)	Fasted forty days and nights (Matt. 4:2)
Prepared for ministry through time in the wilderness (Ex. 2:15)	Prepared for ministry through time in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11)
Pentateuch (5) attributed to Moses	5 speeches given by Jesus (Matthew 5-7; 10, 13, 18, 22-25)

Moses	Jesus
Ascended the Mountain to be taught God's will	Ascended the mountain to teach God's will
Moses ascends the mountain to worship	Jesus ascends the mountain and is worshipped (Matt. 28:17)
Moses' face shone from his encounter with God on the mountain (Ex. 34:29-35)	Jesus is completely transfigured and his glory outlasts both Moses and Elijah (Matt. 17:1-9)
Moses spoke in the name of God	Jesus speaks in his own name (5:21-48)

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“While Matthew presents Jesus as Moses-like, he does not depict him as a new Moses but as Lord, the son of God.”

[David E. Garland, “Reading Matthew,” p.52]

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A Special Mission for a Special Season (5:1a)

On
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“Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down.”

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“Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down.”

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The crowds aren't there because they are religious.
They are there because they are restless.

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Sadducees	Pharisees	Essenes	Zealots
Wealthy conservatives	Middle Class reformationists	Communal Exclusivists	Radical revolutionists
Controlled the government Battled for power. Sadducees controlled the government but were afraid of the control the Pharisees had of the people.	Controlled the people	Withdrew from both government and people but showed compassion to those who came to them	Mobilized the people for revolution

Sadducees	Pharisees	Essenes	Zealots
Didn't like the Pharisees	Didn't like the Sadducees	Didn't like the priesthood	Didn't like the Romans and tax collectors – Jews were “cowards” if they paid taxes to Rome; taxation was slavery.
Literalists Argued over oral law verses written law; disagreed on resurrection; angels; God's sovereignty (P) or human responsibility (S)	Interpretationalists	Mystical (Apocalyptic)	Extremists
Preoccupied with temple ritual purity	Preoccupied with daily purity	Preoccupied with preparing for the future	Preoccupied with kicking Rome out and separating from Gentiles

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A Special Mission for a Special People (5:1c-2)

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“His disciples came to him,
and he began to teach them.”

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Question: To which of these parties did the disciples belong?

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“These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.”

[Matthew 10:2-4]

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[Matthew 10:2-4]

A Tale of Two Opposites

Matthew was the tax-collector and unpatriotic traitor!

Simon was the tax-hater and patriotic extremist!

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Jesus doesn't found a new party, he called people to him from the different parties and recommissioned them.

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