

“Matthew’s Follow Theme”

There are five main teaching blocks in the book of Matthew – they are entirely or almost entirely **RED: Chapters 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25**. Each of these end with a phrase like ...

“When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching ...”
Matthew 7:28 (NIV)

“After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples,
he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee.”
Matthew 11:1 (NIV)

“When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there.”
Matthew 13:53 (NIV)

“When Jesus had finished saying these things,
he left Galilee and went into the region of Judea to the other side of the Jordan.”
Matthew 19:1 (NIV)

“When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples ...”
Matthew 26:1 (NIV)

The end of the Sermon on the Mount has a strong emphasis on **action** ...

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven,
but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.”
Matthew 7:21 (NIV)

That is followed by a statement that many will say they did lots of stuff for the Lord but He will tell them ...

“‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons
and perform many miracles?’²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you.
Away from me, you evildoers!’”
Matthew 7:22-23 (NIV)

Then Jesus said ...

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts
them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”
Matthew 7:24 (NIV)

Jesus already commanded His followers to “follow Him” in Matthew 4:19 so evidently it wasn’t important to remind people here. The Luke parallel includes “coming, hearing, and doing” ...

“Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes
to me and hears my words and puts them into practice.”
Luke 6:46-47 (NIV)

The point is that it is not enough to know stuff about the Lord and what it means to follow Him. Most of us don’t need another “study”; we need a “doing” party. Most of us are educated far beyond our level of obedience. Hearing is extremely important (hence the structure of Matthew) but according to Jesus, it is only half of the equation. Many people are content to know about stuff that Jesus teaches but they haven’t made it a habit to do right away what they learn.