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PEOPLE AND PLACE: A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF
THE KINGDOM IN MATTHEW

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PEOPLE AND PLACE: A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF
THE KINGDOM IN MATTHEW

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To Hannah,
with whom I have made the vow
of the “Shining Barrier”

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>ABD</i>	D. N. Freedman, ed., <i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>ANF</i>	<i>The Ante-Nicene Fathers</i>
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
BDAG	Walter Bauer, Fredrick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, and Wilber Gingrich, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , 3 rd ed.
BDF	F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, <i>A Greek Grammar of the NT</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BTCB	Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>DJG</i>	<i>Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels</i>
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
<i>JAAR</i>	<i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCG</i>	<i>Journal of Cultural Geography</i>
JPTS	Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of New Testament Supplement
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for Study of the Old Testament</i>

<i>LNTS</i>	<i>Library of New Testament Studies</i>
L&N	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains</i>
LXX	Septuagint
NAC	The New American Commentary
NICNT	The New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NPNF	The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
PL	Patrologia Latina
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SNTS	Society of New Testament Studies
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
TWNT	Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary

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PREFACE

The idea to examine the space of the kingdom first entered my mind in a seminar on the kingdom of God with Mark Seifrid. As I read through the major works on the kingdom, I realized that the emphasis on the rule of God was at the expense of the spatial and person centered aspects of the kingdom. My supervisor, Jonathan Pennington, had already touched on this issue in his dissertation “Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew.” His project focused on why Matthew used the language of “heaven and earth” while I will spend more concentrated time on the implications of the spatial reality of the kingdom.

In some ways this dissertation does not fit into a neat category. It is trans-disciplinary. Historical-critical exegetes may be frustrated with the number of philosophical concepts (and may detest the word “space” after it is over), while philosophers may be annoyed by the detailed exegesis. Systematic theology could not be avoided (not that I wanted to) as the implications of the incarnation and its relationship to anthropology have massive importance. Some sociological observations are interspersed through the work concerning social theories of space and exorcisms. The focus is on exegesis of Matthew, but philosophical, sociological, geographical, and systematic reflections are interspersed. The need for this type of cross-study is increasingly recognized as beneficial. The bifurcation and specialization in each field has produced numerous strengths, but a weakness is that scholars forget to reach out across the aisle.

I want to thank my wife, Hannah, who patiently allowed me to work on the project. Jonathan Pennington read my chapters numerous times always providing helpful exegetical and structural suggestions. My father, Tom Schreiner, was regularly interacting with me on these ideas and helped improve the project in a variety of ways. I also need to

thank Matthew Sleeman who pointed me to numerous works on spatial theory and noted some novice mistakes I made in spatial understanding. My committee had helpful feedback towards the end of the process. Adam Christian also read my manuscript with an editor's eye and saved me from many errors. My prayer is that through this work one understands the Gospel of Matthew better, and thereby sees the face of God in Jesus Christ.

The soundtrack for this dissertation ranges from my Spotify playlist of movie scores, to Arcade Fire, Vampire Weekend, Daft Punk, Youth Lagoon, Over the Rhine, Roman Candle, Mozart, The Apache Relay, First Aid Kit, Phosphorescent, Lord Huron and many others. Each of these artists provided much inspiration as I perspired at the keyboard. Lord Huron's lyrics to their song "Ends of the Earth" are appropriate to my theme.

Oh, there's a river that winds on forever
I'm gonna see where it leads
Oh, there's a mountain that no man has mounted
I'm a gonna stand on the peak

Out there's a land that time don't command
Wanna be the first to arrive
No time for ponderin' why I'm-a wanderin'
On while we're both still alive

To the ends of the earth, would you follow me
There's a world that was meant for our eyes to see
To the ends of the earth, would you follow me
If you won't, I must say my goodbyes to thee.

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CHAPTER 1

THE ECLIPSE OF SPACE

A 1562 second edition of the Geneva Bible famously rendered Matthew 5:9 as “Blessed are the placemakers.” Although it was an error, the mistake inadvertently points to an important idea—the reality of spatial themes in Matthew.¹ Spatial studies are gaining popularity across the disciplines, but scholarship regarding the kingdom has been prone to neglect the spatial dimension. Usually, studies on the kingdom concentrate on two interrelated focuses. They emphasize the kingdom is God’s rule, and stress on the temporal question. Little attention is given to the “where” or “space” of the kingdom. Some admit the kingdom includes spatial aspects, but the implications of the spatial argument in Jesus’ ministry have not fully been investigated. This project will employ a spatial hermeneutic on Matthew’s presentation of the kingdom.

At least four reasons account for the neglect of spatial considerations concerning the kingdom in the Scriptures.² First, because the kingdom has been defined as God’s dynamic rule. This has been the leading view since Gustaf Dalman’s study *Die Worte*

¹E. V. Walker says, “We take for granted ritual and doctrine as theological subjects, but we tend to overlook the theology of building, settling, and dwelling. As expressions of religious experience, sacred places are as important as doctrine and ritual. They energise and shape religious meaning. They help make religious experience intelligible. A sacred place is not only an environment of sensory phenomena, but a moral environment as well.” E. V. Walker, *Placeways: A Theory of the Human Environment* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 77.

²Other arguments could be given such as the lack of a sense of rootedness in modern times because of globalization. Another argument for the importance of space from a Jewish perspective is the importance of the land in the Old Testament. I will not interact as much with this view as it has been covered by others. Craig Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011); Oren Martin, “Bound for the Kingdom: The Land Promise in God’s Redemptive Plan” (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013); W. D. Davies, *The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1994).

Jesu in 1898.³ George Eldon Ladd popularized this view in his numerous works on the kingdom arguing that the abstract idea is the primary meaning.⁴ Even the dictionaries have followed suit.⁵ But Ladd's conception of the kingdom must be understood in its historical and geographical context. For Ladd was at least in part reacting to dispensationalism with its focus on land, and therefore was prone to downplay the "place" or "space" feature.⁶ Although more people are dissenting to Ladd's circumscribed view of the kingdom,⁷ the supremacy of Dalman and Ladd's definition is still prevalent.⁸

³Gustaf Dalman, *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902).

⁴George Eldon Ladd has argued in line with Dalman that the primary emphasis is God's saving rule, which has already arrived in the person and work of Christ but will be consummated at his final return. See, for example, G. E. Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974); idem, "Kingdom of God-Reign or Realm," *JBL* 81, no. 3 (1962): 230-38. See also idem, "The Kingdom of God in the Jewish Apocryphal Literature, pt. 1," *BSac* 109, no. 433 (1952): 55-62; idem, "The Kingdom of God in Jewish Apocryphal Literature, pt. 2," *BSac* 109, no. 434 (1952): 164-74; idem, "The Kingdom of God in the Jewish Apocryphal Literature, pt. 3," *BSac* 109, no. 436 (1952): 318-31. Ladd does say, "We are not shut up to choosing one or the other of these two meanings is shown by the fact that both meanings of *malkuth* are found in the OT describing political affairs. *Malkuth* can be either a monarch's kingship, his reign, or it can be the realm over which he reigns. It is our thesis that both meanings are to be recognized in the teachings of Jesus, and that the primary meaning is the abstract or dynamic one, for it is God's kingly act establishing his rule in the world which brings into being the realm in which his rule is enjoyed." Ladd, "Kingdom of God-Reign or Realm," 236.

⁵As Kvalbein notes, this view is also promoted by the standard lexicons and dictionaries, Bauer-Aland, BDAG, TDNT. Hans Kvalbein, "Do Not Trust the Dictionaries: Basileia Is Realm, Not Rule or Reign" (paper presented at the SNTS, Berlin, 2010). Louw and Nida vigorously defend it, saying, "It is generally a serious mistake to translate the phrase 'the kingdom of God' as referring to a particular area in which God rules. The meaning of this phrase in the NT involves not a particular place or special period of time but the fact of ruling." Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domain* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 480.

⁶G. E. Ladd, *The Blessed Hope: A Biblical Study of the Second Advent and the Rapture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956).

⁷Jonathan Pennington argues that a monolithic understanding of the kingdom does not do justice to Matthew's use of the kingdom of heaven. Jonathan Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007). Hans Kvalbein has one of the more forceful articles arguing for realm as the primary meaning, although he may swing the pendulum too far away from reign. Kvalbein, "Do Not Trust the Dictionaries." Previously Aalen, the teacher of Kvalbein, argued for a spatial understanding from the Gospels. He asserts along different lines that the "kingdom" means the realm of God because if the phrase means reign, then it must be God who is the king, not Christ. But if Christ is the king how can God be king? He states that of course Jesus could be the viceroy of God, but the kingship of Christ does not conflict with the idea that the kingdom of God is essentially a community or an area. Sverre Aalen, "'Reign' and 'House' in the Kingdom of God in the Gospels," *NTS* 8 (1962): 215-40. Lohmeyer argues that the kingdom of God is the House or City of God. Ernst Lohmeyer, *Lord of the Temple*

Concerning the kingdom, I. Howard Marshall said, “While it has been emphasized almost *ad nauseam* that the primary concept is that of the sovereignty of kingship or actual rule of God and not of a territory ruled by a king, it must also be emphasized that kingship cannot be exercised in the abstract.”⁹

Second, the space and place facet have been ignored because in the modern era time has conquered space and left it in chains of irrelevance.¹⁰ With faster modes of transportation and communication time swallows up place and space.¹¹ Although time and space are allied, time tends to supplant the spatial component because in some sense time is more measurable. The sociologist Anthony Giddens argues that history and time began to be emphasized over geography and space when the mechanical clock began to

(Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), 62-91. Allison also has an extended argument of the kingdom including a spatial component. Dale Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 164-204. Scot McKnight also argues in his book that to say that the kingdom is a reign is to tell half of a story. Scot McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2014), 74.

⁸I am not denying that Ladd’s influence was largely positive, for even I am using his “kingdom now” paradigm. However, this does not mean his definition and conception cannot be sharpened.

⁹I. Howard Marshall, “Church,” in *DJG*, ed. Joel Green et al. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 123. Gerhard Lohfink said, “A kingdom without a people is no king at all but a figure in a museum.” Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus of Nazareth: What He Wanted, Who He Was*, trans. Linda Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2012), 25.

¹⁰David Harvey asserts social theories typically privilege time over space: “They broadly assume either the existence of some pre-existing spatial order within which temporal processes operate, or that spatial barriers have been so reduced as to render space a contingent rather than fundamental aspect of human action.” David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989), 205. Weder argues it is fruitless to concentrate upon the chronological question and used spatial metaphors to describe the eschatology of Jesus. The emphasis is not on time but on power, the here and now, and not on the apocalyptic. Hans Weder, *Gegenwart Und Gottesherrschaft : Überlegungen Zum Zeitverständnis Bei Jesus Und Im Frühen Christentum* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verl, 1993).

¹¹Another name for this phenomenon is globalization. Martin Heidegger said the following about the change he was witnessing: “All distances in time and space are shrinking. Man now reaches overnight, by plan, places which formerly took weeks and months to travel. He now receives instant information, by radio, of events which he formerly learning about only years later. . . . Yet the frantic abolition of all distances brings no nearness; for nearness does not consist in shortness of distance. Martin Heidegger, “The Thing,” in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (London: Harper Colophon, 1975), 165-66.

become widely available at the end of the eighteenth century.¹² Edward Casey, professor of philosophy, has argued that time has become dominant with everything else being subjacent to it “beginning with place and ending with space.”¹³ The phrase “time will tell” is not only what we say in the modern era, but also what we believe. But whenever we think of time as a string-like succession, we spatialize it.¹⁴ Even the temporal language of being “before” and “after” invokes spatial distinctions. The temporal fingers have reached their way into New Testament studies as noted in the dominant temporal categories directing kingdom studies. Eric Stewart even asserts, “Nowhere is the privileging of time over space more apparent than in New Testament studies.”¹⁵

However, space is integral to temporal understandings. Although space has become the given, and time the variable in the equation, both need to be fleshed out to get a full-orbed picture of the kingdom. Yi-Fu Tuan rightly asks, “If people lack a sense of clearly articulated space, will they have a sense of clearly articulated time?”¹⁶ Although the twin towers of time and space can be separated in the abstract, in reality they are interwoven. Doreen Massey, a geographer and social scientist, argues they are integral to one another and that for time to be open, space must be in some sense be open too.¹⁷ The

¹²Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity, 1990), 18. He argues localized activities dominated the shaping of space by pre-modern societies but that the situation has changed. The advent of modernity increasingly tears space away by fostering relations between “absent” others.

¹³Edward Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 8.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁵Eric Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus: An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 41.

¹⁶Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 119.

¹⁷Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), 48. The Old Testament presents a dual emphasis on time and space. Only at a certain *time* of year could the priests could enter certain *spaces*. Karen Wenell gives a helpful chart to illustrate the connections between the ideology of holiness, sacred space, sacrifice, time and people in her book. What is clear is that space mattered, time and space were

centrality of time relative to the kingdom has often been investigated in studies on the kingdom. It appears justified that a spatial lens will open new roads to travel.

Third, the spatial aspect of the kingdom has been neglected because of the influence of Platonic dualism.¹⁸ Plato divided the world between the “ideas/forms” and the material world. The material world, according to Plato, is not the real world but only an image or copy of the real world. In this conception, both the physical land and people’s bodies become unimportant. This view has been remarkably influential throughout the history of Christian thought through the influence of Philo.¹⁹ Although alterations to this view are making progress, sometimes the material is still disparaged in Christianity.²⁰ If one asserts the importance of materialism, then both bodies and space become important. As Tournier says, “Man is not a pure spirit, and he has part in the places in which he has lived and experienced joy and sadness. He is bound up with matter, with things, with the ground he lives on. Our place is our link to the world.”²¹ At the intersection of body and

linked, but there may also be an accent on one at the expense of the other. Karen Wenell, *Jesus and Land: Sacred and Social Space in Second Temple Judaism*, LNTS (New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 66.

¹⁸Admittedly, this is a debated point. Hans Boersma argues it is the loss of Christian Platonism that leads people to devalue the material world. For the Platonic tradition, the natural and supernatural relate by way of participation. Hans Boersma, *Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011). See also Paul Tyson, *Returning to Reality: Christian Platonism for Our Times* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014). Robin Parry, *The Biblical Cosmos: A Pilgrim’s Guide to the Weird and Wonderful World of the Bible* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014).

¹⁹Aquinas did object to the dualism between body and soul. See Denys Turner, *Thomas Aquinas: A Portrait* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 70–99.

²⁰One of the more famous proponents of the importance of the body in the “materialism” of the afterlife is N. T. Wright. In his book *The Resurrection of the Son of God* he persuasively argues that resurrection is something that happens to bodies. N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003). Outside of biblical studies, Mark Johnson has some good reflections on the importance of the body. He argues what one calls “mind” and “body” are not two things, but rather aspects of one organic process. Mark Johnson, *The Meaning of the Body: Aesthetics of Human Understanding* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 1. But still reflections on the kingdom have also been prone to neglect the body in relation to the kingdom.

²¹Paul Tournier, *A Place for You: Psychology and Religion* (New York: Harper Collins, 1968), 30.

earth place begins to materialize. Being embodied creatures means that humans are also “implaced” creatures, rooted creatures.²² One must always be *somewhere*. Reflections on the kingdom have also been prone to neglect the body’s affiliation with the kingdom.²³ If the Platonic dualism is broken, then space and bodies suddenly become significant.

Finally, neglect of the spatial notions stem from constricted views of space and place. Space has been thought of too narrowly. Most view it either as a Newtonian or Galileian absolute concept, or as a static physical representation.²⁴ Because of the influence of both Newton and Galileo, space is thought of as closed, stopped up, unchanging, and lifeless. Humanistic geographers have called this view “spatial separatism.” Spatial separatism approaches space as autonomous from social processes.²⁵ In the language of Charles Taylor, the cosmos is now viewed as buffered or closed.²⁶ But what if space is

²²Jacobsen writes, “Unlike many Eastern religions or ancient myths, the body is nowhere in Scripture portrayed as a barrier to faithful living or a liability to our relationship to God.” Some may argue against this assertion with an appeal to the “flesh” language in Paul’s epistles. But “flesh” is notoriously difficult to translate and many times can be understood as sinful desire rather than referring to the material body. Eric Jacobsen, *The Space Between: A Christian Engagement with the Built Environment* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 37.

²³Phenomenology has much to offer in the way it views the body. Inge says it is the starting place for protests against closed views of space. John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 31. What phenomenology contributes to theological attempts of talking of embodiment is that it offers a difference perspective of the body. The body is not objectified, rather the body is a conduit of presence and of relationality toward other human being and toward the environment it encounters. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1962); Lawrence Hass, *Merleau-Ponty’s Philosophy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); Ola Sigurdson, “How to Speak of the Body? Embodiment Between Phenomenology and Theology,” *Studia Theologica* 62, no. 1 (2008): 25-43.

²⁴I will trace the influence of Galileo and Newton in chap. 3, but in short, Foucault says it best: “The real scandal of Galileo’s work lay not so much in his discovery, or rediscovery, that the earth revolved around the sun, but in his constitution of an infinite and infinitely open space. In such a space the place of the Middle Ages turned out to be dissolved, as it were; a thing’s place was no longer anything but a point in its movement, just as the stability of a thing was only its movement infinitely slowed down. In other words, starting with Galileo and the seventeenth century, extension was substituted for localisation.” Michel Foucault, “Of Other Spaces,” *Diacritics* 16 (1986): 23.

²⁵Derek Gregory, “Space,” in *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, ed. Derek Gregory et al., 5th ed. (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 708.

²⁶James K. A. Smith, *How (Not) To Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 34.

porous and open? What if it is moldable and has a transcendent, enchanted, and legendary purpose? What if it is not de-sacramentalized, but sacramentalized?²⁷ The tendency remains to view humanity as adrift in a cold unenergized cosmos. This “coldness” can be seen in the concepts that arise when space/place are invoked. To be placed does not only imply geographical locations, but physical locations represent social, ideological, and mental places, or places of identity. For biblical studies, “space” triggers either the land in the Old Testament or the reconstitution of national Israel. Both concern either the past or the future with little “enchantment” in the present. What if space affects everyday existence? Michel Foucault was one of the pioneers in reasserting a more complex view of space. He says, “Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile. Time, on the contrary was richness, fecundity, life.”²⁸ Foucault did not understand why time was infused with agency and societal development, while geography and space was considered lifeless and dead. Why was history socially produced and not space?

Christopher Tilly alleges the following about typical views of space:

Such a view of space de-centered it from agency and meaning. It was something that could be objectively measured in terms of an abstracted geometry of scale. Space was quite literally a nothingness, a simple surface for action, lacking depth. This space was universal and everywhere and anywhere the same, and had cross-cultural impact on people and society. . . . Space as container, surface and volume was substantial inasmuch as it existed in itself and for itself, external to and indifferent to human affairs. The neutrality of this space resulted in its being divorced from any consideration of structures of power and domination.²⁹

Therefore because of (1) the primary emphasis on dynamic rule (2) the

²⁷By sacramental I am simply affirming that God reveals himself through created things.

²⁸Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 70. In another article Foucault writes, “The great obsession of the nineteenth century was, as we know, history. . . . The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed.” Michel Foucault, “Des Espace Autres,” trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 1.

²⁹Christopher Tilly, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), 9.

dominance of time, (3) the dualistic tension, (4) and constricted views space, the spatial aspects of the kingdom have been deserted. If discussed at all, the realm aspect is usually relegated to a future inheritance, or an acknowledgement that the king must have a domain over which to reign.³⁰ Biblical theologians do note the land theme running across Scripture, but they usually have little to say when they come to the Gospels. So, how does one tie the space of the kingdom to Jesus' ministry? My goal is to help readers see the magnitude of kingdom space *in Jesus' ministry* and the conferral of this mission to his community. In this way I propose a different perspective on the kingdom than is usually presented. The focus on Jesus' ministry is intentional, for although the Gospels culminate in the death and resurrection of Jesus, they still spend a vast amount of limited papyrus space on his ministry.³¹ The basic question I will try to answer is: how do recent spatial theories help one understand Jesus' bringing of the kingdom in Matthew? Our reading of Matthew has become dis-placed, and it is time to be re-placed.³²

A Spatial Turn and Biblical Studies

A spatial turn is sweeping through the wider scholarly world in the social sciences, humanities, and philosophy.³³ Across the disciplines, the study of space has

³⁰Dispensationalists argue it is the reconstitution of national Israel. More recently Joel Willitts notes the correlation between the land-kingdom motif, arguing that it entails Israel's territorial restoration. Joel Willitts, *Matthew's Messianic Shepherd-King: In Search of "The Lost Sheep of the House of Israel"* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 168-73. However, these approaches look at territorialism and geography from a purely static view. Spatial theories can also be examined in light of human agency and social structures. In the coming pages I provide a brief overview of the changing views on geography.

³¹Apart from his life and teaching, the death and resurrection of Jesus make little sense.

³²I have surveyed many commentaries on Matthew, and this topic to my knowledge is rarely broached. One exception is Dale Bruner's commentary although he does not go into much analysis. He helpfully says, "The word "kingdom" denotes both a *place* and a *power*; it is both a space-word horizontally and a time-word vertically. The idea of space is by not means secondary." F. D. Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary. The Christbook, Matthew 1-12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 140.

³³Soja says, "The foundational moment for what would eventually become the Spatial Turn was an assertion of the ontological parity of space and time, that each was formative of the other at the most basic existential level, with neither being intrinsically privileged." He also says it burst onto the academic scene sometime in the mid 1990's. Edward Soja, "Taking Space Personally," in *The Spatial Turn*,

undergone a profound and sustained resurgence. “Recent works in the fields of literary and cultural studies, sociology, political science, anthropology, history, and art history have become increasingly spatial in their orientation.”³⁴ Anthropologists are beginning to speak of gendered spaces, embodied spaces, inscribed spaces, contested spaces, transnational spaces, and spatial tactics.³⁵ Space is becoming every bit as important as time in the unfolding of human affairs.³⁶ Not in the trivial sense that everything occurs in space, but because *where* events unfold, *how* space takes shape, the relationship *between* identity and space, and the role of human beings in the production of space is more and more important. Space is no longer thought of as a passive participant, but an active one and those who relegate geography and space to the status of inconsequential, do so at their own risk.

The spatial turn in the wider scholarly world has pushed through the temporal rubble, but biblical studies is still playing catch-up on more recent developments in both

ed. Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge, 2009), 18. Sloterdijk says that the present project is an attempt to recover Being and Space from its state of entombment. He believes that much of Heidegger’s interest in rootedness can be salvaged. Peter Sloterdijk, *Bubbles*, vol. 1 of *Spheres*, trans. Wieland Hoban (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2011), 342.

³⁴Barney Warf and Santa Arias, “Introduction: The Reinsertion of Space into Social Sciences and Humanities,” in *The Spatial Turn*, 1. French thinker Gaston Bachelard proposes what he calls *topoanalysis* to study the psychological importance of place. In psychic spatiality place is everything. All the images contained within one’s mind, the date or time is only one way of organizing things. Humans usually organize things in their minds around place. Topoanalysis is the exploration of self-identity through place. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (New York: Orion, 1964), 8-9.

³⁵Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga, eds., *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003). Halvor Moxnes, “Body, Gender and Social Space: Dilemmas in Constructing Early Christian Identities,” in *Identity Formation in the New Testament*, ed. Bengt Holmberg and Mikael Winninge (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 163-81.

³⁶Warf and Arias attribute this spatial turn to three different factors. First, although it may seem that globalization may have annihilated the importance of space, globalization has increased interest in geography has acquired a renewed significance. Second, the Internet has raised issues of spatiality in several fields. Third, the rapidly rising global ecological and environmental problems have played a large role in elevating the importance of space. Warf and Arias, “Introduction,” 5-6. The role of space is communicated by the psychologist Paul Tournier in his book *A Place for You*, in which he demonstrated we are intrinsically spatial beings. Tournier, *A Place for You*.

spatial and geographical theories.³⁷ However, the subject has not been entirely neglected.³⁸ Matthew Sleeman, professor of New Testament at Oak Hill College, has incorporated spatial theories in his published dissertation *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts*.³⁹ Sleeman argues Jesus' ascension is foundational for establishing the relationship between "spatiality" and presence in Acts. The narrator's understanding of space and place is shaped by Christ's heavenly location. In this way the study moves away from (but does not contradict) the more temporal readings in Acts.

Sleeman's work is a welcome contribution to New Testament scholarship. A more geographical and spatial bent complements the temporal readings of the biblical text, which New Testament scholarship outside of dispensationalism has been wary of traversing. His correlation between heaven and earth and the tight connection between

³⁷Place has not been entirely neglected, but usually it is thought of simply as "physical space." For an example, see Duling's articles. Dennis C. Duling, "The Jesus Movement and Social Network Analysis (Part I: The Spatial Network)," *BTB* 29, no. 4 (1999): 156-75; idem, "The Jesus Movement and Social Network Analysis (Part II: The Social Network)," *BTB* 30, no. 1 (2000): 3-14. A few are applying the theory I will present in chap. 3. For an overview see Eric C. Stewart, "New Testament Space/Spatiality," *BTB* 29, no. 3 (2012): 139-49.

³⁸For studies that employ critical spatiality or argue in a similar way, see Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus*; James Flanagan, "Ancient Perceptions of Space/Perceptions of Ancient Space," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 15-43; Jon Berquist and Claudia Camp, eds., *Constructions of Space I: Theory, Geography and Narrative* (New York: T & T Clark, 2007); Jon Berquist and Claudia Camp, eds., *Constructions of Space II: The Biblical City and Other Imagined Spaces* (New York: T & T Clark, 2008); J. Cornelius De Vos, Karen Wenell, and Jorunn Økland, eds., *Constructions of Space III: Biblical Spatiality and the Sacred* (New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2014); Mark George, ed., *Constructions of Space IV: Further Developments in Examining Ancient Israel's Social Space* (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013); Gert Prinsloo and Christl Maier, *Constructions of Space V: Place, Space and Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013); Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003); Matthew Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Mark George, *Israel's Tabernacle as Social Space* (Atlanta: SBL, 2009); Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*.

³⁹Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension*. Before obtaining a Ph.D. in New Testament, Sleeman earned a Ph.D. in geography. One can read a previous essay from geographical conference in the book *New Words, New Worlds*. Martin Clark and Matthew Sleeman, "Writing the Earth, Righting the Earth: Committed Presuppositions and the Geographical Imagination," in *New Words, New Worlds: Reconceptualising Social and Cultural Geography*, ed. Chris Philo (Aberystwyth, Wales: Cambrian, 1991), 49-59.

the two are helpful for thinking about the real presence of Christ.

Yet spatial theories can be applied in different and more expansive ways. While Sleeman focuses on Acts, the Gospel of Matthew also has much to discuss and examine in this regard. Matthew employs the spatial terminology of heaven and earth throughout his Gospel more than any other Gospel writer. In addition, unlike Luke, Matthew did not find it necessary to provide a part two of his book. His writing sufficiently told the story of the Messiah. While Luke provides two accounts of the ascension, the end of Matthew's Gospel is curious in this regard, for he does not write of Jesus leaving. Although the evading of the ascension in Matthew's narrative does not mean the ascension is unimportant to the Christian faith, it does indicate Matthew's distinct portrayal of the continuing presence of Jesus. The ascension may be implied by Jesus' promise in the Great Commission, but Matthew never explicitly states that Jesus left and leaves readers with an intentional great omission. When the curtain closes on Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is simply on the mountain promising his disciples that he will be with them. He does not even mention the Spirit. He is, as many scholars have noted, Immanuel, now and forevermore. Therefore, not only the ascension or the Spirit's role need to be examined from a spatial perspective, but so too the incarnation and the community's mission.

Spatial theories have implications not only for the ascension and exaltation of Jesus, but for the incarnation and the presence of Jesus.⁴⁰ Is Matthew communicating something distinctive about Jesus' presence and his relationship to the spatial kingdom? Can spatial theories be beneficial in answering this question? These questions are not contradictory to Sleeman, but rather complementary. If the spatial ideas I will present in

⁴⁰Inge writes, "Although emphasis on the Holy Land and Jerusalem recedes in the New Testament, the incarnation . . . supports the notion of place retaining vital significance in God's dealings with humanity, since places can be thought of as the seat of relations, or the place of meetings and activity in the interaction between God and the world." Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, 58. N. T. Wright also argues the ascension tells us about Jesus' continuing *human* work in the present, but this is not how Matthew presents it. N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 113.

chapter 3 are helpful for our understanding of biblical texts as Sleeman has proposed, then not only do Acts and the ascension need a fresh analysis, but so too Matthew, the incarnation, and the role of the church.

Thesis

I propose that help can be found in viewing the kingdom as spatial in Matthew by (1) expanding one's view of space; (2) tying space to the human body; (3) thinking through the social production of space; (4) and tethering all this to the imagination. The thesis can be stated in two ways. *Theologically*, Jesus descends upon the earth in the flesh to reorder the space of earth.⁴¹ In *metaphysical* terms, the spatial aspect of the kingdom is localized in the human body by means of the Holy Spirit, and human bodies create “imagined” kingdom spaces by social living.⁴² In lay terms, the spatial kingdom begins in the body.

By “imagined” I do not mean an invention. Rather, I refer to what Wendell Berry calls “the impulse to transcend the limits of experience or provable knowledge in

⁴¹I will define and describe “space” in chap. 3.

⁴²The body has been associated with space and place before. In the Babylonian text *Enuma Elish*, Marduk takes the slain body of Tiamat and builds the earth. Casey therefore says that body and place belong together from the very beginning. Their fate is linked. See Casey, *Getting Back into Place*, 45. Bartholomew in *Where Mortals Dwell* traces place from Genesis to Revelation. From the very beginning in the Scriptures this has been the case. Adam was created to live in the Garden, and displacement was at the heart of God's judgment. Framing the storyline in this way, then the re-placement of God's people would be the goal. The connection between *who* Adam is, and *where* he is, can be seen in the Hebrew words used in Genesis to identify him. Adam is *adam* while the ground from which he is formed is *adamah*. The author is showing the concept of people and place/space are woven together. The emphasis on place in Scripture can also be seen in the concept of land. Abraham is promised land, and much of the Jewish Scriptures are framed in seeking for the land, finding it, losing it, and desiring it. At the end of Revelation, a city comes down from heaven, which is described as Bride. It is both a people, and place. These two concepts can never really be dissociated, although they are distinct. Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell*. Stuart Elden also notes the presence of *autochthony* in Greek myths. *Autochthony* is the idea that men sprang up fully formed, born of the earth. People were not just born there, but born from there. This again causes an explicit organic link between land and people. Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 21-26. Someone pointed me to Lohfink's book after my dissertation was largely written. He also emphasizes the people and place aspect of the kingdom: “For Jesus the reign of God not only has its own time, it also has its own place in which to be made visible and tangible. That place is the people of God” Lohfink, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 40.

order to make a thing that is whole.”⁴³ He also describes the imagination as a way of knowing things that can be known no other way; it is the power to make us *see*, or the idea of the mind running on beyond the deliverance of the senses, and beyond positions justified by reason, to conclusions which come to govern our behavior.⁴⁴ Imagining is insisting on and reaching for an alternate way of seeing things.

I am not simply arguing that the land promises are de-territorialized and attachment to the land and temple is to be replaced by attachment to the person of Jesus. This argument has been rehearsed a number of times.⁴⁵ However, the de-territorialization contains a spiritualization of the land promises not respecting the spatial promises. Better to not discard territory and space altogether, but tie these concepts to anthropology and spatial production. The land, Jerusalem, and the temple are transcended in Jesus, but at the same time there is a genuine concern with these realities. W. D. Davies argues that the New Testament, “personalizes holy space” in Christ.⁴⁶ Yet this personalization is not simply interiorization, but a way of conceiving of the production of space through the body.⁴⁷ Through the body of Jesus and his community space is produced.⁴⁸ In Matthew,

⁴³Wendell Berry, *Imagination in Place* (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2010), 3. It is closer to what James Smith describes as “a precognitive aesthetic by which we navigate and make sense of the world.” But I would trade out the word “pre-cognitive” for a concept that clarifies that it is not solely rationalistic, and includes both the mind and senses. James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 19.

⁴⁴Through the imagination one constructs a world which contains value-elements, and controls and affects decisions, intentions, choices, friendships.

⁴⁵Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, 366-76. According to Davies the land had become irrelevant to Paul and Jesus personalizes “holy space.” Bruce Waltke, *An Old Testament Theology: An Exegetical, Canonical, and Thematic Approach* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 534. G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 751.

⁴⁶Davies, *The Gospel and the Land*, 367.

⁴⁷The production of space has always been through the body. But Jesus’ body represents humanity in its completeness and thus is an intensified picture of what humanity could and should be.

⁴⁸This argument will be developed as the work continues. See specifically chaps 3 and 4.

the sacred sites are de-sacralized in a way that points to Jesus setting aside the boundaries of the land, but also fulfilling them in a greater sense when Jesus asserts his claim over the whole earth. Matthew's schema does not de-territorialize, rather, he expands this territory to be both heaven and earth.⁴⁹ This transposition is mediated through his presence. In other words the land promises of the OT are not disinherited, for the promises were always universal in scope.⁵⁰

In a work such as this, space does not permit me to analyze all the different aspects of the kingdom, even in Matthew.⁵¹ Therefore, I am focusing on the kingdom as a space/place and on its presence or immanence. Although the future and transcendent nature of space are significant, I want to focus on Jesus' creation of space *in* his ministry.

⁴⁹The de-territorialization theme seems to be a common statement, but it is not nuanced enough. Jesus' promises are territorial, but just in a different sense than the Jews expected. See Riches for an example of de-territorialization. John Riches, *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 294.

⁵⁰Consider the text from Ben Sira 44:21. "Therefore, the Lord certified for Abraham with a solemn pledge that he would bless nations through his descendants, that he would make him increase like the dust of the earth, exalt his descendants like the stars, and give them an inheritance from sea to sea and from the river to the end of the earth." Therefore it seems as if Second Temple Jewish writers viewed the promise to Abraham as universal in scope.

⁵¹I will also focus on the presence of the spatial kingdom in Matthew, although this theme appears in other places in Scripture. Luke 17:20-21 in particular has a very clear reference to this concept. The Pharisees ask when the kingdom of God will come (temporal question), and Jesus replies by telling them they do not understand the nature of the kingdom (could he be saying it is spatial, but not as they expect?), for the kingdom of God is coming in ways that cannot be observed. In v. 21 Jesus clarifies that "The kingdom of God is in the midst of you" (ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστίν). Although there is much debate whether this should be translated "within you" or in the "midst of you," clearly he is correcting their view of the kingdom as not external, but localized. The *Gospel of Thomas* 113 has a parallel passage: Jesus' disciples said to him, 'When will the kingdom come?' Jesus said, 'It will not come by expectation. It will not be a matter of saying "here it is" or "there it is." Rather the kingdom of the Father is spread out upon the earth, and people do not see it. The parallel does tie the concepts of "spread out upon the earth" with it being ἐντὸς ὑμῶν. Could Jesus be saying the kingdom is spatial now in bodily form? Both the *Gospel of Thomas* and Tertullian (Marc. 4.35) associate the saying in Luke 17:20-21 with Deut 30:11-14 (LXX), where the commandment is said to be not far away, or in heaven, or beyond the sea, but very near, in one's heart, and in one's hands. Deuteronomy casts the commandment in spatial terms, not far away, or in heaven, but near. If both Tertullian and *The Gospel of Thomas* tie this passage to the nearness language of Deuteronomy, then it would be fitting to tie such to the spatiality of Jesus' body. The kingdom is in the midst of them in the person of Jesus. Luke is not giving a spiritualization or interiorization of the kingdom in the usual sense.

In my survey of the literature, this is the facet that has been most neglected. Although I will focus on the kingdom as place and space this does not mean I am rejecting the kingdom is also a reign. I am contending that the realm and reign aspects in reality cannot be separated, although they can be distinguished.⁵² I will not trace the thought history of space from the ANE to the modern period, as fruitful as this could be, because that would be a dissertation in its own right.⁵³ However, the possibility of an argument exists for the correlation between postmodern views of geography and those in the Second Temple period and in the Greco-Roman world.⁵⁴

My argument is also not asserting first-century Christians or Jesus explicitly thought in the spatial categories I will present in chapter 3, nor to colonize him into a geography of philosophical thinking. Rather, it is advancing a more expansive understanding of spatiality that is a universal human experience. Space and place are not static but active. They are not simply geographical concepts to be studied on maps, but need to be thought through socially as well.⁵⁵ The sociological understanding of space

⁵²Foucault asserted that power and space are connected right across the spectrum from such a macro scale to the “little tactics of habitat.” He said “a whole history remains to be written of space—which would at the same time be a history of powers.” Michel Foucault, “The Eye of Power,” in *Power Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings (1972-77)*, ed. Colin Gordon (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 149.

⁵³But as acknowledged, in some sense this is impossible, because they are tied together.

⁵⁴Stewart looks at the ancient conception of space from ancient geographers and authors: “There is evidence among many ancient Greek geographers of a concern with scientific geography, there is far more interest in what might be termed ‘human or cultural geography.’” He spends less time on human geography in early Judaism (90-92) although there is probably work that could be done here, specifically on them saying Jerusalem was the center of the world (Ezek 5:5; Isa 19:24). Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus*, 67.

⁵⁵Sleeman notes how ancient writers viewed history and geography not as separate but intertwined. Geography is not only a setting for history but part of history. Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension*, 50. William Cavanaugh summarizes Michel de Certeau’s insights on maps: “Pre-modern representations of space marked out itineraries which told ‘spatial stories’, for example, the illustration of the route of a pilgrimage which gave instructions on where to pray, where to spend the night, and so on. Rather than surveying them as a whole, the pilgrim moves through particular spaces, tracing a narrative through space and time by his or her movements and practices. . . . By contrast modernity gave rise to the mapping of space on a grid, a ‘formal ensemble of abstract places’ from which the itinerant was erased. . . . Each item on the map occupies its proper place, such that things are set beside one another, and no two things can occupy the same space. The point of view of the map user is detached and universal, allowing

which views “geography as not simply territorial, but something altogether different, more complex, and more interesting.”⁵⁶ One can feel the difference a person makes on place centuries later. The physicists Niels Bohr and Werner Heisenberg noticed this when they visited Krønberg Castle in Denmark. Bohr said to Heisenberg:

Isn't it strange how this castle changes as soon as one imagines that Hamlet lived here? As scientists we believe that a castle consists only of stones, and admire the way the architect put them together. The stones, the green roof with its patina, the wood carvings in the church, constitute the whole castle. None of this should be changed by the fact that Hamlet lived here, and yet it is changed completely. Suddenly the walls and ramparts speak a quite different language. The courtyard becomes an entire world, a dark corner reminds us of the darkness in the human soul, we hear Hamlet's "To be or not to be."⁵⁷

What Bohr did not reflect upon was how this experience also changed them. This experience of seeing “where” Hamlet lived changed the way they related to the world even though they never met Hamlet personally. Jesus, in the same way, by coming to the earth, changed this place forever. The spatial kingdom is becoming in Jesus' ministry, and the time has come to reflect more deeply on this aspect.

Outline of Argument

The basic question I am seeking to answer is how do recent spatial theories help one understand Jesus' bringing of the kingdom in Matthew? By expanding one's view of space one can see that Jesus comes to reorder the space of the earth in Matthew as the heavenly king. Jesus pierces the barrier between the two realms in his incarnation, and the spaces of heaven and earth begin to collide in his ministry. Therefore, in Matthew, Jesus does not just promise a temporal or ethereal kingdom, but one that is located, one that has a sense of rootedness. He is granted authority over this space and

the entire space to be seen simultaneously.” William Cavanaugh, “The World in a Wafer: A Geography of the Eucharist as Resistance to Globalization,” *Modern Theology* 15 (1999): 183.

⁵⁶Barney Warf, “From Surfaces to Networks,” in *The Spatial Turn*, 74.

⁵⁷Quoted in Tuan, *Space and Place*, 4.

inspires people to follow him in this construction project. The spatial kingdom begins in his body, and he extends it to his church by promising his presence. The body, as Mary Douglas has argued, is a “symbol of society,” an expression of social attitudes.⁵⁸ Jesus’ body suggests social and spatial stances. What has been sketched above will be argued in Matthew in four parts.

Part 1: Chapter 2 presents Matthew as a candidate for exploring this theme. Matthew contains two commonly noted themes that show that Matthew was not an arbitrary choice for analysis. Not only does Matthew pair heaven and earth (two realms) in his Gospel, but he portrays Jesus as Immanuel. Matthew explicitly links the themes of the presence of Jesus and spatial union in two places, Matthew 18:20 and 28:18-20. Chapter 3 then introduces a theoretical foundation called critical spatiality. Critical spatiality provides a way to understand space as a social product. The spatial theories I present in chapter 3 expand the conception of space by giving three categories for understanding space and the production of space. Space is physical (firstspace), ideological (secondspace), and imaginative (thirdspace).⁵⁹ Chapters 1-3 lay the foundation upon which to build an argument concerning Jesus’ reordering the space of the earth.

Part 2: (Deeds) Chapter 4 examines one of the deeds of Jesus from a spatial perspective. When Jesus contests Beelzebul in Matthew 12, he is challenging the “lord of the earth.” By entering his house he reorders the space of the earth. Jesus conquers the lord of the earth by entering his space and then bestowing life to the exorcised person. Chapter 5 looks at the Spirit in the Beelzebul controversy and in Matthew more generally. The

⁵⁸Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966); idem, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon, 1970).

⁵⁹Firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace are analogous in some ways to the use of the speech act theory in biblical studies. The speech act theory uses categories outside the biblical text, from linguistic theory, to help one understand the complexity of the use of words. In a similar way, critical spatiality employs a geographical theory of space in order to assist the comprehension of the use of space and place in the Scripture.

Spirit is the inaugurator of the new exodus/new creation, and therefore the spatial kingdom is becoming in Jesus' exorcisms.

Part 3: (Words) In chapter 6 I broaden my scope and move from one specific deed to give an overview of the first three discourses in Matthew. Each of them (in different ways) reveals how Jesus is making a world by breaking a world. His words create worlds in the Sermon on the Mount, where he calls his disciples to be salt and light on the earth. In the commissioning of the disciples, Jesus tells his disciples to go out bringing peace to houses and healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out demons. The kingdom parables describe the kingdom as present, but hidden. The space of the earth is the theater upon which the kingdom is enacted. Chapter 7 then looks at the last two discourses. Jesus forms a meek *ἐκκλησία* space in the community discourse. The church's actions are contrasted with the communities of the world. In the last discourse Jesus contests the most important sacred space in the ancient world, the temple.

Part 4: Chapters 8 and 9 form the conclusion. Chapter 8 analyzes two final texts that provide an *inclusio* to chapter 2. Both the spatial kingdom and Jesus' presence, correspond to chapter 2. In Matthew 19:28 Jesus speaks of the new world (heaven and earth united) where he will rule alongside his new family. Then the nature of Jesus' presence is drilled down more concretely in an analysis of Matthew 18:20. Chapter 9 closes with conclusions and implications. I conclude that Jesus' body is the key to uniting the dual Immanuel and spatial themes in Matthew. Jesus' body is a microcosm of the two realms and the kingdom is a thirdspace.

Geography literally means "earth-writing", combining the Greek *γῆ* (earth) and *γραφία* (writing). "Earth-writing" can be thought of in two ways; either writing *about* the world, or writing (shaping, transforming) the world. It is my argument that Jesus in Matthew is geo-graphing the earth in the latter sense. He is rewriting, reforming, reordering, and reconciling the two realms of heaven and earth through his presence.

CHAPTER 2

THE PRESENCE OF JESUS AND THE SPATIAL KINGDOM

Introduction

Does Matthew have any emphasis on space and place? Are these themes that he cares about? The Gospel of Matthew was not a random choice for this analysis, nor am I forcing Matthew to conform to an abstract model. Two of Matthew's distinctive emphases make Matthew a principal candidate for exploring the relationship between the presence of Jesus and the space of the kingdom. In this section I argue that Matthew's Gospel stresses, (1) the presence of Jesus and, (2) the kingdom as spatial in nature.¹ These themes also raise some interesting questions. Questions such as: Why does Matthew emphasize these two realms? Is the spatial kingdom present in Jesus' ministry? In what way? Why does Jesus promise his presence in the Great Commission, but make no mention of the Spirit? Is Matthew trying to communicate something distinct about Jesus here? In what way will Jesus be *with* his community after he is gone bodily? And do the two themes of space and presence connect in any way?

By noting the occurrence of the two themes listed above, one can then work back into the text to see Jesus' embodiment of the kingdom as the manifestation of the spatial kingdom. The body of Jesus is the starting point for an understanding of how the spatial element develops. Jesus comes from heaven bringing the kingdom in his person. The body of Jesus, the heavenly Son, disrupts and reorders the space of the earth.

¹Matthew did not sit to write and consciously think of spatial theories. Rather these themes naturally flowed through his work and his work repositions spatial theory.

Immanuel

All of the defining moments in the life of Christ in the Gospels relate to Jesus' presence. Jesus being "with" (*μετά*) his disciples is an explicit Matthean theme.² At least three texts speak to the theme of the presence of Jesus. First, in Matthew 1:23 he quotes Isaiah saying, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel (which means God with us)." Second, Matthew 18:20, where Jesus promises that when two or three are gathered in his name, he is present with them. The third text is in Matthew 28:20 the last verse of the Gospel, where Jesus assures his disciples that he is with them to the end of the age. In this section, I will focus on the Immanuel *inclusio* of the book, and save an examination of Matthew 18:20 for a later chapter.

Narrative Viewpoint

David Kupp's dissertation under James Dunn presents the most prolonged reflection on the theme of Jesus' presence with his people in Matthew.³ Kupp asserts Matthew 1-2 is indispensable for a proper reading of the Gospel plot as a whole. The way Matthew sets the scene determines how one reads the narrative, and the same is true for how Matthew closes the Gospel. Matthew's ending packages many of the book's themes into two verses. The placement or position of these themes within the narrative helps readers frame Matthew's narrative.

²Frankmölle is one of the first to call attention to the concept of being with Jesus as important to Matthew's ecclesiology. H. Frankmölle, *Jahwebund Und Kirche Christi* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1974), chap. 1. Kingsbury argues the theme controls the theology of Matthew. J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 28-29. Marcia Kump shows that when Matthew uses *μετά* he made certain changes in comparison to Mark and employs the word "in a figurative way to denote a special relationship between disciples and Jesus/God." According to Kump, Matthew is referring to "being empowered to perform miracles that Jesus can perform and to having the relationship with God that constitutes the kingdom of heaven." Marcia Kump, "Turning Matthew's Gospel Inside Out: Re-Visioning Matthew's Concept of Discipleship" (Ph.D. diss., University of Vanderbilt, 2003), 183.

³David Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel: Divine Presence and God's People in the First Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Kupp makes an interesting argument concerning the narratival viewpoint of these bookend passages. He asserts the narratival viewpoint at the beginning and end of Matthew is external to Jesus (Matt 1-2 and 27:51-28:20), which means Matthew can speak more generally about themes he is underscoring. It is as if Matthew steps back and takes a more expansive view of his themes at the beginning and end of his narrative. Perhaps Matthew's narrative viewpoint explains the frontloading of the fulfillment quotations in chapter 2. Matthew speaks about the events of Jesus' birth as if Matthew is somewhat removed from the scene, giving strong ties to the history of Israel at almost every turn. By so doing, Matthew presents Jesus from the perspective of subordinate characters in the first two chapters. The focus is on Jesus, but this focus sharpens by looking at the correspondences with other characters in biblical history. When Matthew flies over some of his themes, he ties the coming of Jesus with the term Ἐμμανουήλ.

Not until Jesus' baptism does Jesus himself enter the scene, then Matthew zooms in on his ministry. The internal viewpoint lasts from 3:1 to 27:50, according to Kupp, and then Matthew switches back to the external viewpoint after the death of Jesus. After the death of Jesus, Matthew again zooms out and begins to describe the immediate ripple effects of his sacrifice. The bodies of the saints come out of the grave, the centurion confesses this was the Son of God, Jesus is buried by Joseph of Arimathea, and Pilate puts guards at the tomb. Matthew then describes the resurrection and gives Jesus' Great Commission to the disciples. His external narrative viewpoints, at two different spots in the Gospel, allow him to reflect and weave together themes. The bookends direct readers to the Immanuel theme with their distinct narrative frameworks.⁴

Not only does this literary tool allow Matthew to highlight emphases, but it underlines the presence of Jesus in the narrative. For the rest of the book is about Jesus walking and talking on the earth. Matthew speaks to his themes not only by *what* he

⁴Ibid., 51-52.

explicitly says but in *how* he structures his book. Maybe the most obvious thing about all the Gospels is that they were written because Jesus came and lived upon this earth. Jesus' presence produced the Gospels. His ministry, his life, and his death and resurrection are what Matthew desires to concentrate upon. The Gospel itself accentuates the presence of Jesus, for salvation is found in his presence. At the end, Jesus' promises his disciples that his presence will not leave them.

Hence the implied reader is introduced in the opening narrative frame to a correspondence between salvation and divine presence on the one hand, and sin and divine absence on the other. This presence/absence correspondence will prove programmatic for the story.⁵

The Birth and Presence of Jesus

Jesus' birth provides the context for the first Immanuel statement. The paragraph begins "the birth of Jesus was thus" (Τοῦ δὲ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἡ γένεσις οὕτως ἦν). Jesus' birth and God's presence are tied together. Matthew couples the coming of Jesus in the flesh with the presence of God. The meaning and significance of these two names Ἰησοῦς and Ἐμμανουήλ are interdependent. The physical body of Jesus introduces, inaugurates, and fulfills a new phase of presence. Kupp mentions the dominance of the divine presence theme in 1:18-2:23.

It is notable that every character and event of these episodes (1:18-2:23) is in some way subject to the extraordinary presence of YHWH . . . Divine presence has a direct and perceptible impact, through the media of the Holy Spirit, angelic voices, dreams, celestial messages and the voice of God through the prophets.⁶

The presence of God after 400 years of silence is a major break in salvation history. As W. D. Davies and Dale Allison say, "While God has been 'with' his people in the past, he would, it was hoped, be especially 'with' them in messianic times (Isa 43:5; Ezek 34:20;

⁵Ibid., 59.

⁶Ibid., 54.

37:27; Zech 8:23; 11QTemple 29:7-10; Jub 1:17, 26; Rev 21:3).⁷ But there is a striking difference of how he is with them in the past, and now in Matthew.⁸ Ellen Charry notes how much of the scriptural imagery for the divine presence is place-centered. God dwells on a mountain, in a house, in a tent. With the advent of Jesus, the presence of God dwells not in a tabernacle, a city, house, mountain or even Israel—but in an individual, a person, a body.⁹ But Charry’s assertions are only partially true, for an inextricable relationship exists between person and place. In other words, the promise is person and place centered.

The quote Matthew uses in 1:23 comes from Isaiah 7:14.¹⁰ An examination of the background to this quote helps one understand Matthew’s text more fully. In Isaiah 7, Ahaz (king of Jerusalem) is in turmoil for Rezin (king of Syria) and Pekah (king of Israel) are mounting an attack against Jerusalem. Ahaz stands in the middle of two different affronts to his city. Therefore, the Lord sends the prophet Isaiah to meet Ahaz to tell him not to fear, because he resides in the “house of David” (7:13). This is a place-centered promise, but also a person-centered promise. The house of David is established because of the actions of David and God’s promises to David of an eternal dynasty (2 Samuel 7). David creates this place through the covenant relationship with the Lord.

Ahaz is given a sign that should cause him comfort. The sign is the Immanuel verse quoted in Matthew: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” This again is a person-centered promise but has place and spatial implications. The spatial implications are so tied to the person that these two would have

⁷W. D. Davies and Dale Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1988-97), 1:218.

⁸Matthew changes the pronominal ending “you” (*καλέσεις*) will call his name Immanuel (Isa 7:14) to “they” (*καλέσουσιν*) will call him Immanuel (Matt 1:23). For more on this, see Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew: And Its Use of the Old Testament* (Lund, Sweden: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1954), 98.

⁹Ellen Charry, *God and the Art of Happiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 235.

¹⁰For an analysis of the textual form of the quotation, see M. J. J. Menken, “The Textual Form of the Quotation from Isaiah 7:14 in Matthew 1:23,” *NovT* 43, no. 2 (2001): 144-60.

been virtually indistinguishable to Ahaz. For Ahaz, the promise of a person included a changed space and place. The sign was for Ahaz's day but also a promise concerning the coming Messiah.¹¹ The sign was Immanuel. This son would establish a place for Israel as David had. In Ahaz's day this son did not ultimately bring about the presence of God, for in 586 BCE the kingdom fell to the Babylonians. Kupp articulates again:

Matthew has given his audience the restoration of the Old Testament promise of divine presence in word, but he also provided the promise of presence in person. In Isaiah the Immanuel child was only a symbol of God's military victory. Matthew's Immanuel, however, is the personal agent of God's promise to save and be with his people. It is not unjustifiable then to see Jesus as the embodiment of all the salvific power found in the divine biblical assertion, I am with you.¹²

The presence of Jesus, just as the guarantee to Ahaz in Isaiah 7, contained promises of a person that had effect on place. Salvation is impossible in Matthew without the presence of Jesus, and the presence of Jesus must begin with his birth. Matthew, unlike Mark, included the story of Jesus' birth in his narrative. He desires to communicate some unique feature about Jesus' presence, and he ties this to promises given in the Old Testament. The first breath of Jesus becomes integral to the first words of Matthew. But not only the initial breath, but his last breath as well, verbalize promises of Jesus' presence.

Jesus' Great Commission Promise

The Great Commission (28:19-20) promise also contains a similar phrase about the presence of Jesus, forming an *inclusio* in the Gospel. The presence theme frames the entire narrative of Matthew, one occurring at his birth and the other after his resurrection. Jesus tells his disciples "Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age

¹¹The purpose of this promise functions both as a present hope a future promise. In context, the promise is fulfilled in the birth of Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isa 8:1). J. A. Motyer argues that signs in the OT function as either "present persuaders" or "future confirmations." He says 7:14 falls under the latter case because Immanuel's birth comes too late to be a "present persuader." J. Alec Motyer, "Context and Content in the Interpretation of Isaiah 7:14," *TynBul* 21 (1970): 120. But Matthew's typological interest in the fulfillment quotations has regularly led him to find patterns from the OT that are fulfilled in Jesus. Therefore, to draw a sharp line between "present persuader" and "future confirmation" seems artificial.

¹²Kupp, *Matthew's Emmanuel*, 169.

(καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ μεθ' ὑμῶν εἰμι). Otto Michel says Matthew 28:18-20 is the key to understanding the whole book.¹³

The first question to answer is who is the ἐγὼ in Jesus' statement? Although the answer seems obvious, theologically it could be easy to veer towards the Holy Spirit as a solution.¹⁴ John promises the presence of the Spirit and Luke greatly emphasize the role of the Spirit. But in Matthew Jesus breathes no spirit upon them, he does not ascend, and promises them no παράκλητος. Leander Keck says interpreters should be intrigued by what this paragraph does not say for Jesus neither promises nor imparts the Holy Spirit.¹⁵ Matthew arrests his attention on the presence of Jesus.¹⁶ To equate Matthew's presence motif with the Spirit is to transfer the theology of one Gospel to another and does not respect each Gospel's distinctive voice. How is one to account for this silence about the Holy Spirit in the church's life and mission? As Keck remarks, "To attribute it to mere oversight would be patronizing" and it will not do to attribute this silence to Matthew knowing Mark and not Luke and John, for according to tradition Matthew was with Jesus.¹⁷ In the last words of Matthew Jesus promises he himself will be present with the community. This promise is the presence of Jesus in Matthew, not the presence of the Spirit. The two are interrelated, but one should not scurry to the Spirit. For Matthew makes it explicit that he is highlighting the presence of the risen Jesus. He is particularly

¹³Otto Michel, "The Conclusion of Matthew's Gospel," in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. Graham Stanton (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 35.

¹⁴Charette does too quickly jump to the Spirit in his analysis of this text and other "presence" texts in Matthew. He bases this on the OT background. Blaine Charette, *Restoring Presence: The Spirit in Matthew's Gospel*, JPTSS (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 108-13.

¹⁵L. E. Keck, "Matthew and the Spirit," in *The Social World of the First Christians: Essays in Honor of Wayne A. Meeks*, ed. O. Larry Yarbrough (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 147.

¹⁶France agrees, saying, "In the Fourth Gospel Jesus promises the continuing presence of the Spirit with his disciples after he has left them, but in Matthew the presence is that of Jesus himself." R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 1119.

¹⁷Keck, "Matthew and the Spirit," 148.

careful with his Spirit language. Kupp says, “For Matthew Spirit language is secondary to his community’s primary experience of the present, risen Jesus.”¹⁸

Jesus is promising his presence, but to whom is Jesus promising his presence?¹⁹ Jesus says behold I am with “you” (ὁμῶν). The immediate reference is the eleven disciples in verse 16. While the Great Commission was interpreted throughout church history as usually applying only to the disciples,²⁰ the verse should not be interpreted only in its historical context, and Jesus hints at this by including the temporal phrase, “to the end of the age.” So that which Jesus promises his disciples, he also promises to his future community. While temporal focus “to the end of the age” has been dominant, the answer of what exactly Jesus means by “I am with you” is more problematic. Theologically and canonically, most would again turn to the Spirit as the mediator of the presence, but as noted above, Matthew avoids Spirit language. What if one looks at the phrase from a spatial view? Already in this pregnant phrase, three spatial ideas are presented. Jesus now possesses all authority over space, they are to go into every space, and he, as Jesus of Nazareth, is present. Scholars have commented how all of Matthew’s themes show up in the Great Commission, and right at the outset of it, spatial ideas and presence themes are linked. It is the risen bodily Jesus who is the one who speaks these words. New questions arise from this approach, such as, “How exactly is the bodily Jesus going to be with the church, and in what sense?”²¹ The answer to this question will be answered as the argument progresses.

¹⁸Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 230.

¹⁹Davies and Allison say that the dominant sense here may not be so much that of divine presence as of divine assistance. But it seems that divine presence would be divine assistance and therefore a distinction is introduced that is not inherent in the text. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:687.

²⁰David Parris, *Reading the Bible with Giants* (London: Paternoster, 2006).

²¹The section in chap. 8 on Matt 18:20 gives some options for the nature of this presence. The Great Commission also has semblances or echoes of a “return to land” passage in the OT. The literary genre of the Great Commission has received quite a bit of attention. Debate remains about whether the literary genre resembles an “official decree,” but the similar structure and themes are unmistakable.

The Spatial Kingdom in Matthew

Not only is Matthew concerned with the presence of Jesus, but he ties this theme to the presence of the spatial kingdom.²² Jesus says at his coming that the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matt 4:17). But what is the nature of this kingdom? According to J. R. Firth, we “know a word by the company it keeps,” and this keeping company is called collocation.²³ Meaning is partially determined by the associations a word acquires. The words attendant with βασιλεία in Matthew imply a spatial understanding of the concept. Matthew uses βασιλεία 55 times in a variety of phrases. He uses the term more often than any other Gospel and more frequently than the rest of the New Testament combined. Although one could list all the different words associated with the βασιλεία, it may be more helpful to divide these into categories of prepositions, verbs, metaphors/similes, and antonyms used in relationship to the kingdom.

Prepositions Preceding the Kingdom

In Matthew, a preposition closely precedes βασιλεία 22 times. Ten of these are ἐν, 6 εἰς, 3 ἐπὶ, and 1 of each of the following: ἀπὸ, διὰ, and ἐκ (see Figure 1). Murray Harris notes that the main uses of ἐν can be locative, temporal, instrumental, agency,

Compare this passage to the proclamation of the Persian king Cyrus in 2 Chr 36:22-23. As Charette notes, “The striking resemblance between the two passages does seem too close to be merely coincidental” (111). 2 Chronicles is the last book of the Hebrew Bible and Matthew is the first book of the NT. The Hebrew Bible closes with Cyrus’s edict about rebuilding the temple, a structure loaded with “presence” themes, and Jesus in Matthew promises his disciples that he will always be present with them. Perhaps Matthew wanted to allude to 2 Chronicles because of his interest in the future and even present restoration of the land. For when Cyrus declares the edict, it signals for the people of Israel to return to their land. Charette follows this view and lists the following scholars who do as well. Charette, *Restoring Presence*, 110-11. Bruce Malina, “The Literary Structure and Form of Matt. XXVIII. 16-20,” *NTS* 17 (1970): 87-103; J. Lange, *Das Erscheinen Des Auferstandenen Im Evangelium Nach Matthäus* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1973), 351-54; Frankmölle, *Jahwebund Und Kirche Christi*, 50-61. Others see Dan 7:13-14 as the background to the Commission. Michel, “The Conclusion of Matthew’s Gospel,” 36.

²²The presence of Jesus and spatial themes are linked as already mentioned in Matt 28:20, but also in 18:20. I would argue it is implicitly in Matt 16:16-20 as well.

²³J. R. Firth, “A Synopsis of Linguistic Theory, 1930-1955,” in *Studies in Linguistic Analysis*, ed. J. R. Firth (Oxford: Blackwell, 1957), 11.

causal, attendant circumstance, and respect.²⁴ Although time precludes an analysis of each occurrence (and the verb would need to be taken into account), the two most likely uses are locative and respect in relation to the kingdom. Εἰς and ἐν make up 16 of the 22 prepositions preceding βασιλεία and share common territory. Etymologically εἰς was a later variant of ἐν. Hellenistic Greeks tended to blur the distinction between categories of linear motion (to) and punctiliar rest (in).²⁵ Εἰς has the same range of meanings of ἐν.

The occurrences of εἰς in relationship to βασιλεία could function locatively, temporally, telically, or with respect. A couple of samples will suffice to show that the locative meaning is the most natural interpretation for both of these prepositions. Matthew 5:19 says, “Whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least ἐν the kingdom of heaven.”

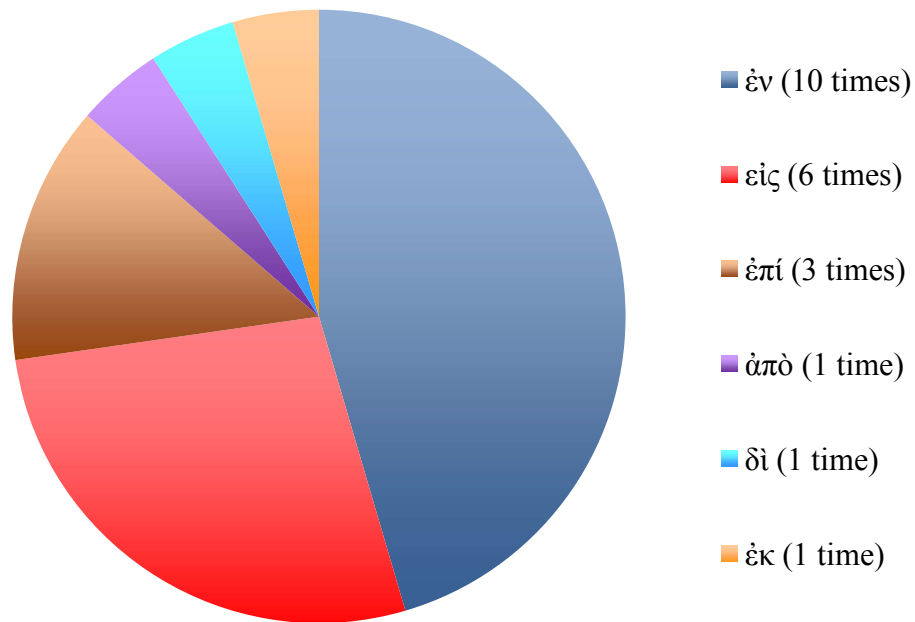


Figure 1. Prepositions preceding βασιλεία in Matthew

²⁴Murray Harris, *Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 118-22.

²⁵Ibid., 84.

Again, the two most probable connotations in this passage are either locative or with respect. Possibly, they will be called least “in respect” to the kingdom, but the locative understanding fits better. They will be called least “in the location” of the kingdom of heaven. Another example comes from Matthew 8:11 which proclaims, “Many will recline at the table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ἐν the kingdom of heaven.” Again the locative meaning is most natural. Matthew 7:21 is an example of the locative understanding of εἰς. Jesus says, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven” (εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν). Matthew’s use of εἰς here can be described as extension involving a place.²⁶ Matthew’s consistent use of ἐν and εἰς in relation to βασιλεία implies a spatial understanding of the kingdom.²⁷ Many more examples could be given, but these examples suggest that the prepositions in relationship to the kingdom should be understood in the locative sense.

Verbs in Relationship to the Kingdom

The verbs closely associated with the kingdom are also telling. Matthew speaks of entering (εἰσέρχομαι) the kingdom five times (5:20; 7:21; 18:3; 19:17, 23-24; 18:9; 25:46). Three times he says the kingdom is theirs (εἰμί), or belongs to them (5:3, 10; 19:14).²⁸ BDAG’s first entry about εἰσέρχομαι is to move into a space and secondly to enter in to a state. Dalman’s views on the kingdom being a reign and not a realm have been so influential that BDAG puts all of the phrases of “entering the kingdom of God” under the “entering a state” category. Louw and Nida communicate similarly. Defending

²⁶BDAG, 288.

²⁷Interestingly, Blass and Debrunner say that Matthew is free from the replacement of ἐν and εἰς in a local sense. BDF, §205.

²⁸The occurrence of verbs related to the kingdom in Matthew are εἰμί (17), εἰσέρχομαι (5), ὁμοιώω (4), κηρύσσω (4), λέγω (4), ἐγγίζω (3), δίδωμι (3), ερχομαι (2), καλέω (2), ζητέω (2). One of the other verbs he uses is “prepared” (ἐτοιμάζω). The same thing is said in Judaism of the coming world (4 Ezra 8:52). The New Jerusalem is also prepared (4 Ezra 7: 6-14; Rev 21-22; Syr. Bar. 4:3-6). It is quite natural to see the New Jerusalem as a spatial local place.

their view that the βασιλεία is only a reign, and not a realm, Louw and Nida say the expression “to enter the kingdom” does not mean going to heaven but “accepting God’s rule” or “welcoming God to rule over.”²⁹ R. T. France agrees that the phrase should be treated as a metaphor rather than importing “inappropriately concrete ideas of place.”³⁰ Joel Marcus also defends Dalman’s singular view of kingdom saying that entering must correspond to “entering into an action” because it corresponds to ancient Semitic and NT usage.³¹ Marcus uses John 4:38b to support the “entering a state” view where Jesus remarks, “Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.” Marcus asserts the disciples have entered into the labor itself and not into its fruits. But Marcus’s view does not sufficiently explain verse 37 which Jesus is expounding upon. Verse 37 says, “One sows, another reaps.” Therefore entering in their labor corresponds with the reaping. They are entering the fruits of their labor, and *not* entering into an action. The other example Marcus gives of entering into an action is Matt 25:21 where the faithful servants are invited to “enter into the joy of their master.” But the phrase is best understood as a metonymy, joy being part of the benefits of being with the master.

BDAG also provides examples of “entering” into a state. Josephus speaking of entering into our laws (*Contra Apion*, 2.123), and the author of Hebrews consistently speaks of entering the rest of God in Hebrews (Heb 3:11; 19; 4:1, 3, 506, 10-11). Other examples include entering into glory (Luke 24:26) and entering into temptation (Matt 26:4). But these are also places, for places are created.³² Language tends to be more

²⁹Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, eds. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domain* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1989), 480.

³⁰France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 190.

³¹Joel Marcus, “Entering into the Kingly Power of God,” *JBL* 107, no. 4 (1988): 668.

³²Liebenberg says states are locations. Jacobus Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom: Parable, Aphorism, and Metaphor in the Sayings Material Common to the Synoptic Tradition and the Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 472.

flexible and idiomatic than even a dictionary allows. I am not claiming all these are not states/actions, but most states include places. To pigeonhole them and say this is only a state/action is reductionistic.

The arguments for “entering the kingdom” to mean entering the rule of God as seen above are at best partly true and overly influenced by Dalman’s work on the kingdom. The locative understanding should be the starting place rather than the other way around. The NT supports this as people enter eternal life (Mark 9:43), the narrow gate (Matt 7:13), or the narrow door (Luke 13:24). Petri Luomanen, in his dissertation on “entering the kingdom of heaven,” notes this phrase indicated there is a space of salvation.³³ Lohmeyer claims entrance language goes back to the cultic entrance regulations which were observed in the temple festival liturgies.³⁴ Examining the occurrences of εἰσέρχομαι in the LXX reveals that a concrete noun is regularly the object of the verb. In the LXX, εἰσέρχομαι is frequently followed by concrete nouns: οἶκος (43x), γῆ (27x), πόλις (24x).

Similes and Metaphors of the Kingdom

The similes and images Matthew employs to compare the kingdom are also revealing, and concern both likeness to persons and likeness to objects. Matthew says the kingdom is like (ὁμοιῶω, ὅμοιος) a man who sowed good seed (13:24), a king who wished to settle accounts (18:23), a master of a house who brings out treasures old and new (13:52), a merchant in search of fine pearls (13:45), a master of the house who hired servants early to work his field (20:1), a king who gave a wedding feast (22:2), and ten virgins who were waiting for the bridegroom (25:1). The kingdom is also like a grain of mustard seed which a man went out to sow (13:24), it is like leaven (13:33), and a treasure

³³Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 39.

³⁴Ernst Lohmeyer, *Lord of the Temple* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1961), 64.

hidden in a field (13:44), or a net that was thrown out to gather fish (13:47). These two lists, one comparing the kingdom to *persons* and the other comparing it to *objects* reveal Jesus' explanation of the kingdom for those who have ears to hear. The kingdom includes people, usually a king or master, but also a space or the location in which the ruler reigns. The idea of dominion is not only present but also the idea of domain and people. The king and master has a field, a house, or a wedding hall. In addition, the objects used to compare the kingdom of God point towards understanding the kingdom as a location. One enters by the narrow gate (7:13), keys to the kingdom exist (16:19), the Gospels speak of meal and tables in the kingdom (8:11), and there is drinking from the vine in the kingdom (26:29). Lohmeyer argues the temple and house metaphors are eschatological in character and point towards the new world.³⁵

Table 1. People and place in metaphors and similes of the kingdom

<i>People</i>	<i>Place</i>
Man who sowed good seed	Field
King, who wished to settle accounts	Palace
Master of House	House
Merchant	Home
King, who gave a wedding feast	Palace
Ten Virgins	Wedding Hall

Admittedly, these images are capable of diverse usages and meanings, but one should note that when Jesus wanted a physical object with which to compare the kingdom he consistently chose an object that communicated a location. In any simile or metaphor, varying degrees of correspondence subsist between the vehicle and tenor. But when different images are used, and a common correspondence is running through them, it is

³⁵Ibid., 65.

likely that there is a high degree of coherence.³⁶ Although this argument is not sufficient on its own, considered as a larger part of what the kingdom is in the Gospel of Matthew, it provides one more piece of evidence for a spatial understanding of the kingdom.

Γέεννα as the Antonym of the Kingdom

Compared with the other Evangelists, Matthew more frequently speaks of hell (γέεννα) and the future judgment. An important observation of the kingdom in Matthew is that the antonym of βασιλεία is γέεννα. If βασιλεία and γέεννα are used as antonyms, then our understanding of one should inform our understanding of the other. The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:20-22) contrasts these two concepts. Jesus tells his disciples unless their righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees they will never enter the *kingdom of heaven*. Contrasted to the kingdom in verse 21 is judgment. A parallel statement is then used in verse 22 where this judgment is called the hell of fire (γέενναν τοῦ πυρός). In this passage, Matthew views the kingdom of heaven as the opposite of the hell of fire. Notice that hell is both a place and a state of judgment. Entering the kingdom of heaven is the antonym for being thrown into the hell of fire. Both are locative ideas, but include states and actions.

One sees the same type of thinking in 18:9, where Matthew contrasts entering life (ζωὴν εἰσελθεῖν) and being thrown into hell (βληθῆναι εἰς τὴν γέενναν). In all of the Gospels evidence exists that “entering life,” “entering the kingdom of heaven,” and “being saved” are interchangeable. In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew frames the beatitudes with “the kingdom of heaven” and the rest of the descriptions should be seen as parallel descriptions. In 7:14, we see Matthew use the phrase “enter life” and then soon after in 7:21 he says “enter the kingdom of heaven.” In 18:3, we see again the phrase “entering the kingdom of heaven,” and then in 18:8-9 he says “enter life.” Therefore, if “life” and

³⁶G. B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1980), 153.

the “kingdom of heaven” are synonymous it becomes unambiguous that *γένενα* and *βασιλεία* are antonyms. In 18:8-9, Matthew uses life and hell in the same verse.

And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to *enter life* crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the *eternal fire*. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to *enter life* with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the *hell of fire* (my emphasis).

Finally *γένενα*, like *βασιλεία*, has motion verbs and locative prepositions that indicate a spatial understanding. Matthew reveals in 5:29-30 that your whole body can be thrown into hell (*ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου εἰς γέενναν ἀπέλθῃ*). The spatial meaning of these two concepts is clear. One is an attractive place, the other unpleasant; one is a place of fire, and one is a place of joy. People are entering both a place and a “state.”

Summary

Most of the collocations with *βασιλεία* convey spatial and locative ideas. The prepositions, verbs, similes/metaphors, and antonyms to the kingdom all suggest this understanding. Matthew did this both consciously and unconsciously. Some of the words naturally flowed from his understanding of what the kingdom was, but as the next section shows, he also chose the language of heaven specifically to communicate the spatial aspect of the kingdom. Therefore it seems likely Jesus and early Jews understood the kingdom as a space, and this space was united to those who inhabited this space.

Kingdom of Heaven

A final important argument for the kingdom of heaven being a place is that Matthew specifically chose language which implies a spatial understanding. The other Synoptic Gospels use *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ*, while Matthew regularly uses *ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*. N. T. Wright argues the phrase *ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν* has been long misunderstood by Christians to mean a place. He asserts for Jesus it was “a Jewish way

of talking about Israel's god become king."³⁷ But Wright does not seem to have sufficiently reflected upon Matthew's use of οὐρανός. Although he states it was "a Jewish way of talking," he gives no evidence for this assertion.³⁸

Jonathan Pennington has done the most extensive work on Matthew's distinctive language.³⁹ One encounters the phrase ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν 32 times in Matthew, and nowhere else in the Gospels. Matthew uses forms of οὐρανός 82 times, which is over 30% of the total uses in the NT. More than a dozen explicit conjunctions of heaven and earth reside in Matthew and many other thematic contrasts along the same lines. The stock phrase "heaven and earth" occurs more times in Matthew than in any other New Testament book. Over 20 times the terms are connected in some form.⁴⁰ The only other book in the NT that even comes close is Revelation, which has 16 pairings. Earth (γῆ) occurs forty-three times, sixteen of which are paired with οὐρανός (37%). Matthew also uses heaven to modify kingdom (32x) and father (13x).

As Pennington argues, "To deny a spatial sense of ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν would require interpreting οὐρανός in this phrase as bearing no relation to the rest of the

³⁷N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 202. Wright does have some good reflections on the kingdom, specifically, he emphasizes that the announcement of the kingdom was in fulfillment of Jewish hopes and a completion (although different than they expected) of Israel's story.

³⁸Although if one looks at most of the common NT introductory textbooks, this idea is consistently repeated. Yet Pennington argues this view can be traced back to Gustaf Dalman, whose view was never challenged.

³⁹Much of the material that follows comes from Jonathan Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007). Schneider has also done work on this theme. Gerhard Schneider, "Studien Zum Mattäusevangelium: Festchrift Fur Wilhelm Pesch," in *"Im Himmel-Auf Erden: Eine Perspektive Mattäischer Theologie*, ed. Ludger Schenke and Wilhelm Pesch (Stuttgart, Germany: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1988), 287-9.

⁴⁰Pennington categorizes these under copulative, thematic, and implied pairs. Sometimes heaven is put in conjunction with Hades, or humanity is put into contrast with the Father in heaven. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 194-95.

spatial uses of οὐρανός throughout Matthew.”⁴¹ Multiple reasons exist why Matthew uses this term and Pennington is right to note “the uses of kingdom language are too variegated and nuanced to force upon them a monolithic conception of kingly rule.”⁴² Pennington argues this phrase should be interpreted in light of the tension between heaven and earth. Matthew, by contrasting the pair heaven and earth consistently in his Gospel, is drawing a sharp distinction between realms. There is the heavenly realm where God the Father is, and there is the earthly realm where humanity is. Matthew’s understanding of cosmology is therefore dualistic.

The duality between heaven and earth is peppered throughout the book.⁴³ Matthew describes God as the heavenly father (ὁ πατήρ ὁ οὐράνιος; 7x), and the father who is in heaven (ὁ πατήρ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς; 13x), which occurs only one other time in the NT.⁴⁴ Although the Gospels refer to God as Father over 170 times, a closer look reveals that it is an especially important theme in Matthew (44x) and John (109x). Matthew implies a contrast with earthly fathers who are consistently portrayed in a negative light in his Gospel. He is the earthly king because he can sympathize with humans and he became like mankind. The Christian is to pray for the kingdom of the Father of heaven to manifest itself on earth (6:9-10), and he is already doing this through Jesus’ person and

⁴¹Ibid., 297. Pennington categorizes the uses of heaven into three primary uses: (1) a reference to the portions of the visible creation distinguished from earth, (2) combined with γῆ as a merism to refer to the whole world, and (3) a reference to the invisible, transcendent place(s) above where God dwells along with his angels and the righteous dead. Jonathan Pennington, “Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis: Theological Cosmology in Matthew,” in *Cosmology and New Testament Theology*, LNTS (New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 29. When heaven modifies kingdom, the third use is likely in view.

⁴²Pennington, *Heaven and Earth*, 282.

⁴³I am not advocating a two-kingdom approach as summarized by David VanDrunen. David VanDrunen, *Living in God’s Two Kingdoms: A Biblical Vision for Christianity and Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010).

⁴⁴See Mark 11:25.

work.⁴⁵ The church receives its authority from heaven to bind things on earth (16:19). The disciples are promised whenever two of them agree upon the earth (ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς) it shall be done for them by their Father in heaven (ἐν οὐρανοῖς). In short, Matthew, by choosing “kingdom of heaven” is communicating that God’s reign logically necessitates a spatial territory and people over which he reigns. Hence, to understand the kingdom as primarily the rule/reign of God does not fit with Matthew’s language he chooses to modify the kingdom.

Summary. Matthew presents his narrative framed with the Εμμανουήλ theme and specifically links it to spatial ideas at least twice in his Gospel. The presence of Jesus is integral to his Gospel and Matthew’s use of βασιλεία does not coincide with it only being the reign of God. To wash out the realm aspect of the βασιλεία does damage one’s understanding of the kingdom. Matthew has not defined the term βασιλεία, but by examining the words keeping company with βασιλεία one should conclude Matthew was implying a spatial component. It seems that space and the presence of Jesus are connected in Matthew. But what is the connection, and why does Matthew do this?

Conclusion

Although the space of the kingdom has been supplanted in favor of the dynamic rule or the temporal, all of them must go hand in hand. My aim is to look more closely at the space of the kingdom in Jesus’ ministry. The temporal question asks when will these things happen, but a space perspective asks what images and relations are used to describe it. Matthew’s Gospel touches on these themes by accentuating more than the other Gospels the presence of Jesus and the themes of heaven and earth. Matthew highlights these themes because he is presenting the space of earth as “under

⁴⁵Gibson argues the Lord’s Prayer reflects the perception that Jesus’ disciples are in danger of becoming members of “this generation.” Jeffrey B. Gibson, “Matthew 6:9-13//Luke 11:2-4: An Eschatological Prayer?” *BTB* 31, no. 3 (2001): 96-105.

construction.” The earth is tilled and turned over via the incarnation. Through Jesus’ body, he contests the space of earth, inaugurating the installation of the kingdom of heaven to earth. Matthew forges a bond between heaven and earth through the presence of Jesus. “The presence of Jesus becomes heaven’s link with the earthly gathering.”⁴⁶ Indeed, all authority under heaven and earth is now his. The heavenly Son has come and contested the earthly space, which he has won in his resurrection. The land promises are not de-territorialized but expanded. Attachment to the land and temple are not replaced but fulfilled by union to the person of Jesus, for through the body of Jesus the structures of the earth begin to change. Jesus forms space through his body.⁴⁷ Although the intersection of Jesus’ body and the upheaval of earth may sound strange, most “revolutions” contain the intersection of bodies with spatiality.

⁴⁶Kupp, *Matthew’s Emmanuel*, 182.

⁴⁷Carter says that most Matthean scholars have rightly explored the presence theme in the context of the Hebrew Scriptures, but they have not as regularly compared it to Roman imperial tradition of the ruler as *deus presens*—God present. Warren Carter, “Contested Claims: Roman Imperial Theology and Matthew’s Gospel,” *BTB* 29, no. 2 (1999): 58-60. See also Carter’s discussion of Matt 1:23 from an audience-oriented perspective where he argues the presence theme is an attack on the Roman imperium. Warren Carter, *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001), 93-102.



HEAVEN & EARTH



THE PRESENCE OF JESUS

Figure 2. Two themes in Matthew

The Netflix documentary “The Square” exemplifies the intersection between bodies and spatiality in a few personal stories from the Egyptian Revolution in 2011. The film follows Ahmed Hassan, a fiery young man in his 20s who argues until he can barely speak in defense of the ideals of the Tahrir revolution. Occupying Tahrir Square is the method of protest against the corrupt government. Military tanks run over bodies, shots are fired into crowds, and many other brutal responses are seen. Ahmed and his friends use their bodies as vehicles of protest, and they dissent by occupying a spatial center declaring to their government their rebellion. Both the government and the citizens claim that the land (Tahrir Square) is theirs and seek to control it for political purposes. As Nietzsche notes every specific body strives to become master over all space, extend its force, and thrust back all that resist its extension. Every specific body is on a quest for omnipotence, the ability to become “master over all space.”⁴⁸ The extraordinary thing about the Egyptian revolution was that while the people forced the resignation of President

⁴⁸Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1968), 636.

Mubarak, and ousted President Morsi, they did not have a plan for someone to fill the void. The two organized powers were the Muslim brotherhood and the military who would then take power when the power vacuum was unbolted.

Unlike the Egyptian revolution, Matthew describes Jesus as stepping in the gap, not as a power hungry political leader, but one who shapes the imagination of the people through sacrifice. Matthew presents Jesus as the organizer of space, his body as the main vehicle of protest against the kingdoms of the earth. The kingdom of heaven is not merely an intervention of God in history, but an intervention of God in space. Jesus, the king of heaven, by occupying the space of the earth, is in the process of overhauling it for his own purposes. The first book of the NT describes the initial sowing of the ground while the last book pictures the marriage of heaven and earth, uniting the two in a lasting embrace.⁴⁹

⁴⁹I am indebted to N. T. Wright for this language. N. T. Wright, *Surprised By Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 19.

CHAPTER 3

SPATIAL THEORY

Spatial Theory

I have attempted to show that Matthew is ripe with spatial themes and also that a spatial perspective raises some questions about his narrative. Now in order to perform spatial exegesis and begin to answer these questions, I must argue for a different theory of space than usually comes to mind. My aim in this chapter is to uproot the common conception of space and firmly ground it in another set of ideas. By incorporating the sociological view of space and insights from critical spatiality, a different conception of how Jesus carries the kingdom of heaven to earth can be garnered. Edward Soja rightly states one of the objectives of this chapter:

It is to encourage you to think differently about the meanings and significance of space and those related concepts that compromise and comprise the inherent spatiality of human life: place, locations, locality, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory, and geography. In encouraging you to think differently, I am not suggesting that you discard your old and familiar ways of thinking about space and spatiality, but rather that you question them in new ways that are aimed at opening up and expanding the scope and critical sensibility of your already established spatial or geographical imaginations.¹

To do this we must begin with some descriptions and definitions.

What Is Space?

What is space? What is the difference between place and space? Definitions of these terms are hard to come by due to varied views throughout history and its conceptual

¹Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1996), 1. The British social scientist and geographer Doreen Massey aptly says, “I hope to liberate space from some chains of meaning which have all but choked it to death, in order to set it into other chains where it can have a new and more productive life.” Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), 25.

nature. *The Oxford Dictionary* defines space as “(a) a continuous area or expanse that is free, available, or unoccupied, (b) the dimensions of height, depth, and width within which all things exist and move.²” Space is usually thought of as infinite, open-ended, unattainable, and uncontrolled. Place, on the other hand, tends to be more specific, limited to location, particular, and active in forming identity through encounters and community.³ Dictionaries are sometimes mistakenly viewed as the last word on a subject, requiring them to bear more weight than they can handle. But dictionaries only reflect how people are currently employing words, and there is usually a historical reason why terms have been defined in such a way. Therefore, a brief history of spatial thought reveals why these definitions have become dominant.

Metaphysical space. A helpful distinction to begin with is the difference between *metaphysical space* and *social space*. Although metaphysical space and social space interweave, my focus will be on social space more than the metaphysics of space. Metaphysics is the explanation of the fundamental nature of being. Thus, metaphysical space is the fundamental nature of space. The nature of space has been debated since Plato, and the discussion continues in the modern age.⁴ Keimpe Algra examines the pre-Einsteinian Greek views of space identifying three kinds of spatial concepts:

²*New Oxford Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

³Mark George in his analysis of the tabernacle as social space, says, “Places are fixed, and if they are structures, then in addition to be located at a specific site, they have things such as foundations, walls, doors, windows, gates, and other such permanent features. The tabernacle does not. It is a space, because it is not fixed to a particular location or site. Instead, it is free to move about within the larger space of creation and the cosmos.” Mark George, *Israel’s Tabernacle as Social Space* (Atlanta: SBL, 2009), 8. But this is too strong a distinction for me. For a place is a space as well a place. The level of ability to relocate does not determine a space from a place, rather place nicely fits into the broader category of space.

⁴Plato viewed space as a receptacle (*ὑποδοχή*), Aristotle had a volumetric conception of space (*τὸ πῶσον* or *μέγος*). The Stoics were concerned with the distinction between space and the void. The principle they formulated was a body extends and makes room for itself through body. Space was thus conceived in terms of body as an agency creating room for itself and extending through itself. The Stoics view can be summarized: space as extension.

- (a) a kind of prime stuff or ‘reservoir of physical possibilities’
- (b) a framework of (relative) locations, or
- (c) a container, the fixed stage where things play out their comedy, a space in which things are and through which they can move (receptacle).⁵

These views of space continued through the centuries but two of them became dominant (as seen in the *Oxford Dictionary* definition) while one (b) was cast aside. We in the modern age still persist in speaking of things as *in* space or *in* time. But T. F. Torrance notes that the Fathers rejected the receptacle idea of space, while the Medievals introduced it into the West with far-reaching effects.⁶ Patristic theology rejected a notion of space as that which receives and contains material bodies, and developed a notion of space as the seat of relations. They put forward an open concept of space sharply opposed to the Aristotelian idea.⁷ Torrance says the receptacle view has posed problems for theology, but perhaps never more than in modern times.⁸ Fast-forward to the seventeenth century and the same debate transpired between Isaac Newton and Gottfried Leibniz. Newton viewed time and space as abstract and absolute, while Leibniz held that space and

⁵Keimpe Algra, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought* (New York: Brill, 1995), 15-16.

⁶Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), vii. Although later Torrance acknowledges there was a smaller stream of the relational view of space in the Middle Ages. Duns Scotus (1265) developed a more dynamic and relational concept of space through reflecting upon creation and the incarnation. *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷*Ibid.*, 24. Torrance traces how Origen and Athanasius dealt with the coming of God in space and time in Jesus Christ. He says the Aristotelian definition of space found no place at all in Nicene theology, while they also rejected the strict receptacle view.

⁸He notes how John of Damascus introduced Aristotle’s definition of place or space into Eastern theology but Latin theology failed to follow John in the way it was worked it out. Medieval thinking about space was activated by problems that arose out the idea of real presence. *Ibid.*, 27. The Reformation views of space were very much influenced by Patristic conceptions. Lutheran thought held onto the receptacle notion of space, while Reformed and Anglican theology stood much closer to classical-Patristic theology. Torrance says this directly relates to the differing views of the so called *extra Calvinisticum* and transubstantiation. For a very brief summary of the development of the views, see pp. 56-58 in Torrance’s book.

time were relational rather than absolute.⁹ Algra's (a) kind of space and (c) can both be identified with Newton's concept of absolute space, while (b) was defended by Leibniz.¹⁰

For Leibniz, space and time have no independent existence in and of themselves, but were derivative for how we measured them.¹¹ But the Newtonian system gradually won the day while the rival scientific theories fell from grace. Thomas Altizer explains that "ultimate transformations of space have occurred throughout our history and nowhere more decisively than in the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century."¹² In Newton's *Mathematical Principles* he affirmed space is the place in which God is omnipresent, and thus is eternal and an attribute of God. Newton usually demarcated between science and metaphysics. However, Newton, by separating science from religion

⁹Edward Casey in his book *The Fate of Place* traces the four stances of understandings of space: modern space as absolute (Gassendi and Newton), modern space as extensive (Descartes), modern space as relative (Locke and Leibniz), and modern space as site and point. Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 119.

¹⁰The threefold classification can be reduced to two main kinds: space as extension or volume and space as a system of relations.

¹¹David Harvey offers a description of the difference between absolute, relative, and relational space: "Absolute space is fixed and we record or plan events within its frame. This is the space of Newton and Descartes and it is usually represented as preexisting and immovable grid amenable to standardized measurement and open to calculation. Geometrically it is the space of Euclid and therefore the space of all manner of cadastral mapping and engineering practices. . . . The relative notion of space is mainly associated with the name of Einstein and the non-Euclidean geometries that began to be constructed most systematically in the nineteenth century. Space is relative in the double sense: that there are multiple geometries from which to choose and that the spatial frame depends crucially upon what it is that is being relativized and by whom. . . . The relational concept of space is most often associated with the name of Leibniz who . . . objectified vociferously to the absolute view of space and time so central to Newton's theories. His primary objection was theological. Newton made it seem as if even God was inside of absolute space and time rather than in command of spatio-temporality. By extension, the relational view of the space holds there is no such thing as space time outside the processes that define them. . . . Processes do not occur *in* space but define their own spatial frame" Harvey, *Spaces of Global Capitalism*, 121-23, quoted in Barney Warf, "From Surfaces to Networks," in *The Spatial Turn*, ed. Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge, 2009), 74-75.

¹²Thomas J. J. Altizer, "An Absolutely New Space," *Literature and Theology* 21, no. 4 (2007): 347. He goes on to say that in the seventeenth century "a purely quantitative space was born, one that could only be understood mathematically and physically at once, an abstract space that is wholly other than the space of our common experience, and a space embodied in a newly realised infinite universe, a universe absolutely dissolving everything that previously had been manifest as a heavenly or sacred space."

in other areas, paved the way for further separation. By the end of the eighteenth century, Newton's view of infinite space had prevailed. But as Casey notes:

It was a triumph, however, only for the physical side of Newton's space. The God who filled it and whose property or attribute it was had vanished Space was now pure, infinite, three-dimensional container for all things and activities. Its divinity was gone . . . the properties remained with the space. Only God departed.¹³

In sum, Newton paved the way for space to be thought of as existing independently of events. Space was absolute, wholly other, preexisting and immovable. Places too became just portions of absolute space and had no interest in their own right.¹⁴ But Leibniz's relational view of space seems to be seeing a revival, and some confluence even exists between Leibniz's view and the rise of humanistic geography.

Modern Views of Space and Geography

While many, especially in biblical studies, still think of space as absolute (a container to be filled) spatial theorists and geographers are beginning to understand space in a more Leibnizian way again.¹⁵ Modern views of geography are constantly changing and a brief history of the field should help one see how biblical studies can incorporate and be

¹³Casey, *The Fate of Place*, 255.

¹⁴One can see an important effect of the development of absolute space and place in the emergence of maps. William Cavanaugh summarizes Michel de Certeau's insights on the transformation: "Pre-modern representations of space marked out itineraries which told 'spatial stories', for example, the illustration of the route of a pilgrimage which gave instructions on where to pray, where to spend the night, and so on. Rather than surveying them as a whole, the pilgrim moves through particular spaces, tracing a narrative through space and time by his or her movements and practices By contrast, modernity gave rise to the mapping of space on a grid, a 'formal ensemble of abstract places' from which the itinerant was erased. A map is defined as a 'totalizing stage on which elements of diverse origin are brought together to form a tableau of a 'state' of geographical knowledge'. Space itself is rationalized as homogeneous and divided into identical units. Each item on the map occupies its proper place, such that things are set beside one another, and no two things can occupy the same space. The point of view of the map user is detached and universal, allowing the entire space to be seen simultaneously." William Cavanaugh, "The World in a Wafer: A Geography of the Eucharist as Resistance to Globalization," *Modern Theology* 15 (1999): 3.

¹⁵Warf says, "The rise of post-Fordist globalized networks of people, capital, goods, and ideas changed many theorists' view of space from the notion of absolute, Cartesian notion—static, fixed, and lying outside of society, or space as a container—to relative and relational space, space as socially constructed by people, and thus fluid, folded, twisted by chains, pleated, and unstable." Warf, "From Surfaces to Networks," 74.

challenged by developing trends.¹⁶ Cloke, Philo, and Sadler in their book *Approaching Human Geography* use their introduction to trace the changing tides of geographical study in the modern period.¹⁷

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the two concerns in geography were environmental determinism and the regional concept. Environmental determinism seeks to examine the influence of the environment on society and map these variations and relate them to external environmental factors.¹⁸ The tendency was to treat people as little more than “dots on a map, statistics on a graph or numbers in an equation, since the impression being conveyed was of human beings ‘whizzing’ around in space.”¹⁹ At the turn of the nineteenth century, the regional concept, which is the identification and description of particular regions of the earth’s surface, became the prevailing method of study. Regional geography studies the unique characteristics of places, their culture, economy, topography, climate, politics, and environmental species.

After 1960 the quantitative revolution became dominant. The quantitative methods are what they sound like. Geographers supplemented their long-standing use of descriptive statistics with the application of inferential statistics. “The information explosion generated vast quantities of data, which begged analysis and which, in turn, raised fresh questions, leading to a need for yet more information.”²⁰ It was a “scientific” geography directed towards explaining, scientifically proving, and theorizing spatial

¹⁶See R. J. Johnston, ed., *The Future of Geography* (New York: Methuen, 1985) for an overview of the changing views of geography. The editor says the field of geography is constantly being redefined.

¹⁷Paul Cloke, Chris Philo, and David Sadler, *Approaching Human Geography: An Introduction to Contemporary Theoretical Debates* (New York: Guilford, 1991), 1-27.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 69.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 8.

phenomena and relations. Statistical techniques and mathematical methods played a prominent role in this process and coupled with a reliance on computerization.

Social space and humanistic geography. These models of geographic inquiry began to be critiqued in the later years of the 1960s for a number of reasons, but Sadler identifies the major critique. The main problem is that they create a sense of objectivity by “artificially separating observer from the observed, denying the existence of strong correspondence links, and asserting value-neutrality on the part of the observer.”²¹ The use of mathematical or geometric language filters out social and ethical questions. In other words, distance developed between the geographer and what was actually happening in the lives of people who resided in their environments. These dissatisfactions brought about what is now called humanistic geography.

The term ‘humanistic geography’ was first used by Yi-Fu Tuan (1976) who attempted to study the complexity of the relationship between people and place. As Daniels contends, humanistic geographers are united by “their disenchantment with the writings of positivist human geographers.”²² Positivists’ procedures do not adequately explain the intellectual and moral issues of humans. Humanists rejected the reduction of space and place to geometrical concepts of surface and point. Their conceptions of space and place are thick with human meaning and value. Place and space are key concepts in humanistic geography. The meaning of place is inseparable from the consciousness of those who inhabit it. Daniels says, “From a humanistic perspective place is not so much a location as a setting, less a thing than a relationship.”²³ Place and space, in this view, develop through time and are not static concepts. Humanistic geography began to connect space to the phenomenological and existential experiences of particular people.

²¹Ibid., 14.

²²Stephen Daniels, “Arguments for a Humanistic Geography,” in *The Future of Geography*, 143.

²³Ibid., 146.

Social space essentially concerns the values attached to space through social and personal experiences. Space, according to a social view, is not a blank canvas, but inherently caught up in social relations. Views on social space seek not to understand the fundamental essence of space, but rather to understand physical or virtual space. In this sense, social space is more relevant to the question of how the kingdom can be present in spatial form. According to Edward Soja, modernist thought exhibits a persistent tendency to see space as purely physical or mental, but a social space perspective opens up renewed ways of thinking about space. Social space is the interaction between subjects and their surroundings. It is a perspective, a way of reading place, and found in ‘lived space.’ Social space is similar to the idea of place. So, in this work, I will be using space and place interchangeably.²⁴ Warrant exists for using them interchangeably not only in postmodern geographers, but as Algra notes, even the Greek language did not have a terminological distinction for space and place.²⁵ In premodern societies, space and place largely coincided, but modernity tears space away from place. Doreen Massey criticizes Cartesian conceptions of space as a passive surface and suggests three maxims:

- (a) that space be seen as the product of interrelations, i.e., of embedded social practices in which identities and human ties are co-constituted
- (b) that space be understood as the sphere of possibility i.e., as a contingent simultaneity of heterogeneous historical trajectories
- (c) that space be recognized as always under construction.

Massey claims that because space (on this reading) is a product of relations and embedded in material practices, it is always in the process of being made. It is never finished, never

²⁴Most distinguish between the two concepts and many may disagree with using the terms interchangeably. Inge asserts, “Spaces are what are filled with places.” But there has been a turn in the way of describing space even since Inge wrote. Inge is also following Newton’s view of space. John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 2.

²⁵Algra, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought*, 32. Massey notes how Anthony Giddens asserts that in premodern society space was as local as place. Massey, *For Space*, 66.

closed.²⁶ “A space which is neither a container for always-already constituted identities nor a completed closure of holism. This is a space of loose ends and missing links. For the future to be open, space must be open too.”²⁷ Although this tracing of the recent history of geographical studies may seem tedious, it is important to see that even for geographers space is beginning to be viewed in a relational way as Leibniz, and many premoderns, had argued long ago. Biblical scholars have been leisurely in adopting these positions, although a few steps towards incorporating humanistic geography have occurred.²⁸

Lefebvre and Soja

As previously noted, before the 1970s most geographers considered space a neutral container, a blank canvas filled by human activity. But in the 1970s two strands emerged. One was a structuralist view, which emphasized the influence of political and economic structures in shaping places. The other was the humanist view, which attempted to reinstate human agency to geography or place.²⁹ In the postmodern wave of the 1990s these two streams merged as people realized human agency and social structure both shaped and produced space. No longer was space thought of as an extension; rather it was localized.

One of the first to put this into writing was the French Marxist theorist Henri

²⁶Massey, *For Space*, 9.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 12.

²⁸As noted in chap. 1.

²⁹Humanistic geography can be traced to W. Hoke, who perhaps was the first to explicitly call it “social geography.” Hoke declared, “The following discussion will be based upon the proposition that social geography deals with the distribution in space of social phenomena, and that its working programme may be stated as the ‘description of the sequence and relative significance’ of those factors, the resultant of whose influence is the localisation in space of the series of social phenomena chosen for investigation.” G. W. Hoke, “The Study of Social Geography,” *Geographical Journal* 29 (1907): 64.

Lefebvre.³⁰ He sought to bridge the gap between “scientists and physicists in the physical sciences, on the one hand, and philosophers, geographers, and others in the humanities and social sciences.”³¹ He argued absolute space cannot exist because space is colonized by human/social activity.³² The science of space was not his subject, but of knowledge (a theory) of the production of space.³³ Every society produces its own space. Therefore, theories of space have become more dynamic. Lefebvre said:

Philosophers have themselves helped bring about the schism with which we are concerned by developing abstract (metaphysical) representations of space . . . a divine property which may be grasped in a single act of intuition because of its homogeneous (isotropic) character. This is all the more regrettable in view of the fact that the beginnings of philosophy were closely bound up with the "real" space of the Greek city. This connection was severed later in philosophy's development.³⁴

What happens to space lends a miraculous quality to thought, “Which becomes incarnate by means of design. The design serves as the mediator between mental activity and social activity; and it is deployed in space.”³⁵ Lefebvre admits that speaking of ‘producing space’ sounds bizarre, but this is due to the supremacy of abstract space.

More recently and following Lefebvre, Edward Soja, a professor of geography

³⁰For introductions to Lefebvre and his work, see Roland Boer, *Marxist Criticism of the Bible* (London: T & T Clark, 2003); Stuart Elden, *Understanding Henri Lefebvre: Theory and the Possible* (London: Continuum, 2004); and Rob Shields, *Lefebvre, Love and Struggle: Spatial Dialectics* (London: Routledge, 1999).

³¹George, *Israel's Tabernacle as Social Space*, 20.

³²I am not following Lefebvre on every nuance of his description of space. I think there are things to learn from him, but there is also room for critique of his views. However, if absolute space is absolute then does it stand outside and above God? One of the implications of the modern view of space is that it places space as superior and separate from God.

³³Henri Lefebvre, *La Survive Du Capitalisme: La Reproduction Des Rapports de Production* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1973); The French book was translated into English in 1976. Henri Lefebvre, *The Survival of Capitalism: Reproduction of the Relations of Production* (London: Allison and Busby, 1976), 17-18.

³⁴Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1991), 14. English translation: Henri Lefebvre, *La Production de L'espace* (Paris: Éditions Anthropos, 1974).

³⁵Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 27-28.

at UCLA, argues space has usually been thought of in physical form, but this interferes with interpreting human spatial organization as a social product. He acknowledges that the term “spatial” typically evokes physical or geometrical images.³⁶ Seeing space as absolute is misleading because it misses the subjectivity of human spatiality.

The assertion of (social) spatiality shatters the traditional dualism and forces a major reinterpretation of the materiality of space, time, and being, the constructive nexus of social theory Spatiality exists ontologically as a product of a transformation process, but always remains open to further transformation in the contexts of material life.³⁷

Lefebvre and Soja are not the only ones to propose these theories.³⁸ Other geographers and philosophers espoused some of these same concepts. David Harvey, along with Lefebvre, rejects the notion that space is absolute or that is a container. He believes in the construction of space.³⁹ Derek Gregory also played an important role in combining social sciences with geography.⁴⁰ Trevor Barnes, from a more post-structuralist perspective,

³⁶Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (New York: Verso, 2001), 80.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 120, 122.

³⁸One may be surprised to find out many of these theorists are Marxist philosophers. But Sadler notes the Marxist approaches are highly significant in the development of geography in relation to the intellectual traditions of social science: “The initial basis of Marxist approaches to human geography lay in their oppositional critique of the limitations of spatial science and, in particular, its disregard for the economic and political constraints imposed upon spatial patterns by the way in which society worked, and its tendency to restrict analysis to how things actually seemed to be rather than to consider how they might be under different social conditions. This radical tradition, then, grew, out of a dissatisfaction with existing analyses.” David Sadler, “Changing Times and the Development of Marxist Approaches to Human Geography Since the Late 1960’s: Still Relevant and Radical after All These Years?” in *Approaching Human Geography: An Introduction to Contemporary and Theoretical Debates*, ed. Paul Cloke et al. (New York: Guilford, 1991), 28. Sadler goes on to say that Marxism propelled geographers forward to consider the ramifications of the interrelationship between social relations and spatial structures. The production of space should be seen as both spatial and social.

³⁹David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1989). Probably a more balanced view asserts an objective space that can be molded and formed rather than the view that humans exclusively create space.

⁴⁰Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1994).

proposes that spatial practices produce different spaces and practices.⁴¹ Reginald Golledge contributed to the development of analytical behavioral geography based on the dissatisfaction with the mechanistic and deterministic models.⁴² By so doing he challenged the conception of a “people-less” geography. Torsten Hägerstrand similarly emphasized individual behavior in geography.⁴³ Neil Smith also rejected absolute space, a view which has dominated geography. He said relative space is different, for socio-economic processes effect it.

Lefebvre and Soja, then, are not alone; space is being analyzed differently than in the past. Geographers are rejecting the concept of absolute space and proposing an understanding of space that brings it down to the earth, the space between us. Thus space, in the critical understanding, includes location, place, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory, and geography.⁴⁴

Critical Spatiality

The localization of space in biblical studies is called “critical spatiality,” and views space as a thoroughly social product, a cultural creation and product, an understanding and recognition of the role that human beings, individually and collectively, play in creating the space they occupy.⁴⁵ Critical spatiality understands space to be more

⁴¹Trevor Barnes and D. S. Duncan, *Writing Worlds: Texts, Discourses and Metaphors in the Interpretation of Landscape* (London: Routledge, 1992).

⁴²R. Golledge and R. J. Stimson, *Spatial Behavior: A Geographic Perspective* (New York: Guilford, 1997).

⁴³Torsten Hägerstrand, “The Domain of Human Geography,” in *Directions in Geography*, ed. Richard Chorley (London: Methuen, 1973).

⁴⁴Whether their views should be accepted will be dealt with more in the conclusion.

⁴⁵Critical spatiality is not anti-history, rather it restores the ontological trialectic of sociality, historicity, and spatiality. Soja writes, “any privileging of spatiality has to be understood as a temporary, a strategic foregrounding of the weakest part of the ontological triad, designed to restore a more balanced trialectic.” Soja, *Thirdspace*, 171.

than simply physical properties, or matter, or motion. Rather, space is all these things at once. Space is inherently relational. Critical spatiality divides spatial theories into a three-part grid. The three spaces are new and necessary ways of seeing space. All places can be studied as any one of these spaces, but scholars must recognize this only as a heuristic division. Every space exists as all three spaces simultaneously. Any one location can and should be analyzed for its manifestations of all three spaces. Lefebvre was the first to speak this way. Lefebvre concentrated on the production of space in what he called the reproduction of social relations. Others such as David Harvey and Edward Soja have followed him (while calling the three different spaces various names). Soja calls them firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace. The benefit of this terminology is the novelty of it, and readers can fill up the meaning as they begin to understand these terms. Negatively, the terms give readers no place to begin if they have not been introduced to the subject. For those just beginning with these distinctions, the best place to start is with the names physical space, mental space, and social space.⁴⁶

Physical space (firstspace) is space that can be comprehended empirically by measurable configurations and is what most modern people have understood space to be. Physical space includes the traditional realm of geography and privileges objectivity and materiality and can also be analyzed in the sense of material spatial practices referring to the material flow of goods, money, and people. For example, firstspace is the space of the physical seat you are sitting on, the space of the room you are in. In first century Palestinian society material practices include the agricultural production, taxation, etc.

The second space is *mental space* (secondspace). The boundary between physical space and mental space is blurred. Mental space is the spatial working of the mind and the perception of space. In this category one focuses on the ideological. The

⁴⁶After the introduction of these concepts, I will revert to speaking of firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace as the names of physical, mental, and social space are not nuanced enough and may end up being misleading.

realm of signs and significations dominate here and allow physical spatial practices to be talked about and understood. How does one speak and think about this material practice? Harvey speaks of this at the cultural level as “representations of space.” These are all the signs, codes, and knowledge that allow the material practices to be talked about and understood. To return to our example, mental space is the associations one brings to the seat or the room one is in. Is this a place of structure, work, fear, or instability? Is the space “against the law,” or is it a place of freedom? In Palestinian society this would be the ideology of Torah regulations or oral traditions.

Finally there is *social space* (thirdspace).⁴⁷ Modernist thought had the tendency to see firstspace and secondspace as together defining the whole of the geographical imagination. But thirdspace represents ways in which new meanings and possibilities of spatial practice can be imagined.⁴⁸ Thirdspace denies the dualism of only a first and secondspace by examining spaces as “simultaneously real [firstspace] and imagined [secondspace] and more (both and also).”⁴⁹ In *The Production of Space* Lefebvre said space is a social product, or a complex social construction. Space as a social construction implies a shift from understanding space as a static notion and rather emphasizes the process. As noted earlier, space therefore is more than matter, motion, or physical properties. Soja says that to be human is “not only to create distances but to attempt to cross them, to transform primal distance through intentionality, emotion, involvement,

⁴⁷Thirdspace is related to but distinct from ‘third space’ which is a sociolinguistic theory of identity and community. Sporting associations, bars, nightclubs, shopping malls are all labeled as third spaces/place. Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place: Cafés, Coffee Shops, Community Centers, Beauty Parlors, General Stores, Bars, Hangouts, and How They Get You through the Day* (New York: Paragon, 1989).

⁴⁸For a brief summary of thirdspace, see the article in *The Dictionary of Human Geography*. Paul Routledge, “Third Space,” in *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, ed. Derek Gregory et al., 5th ed. (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 753-54.

⁴⁹Soja, *Thirdspace*, 11.

attachment. . . . We create meaning through our relations with the world.”⁵⁰ Thirdspaces are mental inventions, but mental inventions that can open up new possibilities for spatial practice.⁵¹ Thirdspace provokes Other-worlds, or spaces beyond what is presently known, where alternative territories or worldviews are explored. In this sense then, social space is not a very good name for thirdspace, for “thirdspace resides in visionary vistas that imagine new meanings or possibilities for shaping spatial practice.”⁵² To return to the example, social space (thirdspace) is a way of envisioning alteration to the space one is in. For example by inserting a comment or by not speaking at all, the space one occupies is changed. As one performs this or that action, the space changes.

The following table from Sleeman’s book gives a helpful overview of the different names scholars have given each space.⁵³

Table 2. Categories for understanding of space

<i>Lefebvre (1974)</i>	<i>Harvey (1990)</i>	<i>Soja (1996)</i>	<i>Particular Life Realm</i>
Physical Space Perceived Space	Material spatial practice	Firstspace	Experience - the empirical
Mental Space Conceived Space	Representations of space	Secondspace	Perception – the theoretical
Social Space Lived Space	Spaces of representation	Thirdspace	Imagination – the creative

⁵⁰Soja, *Postmodern Geographies*, 133.

⁵¹See the conclusion for more on the kingdom as thirdspace.

⁵²Matthew Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 45. Possibly the name social space is not a good name for thirdspace because as Elden has argued, Soja and Lefebvre were actually doing something different. Although Elden may be onto something, I think they are still probably in the same stream and I am adopting Soja’s thirdspace acknowledging that he claims it comes from Lefebvre. Whether he understood Lefebvre is another question and outside the purview of this project. See Stuart Elden, “Politics, Philosophy, Geography: Henri Lefebvre in Recent Anglo-American Scholarship,” *Antipode* 33, no. 5 (2001): 809.

⁵³Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension*, 43.

These concepts are admittedly abstract so an illustration will help. A bus seat in Montgomery, Alabama in 1955 will be the space employed.⁵⁴ On December 1, Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat to a white male on a bus and thereby ignited the American Civil Rights movement. One can analyze this seat from the three perspectives put forward by these philosophers and geographers. The bus and the bus seat were of course physical space. It was firstspace. Most people conceive of space in this way, and then stop there. But there is more to space, for it also was a mental space (secondspace) in the sense that there were laws that did not allow Rosa Parks to sit when a white person required the seat. Space has physical properties, but the seats, according to the law, designated a higher social status. In American culture at this time African Americans were marginalized and excluded, and specifically excluded from the seats, if a Caucasian desired the seat. For Rosa Parks to refuse to give up her seat was a statement on the role of African Americans in society. Flanagan points out about the bus seat:

Her [Parks's] rights and dignity, indeed her entire life, were spatially circumscribed and controlled in such a way that we cannot understand the Civil Rights movement, U.S. culture, or the trauma in our society if we ignore the space and its meaning on that bus. Ironically, the space was simultaneously central and peripheral. Holding it was central to both the cause and the countercause. Holding its center also made it marginal, off limits, and out of bounds for those who did not hold it. Yes history was an issue, and so was society. But it was space and contesting space with a spatial practice that changed life in America's southlands.⁵⁵

Flanagan goes on to say a spatiality survives beyond physical space (firstspace) and mental space (secondspace), which one can see here in the example of Rosa Parks. By using the physical space, and contesting the “representation” of what the bus seat meant, she was creating a thirdspace, which is simultaneously real, imagined, and more. The space was “and more” in the sense that she longed for the day when that bus seat would no longer be a problem. The “more” part of Soja’s definition is exemplified in Parks’s

⁵⁴Flanagan gives this helpful example in his essay on the subject. James Flanagan, “Ancient Perceptions of Space/Perceptions of Ancient Space,” *Semeia* 87 (1999): 26.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 27.

contesting of the bus seat. Thirdspace is the category philosophers and geographers have adopted to help explain the active role people take in shaping their own place. Space therefore consists of the physical world in which people exist, the ideological underpinnings of understanding places, and the lived practices of people within those places that sometimes challenge and sometimes reaffirm the expected uses of such places. A reader can hopefully now see how thirdspace (or the lived practices) relates to Jesus' lived practices in Matthew. Sometimes Jesus contests and other times he endorses the expected use of places.

Heterotopia

Similar to thirdspace is Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopia. Both Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre in their construction of thirdspace are drawing on Foucault. Although Lefebvre critiques Foucault for being too theoretical and not tying spatial theories to the practical realm, many correspondences survive between the concepts of heterotopia and thirdspace.⁵⁶ In 1967 Foucault gave lectures entitled "*Des Espace Autres*" (Of Other Spaces), which were later published in a French journal. In the lectures Foucault proposed a new concept called "heterotopia" which refers to spaces of *otherness*, imaginary places outside all places, in which new modes of sociality are imagined and practiced. They are neither here nor there, simultaneously physical and mental. They are physical representations of a utopia and social sites. He gives the example of various children's imaginative games, mentioning Indian tents and games played under the covers of the parents' bed. The children's inventive play produces a different space that at the same time mirrors that which is around them. The space reflects and contests their lived spaced simultaneously.⁵⁷ Foucault states the role of heterotopias

⁵⁶Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 1-10.

⁵⁷In the article Foucault explains the concept with the example of seeing oneself in the mirror: "The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place. In the mirror, I see myself there where I am not, in an unreal, virtual space that opens up behind the surface; I am over there, there where I am not, a

is to create a space of illusion that exposes every real space. Museums, historic villages, cemeteries, gardens, and theme parks are identified by Foucault as heterotopias, places where all the other real sites can be found within the culture as simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Heterotopia's are therefore counter-sites.

Conclusion

In the study of Matthew, space is often neglected, and in large part the biblical text more generally. The neglect stems from time supplanting space and from space being viewed too narrowly. To be “placed” or to be in space does not only imply geographical locations. Geography is only one dimension of spatial consideration. Recent advances in spatial theory, starting with humanistic geography and a view called critical spatiality have brought space and human agency together. Space is not dead and unmovable, but filled with meaning. It is “socially constructed . . . and thus fluid, folded, twisted by chains, pleated, and unstable.”⁵⁸ Space is an element of culture in addition to being concrete and material. It is negotiated, filled with meaning, contested, built, expanded, open, relational, unfinished, and always becoming. I will approach space and geography as socially constructed, using the three categories of critical spatiality to encapsulate the understanding of space. All three spaces exist simultaneously as shown in the figure below. A dialectical relationship is present between human agency, societal structures, and

sort of shadow that gives my own visibility to myself, that enables me to see myself there where I am absent: such is the utopia of the mirror. But it is also a heterotopia in so far as the mirror does exist in reality, where it exerts a sort of counteraction on the position that I occupy. From the standpoint of the mirror I discover my absence from the place where I am since I see myself over there. Starting from this gaze that is, as it were, directed toward me, from the ground of this virtual space that is on the other side of the glass, I come back toward myself; I begin again to direct my eyes toward myself and to reconstitute myself there where I am. The mirror functions as a heterotopia in this respect: it makes this place that I occupy at the moment when I look at myself in the glass at once absolutely real, connected with all the space that surrounds it, and absolutely unreal, since in order to be perceived it has to pass through this virtual point which is over there.” Michel Foucault, “Des Espace Autres,” trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 47.

⁵⁸Warf, “From Surfaces to Networks,” 74.

physical space.⁵⁹ Social space is produced, “having no substantial essence in itself, but only has a relational significance, created through relations between peoples and places.”⁶⁰ By understanding space in this way one can possibly already see a new way to view the spatiality of the kingdom as present, yet not here in its fullness.

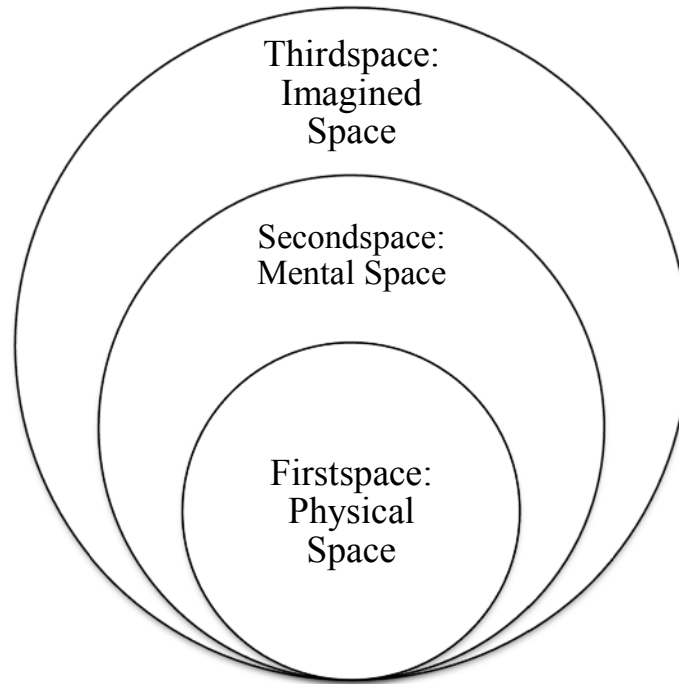


Figure 3. Three spaces existing simultaneously

As one will see in the rest of argument, in Matthew the space of this earth is

⁵⁹Moxnes notes that the unity between land and human life has been perceived in different ways. The term “cultural landscape” has been introduced to emphasize the human influence on landscape. Halvor Moxnes, “Landscape and Spatiality: Placing Jesus,” in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard DeMaris (New York: Routledge, 2010), 92. The relationship of humanity to nature has never been a simple one. The Roman statesman Cicero called the garden a “second nature” (*altera natura*). Annette Giesecke and Naomi Jacobs, eds., *Earth Perfect? Nature Utopia and the Garden* (London: Black Dog, 2012), 9.

⁶⁰Christopher Tilly, *A Phenomenology of Landscape: Places, Paths and Monuments* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), 10-11.

contested and changed through the body of the Son of God. In the words of Paul, the space of earth is experiencing “birth-pangs.” The kingdom of heaven is a thirdspace, a spatial symbol that was both well-known and sufficiently vague “to represent a challenge to the firstspace practice and the secondspace ideology that governed the life of the first audiences of Jesus and the Gospels.”⁶¹ The previous analysis of spatial theory and Matthew’s distinctive emphases paves the way for examining the budding of the spatial kingdom in Jesus’ ministry more fully.

⁶¹Moxnes, “Landscape and Spatiality,” 96.

CHAPTER 4
LORD OF HEAVEN AND EARTH

Introduction

God does not suffer history, but moves it. As Athanasius states, and Anselm repeats, the purpose of the incarnation is to prevent the good creation from failing to achieve its true destiny.¹ The incarnation has profound significance for the understanding of space and social production.² In the incarnation, God enters into the deepest possible relationship with space.³ Not only does the body of Jesus occupy space, but his body creates space by social interactions. Jesus' body is a natural symbol, a microcosm of the society he wants to produce.⁴ The Gospels speak of knowing God not through moving beyond the veil of the physical, but precisely by acknowledging the physical. Lilburne aptly says the incarnation is the "crowning point of concreteness."⁵ The emergence of the Gospels, in this regard, show great concern for the physical life and ministry of Jesus, and

¹Athanasius, *On the Incarnation* (London: David Nutt, 1885), 6. Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, ed. S. F. Schmitt., *Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia* (Edinburg, 1946), vol. 2, I:4. See C. E. Gunton, *Christ and Creation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 80.

²Inge asserts the role of the body has resurfaced in academic circles but what has almost always been ignored is that to reassert the importance of the body, one must, by implication, reassert the importance of place. The two are inseparable: "It is fascinating that although the importance of the body is increasingly recognized in theology and other disciplines, the obvious interrelationship between place and body, and therefore the importance of place itself in human experience, is scarcely commented on in theology." John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 53.

³Torrance says after the Incarnation He is at work within space and time in a way that He never was before. Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 53.

⁴Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon, 1970).

⁵Geoffrey Lilburne, *A Sense of Place: A Christian Theology of the Land* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 90.

those whom he touched upon the earth. Jesus dreamed the impossible dream of the kingdom. He set in motion the great wheel of spatial change by throwing himself upon it and being crushed in the process. By coming to earth, being crushed, rising from the dead, and bestowing his presence, he set into motion the new creation (*παλιγγενεσία*).⁶

One should note here that Lefebvre's starting point for his trialectic theory is the human body. "Each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces that space."⁷ Christl Maier comments on this saying, "It is through the body and all of its senses that humans perceive space; it is bodily gestures which connect perceived space with conceived space and thus build up lived space-in daily practice, in working places, schools etc."⁸ Lefebvre reflects on the body's relationship to space in ancient times. People measured space as an image and living reflection of our bodies.⁹ Measurements were associated with thumbs, breadths, feet, palms, and so on. Casey similarly argues the best route to recover place is through a focus on the human body.¹⁰ He traces the embodiment theme back to Kant who says that since our bodies are already divided into paired sides and parts we can discern objects as placed and oriented.

⁶Sometimes translated as "new genesis." See chap. 8 for a further discussion of this term and the implications.

⁷Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1991), 170. Lefebvre writes, "Western philosophy has betrayed the body; it has actively participated in the great process of metaphorization that has abandoned the body; and it has denied the body. The living body, being at once 'subject' and 'object,' cannot tolerate such conceptual division, and consequently philosophical concepts fall into the category of the 'signs of non-body.' Under the reign of King Logos, the reign of true space, the mental and the social were sundered, as were the directly lived and the conceived, and the subject and the object. New attempts were forever being made to reduce the external to the internal, or the social to the mental, by means of one ingenious typology or another." *Ibid.*, 407.

⁸Christl Maier, "Body Space as Public Space: Jerusalem's Wounded Body in Lamentations," in *Constructions of Space II: The Biblical City and Other Imagined Spaces*, ed. Claudia Camp and Jon Berquist (New York: T & T Clark, 2008), 120.

⁹Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 110-11.

¹⁰Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 203.

Kant therefore argues the most intimate and the most consequential inroad to place is through the body.¹¹

As noted in the previous chapters, Matthew emphasizes the presence of Jesus and the spatial kingdom.¹² Part of Matthew's aim is to show the presence of Jesus matters and that his presence begins to change the "dust" of the earth.¹³ In John's language, the Word becoming flesh has a transformative effect on the spaces Jesus encountered.¹⁴ Space has always been able to be transformed, for it is a relational and social product. Space is the product of interrelations, the sphere of multiple possibilities, and always under construction. Matthew's interest in the spatial kingdom, heaven and earth, and the presence of Jesus all provide material to investigate concerning spatial theory. Chapters 1 through 3 aimed at providing a framework, or bedrock upon which to mount an argument

¹¹Cooper argues the body has been destabilized and emptied of meaning. He traces thoughts on the body in Scripture and history, and then in philosophy and life. Adam G. Cooper, *Life in the Flesh: An Anti-Gnostic Spiritual Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 2.

¹²His body, his presence, his incarnation are the inauguration of the kingdom. As Kevin Vanhoozer said, "Jesus is not the proclaimer of the kingdom of God but its embodied enactment." Kevin Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical Linguistic Approach to Christian Doctrine* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005), 55.

¹³The spatial kingdom was at hand in Jesus' ministry because Jesus himself says so. In Matthew 4:17, at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus commands, "Repent and believe for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Most of the questions surrounding this text concern the temporal nature of the statement. Is the kingdom present, future or both? What does the phrase at hand mean, but once these questions are answered, the next step must be *how* or *in what way* is the kingdom present? I suggest that Jesus comes saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand *in* his body, in his person. The Catholic scholar, Merklein, similarly says the kingdom's nearness is not primarily temporal, but personal. But then this personal nature is interpreted in terms of one's own conversion to the salvific rule of God. Helmut Merklein, *Jesu Botschaft von Der Gottesherrschaft. Eine Skizze* (Stuttgart, Germany: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1983), 3:52-53. Hauerwas writes, "Early Christians rightly saw that what Jesus came to proclaim, the kingdom of God as a present and future reality, could be grasped only by recognizing how Jesus exemplified in his life the standards of that kingdom." Stanley Hauerwas, "Jesus and the Social Embodiment of the Peaceable Kingdom," in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. John Berkman and Michael Cartwright (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 118.

¹⁴The production of space argument does not begin with the incarnation or end with the ascension. But God becoming man is a unique event where God enters into space in a way he has not before. The spatial implications of the incarnation must also be understood as an ongoing process. God dwelling with humanity is not retracted after the resurrection.

for the Jesus coming to reorder the space of the earth. The next four chapters begin to answer *how* the presence of Jesus and the spatial kingdom connect by reflecting on the spatial significance of Christ's body and its extension.¹⁵

The next two chapters focus on one deed of Jesus that speaks to the presence of the kingdom, the Beelzebul controversy in Matthew 12.¹⁶ Chapters 6 and 7 then look at Jesus' words. Both illustrate the extension of the spatial kingdom in bodies. The Beelzebul controversy demonstrates that the *means* of territorial rule is through human bodies. Exorcisms are about power over place.¹⁷ Matthew intentionally used the name of Beelzebul in the narrative to allude to the story of the *Baal Cycle*.¹⁸ At least three correlations to the background of Beelzebul and Matthew 12:22-30 rise to the surface. Baal is known as (1) the "lord of the earth", (2) the builder of a palace or home, and (3) the giver of life. All three of these observations will be examined in the text of Matthew

¹⁵Hauerwas goes onto say, "The form of the Gospels as stories of a life are meant not only to display that life, but to train us to situate our lives in relation to that life. . . . Jesus is the one who come to initiate and make present the kingdom of god through healing of those possessed by demons, by calling disciples, telling parables, teaching the law, challenging the authorities of his day, and by being crucified at the hands of Roman and Jewish elites and raised from the grave." Hauerwas, "Jesus and the Social Embodiment," 119.

¹⁶The presence of the place of the kingdom has not been sufficiently addressed in scholarship. This is partly because most scholarly work studies Jesus' teaching on the kingdom, but fewer analyze the exorcisms. In his *Life of Jesus* Friedrich Schleiermacher wrote, "If we reflect on the numerous miracles that are not recounted, on the numerous miracles that are narrated, and on the miracles that are described in detail, we must conclude that the performance of miracles required a large part of Christ's time during his life." Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Life of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 192.

¹⁷Exorcisms particularly were an essential part of Jesus' ministry. Hollenbach even argues that (a) "quantitatively the exorcisms played a large role in Jesus' career" (b) "qualitatively . . . exorcisms figure prominently in Jesus' own understanding of his career"; and (c) "it was in connection with this particular activity that he drew upon himself the wrath of all the important public authorities of the time." Paul Hollenbach, "Jesus, Demoniacs, and Public Authorities: A Socio-Historical Study," *JAAR* 49 (1981): 568-9. Twelftree attests, "There is ample evidence that he had a reputation for being extremely successful in expelling evil spirits from people." Graham Twelftree, "Demon, Devil, Satan," in *DJG*, ed. Joel Green et al., 1st ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 166.

¹⁸That Matthew was aware of the traditions of the *Baal Cycle* is hard to prove conclusively. However because of the images of Satan's house, and entering his house, it seems that these are likely echoes of the *Baal Cycle* tradition.

12:22-30, showing how they highlight Jesus' lordship over the space of the earth. Then, I will show how the Spirit in Matthew is inaugurating a new exodus/creation. When Jesus challenges Satan in Matthew 12, he is contesting the space of the earth, because the territory of Satan's authority is the earth. Satan is polluting the earth by his possession. Robert Sack argues that territoriality has three steps: classification, communication, and control.¹⁹ In this narrative, Jesus recognizes Satan (classification), then he communicates with him, and then proves his control. Jesus controls the territory of the earth through these three steps. To put this chapter in the form of a question, Matthew 12:22-30 raises the question, "Who is lord of the earth?"

Beelzebul and the Baal Cycle

Matthew 12 is a turning point in the narrative of Matthew. The conflict in the Gospel bubbles to the surface, and the severity of the antagonism is made plain. For the first time in the narrative, Matthew asserts that the Pharisees conspire against him speaking of how to destroy (*ἀπόλλυμι*) him (v. 14). Although this opposition has been hinted at before, the hostility becomes overt in chapter 12. As R. T. France notes, "Now the narrative plumbs the lower depths, as we hear of those who are not merely indifferent to Jesus but actively oppose him."²⁰ Robert Branden argues there are four ways in which this conflict is highlighted in chapter 12 even outside the Beelzebul controversy.²¹ First, Jesus says the sin of blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven (vv. 31-32). The

¹⁹Robert Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*, CSHG (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 1.

²⁰R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 451. Carson notes how opposition to Jesus had already surfaced (9:3, 11, 14, 34; 10:25; 11:19), but now it erupts in a concrete issue that generates enough hatred to lead Jesus' enemies to contemplate murder (v. 14). D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 of *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, ed. Tremper Longman and David Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 322.

²¹Robert Charles Branden, *Satanic Conflict and the Plot of Matthew* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 57.

harsh language still troubles modern interpreters and Matthew's direct language is a sign of a narrative alteration. No longer are Jesus' words uncertain, but they are direct and shocking. Second, Jesus indicts the current generation for aligning with evil both in the passage about the sign of Jonah (vv. 38-42), and the return of the unclean spirit (vv. 43-45). Jesus' says judgment (*κρίσις*) and condemnation (v. 42) are coming upon this evil (*πονηρός*) generation (v. 45). Negative words abound in Jesus' description. Third, the chapter ends with Jesus clarifying whom his mother and brothers are; those who do the will of his father. In so doing, Jesus is indirectly critiquing those who suppose they are following the "Jewish" way of life. Jesus clarifies who his true followers are. Fourth, in chapter 13 Jesus begins declaring in parables that crowds do not know "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (v. 11). Most commentators and scholars concur that although the opposition to Jesus has already surfaced, chapter 12 represents a decisive moment in the narrative where the hostility becomes heightened. Because of this reason, chapter 12 is suitable for enquiry of how Jesus contests the space of earth in his body.

Something Greater Than Beelzebul

Readers do not only hear of opposition in chapter 12 but also Jesus' response to opposition.²² Three times in the section of 12:1-45 Matthew has Jesus saying "something greater/more (*μέγας*) is here" (vv. 6, 41, 42; France says the same idea is in vv. 3-4). In the explicit examples in this chapter, Jesus is compared to OT figures, such as David, the priests in the temple, Jonah, and Solomon.²³ To whom does Jesus stand as "something greater" in the Beelzebul controversy? Although the term *μέγας* does not occur in the Beelzebul story, the language of authority is used. Jesus enters the strong man's house, binds him, and plunders his goods. Therefore, it is possible that interpreters should see

²²France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 451.

²³Donald Senior, *Matthew*, ANTC (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 141.

vv. 22-32 as also asserting that in Jesus “something greater/more is here.” He is μέγας than Satan. I suggest that background work on the specific name of Beelzebul, which Matthew highlights in this story, reveals themes of Jesus’ dominion over the territory of the earth. The way Jesus demonstrates his Lordship over the earth is through his presence, and the exorcism of a demon out of the body. The text in Matthew is as follows.

Then a demon-oppressed man who was blind and mute was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons.” Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can someone enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house. Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. (Matt 12:22-30)

Although debate exists about the origin and spelling of Beelzebul, most argue it comes from the Canaanite god Baal.²⁴ *Ba’al zēbûl*, means “baal the prince” or “baal of the high house.” For *ba’al* means “lord” and was the Canaanite storm and fertility god, while *zēbûl* means “height, abode, dwelling.”²⁵ His name is well attested in the Ugaritic texts in addition to being mentioned in other ancient texts. He is also known as the giver of rain; the fertility of the earth is ascribed to him. Therefore he is also called the “rider on the

²⁴Beelzebul is sometimes spelled Beelzebub because there is a debate concerning whether the last part of the name be taken: (1) *zēbûb* as “fly” or “flies” interpreting the name “lord of the fly/flies,” (2) others see it as the original name of the god which was intentionally distorted by scribes to show contempt for the deity to mock his worshipers. Maier concludes that since it was the tendency for Hebrew scribes at times to distort certain names, it seems best at the present to regard “Baal-zebub” as a caconymic (“lord of the fly/flies”) for an original “Baal-zebul,” “Baal the prince.” See W. A. Maier III, “Baal-zebub,” in *ABD*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1:554. See also F Charles Fensham, “Possible Explanation of the Name Baal-Zebub of Ekron,” *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 79, no. 3 (1967): 361-64. France says there is no clear link with the Philistine god “Lord of the flies.” France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 478.

²⁵For an overview, see John Day, “Baal,” in *ABD*, 1:544-49. MacLaurin argues the phrase means “the master of the house” or “prince of demons.” E. Colin B. MacLaurin, “Beelzeboul,” *NovT* 20, no. 2 (1978): 156-60.

clouds” and the “lord of the earth.” As Umberto Cassuto notes *ba'al's* activity is associated most generally with life.

They thought of him as the giver of food and nourishment, and fecundity to all creatures, and particularly to men; he was the source of life for all things created: for plants, for animals for men, and even for the gods themselves. In a word, he was regarded as the God of Life, as the personification of all the forces that give, preserve, and renew life.²⁶

One of the main documents where readers learn of Baal is in *The Baal Cycle*, sometimes referred to as the *Baal Epic*.²⁷ Even though there are gaps in the tablets, the overall thrust of the cycle is clear. The story is about Baal’s kingship. The cycle relates the story of Baal and his kingship struggle over the universe. Baal’s first conflict is with Yamm, whose name means “sea.” After Baal’s defeat of Yamm, Baal holds a great feast, and Baal is referred to as Mightiest Baal, Prince Lord of the earth “*zbl.b^cl.ars.*”²⁸ This title is used throughout the rest of the story. Additionally after Yamm’s downfall, Baal builds his temple or his house. The parallels between the defeat of the sea and the subsequent building of a palace in the account of the exodus and the construction of the tabernacle have been noted.²⁹

At the erection of the palace, Baal renews his war with Mot whose name means “death.” Baal descends into Mot’s realm, but in a dream the fertility of the land is renewed. This dream predicts and assures Baal’s victory over Mot. Although the details are unknown to us, it is clear that with the construction of the palace, Baal deals a serious

²⁶Umberto Cassuto, “The Palace of Baal,” *JBL* 61, no. 1 (1942): 52.

²⁷Which was unearthed at Ugarit (Ras Shamra) in the early 1930s.

²⁸Mark S. Smith, “The Baal Cycle,” in *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, ed. Simon Parker (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997), 106.

²⁹See Day, “Baal,” 1:548. Baal’s palace of cedar trees are brought from Lebanon and Sirion. There is a powerful fire kindled in order to melt silver and gold and on the seventh day the silver and gold poured themselves into sheets and fixed themselves to decorate the cedar planks on the walls. The covering of the cedar planks and adorning them with gold is mentioned in the Book of Kings with regard to the building of the Temple of Solomon by Canaanite craftsman.

blow to Mot and his followers scatter. When Mot and his followers scatter, Baal announces the rise of his kingdom. Cassuto quotes Baal in his victory over his enemy Mot, the God of Death when Baal says,

I alone shall reign over gods,
I who sustain gods and men,
I who satiate the multitudes of the earth.³⁰

As Smith says, “The cosmos of Baal’s kingship is a universe nurturing life wondrously, but precariously. The universe is frequently, if not usually, overshadowed by chaos, the transient character of life and finally death.”³¹In summary, in the *Baal Cycle*, there is a contest and struggle. Baal comes out as victorious, and his victory includes land themes and also the building of a place or a house.

As stated earlier, although there are many exorcism stories, this is the only one where the name Beelzebul appears. Three background issues rise to the surface. Baal is known as (1) the “lord of the earth,” (2) the builder of a palace or home, and (3) the giver of life. The background to these points in Baal Cycle have already been noted. I will take all three of these observations and walk through the text of Matthew 12:22-30 showing how they highlight Jesus’ reordering project on the space of the earth. Although the Pharisees think Jesus is working with Beelzebul, he is constructing against him.

Lord of the Earth

Not only is Baal known as the “lord of the earth,” but Satan is identified as the ruler of the world in both apocalyptic Judaic literature and the New Testament.³² In the *Martyrdom of Isaiah* it speaks of Satan as the “prince of the world” (1:3). Then in 2:4 it says “for the angel of iniquity who *rules this world* is Beliar.” This is also consistent with

³⁰Cassuto, “The Palace of Baal,” 56.

³¹Mark S. Smith, “The Baal Cycle,” in *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, ed. Simon Parker (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997), 81.

³²Although France notes that how Satan became associated with Beelzebul is a matter of speculation. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 478.

1 John 5:19. “And that the *whole world* lies in the power of the evil one.” John 12:31 says, “Now the *ruler of this world* will be cast out.” Paul has a similar description in 2 Corinthians 4:4 where he says, “In whose case the *god of this world* has blinded the minds of the unbelieving.” Therefore when Jesus contests Satan, he is in a struggle with the ruler of the world. As C. S. Lewis says, “There is no neutral ground in the universe; every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.”³³

Matthew indicates the struggle over the earth by including the name Beelzebul, which means, “lord of the earth.” Although the term “earth” never occurs in the section, there is the spatial language of kingdom, city, and house. Additionally, in the temptation account in Matthew, the implication is that Satan governs all the kingdoms of the earth because he offers them to Jesus (Matt. 4:8-9). In Matthew and other early Christian literature then, Satan is the lord of the earth.³⁴ Jesus comes in this episode showing that something greater is here. Jesus is now the Lord of the earth, and he demonstrates his power over place through the exorcism.

However, what does the exorcism specifically have to do with regulation of the land and space? Jonathan Smith has argued that the demonic should be understood in locative categories.³⁵ The demon’s place is always in the realm of the dead, the wild and uninhabited places, the desert, or in uncivilized space and time. “The oldest rituals which treat demons are best understood as rituals of location or relocation. The demon is “placed” by being named, entrapped and removed to its proper realm.”³⁶ Jesus, by

³³C. S. Lewis, *Christian Reflections*, ed. Walter Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 33.

³⁴Matt 12:43-45 gives a visual depiction of how an unclean spirit moves in and out of clean and unclean places. Demons in this description have no respect for staying outside boundaries. In fact they want to disrupt boundaries for changing space changes social structures. That is why Jesus has to “bind” the strong man.

³⁵Jonathan Z. Smith, “Towards Interpreting Demonic Powers in Hellenistic and Roman Antiquity,” in *Aufstieg Und Niedergang Der Römischen Welt*, ed. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1978), 438.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 428-29.

conquering Beelzebul is placing him, while the devil was restructuring a place he did not belong, the earth.

Similarly, people possessed by demons are out of place. Smith claims in locative cosmology, the demon is out of place, while in utopian cosmology, it is the subject who is out of place.³⁷ The subject's true home can either be conceived as "on high" or simply a return to horizontal right relations. The man possessed was on the earth, but not a part of the earth in the sense that he was socially ostracized. Mary Douglas has pointed out that the individual physical body is perceived as a microcosm of the social body. The body is the battleground where disguised and corrupting pollutants are threatening attack.³⁸ The demonic are always associated with the marginal, chaotic, and the unstructured.

The demon-possessed person was blind and mute, which has spatial implications. Space is experienced directly, as observed through the works of philosophers, through the senses of the body. By the human eyes people are provided with a vivid look at space in three dimensions, "The organization of human space is uniquely dependent on sight."³⁹ It is by voices that humans normally interact with one another and create space,⁴⁰ and by ears one can listen and comprehend. By turning the head, a person can roughly tell the direction of sounds. "People are subconsciously aware of the sources of noise, and from such awareness they construe auditory space."⁴¹ The senses provide a spatially organized world, and while it is not impossible to interact without these abilities, the difficulty increases. The demon possessed man stood at a disadvantage regarding

³⁷Ibid., 438.

³⁸See Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Calling Jesus Names: The Social Value of Labels in Matthew* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1988), 10.

³⁹Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 16.

⁴⁰Musicologists speak of music space that is created by sounds.

⁴¹Tuan, *Space and Place*, 14.

social life, but Jesus restores this man to “traditional” social life. He creates the space of the earth anew for the man who would not have been welcome in societal functions.

The narrative also includes the crowd and the Pharisees. The spiritual eyes can also be blind to sacred realities. Ironically, it is the Pharisees and the crowd who are also blind and mute.⁴² The characteristics of the blind man leak onto the Pharisees and the crowd in the narrative. The crowd is amazed at Jesus’ teaching but ask, “Can this be the Son of David?”⁴³ The Pharisees are more antagonistic; they think Jesus does this sign by the power of Beelzebul and cannot see it is by the Spirit of God. Not only the marked, marginalized, and the mute need Jesus’ healing, but the religious leaders and the crowd. Their warped senses do not reflect an accurate spatially organized world. Jesus’ critique in this passage is not merely concerning cosmic categories, but also shows that Satan has blinded not only the demon possessed, but some in the crowd and the Pharisees as well. The extent of the devil’s control reaches past the demon possessed man. The demon-possessed man is out of place, but so are the devil, the Pharisees, and the crowd.

Beelzebul, the lord of the earth, demonstrates the disposition of his rule and how he distorts those who are of the earth. Not only is the devil out of place, but so too is the subject, the crowd, and the Pharisees. Jesus comes in bodily form restoring territory through the exorcism. He casts the demon out of the body, and he does this in public signaling the restoration of the man to his social environment. He, as the new lord of the earth, heals men and women and restores them to a right relationship to God, others, and

⁴²Although the interpretation of putting the crowds and the religious leaders goes against Cousland’s thesis that Matthew’s crowds represent the people of Israel as distinguished from their leaders. J. R. Cousland, *The Crowds in the Gospel of Matthew* (Boston: Brill, 2002). But Saldarini says the crowds are anonymous, shifting, unstructured, and contrasted with Jesus’ disciples. The crowds are friendly, yet also unreliable in Matthew’s Gospel. Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew’s Christian-Jewish Community* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 37.

⁴³Baxter links the “Son of David” with the Davidic Shepherd of Ezekiel 34. Wayne S. Baxter, “Healing and the ‘Son of David:’ Matthew’s Warrant,” *NovT* 48, no. 1 (2006): 36-50. See the role of the title “Son of David” in Kingsbury’s article. Jack Dean Kingsbury, “Title ‘Son of David’ in Matthew’s Gospel,” *JBL* 95, no. 4 (1976): 591-602.

their environment. Jesus shows all those listening in this episode that the territory of the kingdom of heaven is now upon the earth. He creates a thirdspace, which is real, imaginary and more. The kingdom is not upon the earth in fullness, but the presence of Jesus does inaugurate the arrival. He extends the sovereignty over space to other bodies by creating them anew.

Baal's House, City, and Kingdom

If the *Baal Cycle* was known to Matthew and his readers, then a word play is likely employed on Beelzebul's "house" (οἶκος) and Jesus' "kingdom" (βασιλεία).⁴⁴ As Cassuto notes, in the *Baal Cycle* the construction of the palace of Baal forms one of the most important episodes in the struggle between Baal and Mot.⁴⁵ In Matthew's story, spatial language is stressed. The Pharisees claim he is doing the exorcism by the power of Beelzebul, but Jesus' response is strange at first glance. For he does not directly counter the attack, but responds to assumptions about space and boundaries. In 12:25 he says "every βασιλεία divided against itself is laid to waste, and no πόλις or οἶκος divided against itself will stand." Similar spatial language occurs when Satan is portrayed as a strong man, fully armed in his οἶκος in verse 29.⁴⁶ This passage uses kingdom, city, and house all in parallel. For Jesus, it is apparent in this episode that βασιλεία requires a realm. The practice of exorcisms was about the control of space.

Why does Jesus use the language both of πόλις and οἶκος in regards to Beelzebul to describe what has happened in the exorcism? Illustrating the spatial nature of these terms is straightforward, but the more expansive view of space helps one

⁴⁴France notes that the strong man's "house" may be intended as a play on the possible meaning of Beelzebul as "lord of the house." France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 481n26.

⁴⁵Cassuto, "The Palace of Baal," 52.

⁴⁶Although France is right to note that for Satan it is assumed in the narrative that he has a "kingdom" he makes the common mistake of saying it carries its normal dynamic sense of "rule." France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 479.

interpret the spatial language. For a city and house are not simply physical space, but also secondspace and can become thirdspace. Evidence even exists that a πόλις and οἶκος were defined with correlations to critical spatiality. Stuart Elden, in his book *The Birth of Territory*, proposes that for many Greek authors, the central definition of πόλις is a sort of association.⁴⁷ This comes in contrast to seeing it as *merely* physical. The interrelationship between people and place is evident in his examination of territory in Greek literature. In the Greek myths, there appears the idea of *autochthony*, that people are born from the very soil they are situated on. This imagery of rootedness suggests that people are inseparable from place and there was an “oneness” to the land that does not exist in modern times. Elden, along with others, state that the theme of *autochthony* is useful in a number of ways. First, it provides unity to the πόλις. Second, the boundaries of the πόλις are set by nature rather than human agreements. Third, the land belongs to people by right, by birth. The connection between people and place is further seen in *Antigone*, a play about the rites and rituals of burial. *Antigone* demonstrates the πόλις is simultaneously a place and a people who inhabit it. In summary, a πόλις is defined by the associations of the people the πόλις contains. The πόλις is not less than the land it sits upon, but it is also more.

Jesus also uses the metaphor of οἶκος in the passage when he responds to the Pharisees asking how he can enter the strong man’s house without first binding the strong man. David Horell says οἶκος means both the physical location and also human groups that make up the household.⁴⁸ Moxnes agrees with Horrell, but takes it a step further arguing the οἶκος is not just where the family lives, but a place identified with history and

⁴⁷Stuart Elden, *The Birth of Territory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), 21-52.

⁴⁸David Horrell, “From Adelphoi to Oikos Theou: Social Transformation in Pauline Christianity,” *JBL* 120, no. 2 (2001): 297. Crosby agrees, arguing that a house refers to three elements: the building, the persons or groups, and the kinds of relationship or social community that characterized the gathering. M. H. Crosby, “House-Based Religion,” *Priests & People* 11, no. 2 (1997): 55. Notice this description fits well with the kingdom being people, place, and power.

tradition.⁴⁹ Moxnes challenges modern presuppositions on the idea of “home.” Over the years the understanding of home as belonging to the private sector of society has become dominant. But it would be anachronistic to lay this view on top of the biblical text. The household, according to Moxnes, was rooted in place, and interacted with the broader community. The household was the basic social unit in Greco-Roman antiquity and therefore any operation of the household structure had significant economic implications. The place of the home then was never empty of meaning, and the meaning stemmed from its history. The meaning comes from the history and tradition of the family and people group. Just as the land is never simply physical dirt, houses and cities are never simply walls.

Jesus, in specific texts in the Gospels, speaks about the home and elucidates that the home as more than the physical. He does not associate it with the private sphere but with his family history, his hometown. In Mark 6:4 Jesus says, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own home town, and among his own kin, and in his own house.” The triad of household, kin group, and home village also occurs in Genesis 12:1 where God tells Abraham to leave his land (γῆ), his kin group (συγγένεια), and his father’s house (οἶκος). Therefore, house was more than just the physical place the family lives, but includes generational importance and unique social structures. Jesus says in Mark 10:29-30 that no one who has left house (οἶκος) or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children and lands (ἀγρός) will not receive a hundred-fold now in this time. Multiple times in the Scriptures there is a three-generational household pattern presented: the parent generation, the next generation, and then their children. They all live in the same house and make their living from working the land. The public sociologically important and rooted view of house fits with the Scripture’s metaphorical description of

⁴⁹Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 30-31.

the Christian community as the household of God.⁵⁰ Like the πόλις, an οἶκος was a place defined by associations.

The associations with the πόλις and οἶκος go far beyond simply the physical structures (firstspace). They are actually defined more by the associations (secondspace). Oppression and social ostracism are key elements of Satan's house as seen in the man who the devil made bind and mute. Readers know from other exorcistic narratives that those oppressed by demons are those who live among the tombs (Mark 5:3), who foam at the mouth and grind their teeth (Mark 9:18), and who convulse (Mark 1:26). The demon-possessed are the "others" in the narrative, those who live apart from society and are shunned, but Jesus defines his family now by "whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother" (Matt 12:50). Their identity is coupled to the occupying of a space. Jesus' household was contesting the seed of the serpent's household. Jesus was rejecting the household of Satan, and creating his own imagined place (thirdspace). He criticized the system of Satan by attacking Satan's house and imagining new meanings or possibilities for spatial practices.

The narrative goes onto to speak of Jesus 'entering' (εἰσέρχομαι) the strong man's house. Most immediately the exorcism achieves this entering, but more broadly, it is executed through the incarnation. In the incarnation, Jesus "entered" Satan's realm of authority and contested him. In this sense then, a good summary of Jesus' ministry can be described as contesting the rule of Satan. Moxnes notes, "The picture of Satan not just as an 'outsider,' but as lord of another realm, which creates an image of two territories, or realms, each under its own ruler, Satan or God."⁵¹ Matthew also emphasizes the two realms by his pairing of heaven and earth in his narrative. Upon entering, Jesus binds the

⁵⁰Eph 2:19; 1 Tim 3:15; Heb 10:21; 1 Pet 4:17.

⁵¹Ibid., 136.

strong man and plunders his house.⁵² Satan’s house is his domain of authority, the earth. Jesus, in this episode is showing the people that he is Lord of the land and all those who dwell in it, just as he has shown that he is *κύριος* of the Sabbath in 12:8. The rule of Satan is upon the space of the earth, and Jesus contests it with his bodily presence. Baal is sovereign in his narrative of the *Baal Cycle*, but Jesus comes in the exorcism showing that his kingdom space is different from Satan’s and Baal’s. He is entering the “strong man’s” house and plundering his goods. In the Beelzebul controversy, Jesus contests the rule of the “lord of the earth” and establishes his own *οἶκος* or kingdom of heaven. But how does he establish this space? How is the kingdom space present in this narrative?

The Giver of Life

Jesus reorders the space of the earth by contesting the “lord of the earth.” He says in Matthew 12:28 that in the exorcism, the kingdom of God is present. Jesus is a foil character to Baal, who is supposed to be the “giver of life,” but Baal, instead takes away life. By giving life in the exorcism, Jesus reveals the coming of the kingdom of heaven. He illustrates he is the giver of life by (1) the word *φθάνω*, (2) the reference to Satan’s possessions, (3) and the language of gathering and scattering. Each of these confirms the importance of the *extension* of kingdom space *through* bodies.

Φθάνω. The Greek word used for the presence of the kingdom is *φθάνω* in verse 28.⁵³ The term is hotly debated. BDAG lists three options for the meaning: (1) come before or precede, (2) arrive, reach, (3) attain.⁵⁴ Moulton and Milligan say that the original meaning was anticipate or precede, but then assert in the NT it has lost this

⁵²The tying up or binding represents exorcistic language which Matthew uses again in Matt 16.

⁵³It is used seven times in the NT: Matt 12:28; Luke 11:20; Rom 9:31; 2 Cor 10:14; Phil 3:16; 1 Thess 2:16; 1 Thess 4:15

⁵⁴Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 1053.

meaning largely and simply means “come or arrive.”⁵⁵ As Beasley-Murray notes, there seems to be little progress by way of linguistics. Turning to scholars, the views are just as multifarious. Some, such as Bultmann, say the term here means God’s reign is already breaking in or dawning.⁵⁶ Grammatically this would be called a proleptic verb. France claims the word essentially means “to be ahead, to precede” or “to catch someone unawares” rather than simply arrive.⁵⁷ But as Beasley-Murray notes it is unclear what breaking in means if it is not already here.⁵⁸ Nolland on the other hand maintains it uniformly means “arrive” except in 1 Thessalonians 4:15.⁵⁹ Everyone seems to agree there is in some sense the presence of God’s kingdom in this verse, but those who gravitate towards seeing the kingdom as mainly future attempt to hedge their statements so as not to take in too much water against their thesis.

Another view, which has not been adequately considered, because of the neglect of the spatial dimension of the kingdom, is how φθάνω is used in relationship to spatial terminology. φθάνω means “to extend to, to reach” (see 2 Chron 28:9; Dan 4:8, 17) when placed near spatial notions. As mentioned above, BDAG lists the third option for the meaning of the word as “attain” (Rom 9:31; Phil 3:16).⁶⁰ This meaning of

⁵⁵J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931), 667.

⁵⁶Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1951), 1:7.

⁵⁷France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 474n5.

⁵⁸G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 78.

⁵⁹John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 501. Some point out that ἐγγίζω and φθάνω can be equivalents, since in Dan 4:11, 22 the LXX has used a form of ἐγγίζω, and Theodotian’s Daniel a form of φθάνω for the same Aramaic verb. Berkey also describes how the underlying Semitic of ἐγγίζω in Mark 1:15 was either the Hebrew *naga* or the Aramaic *mata*, since these verbs are frequently rendered in the LXX by some form of ἐγγίζω. Robert F. Berkey, “Ellixein, Phthanein and Realized Eschatology,” *JBL* 82, no. 2 (1963): 179.

⁶⁰BDAG, 1053.

“extend, reach, or attain” resonates with Matthew’s spatial portrayal of the kingdom. If this is the case, when Jesus casts out demons, the kingdom of God *extends*. The kingdom reaches out further, because the kingdom is now being localized in other people by the same Spirit that is at work in Jesus. The verse can now be examined not only concerning arrival, but the *effect* or the *process* of the arrival.

Satan’s possessions. The reference to Satan’s possessions (τό σκεῦος) in verse 29 sustains the assertion that the Beelzebul controversy is about the *process* of arrival of the kingdom. What are Satan’s possessions? Matthew 12:29 is the only verse in Matthew’s Gospel to use the word σκεῦος, but examining other uses of σκεῦος in the NT is revealing. BDAG lists three options for the meaning of σκεῦος. The third option is the figurative use of “a human being exercising a function.”⁶¹ The use in Matthew is clearly figurative, and other passages exist in the NT where the term is used in place of a human being.⁶² In Acts 9:15 Paul is called a chosen instrument (σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς). In Romans 9:22 those who are lost are “vessels of wrath” (σκεύη ὀργῆς). 2 Corinthians 4:7 says, “We have this treasure in jars of clay” (ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν). The reference in 2 Corinthians especially focuses on the human body. 1 Peter 3:7 calls the women the weaker vessel (ἀσθενεστέρῳ σκεύει).

Literature outside the Scripture also identifies the vessels directly with bodies. The *Testament of Naphtali* 8:6 speaks of the devil dwelling in his own body (ὁ διάβολος οἰκειοῦται αὐτὸν ὡς ἴδιον σκεῦος). Hermas 5:1-2 says Christ’s body is the vessel of the Spirit (τὸ σκεῦος τοῦ πνεύματος). Although each usage of σκεῦος can be sufficiently different, and one has to be wary of the illegitimate totality transfer, it seems plausible

⁶¹BDAG, 927.

⁶²Carson says the metaphor of possessions preserves the metaphor of house and has no relation to demonic possession. But this explanation is not convincing, partly because Carson gives no explanation of what the possessions could be. Carson, *Matthew*, 290.

that the “possessions” in Matthew are the bodies of people. Two arguments outside the linguistic usage buttress this claim. First, the robbing of the strong man in this verse recalls imagery of Isaiah 49:23-25, where God rescues his people from their oppressors (ἰσχύοντος). Isaiah speaks to the captives of a tyrant, the mighty, and the oppressors being rescued, but the Lord says he will save the children. The root word for oppressors is ἰσχύω and Satan is called the “strong one” (ἰσχυρός) in Matthew 12:29. If this is background to Satan’s possessions or goods, then the bodies of people are his possessions. Second, in the context the only “possession” that the devil is in control of is the human body of the possessed person. Davies and Allison agree asserting that the “possessions” are the people Satan has under his sway, or those possessed by demons.⁶³ Therefore, not only is there linguistic evidence but contextual evidence that direct interpreters to see the σκεῦος as the bodies of human beings. The Beelzebul controversy addresses the *process* of the arrival of the kingdom by referencing the possessions that Jesus is plundering from Satan’s house. The kingdom *extends* through Jesus’ ministry because he has plundered Satan’s *possessions*, or the bodies of those possessed by demons.

Gathering and scattering. Verse 30 also maintains consistency in interpreting the kingdom as extending through bodies. After Jesus references entering the strong man’s house and plundering his possessions, he summarizes by saying the following. “Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.” The verse has the parallel of someone being ‘with’ (μετά) Jesus and ‘gathering’ (συνάγω), to being ‘against’ (κατά) Jesus and ‘scattering’ (σκορπίζω). Why does Jesus put ‘with’ in parallel to ‘gathering’ and ‘against’ in parallel to ‘scattering’?

⁶³W. D. Davies and Dale Allison, *Matthew*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1988), 2:342.

Table 3. Positive and negative descriptions in the Beelzebul controversy

<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>
with (μετά)	against (κατά)
gathering (συνάγων)	scattering (σκορπίζει)

Matthew uses one of his distinctive prepositions, *μετά*, in this passage in parallel to gathering. In chapter 2, I highlighted Jesus being *μετά* his people. What is the meaning of the statement in this context? Jesus is explaining that being ‘with’ him means ‘gathering’ people in as he has done in the exorcism. Being ‘against’ him means ‘scattering’ as the Pharisees have done by accusing Jesus of being under the influence of Satan and thereby causing many to doubt Jesus’ ministry.

The language of gathering and scattering recalls either agricultural language or a reference to sheep. The more likely association with these words is herdsman or shepherding language.⁶⁴ In the Jesus tradition, all four Gospels have Jesus using the metaphor of sheep to label Jesus’ followers. Both Matthew (11x) and John (17x) have the most references to sheep among the four Gospels. In Matthew 9:36 Jesus has compassion on the crowds, for they were helpless, like *sheep* without a shepherd. Jesus tells his disciples in 10:6 to go to the lost *sheep* of the house of Israel. Jesus himself asserts in 15:24 that he was sent to the lost *sheep* of the house of Israel. In 10:16 he sends the disciples out as *sheep* in the midst of wolves. When Jesus heals a man with a withered hand in chapter 12 on the Sabbath he compares him to a *sheep* (12:11-12). In 18:12 he tells the story of a *sheep* gone astray and how the shepherd goes searching for the one lost *sheep*. In chapter 25, Jesus separates the *sheep* from the goats. Before Jesus’ death, he compares himself to a shepherd, for when the shepherd is struck, the *sheep* scatter.

I highlight these verses to demonstrate that the “sheep” metaphor is associated

⁶⁴David L. Turner, *Matthew*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 322.

with the bodies of Jesus' followers. Jesus, then, is explaining the kingdom has come upon you, or is *extending*, thorough the *gathering* of his possessions. If the exorcisms are about power over place, and this exorcism is specifically about who is lord of the earth, then Jesus is showing his power over place by gathering human bodies to himself. The *means* by which Jesus enacts his ministry is through his body and the bodies of his followers. Although Baal is known as the giver of life, it is Jesus who gives life to the demon possessed man. The kingdom extends through bodies, and they create spaces challenging the space of the earth.

Conclusion

Matthew 12 is a turning point in the narrative. The antagonism towards Jesus is heightened and Jesus is explicitly opposed. However, Jesus asserts "something greater/more is here" in his person. In the Beelzebul controversy, Jesus is contesting Satan, "the lord of the earth." The exorcisms illustrate the land belongs to God, not Satan.⁶⁵ Jesus classifies Satan, communicates with him, and then controls him. He enters Satan's house, binds him, and plunders his goods. The house of Baal is the earth, and his goods are those who follow him. Jesus in the incarnation, enters this contested space, and brings the kingdom of heaven to earth via his exorcisms. Through his body, and the body of the exorcised, the kingdom of God is $\phi\theta\acute{\alpha}\nu\omega$. As Jonathan Z. Smith observes, "Human beings . . . bring place into being,"⁶⁶ or "a 'place' is formed out of the particular set of social relations which interact at a particular location."⁶⁷ Whoever is with Jesus gathers, whoever is against him scatters. Jesus, in the exorcism, challenges firstspace and secondspace, demonstrating the creation of a thirdspace. He creates a heterotopia, a place

⁶⁵See Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place*, 154-55.

⁶⁶Smith, "Towards Interpreting Demonic Powers," 429.

⁶⁷*Ibid.*, 430.

outside yet also inside all other places. It is not like the space Satan has built, but it contests that space and reorders it. Space is not static and abstract but always in working relationship with people and their bodies. Space is always under-construction, always becoming. But the narrative mentions one other figure that has an integral role in spatial production, the third person of the trinity.

CHAPTER 5

IF BY THE SPIRIT: THE SPIRIT, THE SPATIAL KINGDOM AND THE NEW EXODUS

Exorcisms as Spatial and Body Oriented

Exorcisms are part of a cosmological, political, social, and spatial battle in people's lives. In Lefebvre's words, exorcisms are the production of space, and the production of space contests the existing space. In this section I look at the role of the Spirit in the Beelzebul controversy, arguing that the Spirit in Matthew gestures toward new exodus/creation. For redemption does not mean the "prising apart of creation to liberate what is divine in it, but the prising open of creation to the Spirit of God that it might be filled with divine glory."¹ Matthew saw the exorcisms as a sign of God's impending spatial kingdom. The impending spatial kingdom includes firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace categories.

But before an analysis of the Spirit is undertaken, I will explain how exorcisms more broadly are (1) bodily oriented, (2) and spatial, in that they unite heaven and earth. The tendency still resides to put exorcisms into the "private" sector of illness and healing, but this limited perspective becomes apparent when exorcisms are placed in the cultural context of illness and healing in non-Western societies, or when methodologies such as embodiment and performance are employed.² R. H. Bell maintains although the concepts of demons and the devil are foreign to much contemporary thought, "The defeat of Satan

¹Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 83.

²See A. Kleinmann, *Patients and Healers in the Context of Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Louise Lawrence, *Sense and Stigma in the Gospels: Depictions of Sensory-Disabled Characters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

is viewed as a fundamental aspect of the redemption of the human being.”³ The kingdom of heaven is present through the body of Jesus and he is extending it to other bodies through exorcisms.

Spirits are occasionally portrayed as exterior persecutors in the NT and earlier literature, but most often appear as *interior* inhabitants of the human body.⁴ In NT exorcisms, the most common terms employed are ἐκβάλλω (Mark 1:25-28; 5:8, 13; 7:29-30; Matt 8:31-32; Luke 4:41, 35-36; 8:29, 33-35; Acts 16:18) and εἰσέρχομαι (Mark 1:34, 39; 3:15, 22; 6:13; 7:26; 9:18, 28; 9:38; 16:9, 17; Matt 7:22; 8:16; 10:1, 8; 9:33-34; 12:24-28; 17:19; Luke 9:40, 49; 11:14-20; 13:32). The dismissal of the demon from its host is conveyed with the terms ἐκπορεύομαι (Acts 19:8-12), πέμπω (Mark 5:12), ἀποστέλλω (Mark 5:10) and ὑπάγω (Matt 8:31). All of these terms underscore the locative aspect of exorcisms. A demon is being cast out of the body. The demon is placed elsewhere. Readers see this in the transferring demons from a person to a herd of pigs in Mark 5:13. Twelftree says “sometimes it was thought appropriate to transfer demons from the sufferer to some object like a pebble, a piece of wood, a pot or some water in order to effect a cure.”⁵ The body and spirit possession are interwoven.

Additionally, in all the early Christian literature, Eric Sorensen says there is a clear connection between what spirits (both malevolent and benevolent) are doing at the cosmic level in conjunction with the unfolding of political and social events on the

³R. H. Bell, “Demon, Devil, Satan,” in *DJG*, ed. Joel Green et al., 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 193.

⁴Eric Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism in the New Testament and Early Christianity* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 119. Caragounis says the present activity of the Son of man, especially in casting out demons, should be seen “not so much as indicating the actual occurrence of the decisive event of the kingdom of God, but as the preliminary warfare of the Son of man against the evil powers . . . making possible the entrance of the kingdom of God in history.” But Caragounis’s explanation falls short of what the passage actually says. According to v. 28, the kingdom of God is here in the exorcisms, they are not a preparation for the kingdom. C. C. Caragounis, “Kingdom of God/Kingdom of Heaven,” in *DJG*, ed. Joel Green et al., 1st ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1992), 425.

⁵Graham Twelftree, “Demon, Devil, Satan,” in *DJG*, 1st ed., 167.

ground.⁶ Our blindness to this connection between these two realms could be the result of the secular sacred divide that has clung to modernistic thought, but in ancient times the religious/heavenly and the social/earthly were always intertwined. Something peculiar about miracles connects the two realms of heaven and earth, as does the body of Jesus.

Philip Sheldrake argues:

Miracles unite, just for a moment, two places, two worlds. It occurs in ordinary time and space but the power is a manifestation of other-worldly place. The miracle overcomes the everyday dissociation of the two worlds and reveals their intimate not accidental connection.⁷

Heaven and earth collide in Jesus' exorcisms. As Robert Charles Branden notes, there is "somehow an invisible hinge connecting heaven and earth."⁸ But what Branden misses is that this hinge is not invisible, but visible, in the form of Jesus. The famous church father Tertullian said, "Flesh is the hinge of salvation."⁹

The human body is actually a living crossroad, a midway point between the most distant galaxies and the most minute subatomic particles. Some elements now present in our bodies derive from distant parts of the universe. . . the created universe is a realm of constant interchange, of giving and receiving. Not only do human body-persons participate in this cosmic sharing: they enflesh the vocation of responsible stewardship.¹⁰

Not only are the heavenly realms changing, but the status of the earthly citizens is being transferred from one domain to another. God's kingdom refers to God's sovereign rule *and* space coming "on earth as it is in heaven." Soteriological, eschatological, social and political implications all come to the surface. The effects of possessions are erratic activity, dumbness, deafness, and mental disturbances. The demoniacs' separation from their

⁶See, Sorensen, *Possession and Exorcism*.

⁷Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory and Identity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2001), 43.

⁸Robert Charles Branden, *Satanic Conflict and the Plot of Matthew* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 19.

⁹Tertullian, *De Resurrectione Carnis*, ed. Ernst Evans (London: SPCK, 1960), 8.

¹⁰Mary Prokes, *Toward a Theology of the Body* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 45.

communities is a distinctive theme that occurs in almost all of the demonic portrayals in the New Testament. Therefore, exorcisms have wide ranging implications.¹¹ Those who have had demons exorcised also partake in social reintegration into the community.¹² Christian Strecker calls the exorcisms *transformances*. The identity of the possessed persons is constituted anew, their ranks and social positions in the social arena revisited and the cosmic order reestablished. This social category is also highlighted by the public nature of the exorcisms. Few of them are done in private. All see the performance so that the possessed person will be welcomed back into societal norms. Amanda Witmer in her dissertation on the exorcisms comments saying: “The man's experience is not limited to his own life. The social transformation of the man encompasses the entire community. The person with the spirit is changed in the process, but so are others who participate through their presence.”¹³ Once a person's status has been changed, the community must also change. Political and social events on the ground are changed as spiritual changes occur in a person. The two realms are intimately connected. In Matthew, this is seen with the use of the terms heaven and earth. Thus, in the exorcisms Jesus creates new bodies of space. In his body, the heavenly realm is conquering and also transferring people in the earthly realm to a new social situation. The presence of the kingdom is in Jesus' person.

In this chapter I will continue to employ a spatial perspective on the discussion of exorcisms and illustrate the function of exorcisms as power over space and place,

¹¹Christian Strecker writes, “The exorcisms of Jesus witness a direct class between the divine and demonic. This collision results in diverse transformations, notably in the order of the self, the social order, and the cosmic order. Alterations at all three levels are closely connected to and mutually affect one another.” Christian Strecker, “Jesus and the Demoniacs,” in *The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Wolfgang Stegemann et al. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 126.

¹²Psychologists have noticed that making the psychiatric hospitals real places, with flowers on the tables, communal activities, and parties, help integrate them into a community and is part of the healing process.

¹³Amanda Witmer, *Jesus, The Galilean Exorcist: His Exorcisms in Social and Political Context* (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 165.

through the work of the Spirit.¹⁴ The Spirit is the inaugurator of the new creation, the new exodus. This spatial construction is done in part by rescuing bodies from the ruler of this earth, and setting up a new ruler on the space of the earth.

The Spirit in Matthew

In the Beelzebul controversy, the focus is not so much on the exorcism itself, but the *source* of the power. The exorcism itself only takes up one verse (12:22), while the rest of the passage describes the aftermath. The modern question of whether Jesus could do miracles and exorcisms does not rise to surface. Rather the main question was by what power Jesus performed these exorcisms.¹⁵ After Jesus has performed the exorcism, the crowd asks, “Can this be the Son of David?”¹⁶ The Pharisees then say that Jesus does this by the power of Beelzebul, but Jesus counters that it is by the Spirit of God that he casts out demons. “But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you” (v. 28).¹⁷ Agreement exists between both

¹⁴Halvor Moxnes and Jonathan Smith do have some material on the relationship between exorcisms and place. But Moxnes looks at demon possession and exorcism in the social and political context of Palestine in the first century. My focus is on the apocalyptic or cosmic battle here from a spatial perspective, not denying there are social and political ramifications. Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 125-41; Jonathan Z. Smith, “Towards Interpreting Demonic Powers in Hellenistic and Roman Antiquity,” in *Aufstieg Und Niedergang Der Römischen Welt*, ed. Hildegard Temporini and Wolfgang Haase (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1978).

¹⁵Shirock argues the referents of οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν in 12:27 refer to Jesus’ own disciples rather than the consensus modern view of “your sons” referring to unknown Jewish exorcists associated with the Pharisees. Robert J Shirock, Jr., “Whose Exorcists Are They: The Referents of Oī Yioi Ὑμῶν at Matthew 12:27/Luke 11:19,” *JSNT*, no. 46 (1992): 41-51.

¹⁶The Son of David is known as the Spirit-filled heir apparent to the everlasting kingdom. A parallel account appears in Luke 11:14, but unlike Matthew’s account, Luke’s does not include this statement about David. David was known as a healer in Jewish tradition, one who had the Spirit (Matt 22:43).

¹⁷Some may question why Matthew uses one of his five references to the “kingdom of God” here rather than “kingdom of heaven.” Others may think this puts the spatial argument here on precarious ground for if Matthew wanted to emphasize the spatial aspects he would have intentionally replaced “God” with “heaven” here. But France is most likely right to say that because the preceding reference referred to “Satan’s kingdom” then Matthew would have naturally paired with a more personal reference to God himself. Additionally, Matthew may simply be following Mark here. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*,

groups, from a certain perspective.¹⁸ Both affirm Jesus is spirit-possessed; the question remains what kind of spirit?¹⁹ My argument is that both “powers” (the Spirit and Beelzebul) indicate the importance and control of place in this passage. By raising the question of the source of his power, the Pharisees try to discredit him, but Jesus affirms that he is spirit-possessed, because it is by the Spirit of God (ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ) that he does these things. Therefore, in this passage we have all three parties (Jesus, the crowd, the Pharisees) affirming that Jesus is using an outside source as the power behind his performances.

Matthew emphasizes the Spirit’s role as tied to the new exodus/new creation.²⁰ As Hawthorne notes, when the Spirit of God is referred to in Scripture, life is intended—“for vitality, livingness, is the essence of spirit, especially of the divine spirit.”²¹ From a spatial perspective, Matthew is signaling the life of the people and place with his

NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 480. Carson, Davies and Allison all say this goes stylistically with “Spirit of God.” D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 8 of *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, ed. Frank Gaebelin (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 289. W. D. Davies and Dale Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1988-97), 2:339.

¹⁸Dunn argues both that Jesus was not possessed or controlled by this power and that he was unable to control it, but Dunn seems uncomfortable with identifying Jesus as spirit-possessed which was the assumption of the crowd, his family, and his opponents. James Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit* (London: SCM, 1975), 87-88.

¹⁹According to Guijarro, public accusations, labels of deviancy, and negative labels are used to control behavior which some have interpreted as dangerous to society at large. Unknowingly, the Pharisees are aligning with Satan’s house. Santiago Guijarro, “The Politics of Exorcism: Jesus’ Reaction to Negative Labels in the Beelzebul Controversy,” *BTB* 29, no. 3 (1999): 122.

²⁰Blaine Charette has the most sustained reflection on the Spirit in Matthew’s Gospel. His thesis is similar to mine in that he argues the Spirit is especially evident in the eschatological redemption which has as its objective the restoration of God’s human creation back to himself. Much of Charette’s material is helpful and employed in my analysis, however Charette thinks the presence of Jesus with his community is tied to the Spirit because of the OT connection between the presence of God and the Spirit, but this is not explicit in Matthew’s narrative and therefore is questionable. Blaine Charette, *Restoring Presence: The Spirit in Matthew’s Gospel*, JPTSS (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000); idem, “‘Never Has Anything Like This Been Seen in Israel’: The Spirit As Eschatological Sign in Matthew’s Gospel,” *JPT* 8 (1996), 31-51.

²¹Gerald Hawthorne, *The Presence and the Power: The Significance of the Holy Spirit in the Life and Ministry of Jesus* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1991), 13.

employment of the Spirit.²² His use of the Spirit indicates God's work of restoration of the land promises and therefore has everything to do with space and place in Matthew's Gospel.²³ I will demonstrate the importance of spatial considerations in relation to the Spirit by briefly observing the joining of the Spirit with the new exodus in defining moments of Jesus' life: (1) birth (2) baptism/temptation (3) exorcism (4) death. These observations should inform how one interprets the Beelzebul controversy in Matthew 12, for he performs the exorcism by the Spirit of God, and thereby the spatial kingdom is present.²⁴

The Genealogy

The first words of Matthew's Gospel are βίβλος γενέσεως (book of offspring) which recall the book of Genesis and the subject of creation. Matthew, through these first words and the genealogy (which is also central to Genesis's narrative), proposes that Jesus himself is playing a central role in a new beginning. The entry points to the two testaments therefore begin in similar ways. In Genesis the πνεῦμα θεοῦ (LXX) hovers over the waters in Genesis 1:2. In Psalm 32:6 (LXX) it is by the word of the Lord, and

²²Hawthorne notes the Spirit's creative activity in the world of nature (Gen 1:2; Job 26:13; Pss. 33:6; 104:30), but he says it is with person that the Spirit has most to do. *Ibid.*, 20. However, I would argue Hawthorne has not reflected enough on the interrelationship between people and place.

²³The stress on the Spirit is not as pronounced in Matthew as it is in Luke and John. But there is a thoughtful and intentional portrayal of the activity of the Spirit in Matthew's narrative. Montague in his book entitles his chapter on the pneumatology of Matthew's Gospel "The Discreet Pneumatology of Matthew." G. T. Montague, *The Holy Spirit: Growth of a Biblical Tradition* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1976). Matthew is economical in his references to the activity of the Spirit, but he has the Spirit appearing at defining moments in Jesus' life.

²⁴The role of the Spirit through Matthew is a neglected area of study. I noted in chap. 1 that Matthew emphasizes how Jesus will be present with his community and does not necessarily run to the Spirit as the other Gospels do. Keck even labels one of the sections in his article as Matthew's "Ambivalence Toward Spirit Activity." L. E. Keck, "Matthew and the Spirit," in *The Social World of the First Christians*, ed. O. Larry Yarbrough (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1995), 149. Keck gives three considerations for Matthew's ambivalence about the work of the Spirit: (1) Jesus is presented as Spirit-begotten; (2) the attitude toward prophecy; (3) the reluctance to celebrate present salvation. Keck's analysis of Matthew's reluctance to celebrate the signs of present salvation does not rightly consider the presence of Jesus as a sign of present salvation.

the “spirit of his mouth” (τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ) that the heavens (οἱ οὐρανοὶ) are made. In Psalm 103:30 (LXX) it says he sends forth the Spirit (τὸ πνεῦμά), they are created, and you renew the face of the ground (γῆ). A brief reflection on the spatial nature of the genealogy is helpful.

Matthew begins his book by recounting the genealogy from Abraham to David, to Jesus Christ. Many things that could be said about this list, but for our purposes two things stand out. The two people Matthew chooses as the stop-gaps before Jesus, and Matthew’s insertion of one historical event in the midst of a line of people. In the genealogy Matthew is making Jesus’ history “fit,” which “indicates that for the author, this is not so much a statistical observation, as a theological reflection on the working out of God’s purposes.”²⁵

The two people Matthew structures his genealogy through are Abraham and David. Abraham and David are both towering figures in Jewish history. For both of these figures, spaces (land or a house) are promised to them. In Genesis 12 Abraham is called to go out of his own land (12:1) and promised that he will become a great nation. God makes a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 15 promising him seed, land, and blessing. In Genesis 15:18-21 God says to Abram:

To your offspring I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates, the land of the Kenites, the Kenizzites, the Kadmonites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girashites and the Jebusites.

For Abraham, a large part of the promise included land that he would possess. David is also promised a house and a place for the people Israel. In 2 Samuel 7:10 and 16 God discloses to David, “And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more...And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.” In 1 Chronicles 17:14 we have the

²⁵France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 29; see also John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 72.

same text. The text says, “I will maintain him in my house and in my kingdom forever.” In both passages kingdom and house are paralleled. Matthew placed these two individuals at the beginning of the book to frame Jesus’ message in light of OT promises. From this brief overview it seems that Matthew intends us to see Jesus as coming to fulfill a spatial promise.

The other striking item in the genealogy is the event named in the midst of the list of people. The only event recorded (besides Jesus’ birth) is the deportation to Babylon (Matt 1:11-12, 17). Charette says, “It is noteworthy that the calamitous event of exile and not a person should mark the end of the second period and the beginning of the third.”²⁶ The deportation to Babylon is the historical event of Babylon conquering and removing Judah from their land. The event is central to Matthew’s overview of Israel’s history, so he pauses to mention it amongst a list of people. Israelites, as a people, were closely associated with the place they lived (*autochthony*). To be removed from their home was no small occurrence, and Jesus was coming back to bring them into their new homeland, the kingdom. This structural feature suggests that the land promise is intertwined with the coming of Jesus. Connecting this event with Matthew’s emphasis on Abraham and David, it is evident that the land promise was a vital event in Jewish history.

In summary, Matthew starts his book by pointing his readers to the Jewish Scriptures, so that they can see that Jesus fulfills Jewish hopes. In effect, writes Luz, “Matthew sets out with a new ‘book of origins’, with a new *Heilsgeschichte*, or history of God’s actions in the world and in mankind’s salvation. It is as if he were writing the Bible anew.”²⁷ But this newness also has strong links to what happened previously. The

²⁶Charette, *Restoring Presence*, 37.

²⁷Ulrich Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 24.

same Spirit that worked to create the land and multiply the people is working in Matthew. Although Matthew does not explicitly name the Spirit in the genealogy it is clear he is echoing the Genesis narrative. Michel de Certeau asserts that all narratives have the structure of spatial syntaxes, “every story is a travel story—a spatial practice.”²⁸ The genealogy and the first two chapters of Matthew are “spatial stories” where Matthew traces the history of Israel through space, from Ur, to Egypt, to Canaan, to Jerusalem, to the land of Rome. Jesus comes retracing the spatial steps of his family lineage.²⁹

The Birth of Jesus

The new exodus (or new creation/new land) theme continues when Matthew turns his attention to the birth of Jesus where he employs the noun birth (γένεσις) for a second time (Matt 1:18). In 1:18 γένεσις with πνεῦμα are brought into close connection as Mary is found to be with child of (ἐκ) the Holy Spirit. ἐκ is often used to denote the origin, the cause, or the reason for something. The conception *by* the Holy Spirit conveys that the Spirit is bringing about the work of new creation/new exodus through this new person. People and place are coupled together. Jesus’ birth by the Holy Spirit fulfills the Immanuel promise. Therefore, people, place and presence all collide in the incarnation of Jesus. The connection between people and place finds support in the Old Testament because the Spirit and is regularly viewed as the agent of God’s activity in the act of creation (as noted earlier). Although the Spirit is not mentioned often in Matthew, the birth narrative of Jesus emphasizes the role of Spirit in the connection to the new exodus, the new creation, the new land.

²⁸Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 115.

²⁹The narrative is also full of place references in chapter 2 of Matthew.

The Baptism and Temptation

The events surrounding the baptism and the temptation also mention the Spirit. At the baptism Jesus is anointed for his ministry as the Messiah marking the inauguration of his ministry. As Jesus is baptized, the heavens (οἱ οὐρανοί) are opened (ἠνεώχθησαν) and the Spirit of God (πνεῦμα [τοῦ] θεοῦ) comes down upon Jesus as a dove. At the baptism, the disjunction between heaven and earth is breached as the Spirit rests upon Jesus. The dove is intended to recall the creation account in which the Spirit of God is described as hovering like a bird over the waters. Additionally there is new creation language in the Noah story concerning the dove.³⁰ The context of the baptism occurs around the description of John's ministry and its setting 'in the wilderness of Judea' (3:1). John is the 'voice crying in the wilderness' (3:3). The wilderness in the OT is a place of judgment, where the nation was forced to wander for forty years before they could enter the Promised Land. Later in the biblical narrative, rebellion forced Israel into exile and one of the judgments upon the nation was that the land of Israel itself turned into a wilderness (Jer 4:23-28). However, as Charette notes, the prophets also recognized that "just as the wilderness has once been a place where Israel found grace, so in the future it would be the scene of renewal of grace."³¹

The Spirit also leads (ἀνάγω) Jesus up into the wilderness to be tested by Satan. Although Jesus' ministry has been inaugurated, he has not been tested in order to prove his determination and succeed where Israel has failed. All three synoptic evangelists refer to the role of the Spirit in sending Jesus to his testing, but only Matthew uses the verb ἀνάγω, 'to lead up', which may recall the frequently used verb in the LXX to describe God's leading of his people at the time of the exodus (Num 14:13; 20:5; 1

³⁰L. E. Keck, "The Spirit and the Dove," *NTS* 17 (1970): 41-66; S. Gero, "The Spirit as a Dove at the Baptism of Jesus," *NovT* 18 (1976): 17-35.

³¹Charette, "Never Has Anything Like This Been Seen in Israel," 37.

Sam 12:6; Ps 78:52; 81:10; Jer 2:6; 7:22; 11:4; 16:14).³² In the wilderness, Jesus fasts for ‘forty days and forty nights.’ This evokes the forty-year period Israel spent in the wilderness. That Matthew intends to see Jesus inaugurating the second exodus is confirmed by his use of Hosea 11:1.

Isaiah says that God is doing something new in producing a second exodus for his people that will surpass the first exodus (Isa 43:18-19). More specifically, Isaiah articulates the giving of waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert (v. 20). Earlier in Isaiah’s text the prophet announces the wilderness will become a fruitful land *when* a spirit from on high is poured out on the people. (32:15-16). A similar picture exists in Isaiah 44:3-5 where God pours out water on dry and thirsty land and this is tied with the outpouring of the Spirit. For both Isaiah and Matthew, the new exodus is directly tied to land promises. The Spirit inaugurates the new exodus in the ministry of Jesus. By coming out of the water and then entering the wilderness in the temptation, Jesus is enacting Israel’s spatial story showing them that he is here to perform the new exodus. The second exodus is also spatially concerned, therefore the Spirit is spatially concerned.

The Death of Jesus

Charette also argues that at the death of Jesus the Spirit plays a similar role in regard to the exodus. Although the explicit presence of the Holy Spirit at the death of Jesus is going against the scholarly consensus, Charette provides good evidence for it.³³ Matthew, compared to the other Gospels, uses a distinctive expression in describing the death of Jesus. At the death of Jesus ‘he let go of the spirit’ (ἀφῆκεν τὸ πνεῦμα). Both Mark and Luke write ‘he expired’ (ἐξέπνευσεν) while John says ‘he handed over the spirit’ (παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα). Although Charette acknowledges that ‘the spirit’ here may

³²See *ibid.*, 43.

³³The reference to ‘spirit’ is usually understood to mean the human spirit of Jesus (Matt 27:50).

be understood in the anthropological sense, it is at least possible that Matthew is describing Jesus as ‘letting go’ of the Spirit that rested upon him for his ministry.

Charette remarks,

The unique language employed by Matthew coupled with the extraordinary phenomena that he introduces to explain the significance of Jesus’ death gives one pause to consider whether there may be in fact some reference here to the activity of the Spirit.³⁴

Charette argues that what takes place immediately following his death indicates this is more than a possibility. Unlike Mark, who records a single sign of the rending of the temple, Matthew includes several incidents which create a theological interpretation of life resulting from death. In 27:51b-53, Matthew adds the enigmatic raising of the holy ones. Although this verse has been debated throughout church history, “The implication of this special material included by Matthew alone is that some great life-giving power has been unleashed at the moment of Jesus’ death.”³⁵ Tying the release of the spirit on the cross to this life-giving event gives at least the possibility that Matthew is referring to the Holy Spirit in 27:50. Strengthening this view is the most likely background to Matthew 27:51b-53, Ezekiel 37:1-14. The verbal parallels are striking. There is a valley of dry bones, there is a shaking (*σεισμὸς*), and the bones become as corpses. When Ezekiel prophesies a second time, the breath (*LXX, τὸ πνεῦμα*) enters the dead and they live (37:9-10). In the explanation of the vision God says he will open the tombs of the people and lead them into the land of Israel (37:12). As Charette points out, “The passage contains both new creation and new exodus language” all at the infusion of the Spirit.³⁶ The Spirit at Jesus’ death is released and begins to enact the new exodus seen in the vision of Ezekiel as the dead rise from their graves and walk around the holy city. In Ezekiel the Spirit leads them into the land. For Matthew, the Spirit is leading people up into the new

³⁴Ibid., 48.

³⁵Ibid., 49.

³⁶Ibid.

exodus. The spatial implications are evident in Matthew's and the OT's use of the Spirit.

The Exorcism

Matthew's use of the Spirit in the Beelzebul controversy most likely addresses similar themes. Matthew links the exorcisms, the Spirit of God, and the kingdom in verse 28 with the conjunction *ἀρα*. The kingdom of God is the apodosis, or the main clause in the conditional sentence. The protasis is the "if" (*εἰ*) clause. "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has extended." Like the other places in Matthew where the Spirit appears, here in the exorcism Jesus is enacting the new exodus. There are multiple clues Matthew supplies about the spatial implications of exorcisms. One of these is the role of the Spirit, and the other is the background material to Beelzebul. Additionally, the locative aspects of exorcisms have already been noted. If one takes the perspective of exorcisms being a locative category, then Matthew is communicating that the new exodus occurs through the Spirit, and the extension of the Spirit to other bodies. Beelzebul is the ruler of the land, but Matthew indicates that a new ruler is here who will restore the land, through the power of the Spirit.

Although from this survey it may seem that the Spirit only restores firstspace (i.e. the physical land) it is evident from the rest of the New Testament that the Spirit's role includes secondspace and thirdspace. The Spirit is not just concerned with the physical land. Rather the Spirit works in human beings to create love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23). It is the Spirit of life according to Paul in Romans 8:2, the Spirit is life and peace (Rom 8:6). The secondspace the Spirit creates infuses the firstspace, and the firstspace permeates the secondspace, all pulling the imagination towards a thirdspace, a heterotopia, a place of otherness. The Spirit in Matthew is doing the same through the exorcism. He is creating not a dialectic of space, but a trialectic.

Excursus: Contesting the Devil in the Temptation

The first explicit appearance of Satan in the Gospel of Matthew is in the temptation scene in Matthew 4:1-11. At the outset of the temptation, Matthew establishes the location as in the wilderness. The setting of the temptation interactions are not merely neutral backdrops, rather the settings are part of the fabric of the interface. Daniel Smith, in his analysis of this section in Q says that the author “bring[s] Jesus out into unfamiliar and uncharted territory controlled by the devil...and that his resistance of the devil in effect is a conquest of territory.”³⁷ “The Christian religion is not the religion of salvation *from* places, it is the religion of salvation *in* and *through* places.”³⁸ Matthew’s consistent use of spatial language confirms both a spatial bent and the ingredients of the temptation being a conquest of territory. The Spirit leads Jesus up (ἀνάγω) into the wilderness (4:1). Then the devil takes him to the pinnacle (τὸ πτερύγιον) of the temple (4:5), and tells Jesus to throw himself down (βάλε σεαυτὸν κάτω). Finally the devil takes him to a high mountain in 4:8 (ὄρος ὑψηλὸν λίαν). The devil asks Jesus to fall down (πίπτω) and worship him, and Jesus tells him to be gone (ὑπάγω). This spatial language has the effect in the narrative of pointing readers towards Jesus’ victory over different spaces and his control over spaces outside even the rule of the human earthly rulers of the day. Possibly, Matthew may be implying that Jesus’ conquering of the devil must come before the human earthly rulers. The subjugation of the devil’s space in four Gospels comes before Jesus enters into his ministry and therefore is foundational to conquering the entire earthly system. Jesus’ control over space must include the disestablishment of the devil. As Smith asserts, “The conquest of the devil is thus spatial as well as ethical and exegetical.”³⁹

³⁷Daniel Smith, “How Q Constructs Space: The Temptation of Jesus” (paper presented at the SBL, Baltimore, November 25, 2013), 3.

³⁸John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 92.

³⁹Smith, “How Q Constructs Space,” 4.

Jesus is led out of local space into the wilderness. He goes from the rejected space of the wilderness, to the urban or sacred space of the Temple in Jerusalem, and finally to a high mountain within sight of the all the kingdoms of the world. His progression is shown in the figure 4.

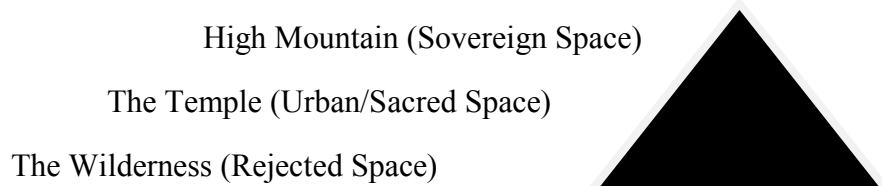


Figure 4. The spatial stages in the temptation

What is the function of this progression in Matthew? Many have noted the geographical progression,⁴⁰ but a more specific analysis of the representation of these spaces has not been undertaken. The wilderness is a “rejected space.” In firstspace categories it is dry, hot, and lacks the nutrients for most living things to survive. The wilderness is the place Israel was made to wander for 40 years because of their disobedience. People are cast into the wilderness, and many prophets go out into the wilderness to escape persecution. Jews believed that the wilderness was the haunt of evil spirits (Lev 16:10; Isa 13:21; 1 Enoch 10:4-5; Tob 8:3; 4 Macc 18:8; 2 Bar 10:8). Jesus goes out into the wilderness to be tempted by Satan, and in Luke 8:29 one learns the Gerasene demoniac is driven into the desert by a demon. Therefore, ideologically (secondspace), the wilderness is a rejected space, but the wilderness is also a space of multiple possibilities. Interestingly, the wilderness becomes a place of freedom in Jewish literature because of its association with the exodus (Isa 63:11-14). The wilderness is converted to a place to meet with God, due to the lack of distraction and the fact that the

⁴⁰France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 126.

Jews met with God in the tabernacle in the wilderness. The expectation was that there would be a return to the wilderness, a second exodus (Isa 35:1-2; 40:3-5; Ezek 20:33-44; Hosea 2:14-23). Therefore, the groundwork was already laid for the wilderness to become a thirdspace, a space that contested the usual categories for the wilderness. Jesus, in line with OT prophecies, comes to the rejected space that the devils fills, and masters it. He fulfills and completes the thirdspace by conquering where Israel failed. Matthew himself sets up the first two chapters of his narrative showing how Jesus fulfills Israel's history and it is natural to carry this fulfillment motif into chapter 4. Previously, the wilderness was a place of defeat and death, and now Jesus makes it place of victory and success. He creates the wilderness into a new space, the final exodus, by conquering the devil here. How does he create a new space? He does this by his presence, the presence of the King. In many ways, the wilderness space in the temptation provides a shortened form of the argument of this entire work. The wilderness is a place still under construction. Although the physical properties make it a space of rejection, Jesus' body changes the space and molds it into the place where the final exodus is enacted.

The devil then takes Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple (Matt 4:5). The temple is both urban and sacred space. The temple evokes both of these conceptions because of the movement from the deserted space of the wilderness and the religious associations that come with the temple to the Jewish people. The devil, by testing him both in the desert and in the temple, demonstrates to Jesus the extent of his spatial rule over the earth. Satan is not simply the ruler over the desert, but he has come and taken over the urban and sacred space of the temple. Smith notes "the very presence of the devil in the Temple, and his seeming command over this space, is not only a horrifying idea, but it also signifies that God has already abandoned the Temple."⁴¹ Although some may argue that the presence of the devil at the temple does not imply this, it is hard to reconcile the

⁴¹Smith, "How Q Constructs Space," 11.

devil being at the temple with the Jewish Scriptures emphasizing the presence of God dwelling there. The devil, by taking Jesus to temple, implies that God has already abandoned the temple. As one can see in the second temple literature, the temple space was particularly sensitive for the Jewish people. They could put up with many abuses, but when the temple was profaned, riots and revolts began. Therefore, this sacred space had strong ideological ties to their religion and their view of the presence of God. Satan takes Jesus to the pinnacle (τὸ πτερύγιον) of the temple (Matt 4:5). Why do Matthew and Luke include this detail? The temple was a microcosm of the earth, the *axis mundi*. The devil, by taking Jesus to this spot, was showing the vastness of his spatial control. Jesus, by gaining control over the devil spatially in this episode indicates a new phase of the presence of God. Satan quotes from Psalm 91:11-12 telling Jesus to jump from the temple, for God has promised that angels will save him, but just previous to Psalm 91:11, the Psalmist speaks of making God your “dwelling place.” In the Hebrew the word is (נומֵע) which means dwelling or habitation. Jesus fulfills the dwelling place of God in his person. The temple sacred space is rejected, but also fulfilled, for it is a place of multiple possibilities. The temple had become the home for the devil, but now Jesus fulfills the role of the temple by himself becoming the place for the dwelling of God. Now the presence of the kingdom is found in the person of Jesus, the true temple.

In Jesus’ final testing, the devil takes him to a high mountain to show him all the kingdoms of the world. I will call this space “sovereign space.” Luke does not include either of the words “high” or “mountain” in his narrative, but Matthew by inserting these words signals a number of background texts. Donaldson says the temptation mountain should be seen as against the background of Mount Zion and specifically Psalm 2:6-8. In both texts there is the promise of sovereignty and the use of δίδωμι.⁴² The eschatological

⁴²Terence Donaldson, *Jesus on the Mountain: A Study in Matthean Theology*, JSNTSup 8 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1985), 94-95.

Zion was also known as a lofty site (Isa 2:2; 1 Bar 4:36f.; 5:1-9; Ps Sol 11:1-3). If Donaldson is correct, then this is the mountain of enthronement and the place where the world-throne would be established. The question remains as to what exactly the devil is doing on Mount Zion? As the earlier places in the temptation have exposed, the devil was exhibiting to Jesus that he is not only spatially in charge of the wilderness, the sacred/urban space of the temple, but also over the kingdoms of the entire earth. The expansiveness of the jurisdiction of the devil over the space of the earth is not to be missed. He occupies the rejected space, the religious space, and the political space. Jesus is subverting the devil's rule through each of the three settings (wilderness, temple, mountain) where eschatological events were expected to occur. The power over place and space were very much a part of Yahweh's plan for dominion.⁴³ Jesus contests the space of the devil demonstrating to him that these places are under construction. These sites have been prophesied as places of eschatological fulfillment, and Jesus fulfills the prophecies. Jesus, through the ministry of his life, death, and resurrection is enthroned and receives world sovereignty. All authority in heaven and *on earth* are given to him, and he promises to be with his community until the end of the age.

Conclusion

The body of Jesus contests the space of earth. Spirits are usually portrayed as *interior* inhabitants of the human body. Malevolent spirits need to be cast out of the body. Exorcisms also have clear connections between what spirits (both malevolent and benevolent) are doing at the cosmic level in conjunction with the unfolding of political and social events on the ground. When Jesus exorcises a demon, he is contesting Satan, yes, but also the political and social workings of the day.

Two interrelated observations have been examined in the Beelzebul

⁴³Ibid., 96.

controversy. I looked at the passage from a spatial perspective examining the word play of Beelzebul and asserted Jesus came contesting Satan, the “lord of the earth” in the exorcism. Jesus contested this space by freeing a body from Satan’s grasp, or as Matthew phrases it, plundering his possessions. Then I investigated the theme of the Spirit in Matthew, because Jesus says he performs these exorcisms by the Spirit of God. Although Spirit language is used efficiently in Matthew’s Gospel, when Matthew does employ the Spirit, distinct new exodus and new creation themes exist. Both of these “powers” in the narrative suggest something spatial is proceeding.

Space is negotiated, open, relational, unfinished and always becoming. Human beings impact the space in which they live. By understanding space in this way, one enters into a new way to view the spatiality of the kingdom as present. Critical spatiality allows one to see the Beelzebul controversy in a different light, for Jesus is contesting firstspace and secondspace, thereby creating a thirdspace. He does this by entering Satan’s house with his body. A modern example demonstrates the role of bodies in protest and the construction of space. An iconic photograph of “Tank Man” illustrated for people across the world the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 in China. The photograph became the image for a revolution where student-led demonstrations exposed deep splits within China’s leadership. The Chinese government cracked down on the protestors with assault rifles and tanks. “Tank Man” was one of the unarmed civilians who briefly blocked the military’s advance towards Tiananmen Square. Tiananmen Square is in the center of Beijing and has been the site of many political events. The Chinese government condemned the protests and many were killed in following events. Estimates of the death toll range from a few hundred to thousands. “Tank Man” wore a white shirt and black pants, holding two shopping bags, one in each hand. He stood in the middle of a wide avenue, directly in the path of approaching tanks. The tanks came to a stop but then tried to drive around the man. However, the man with the shopping bags repeatedly stepped in the path of the tank. The picture was meaningful because it showed an ordinary man in

front of a long line of powerful tanks: one vs. the many, the ordinary vs. the powerful, the peaceful vs. the chaotic. “Tank Man” occupied the space the government claimed was theirs and would not move.

Like the Egyptian Revolution in 2011, the Chinese protests give an example of non-violent bodily resistance. People use their bodies, something integral to who they are, to demonstrate dissent. They then place their bodies in politically charged situations, attempting to change the space they occupy. At the start of this section on Jesus’ exorcism, I quoted Athanasius when he says, “The purpose of the incarnation is to prevent the good creation from failing to achieve its true destiny.” Through the presence of Jesus in the Beelzebul controversy, readers can see that Jesus comes to inaugurate a new creation by plundering Satan’s possessions. The space of earth still has vestiges of goodness, but Jesus comes in bodily form to show exactly how the human body can impact space and he does so by calling other bodies to come and imitate him. The next section will look at the *words* of Jesus, and demonstrate how Jesus uses those words to form the space around him.

CHAPTER 6
SALT, LIGHT, DUST, AND FIELDS

Introduction

Words are not only world-depicting (*Weltabbildend*), but world-building (*Weltbildend*). If the presence of Jesus reorders the spatial structures of earth, one must look at some of his specific words in Matthew. My argument in the next two chapters is that Jesus, through his words, is world-building by world-breaking. By infringing on earthly space, he forms a new space where heaven and earth overlap. By the imagination, readers and hearers construct the thirdspace or heterotopia Jesus is speaking of.¹ Dalman and Ladd both put people on a narrow path concerning the kingdom and spatial analyses have often neglected the body because of constricted views of space, but the concept of embodied space brings together human experience and spatial production.

Matthew divides his discourses into five sections. Each of these discourses presents differing angles on how Jesus reorders the space of earth (especially the natural powers) through his words. He contests the Roman imperium, the religious leaders, and the entire earthly system. One development in this part should be noted. Unlike the previous section, Jesus begins conferring his authority to rewrite the space of earth to his community. He begins building a world by sending his disciples out, and giving his community instructions. In each of these discourses, Jesus forms a new spatial practice around himself and around his community. The space of earth is open for Matthew,

¹Anthropologists have noted the vital role of bodily movement and speech in the creation of space. Vishvajit Pandya, "Movement and Space: Andamanese Cartography," *American Ethnologist* 17, no. 4 (1990): 775-97. These anthropologists subscribe to conceptualizing space as movement rather than as a container.

unfinished. Sometimes the structuring of space comes in unconcealed attacks, other times the structuring is more subtle. Both are effective in their own way.

Table 4. Matthew’s discourses

Chapters	Title
5-7	Blessings, Entering the Kingdom
10	Mission Discourse
13	Parables of the Kingdom
18	Community Discourse
24-25	Woes, Coming Kingdom

The first chapter established that although a temporal and dynamic rule focus on the kingdom has been dominant, a spatial perspective may reveal insights in the text previously undisclosed. Therefore, I briefly noted that there has been a general spatial turn in the humanities and social sciences, and that the world of biblical studies, specifically studies on Matthew, have not incorporated these insights in analysis of the biblical text. In chapters 4 and 5 I examined how Jesus, through his body, reordered space in the Beelzebul controversy.² Space is beginning to be thought of not in an absolute sense, but in a relational way. It can be molded, negotiated, contested, built, and expanded. And place and space are always controlled by someone; entering space means challenging the current ruler. Now it is time to turn to Jesus’ words and highlight some of the ways they are used to create a counter-site.

²To adopt Martin de Boer’s and John Riches’ categorizations in Second Temple Jewish literature, the previous chapter would fall under the *cosmic dualistic* model, which accounts for the presence of evil as due to the invasion of this world by hostile angelic forces. This chapter is the *forensic* model, in that it attributes evil to human disobedience. John Riches, *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 51. Of course, these two models are not mutually exclusive, but the categorization can be helpful for clarity. Additionally, the fact that Matthew has both cosmological models displays that he views evil as stemming both from the supernatural and the natural realm. In this way then, he has Jesus contesting both the forensic and cosmic models in his words and actions.

The Sermon on the Mount and Spatial Practice

The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew contains Jesus' first extended teaching in the Gospel. His words present a contrast world or a counter-site. Calling his followers to righteousness, he seeks to create a thirdspace through his teaching which open up new possibilities for spatial practice. Jesus has a voice in every area into which he travels, whether it is the wilderness, the synagogue, the temple, households, or even the courtroom. Herod, Pilate, and the religious leaders of the day attempted to create a space of peace and flourishing, but Jesus declares that life needs to be as he says, not as they say. Rome could not provide peace, and neither could the Jewish leaders.

Jesus presents a new way of thinking about being μακάριος. The people had heard what the Jewish Scriptures said and the interpretation of the religious leaders (Ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις; 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43), but Jesus himself presents a new spatial and relational word (ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν; 5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). The correlation between “you have heard it was said” and “but I say to you” occurs six times in the sermon. The teaching of Jesus is thereby distanced from the teaching of the day. In so doing, Jesus transforms the space of the people who gather around him. Through the body of Jesus and the extension of his body and his words, Jesus extends the kingdom to other bodies. As Lefebvre says, “Each living body is space and has its space: it produces itself in space and it also produces space.” Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is seeking to create a new space.³

³That Jesus seeks to create a new space in the sermon is evident because Jesus initiates social relations of the kingdom of heaven contrasted to the kingdom of the earth. Betz aptly says, “Already in vss 3-12, reader’s eyes of imagination have been directed to go up and down, from earth to heaven and back to earth, and so on in each of the beatitudes. In vs 12 the eyes seem firmly pegged on “the heavens” and its reward. Then, vs. 13 takes us back down to earth, indeed into the mud itself.” Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 155. Οὐρανός occurs 19x in the sermon, giving evidence these are kingdom ethics in contrast to the ethics of the kingdom of the earth. Inheriting the earth and critiquing the earth are both present and played off one another. The implication is that Jesus is in the process of overhauling the earth.

Salt and Light as Summative

The entire sermon could be viewed from a counter-site perspective. However more benefit comes from focusing on one section of the sermon. Matthew 5:13-16 is about the followers of Jesus being salt and light on the earth. These verses speak directly to the theme of Jesus reordering the space of earth, though his body and through his community. The verses are as follows:

You are the salt of the earth (γῆς), but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world (κόσμου). A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matt 5:13-16)

Although the proposals for structure of the sermon are legion, a task which continues but remains unsolved, these verses likely provide the framework through which the rest of the sermon is to be read.⁴ The verses can still be viewed in the broader framework of the introduction of 1-16, but two arguments support the contention that these verses are summative pieces for the sermon: the placement of the metaphors and the syntax of the phrases.

Matthew places the salt and light metaphors immediately after the beatitudes, which stand separate structurally from the rest of sermon. He also puts the two metaphors together. Neither Mark nor Luke pair the metaphors of salt and light as Matthew, nor do they have them heading off a major discourse.⁵ Matthew pushes them together and ties their syntax together to introduce the sermon. Most scholars rightly see 13-16 as a subunit, even if the verses are part of the larger introduction.⁶ Matthew possibly has

⁴Talbert gives a good summary of the different proposals for the structure of the Sermon on the Mount in chap. 3 of his book. Charles Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 21-26.

⁵Salt (Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34-35) Light (Mark 4:21; Luke 8:16, 11:13)

⁶Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount*, 25.

bunched these two metaphors together to begin the sermon to help his readers interpret the rest of the sermon. The summative nature of these verses is credible for the rest of the sermon could be summarized as *how* they are to be salt and light, or *examples* of what it means to be salt and light of the earth and of the world. Therefore, the metaphors are the first in a string of instructions for how they are to conduct themselves. Dale Allison agrees, saying these verses together constitute a transitional passage which functions as a general heading for 5:17-7:12.⁷ Davies and Allison say “in short, 5:13-16 descriptive names are bestowed upon those who live as the SOM demands.”⁸

The second argument for the central place of these metaphors is the unique structure of Matthew’s syntax. Matthew puts an emphatic pronoun at the front of the sentence in both the salt and light metaphor. The Greek verb ἐστε contains the 2nd plural ending, but Matthew still places the 2nd person plural pronoun before the verb for emphasis (Υμεῖς ἐστε). By so doing Matthew makes these metaphors the most direct statements in the sermon. No other illustration in the sermon has this syntax.⁹ Both the placement of these metaphors and their peculiar syntax gives good reason to see them as framing the entire message of the sermon.

Salt and Light on the Earth and World

The salt and light verses have been looked at from a number of perspectives throughout church history. I want to highlight one observation in these verses, not denying that more could be said. The observation, although simple, is usually neglected because

⁷Dale Allison, *The Sermon on the Mount: Inspiring the Moral Imagination* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1999), 31. Quarles asserts they form part of the introduction of 5:1-16. Charles Quarles, *Sermon on the Mount: Restoring Christ’s Message to the Modern Church* (Nashville: B & H, 2011), 17.

⁸W. D. Davies and Dale Allison, *Matthew*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1988), 1:471.

⁹Although the construction of 2nd person pronoun preceding the verb εἰμί does occur in Matthew 17x. In Mark it only occurs 9x. In Luke 15x and in John 20x. Many of these, however, are the construction “σὺ εἶ” in direct speech.

maybe it is so plain. The observation is that the followers of Jesus alter the space of the earth (as Jesus does).¹⁰

Jesus begins by telling his hearers they are the salt of the earth (Υμεῖς ἐστε τὸ ἅλας τῆς γῆς). They are not to become salty, rather it is an indicative statement, but only to the degree that they are followers of Jesus' words.¹¹ The nature and purpose of the salt has been the dominating focus,¹² although not restricting the metaphor of saltiness to one sense is wise.¹³ The two most dominant and comprehensive meanings of salt are its ability to add flavor and act as a preservative, which are not mutually exclusive. The parallel of "light" of the world seems general enough to include the broad spectrum of good deeds and therefore the salt metaphor is most likely multi-vocal for the evangelist. Latham is probably right to say taking all ANE, Greco-Roman, rabbinical, and OT influences into consideration it seems Matthew is saying "salt has been an abiding and universal symbol of permanence."¹⁴ No matter where one places the emphasis, the point

¹⁰A line of thought I do not have time to tease out is the idea that Jesus comes in the sermon and more specifically the beatitudes teaching them about "suffering space." Jesus through his body shows them how "suffering space" is the path to a space of flourishing.

¹¹Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:471.

¹²Davies and Allison identify eleven different uses of salt in ancient times. *Ibid.*, 1:473-73. Ulrich Luz says he is unsure how the evangelist understood the metaphor. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew*, Hermeneia, trans. James E. Crouch, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1989), 1:205. The most common views can be boiled down to five. Salt was added to the sacrifices in the Jewish Scriptures (Lev 2:13); there was salt of the covenant (Num 18:19; Lev 2:13); it purified things (Exod 30:35); it flavors things (Job 6:6) and it was used as a preservative (Luke 14:34). Quarles thinks salt as a preservative has the best support because this was the most prevalent use of salt in the OT. Second, because Jesus appears to have used the metaphor of salt in this fashion in Mark 9:49. Third, it fits well with the parallel of them being light of the world. Quarles, *Sermon on the Mount*, 79. But the purity view also fits well because Jesus and his followers as purifying elements have transforming effects on others and society.

¹³For an extended argument see Paul Sevier Minear, "The Salt of the Earth," *Int* 51, no. 1 (1997): 31-41.

¹⁴James E. Latham, *The Religious Symbolism of Salt* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1982), 241. Latham goes on to argue that salt is a sign of the eternal covenant, so the disciples are a sign of the New Covenant (206). Garlington agrees with Latham that salt is a sign of the covenant. Don B. Garlington, "'The Salt of the Earth' in Covenantal Perspective," *JETS* 54, no. 4 (2011): 715-48. They use passages such as Lev 2:13, Num 18:19, and 2 Chr 13:5. Although I am not completely opposed to the idea, it does seem to stretch the

seems to be the same: *followers of Jesus have influence on the earth.*

Jesus also calls his disciples the light of the world (Υμεῖς ἐστε τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου). In the OT, light symbolized revelation, hope, joy, righteousness, salvation, and the radiance of divine presence.¹⁵ In Matthew the symbolism of light is related to the manifestation of God among the nations.¹⁶ Matthew draws the theme from Isaiah. Isaiah speaks of people who dwell in darkness seeing a great light (Isa 9:2; Matt 4:16). Matthew's use of Isaiah indicates he sees Jesus and his message as the light. Many have drawn the connection between the phrase "the light of the world" in Matthew 5:14 and the phrase "a light for the nations" in Isaiah 42:6 and 42:9.¹⁷ The correlation between *light* and the nations is an Isaianic theme.¹⁸ McKnight therefore suggests the difference between the parallel earth (γῆ) and world (κόσμος) indicates a Gentile mission in the light metaphor. The salt of the "land" (γῆ) is evoking Jewish imagery and designating the mission to Israel.¹⁹

meaning of salt and border on the error of illegitimate totality transfer. For the purposes of this section it is not important to interact more with this idea as it does not affect my argument greatly.

¹⁵Hans Conzelmann, "Φῶς," in *TDNT*, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 323.

¹⁶Zöckler's study of light leads him to conclude that light shining out a person is integrity. Jesus in Matt 6:22-23, instead of responding to the disciples desire to meet Jesus in an otherworldly place, reminds them of singular capacity that lies within themselves. There is no need to search for Jesus in his heavenly place. Thomas Zöckler, "Light within the Human Person: A Comparison of Matthew 6:22-23 and Gospel of Thomas 24," *JBL* 120, no. 3 (2001): 499.

¹⁷See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:475; Donald Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, WBC, vol. 1 (Dallas: Word, 1993), 100.

¹⁸In Isa 5:14 God says he will set his justice as a *light* to the peoples (ἐθνῶν). Zion is called to arise in Isa 60:1-3, for *light* has come upon them. Verse 3 speaks of the nations (ἐθνη) coming to the *light*.

¹⁹Scot McKnight, *Sermon on the Mount* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 59. William Dumbrell similarly writes, "Indeed if analogies between the groups which Jesus is addressing and the community of Isaiah lx-lxxii may be drawn, perhaps the disciples are to function as the Servant community of the Old Testament, that is, they are by their very constitution to be a guarantee of Israel's final purpose, to be a 'light to lighten the Gentiles.' . . . [T]he disciples are seen in prophetic succession, and thus like their Old Testament counterparts as covenant witnesses and guarantors to their age." William J. Dumbrell, "The Logic of the Role of the Law in Matthew 5:1-20," *NovT* 23, no. 1 (1981): 13.

Yet it is only through Jesus' *words* in the sermon that his followers maintain their saltiness and radiance.²⁰ For salt can lose its saltiness, and light can be hidden. Although Jesus declares his disciples *are* salt and light, he also says salt can lose its taste (*μωραίνω*). The followers of Jesus therefore need to stay attached to the new familial relationship Jesus has provided for them if they are to impact the earth. Some debate exists about how to translate the word *μωραίνω*. Usually the verb means to “become foolish” and therefore the sense could be losing effectiveness or becoming defiled. In Matthew, foolishness is not a statement about intellectual capacities, but rather a moral and spiritual state.²¹ As Quarles says, “The idea is that salt which is impure cannot purify.”²² Believers in Jesus are to alter the space of the earth, but can only do so by maintaining their own purity. Therefore, Jesus declares they are salt, but the full context suggests the indicative statement both warns and encourages. The same is true for being light. Light can be hidden, but is designed to shine before others. Jesus declares they are light, but again warns and encourages them to let their light shine. Through Jesus' words of encouragement and warning, they fulfill the task.

At least one of the main points of the verses seems to be that the disciples *are* kingdom molders, as Jesus is. The disciples *are* salt and light. They are the change agents

²⁰For a defense of connecting Matt 5:11-12 with 5:13-16, see Minear, “The Salt of the Earth,” 35. “Translators, editors, and printers have formed a conspiracy to conceal this linkage. Although early Greek manuscripts use no paragraph division, printed Greek texts and English translations habitually begin a new paragraph with this announcement. Misunderstanding is further ensured when editors insert a new non-biblical heading between two paragraphs, such as ‘Salt and Light.’ The separate caption encourages preachers and teachers to begin their exposition with this new idea and thereby ignore the controls that are exerted on the meaning of the metaphors by their linkage to these disciples who are prophets face persecution and death.” But even if 13-16 is meant to be a conclusion to the introduction, the introduction sets the stage and summarizes the rest of the sermon.

²¹Matthew uses the lexical idea of foolishness (*μωρ-*) seven times in his Gospel. (1) 5:13b, (2) 5:22, (3) 7:26, (4) 23:17, (5) 25:2, (6) 25:3, (7) 25:8. In each of the occurrences the wisdom of the wise is set up against the folly of the foolish. In most of these passages there is the theme of the foolish person being “thrown out.” This coheres with a spatial view of the kingdom and even a spatial view of wisdom and foolishness.

²²Quarles, *Sermon on the Mount*, 81.

Jesus is going to employ in his construction project. He calls these fishermen to have impact upon the world. The task does not merely belong to Jesus alone; he calls many to follow him and carry out his mission and in the Sermon on the Mount he is preparing them for the mission by telling them how to live. Although salt is small and unassuming, it has enormous power, just like the seeds in Matthew 13. The followers of Jesus then are altering the space of the earth.²³ The disturbance of the earth is maybe the most obvious inference from these verses, but also the most neglected.

Most commentators argue about the meaning of the metaphors, but more generally, Jesus is calling his followers to impact the space of the earth and the world, even assuming they will. No matter what symbolism one chooses to fill up the meaning of salt or light, impact is the result. To put it another way, the earth is ‘changed’ by salt and light. Jesus and his followers are the attracting force, who have impact upon the space of the earth and the world. The world is the stage upon which the kingdom is enacted. Salt purifies and preserves the earth, and light falling upon the world changes the space of the world. Salt and light alter the space of earth as the nations see righteousness embodied through the disciples. Through the light of Jesus and his disciples, the world is changed. In the words of Lefebvre, Jesus is telling his disciples how to produce space, how to create a thirdspace, a heterotopia, a counter-site realigning the space of earth. Jesus shows them the space of the kingdom is complex; it is physical, but also ideological, and imaginative. It is an upside down kingdom, one where their secondspace expectations are rewritten and thereby they inherit the earth. It is world-building by world-breaking.

How are they to realign, alter or rewrite the space of earth and be salt and light? According to the sermon, they are to live virtuous lives and stay joined to their

²³Interestingly, Augustine identifies the earth not as that which we tread upon with bodily feet, but the men who dwell upon the earth, or even more the sinners, for the preserving of whom and for the extinguishing of whose corruptions the Lord sent the apostolic salt. Augustine, *Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 1.6, *NPNF* 6:9. But Augustine neglects to acknowledge the interrelationship of people and place.

heavenly Father.²⁴ Stepping outside verses 13-16 and into the rest of the sermon allows readers to see Jesus is telling the disciples the production of space happens through radical loving social interactions. Their righteousness is to exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees (5:20). They are not to be angry with their brothers and sisters (5:22). They are to be reconciled to their brothers (5:24). They are to flee from lust (5:28), stay faithful to their spouses (5:32), be people of their word (5:37), love their enemies (5:44), give to the needy (6:2), pray with the right heart attitude (6:5-13), and forgive one another (6:14). They are called to be generous instead of greedy (6:24). They are not to be anxious, or judge (7:1). They are also to be peacemakers so that they will be called sons of God (5:9). They are to love their enemies so that they may be sons of their Father in heaven (5:45). They are to pray to their Father (6:9), perform actions for their Father (6:1), and acknowledge that their Father will provide for their needs (7:11). All these things and more they are to do to rewrite the space of the earth and the world.²⁵

Humanistic geography and critical spatiality have brought space and human agency together in recent times, but I would argue these proposals go back further in time. These views are universally true theories about humanity and space. They are even seen in the famous Sermon on the Mount passage. Jesus realigns the space of earth by calling

²⁴Betz says they are to regard themselves as a most important ingredient of this life; to say it with the metaphor: they are part of the dirt out of which this world is made. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 158.

²⁵The logical entailment is not that the kingdom will be built in some postmillennial sense, where all the good actions will slowly change the world. But it is hard to deny that small acts of goodness and kindness make a difference. Larger acts are more illustrative to the change of space. Martin Luther King, Jr. changed the space of America forever for African Americans by marching on the Washington DC mall. It was here that he presented an imaginative “I Have Dream” speech that looked toward a brighter future. In a similar way, Jesus comes and plants his feet upon the earth and delivers his dream speech calling his disciples to countercultural heavenly kingdom. He stretches their imagination to what a new community could be, a community gathered around himself. He challenges the representation of space of the earth by offering an alternative; blessed are the meek; you have heard it was said, but I say to you. It is by this living the way Jesus explained that the earth is changed. This kingdom begins in human hearts and their bodies produce space through their social relations. As Davies and Allison say, it is apparent “the evangelist’s exalted estimation of the ecclesia’s role in the religious life of humanity.” Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:479.

others to follow him by teaching them how to live through his words. The structures of society are changed through a multitude of people, but the renovation starts with one man. Through Jesus' and his *ἐκκλησία*'s righteousness, the earth is illumined and salted. Jesus in the sermon envisions a thirdspace that is simultaneously real, imagined and more, teaching them what it means to establish and extend the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of heaven is unlike the kingdoms of earth, for in the kingdoms of this earth the poor in spirit, the meek, and the persecuted are not blessed. The kingdom of heaven will only come about through the bodily presence of Jesus and his followers. Therefore, Jesus speaks to his followers telling them what they are and what role they have in the overhaul of earth. In Matthew especially, he emphasizes Jesus being "with" his people in their task. They are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. In Jesus' incarnation he reorders the space of earth in Matthew, and he gives this task to his followers as well.²⁶

The Mission Discourse

If the Sermon on the Mount *prepares* the disciples be place-makers or world-builders then in the mission discourse in Matthew 10 presents the disciples as sent out to *perform* the task.²⁷ Matthew emphasizes here Jesus' mission is not his alone, for his disciples must carry on his works. Jesus' mission is similar in remarkable ways to the disciples' mission.²⁸ Contained in the passage are a few brief textual observations from a spatial perspective.

The first thing readers notice is the naming of the twelve disciples. This

²⁶Matthew closes the sermon by saying "everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who *builds his house* on the rock" (7:25). This can be interpreted as a spatial metaphor for a house is being built.

²⁷Note the spatial metaphor before chap. 10 about the harvest being plentiful but the laborers few. The earth is viewed as a field to go out into and harvest.

²⁸Craig Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 308.

important contextual note points both backward and forward. It points backward in Israel's history to the importance of land and forward to the new world.²⁹ Most Jewish people expected an eschatological restoration of the lost tribes.³⁰ So far Matthew has only referred to "his disciples" and now the time comes for him to be more specific. He is more specific in three ways: by calling them (1) the twelve, (2) apostles, (3) and by listing their names.³¹ The other Gospel writers place the names of the disciples earlier in their narrative but Matthew holds off until a good portion of his narrative is already behind him.³² Additionally, Matthew is the only evangelist to use the phrase, 'the twelve disciples.'³³ Why does Matthew wait for the release of the names? And why does he need to include that there were twelve? As the land of Israel had twelve tribes, so the twelve are sent out reclaiming the land through their miraculous deeds.³⁴ The twelve represent a fulfillment of the land promises to Israel, but the forward pointing land promises are also given in Matthew 19:28 with another reference to the twelve. Here Jesus speaks of the *παλιγγενεσία* (new world) and the Son of Man sitting on his glorious throne and those who have followed him sitting on twelve thrones. In the new world they will rule over the land on twelve thrones. The *names* and *numbers* of the twelve disciples are about the

²⁹Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 94.

³⁰Tob 13:6; 2 Macc 2:18; Ps. Sol. 8:28; Test. Benj. 9:2

³¹The word "apostle" appears only here in the first Gospel (10:5). In classical Greek texts the primary meaning of the word is naval expedition or the sending out of a fleet. Jesus treaded on the sea, the most evil domain, thereby proclaiming he will reign over all territories. So too he sends out his naval officers to conquer all uncharted and untamed spaces.

³²The listing of the names comes in Mark 3:16-18; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13.

³³Morosco also notes the amount of words Matthew dedicates to his commissioning scene compared to Mark and Luke: "Whereas Mark limits the story to some thirteen and one-half lines of Greek text (according to the UBSGNT) and Luke is able to capture it in just twelve lines, Matthew's version is nearly one hundred lines long." Robert E. Morosco, "Matthew's Formation of a Commissioning Type-Scene Out of the Story of Jesus' Commissioning of the Twelve.," *JBL* 103, no. 4 (1984): 539-40.

³⁴France argues Matthew's phrase "These are the names . . ." is a possible echo of Num 1:4. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 376.

reclamation of a space.

Second, Jesus gives his disciples authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out and heal diseases and afflictions, and raise the dead (10:1, 8). As I explained a previous chapter, exorcisms are about power over place. Jesus, and now the disciples in the exorcisms, liberate bodies from the “lord of the earth” and thereby enter a contested space and challenge the current ruler. Just as Jesus has entered Satan’s house, so the disciples walk in his footsteps. In a similar way, healing sickness is about causing a sickness to be sent out of the body so that the person can be fully socially integrated again. In healing, Jesus’ disciples restore *customary space* to many families economically, physically, politically, and spiritually. Healing in the ancient world was about total well-being and was regularly tied to the proclamation of the kingdom.³⁵ The raising of the dead is also a part of the announcement of the kingdom. The dead were experiencing a shadowy existence in a realm called Sheol, but resurrection brought them back to the realm of earth. Resurrection means transfer of realms (from the underworld to the “living” world) or maybe even better a *return* to the original realm. As N. T. Wright so aptly puts it, “resurrection is precisely concerned with the present world and its renewal.”³⁶ Creation itself will be reaffirmed and remade through resurrected bodies.³⁷

Third, in verses 5-14, readers learn that the disciples are to go and enter *houses* bringing their peace (εἰρήνη) upon it. Notice that the peace is to come upon a place, the house.³⁸ Only in this verse (10:13) and in verse 34 does Matthew use the term εἰρήνη.³⁹

³⁵C. Wahlen, “Healing,” in *DJG*, ed. Joel Green et al., 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 362. See Matt 4:17, 23-24; 10:7-8.

³⁶N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 138.

³⁷Paul affirms Christians are already “new creations;” the process has begun.

³⁸The house is not in contrast to the people, but simply an affirmation of the interrelationship between people and place.

Isaiah 52:7 sees peace as an aspect of the coming kingdom. In Isaiah publishing peace, bringing good news of happiness, and publishing salvation are all seen in parallel to one another. Thus, bringing peace probably means more than merely lodging in their house.⁴⁰ Bringing peace to a house is a form of the spatial kingdom extending to other places (houses).⁴¹ Jesus instructs his disciples to be world-builders one house at a time, but if the people will not receive them, they are to shake the dust off their feet.

The “dust off their feet” is another metaphor which spatial implications. France notes that carrying Gentile territory on one’s feet conveyed uncleanness.⁴² No one was supposed to enter the Temple Mount with dust on their feet because the sacred place must not be touched by uncleanness. Here, it is not just Gentile dust they are to shake off, but the dust of anyone who rejects them. If the land is defiled the people are defiled, but with the coming of Jesus the land is cleansed as people are made clean. Reflection on dust and dirt involves reflection on the relationship between order and disorder. God formed Adam from the dirt to order the dirt. Adam came from non-being to being, from formless to form, from death to life. In a similar way the dust and dirt are tied to people in this passage. Sacred things, places and people are to be protected from defilement. As the people are defiled, so the earth is defiled. However, as we saw in the Sermon on the

³⁹Some may question why Jesus tells them to bring their peace in v. 13 and then Jesus says in v. 34 that he has not come to bring peace but the sword. The conundrum is resolved by acknowledging that the sword comes because of those who reject the message.

⁴⁰Davies and Allison agree, saying it offers more than social convention as the passage rides roughshod over other social conventions. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:176. Carson disagrees saying “peace” is the normal greeting one give when they enter a house. D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, in vol. 9 of *EBC*, ed. Tremper Longman and David Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 286.

⁴¹Interestingly, in Enoch 1:8 peace and light are paired. Possibly there is a link between this text and Matt 5:14. Michael Gorman argues peace is a critical marker of ecclesial identity, a sign of the presence of Jesus. Michael Gorman, *The Death of the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant: A (Not So) New Model of the Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 186.

⁴²France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 387n27.

Mount, as the people are pure so too the earth becomes pure.⁴³ In summary, the apostles are to bring peace and purity in their bodies to different *places*. The *houses* that reject them will be shunned, but those that accept them have restoration offered.

Finally, persecution will come to those seeking reform and reorder (10:16-23), but promises of a new family are provided for the persecuted (10:24-33). This persecution will divide families (vv. 21-22). Even the closest in relation will betray one another to death. In a culture dominated by honor and shame this was not just a personal affront but a public social slight. Jesus has not come to bring peace, but the sword among families (vv. 34-35). However, Jesus promises a new familial relationship for those who acknowledge him, for he will acknowledge (*ὁμολογέω*) those who acknowledge him before his Father in heaven. Although they may be losing their earthly Father, they are gaining a heavenly Father. The new family is not just about a new relationship or emotional unit, but a new socio-economic space. A new family implied a new household, a new space of being. By losing an earthly family, they were gaining a heavenly one. Identity, space, and family are all interlaced.⁴⁴

Summary

Although this section is necessarily shorter the Sermon on the Mount section, it is evident that the disciples are sent out to create heterotopias and thirdspaces that contest all other spaces. In the verses just previous to chapter 10 Jesus goes throughout all “cities and villages” (9:35) teaching and healing. He looks at the people and has compassion on

⁴³Although these ideas may sound strange to the modern ear, possibly the modern era has lost the premodern idea of the interrelationship of all things. Mary Douglas writes, “A primitive world view looks out on the universe which is personal in several different senses. Physical forces are thought of as interwoven with the lives of persons. Things are not completely distinguished from persons and persons are not completely distinguished from their external environment. The universe responds to speech and mime. It discerns the social order and intervenes to uphold it.” Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966), 88.

⁴⁴For a more extended reflection on the connection between family and space, see chap. 8.

them and then says to his disciples. “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.” Why does Jesus use the harvest metaphor,⁴⁵ and what does the metaphor teach about space? The harvest seems to be *people*, but the harvest is also contained within a field, a *place*. The harvest grows somewhere, for a harvest cannot be found floating in the air. Therefore, Jesus sends out his laborers *into* the harvest. The metaphor seems to be communicating the connection between *people* and *place* are nearly inseparable. A harvest is the place of people. The disciples are to be laborers in this space; they are to be industrious with the space for the dust changes as the people transform. For Matthew, then, the cosmos is “porous” or exposed to change.⁴⁶ This is just another way of putting the thesis that space is open and vulnerable. The cosmos is still enchanted for the premodern world rather than shut off and closed. It is open to blessings and curses, to grace, to change, to upheaval. Shaking the dust off the apostles feet is more than symbolic; it is cosmos forming. The disciples therefore, in concordance with being fishers of men, are to be world-builders.⁴⁷ But what does the “locale” or the “field” have to do with the kingdom? It is this topic that we turn to in the kingdom parables.

Parables of the Kingdom: The Field and Seed Parables of Jesus

The kingdom parables in Matthew 13 (or the third discourse) also speak to Jesus producing a counter-site, but from a slightly different angle.⁴⁸ They are parables of

⁴⁵Keener notes how this metaphor was emphasized in other ancient texts, e.g., Babrisu 88:11-19. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 309.

⁴⁶James K. A. Smith, *How (Not) To Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 34.

⁴⁷One might object the disciples are not “world-builders” here for they are called to go only to the Jews, and not Gentiles. But one must also remember that Matthew is recounting what happened before the death and resurrection of Jesus and that the last lines in the Gospel make clear the message goes out to the entire world.

⁴⁸Matt 13 is an important section about the kingdom and the presence of Jesus. Matthew introduces the parables by saying “great crowds gathered about him” (και συνήχθησαν πρὸς αὐτὸν ὄχλοι πολλοί). The Matthean contextual note not only represents the increasing popularity of Jesus, but the

protest, as Moxnes notes.⁴⁹ Through them, Jesus presents a kingdom which is thirdspace: real, imagined and more. The parables create “imagined places, draw[ing] up localities with new social structures, freed from domination. The parables show how people are liberated to act in space in a new way.”⁵⁰ The hearers must begin to construct the reality by believing and acting upon his words.⁵¹ The parables therefore are themselves spaces of representation suggesting new spatial and social relations. They are *Gegenwelts*, contrast worlds. As N. T. Wright says:

They [the parables] invite listeners into a new world, and encourage them to make that world their own, to see their ordinary world from now on through this lens, within this grid. The struggle to understand a parable is the struggle for a new world to be born The parables are not simply information about the kingdom but part of the means of bringing it to birth. They are not a second-order activity, talking about what is happening at one remove. They are part of the primary activity itself.⁵²

The parables are not merely instruction but acts of power and authority.⁵³ His words change worlds and create communities.⁵⁴ Jesus confirms (in the kingdom parables) that his words and his body and the bodies of his followers realign the space of the earth, but

promise of inevitable growth and along with the failure of some to receive it. Whereas Mark and Luke have only two “kingdom” parables, Matthew has no fewer than eleven.

⁴⁹Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 156.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Dodd says parables are not mere analogies, but there is an inward affinity between the natural order and the spiritual order; or in the language of the parables themselves, the kingdom of God is intrinsically like the processes of nature and of the daily life of men. C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1958), 22.

⁵²N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 176.

⁵³Matthew presents Jesus as the one teaching with all authority (ἐξουσία; 7:29; 9:6, 8; 10:1; 21:23; 28:18).

⁵⁴Klyne Snodgrass notes parables are “stories with intent.” I will define the intent as to create an imagined heavenly kingdom which realigns the earthly kingdom. Klyne Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 3. The parables are a form of indirect communication. Indirect communication finds a way into a back window and confronts what one thinks of reality. Snodgrass, similar to Wright, says, “A parable’s ultimate aim to awaken insight, stimulate the conscience, and move to action.” Ibid., 8.

he also reveals that the kingdom is here but hidden. I will focus on both the *locale* of the seed in the parables and the *identification* of the seeds. Although the parables are normally examined for the sower, the seeds, the plants, or the treasure, interpreters have neglected the unifying theme in most of the parables: the *location*. The neglect of the setting can be seen in the names of the parables. Even the names abstract the prominence of place in each parable. The parable of the *sower* could easily be called the parable of the *soils*.⁵⁵ The parable of the *wheat and weeds* could be named the parable of the *field*. In the parable of the mustard seed the seed is placed in a field, and the parable of the leaven highlights its placement into dough. Seeds always grow and exist in a location.

But I also want to highlight the *identification* of the seeds. For the seeds are the catalysts for change in the earth. The seeds are planted in fields, for good or bad. These seeds produce some a hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty. However, the field is the theater where it is all revealed. The parables will be approached as mutually interpreting one another, for Matthew clustered them together for a purpose, and a reader cannot move onto the next parable without the first one still echoing in the mind.

The Parable of the Soils

The Parable of the Soils, more commonly known as The Parable of the Sower,

⁵⁵Although the parable would more aptly be named the parable of the seed, the sower still plays an important role. Luz notes that in the Reformation it became about the good or bad fortune of the *verbi*. The sower was identified with Christ but also with every preacher. Ulrich Luz, *Matthew*, trans. James Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001) 2:240. Joel Marcus says it is extraordinary when one considers all the other components of the parable that *are* allegorized, the one major component which is consciously *not* allegorized is the sower himself. Joel Marcus, "Blanks and Gaps in the Markan Parable of the Sower," *BibInt* 5, no. 3 (1997): 253 emphasis original. Marcus says there are many options for the identification of the sower, but Jesus himself has especially strong evidence. Kingsbury says most scholars generally hesitate to identify Jesus with sower, but Matthew seems to have done just that. Jack Dean Kingsbury, *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13: A Study in Redaction-Criticism* (Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1969), 34. Identifying Jesus as the sower makes sense in the context of these parables. In the narrative flow, Jesus is telling these parables in light of rejection. Those who should have been most eager to welcome him are plotting against him in chap. 12. If the parables in chap. 13 are read in light of the context of chap. 12, then it seems that Jesus through the parables is illustrating and further exemplifying how many will reject his words and his community. His words and his people are the seeds. The context then points to the parables having Jesus as their subject.

is the parable about parables.⁵⁶ The parable will be examined from two perspectives: first, by identifying the seeds; second, by discussing the locale of the seeds.

A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears, let him hear. (Matt 13:3–9)

The seeds. Although commonly known as “The Parable of the Sower,” Kingsbury rightly says the major accent of this parable lies on the seed and its fate, even though the words *σπόρος* and *σπέρμα* are not mentioned.⁵⁷ Therefore, the parable of the sower could easily be named “The Parable of the Soils.” The importance of the sower comes to bear only in terms of the seed, while the seed and the fate/locale of the seed are the constants in the story. The parable culminates with readers looking at the result of the seed, not an identification or focus on the sower.⁵⁸

For our purposes, two interrelated observations concerning the seeds are relevant. First, Matthew equates the seed with persons. Jesus’ interpretation of the parable in 13:18-23 makes the identification of seeds with persons explicit. In verse 20 Jesus says, “As for what was sown on the rock ground, *this is the one...*” The same

⁵⁶Occurring in Matthew, Mark, and Luke causes The Parable of the Sower to be one of the most famous parables. Although the parable is not prefixed with the introduction “the kingdom of heaven is like,” it should still be considered a kingdom parable. *Contra* Luz who says this is not a kingdom parable because none of the Gospels directly designate it as such. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:242. But with Matthew’s highly structured presentation it is hard to imagine that he did not use it as kingdom parable. Additionally, Luz goes on to say the parable can be, but does not have to be understood as a parable of the kingdom of God. *Ibid.*, 2:243. The lack of identification is probably due to Matthew following the Marcan text. But the very presence in Matthew’s section makes it a kingdom parable.

⁵⁷Kingsbury, *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13*, 32.

⁵⁸Crossan says the seed parables of Jesus are the primary and immediate expression of his own experience of God. They are the ontologico-poetic articulation of the kingdom’s in-breaking upon himself. But Crossan’s thesis does not persuade because Jesus is explaining to others the nature of the kingdom. John Dominic Crossan, “Seed Parables of Jesus,” *JBL* 92, no. 2 (1973): 265-56.

pattern occurs in verses 22 and 23 where Jesus says “As for what was sown on..., *this is the one...*” But second, the seed is also the word of the kingdom. Jesus’ interpretation again displays the dual identification. In verse 18 Jesus says, “Whenever anyone hears the *word* of the kingdom...” Jesus is speaking about the seed being scattered, and equating the seed with the “word of the kingdom.” For Jesus, the kingdom spreads by speech, by a message. As Dodd says, the kingdom of God is like a seed: it is an inward germinal principle.⁵⁹

Why does Jesus identify the seed as both human beings and Jesus’ words?⁶⁰ I suggest the answer lies in the dual emphasis on the active role of Jesus’ words *and* his *ἐκκλησία* in the hereness of the kingdom of heaven upon the earth. Pushing the relationship even to more specificity, the words of Jesus have an active effect in his community.⁶¹ In both testaments the word of God is animated. The word is its own character that acts and accomplishes things. Matthew picks up on the theme of the word and has the words of Jesus do the same. Craig Evans even argues the parable reflects the broader concern on Isaiah 55:10-11 where the word of Yahweh accomplishes its purpose.⁶² The divine *λόγος* produces its effect, and those whom the word possesses become the *λόγος*, but Matthew also emphasizes the active role of his community. Jesus is with (*μετά*), or in other words so tied to his community that Jesus’ words and his community accomplish the same thing. The kingdom is present in Jesus’ body and

⁵⁹Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 175.

⁶⁰Marcus says the ambiguity of the identification of the seed may partly reflect the complexity Mark is trying to get across. Marcus, “Blanks and Gaps,” 251. Lohfink agrees, saying Jesus interprets the seed as the Word of God and then suddenly turns around and reads the seed as sowing people. Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus of Nazareth: What He Wanted, Who He Was*, trans. Linda Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2012), 110.

⁶¹Again the speech-act theory is helpful here, for words have locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary effects.

⁶²Craig A. Evans, “On the Isaianic Background of the Sower Parable,” *CBQ* 47, no. 3 (1985): 466.

through the body of his community. Through human bodies, spaces are created. Jesus is reordering the space of the earth by the enactment of the parables. He is tilling the space of earth, by scattering seed (people and his words) onto the earth, and only the seed which lands on the good soil produces grain.

The locale of the seeds. Maybe the most neglected area of this and the rest of the parables is the focus on the locale of the seeds. In the parable, at least six references point to some part of the earth.⁶³ Matthew has some seeds falling on the “path” (ὁδός; 13:4), others on the “rocky ground” (πετρώδης; 13:5), some among “thorns” (ἄκανθα; 13:7), and some on the “good soil” (γῆ καλός; 13:8). The stage upon which the kingdom is enacted is in the world. The kingdom is like *seeds planted on the earth*. The oddness of morality attributed to a place in the good soil reference escapes most commentators’ purview. However, the interpretation clarifies that the earth and the people are connected, for in 13:21 the one sown on the rocky ground has no root in *himself* (ἐν ἑαυτῷ). The rocky ground reveals something about the seed, like the good soil conveys a moral attribute about the seed. The location or place reveals the nature of the kingdom within people. Matthew therefore has people and place intertwined, for seeds cannot be sown in abstraction. They always need a place. The kingdom parables confirm there is indeed a hereness of the spatial aspect to the kingdom. What may be surprising to the disciples is the *nature* of the hereness. Many of the words fall upon places that do not produce crops. There will still be death and opposition, and not all will accept the words of the kingdom. Jesus’ coming reorders spaces of earth by the seeds, but the secondspace of the kingdom is not as the Jews expected it. For the kingdom is here, yet not always perceptible. He prompts them to create a kingdom that is thirdspace, that yields hundredfold, sixty, or

⁶³If these parables are mutually dependent, then there should be some cross interpretation. In multiple parables there is a field which is sown into. Jesus himself identifies the field as the “world” (κόσμος) in 13:38. Interpreters should follow Jesus in the interpretation if it is plausible to interpret the fields in the other parables as the world.

thirty. Like the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' words and his disciples disturb the space of earth from its inhuman rest. Jesus comes rewriting space.

This parable of parables illustrates not all will receive the kingdom,⁶⁴ but the kingdom is still active in Jesus' ministry. The kingdom *is here, but hidden* in plain sight. The kingdom is upon the earth, through seeds (words and human bodies) which are not evident at first, but then grow (or don't grow) into something fruitful and useful. Jesus' body produces words that that agitate space of earth.⁶⁵ As Craig Evan's says, the parable is about the efficacy of God's word . . . and the emphasis seems to be upon the growth of the kingdom.⁶⁶ The spatial kingdom is coming to fruition in the embodied lives comprising his community, because Jesus himself is the presence of the kingdom.

The Wheat and the Weeds

The next parable in Matthew 13 is the parable of the wheat and the weeds. McIver says this parable "provides an ideal vantage point from which to examine the distinctively Matthean concept of the kingdom of heaven."⁶⁷

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed (*καλὸν σπέρμα*) in his field (*ἀγρῶ*), but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and

⁶⁴Luz says in the history of interpretation the passage has been interpreted gloomily because the Gospel only bears fruit in a few. But some also began to give the parable a different accent to that the divine grace came more clearly to expression. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:238-39.

⁶⁵Snodgrass says something similar in his conclusion to this parable: "For all three evangelists this is the parable for understanding the kingdom. 1) the kingdom is a kingdom of word; 2) the kingdom presents a challenge for perception and reorientation to life; 3) the kingdom is presently at work and is established partly as people respond with believing obedience and inhabit the world created by proclamation." Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 171. Schweitzer famously rejected that this parable in Mark is about constant and gradual unfolding. He asserted that immediateness is the note of Jesus' parables, and that the concept of development is not at all brought into prominence. But Schweitzer must be read in light of his arguing that the kingdom was purely future. Albert Schweitzer, *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus, 1985), 61-63.

⁶⁶Evans, "On the Isaianic Background," 466.

⁶⁷Robert K. McIver, "The Parable of the Weeds among the Wheat (Matt 13:24-30, 36-43) and the Relationship Between the Kingdom and the Church as Portrayed in the Gospel of Matthew," *JBL* 114, no. 4 (1995): 643.

sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared also. And the servants of the master of the house came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed (καλὸν σπέρμα) in your field (ἀγρῶ)? How then does it have weeds?’ He said to them, ‘An enemy has done this.’ So the servants said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he said, ‘No, lest in gathering the weeds you root up the wheat along with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Gather the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn. (Matt 13:24–30)

In the parable, Jesus’ enemy contests the space of the earth, but Jesus makes clear that although the kingdom includes evil, that does not mean the kingdom is not localized. He locates the presence of the kingdom in the bodies or body of believers, but there are other bodies contesting the space of the earth. The kingdom is here on the earth, but hidden in plain sight in the midst of evil.

The parable explicitly states the kingdom is like the process narrated. A man (ἄνθρωπος) sows good seed in his field (13:24). Matthew withholds a more specific identification of the man to verse 27 where he is called “the master of the house” and the servants call him “master.” While the master’s men are sleeping, his enemy (ὁ ἐχθρὸς) sows weeds among the wheat. The men come to the master but he says lets the weeds grow among the wheat so that the wheat is not rooted up along with the weeds. At the time of harvest the weeds can be burnt.

In the interpretation (13:36-42) Jesus identifies the field as the world (ὁ κόσμος), the enemy as the devil, and the Son of Man as the master of the house. As in the Beelzebul controversy, both the Son of Man and the devil are battling and contending for the space of earth. The *means* by which they seek to affect and control space is with humans, either good seeds (sons of the kingdom) or bad weeds (sons of the evil one). The field includes plants. In the parable, it is more explicit than the other parables that the seeds are human beings. Matthew and Jesus, through the parable, are affirming the structure of a place is changed socially. Notice that Matthew follows the use of *good soil* (13:23) with *good seed* (13:24). The unexpected thing about the parable is that Jesus affirms the kingdom is present with evil present beside it, and Jesus will allow evil to continue until the last day.

One of the biggest issues in the parable is whether the parable is about the mixed character of, (1) individuals, (2) Matthew's local community, (3) the church, (4) or the world.⁶⁸ Most restrict the debate to the last two categories of the church or the world. Robert McIver gives a string of arguments for both sides but ultimately argues for the ecclesiological view based on the images associated with the kingdom in Matthew.⁶⁹ He asks how the kingdom of heaven can be a present reality? McIver agrees that the kingdom in Matthew is portrayed as a territory, or realm, and therefore "the kingdom of God is manifest in the present community of Jesus' disciples. The community is the realm or territory corresponding to the kingdom."⁷⁰ For McIver, the nature of the spatial kingdom determines that Matthew is speaking about the mixed nature of the church.

McIver is right on a number of fronts. He rightly defines the kingdom in Matthew as a territory, although he may be dividing things too neatly by downplaying the kingdom also as a reign. McIver also asserts the kingdom of God is manifest in the present community of Jesus' disciples. What he and others who affirm this conclusion are lacking is the sense of connecting it to spatial theory. Anthropology and spatial production are intertwined, so that acknowledging the kingdom is manifest with Jesus and his community

⁶⁸Luz says the parable is about the appearance of evil within the community. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:255. Origen says, "The whole world might be called the field, and not the Church of God only, for in the whole world the Son of man sowed the good seed." Origen, *Commentary on Matthew* 10.2 (ANF 10:414).

⁶⁹Robert McIver in his article on the passage summarizes arguments for both the universalistic view and ecclesiological view. McIver, "The Parable of the Weeds," 643-59. The universalistic view has several strengths according to McIver. A number of scholars take this position. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 394-95; Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming Kingdom* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1962), 137, 179 n. 85, 345; Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 351; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 224-25; G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 132-35. First, the universalistic view takes seriously the interpretation of the field as the world. Second, it corresponds to the wider missiological pattern in Matthew. Third, it fits with understanding the kingdom of God as God's reign. Fourth, it provides a strong distinction between the kingdom of heaven and the church. But McIver also thinks the ecclesiological view has good arguments. First, the theme of a mixed community in the church comes up repeatedly in Matthew. Second, this parable is directed at the disciples not the crowds. Third, it gives the parable a point for there is no problem with evil people being in the world.

⁷⁰McIver, "The Parable of the Weeds," 658.

is right, but does not answer the question of *how*. The parables illustrate Jesus is reclaiming the territorial space of the earth, through his body and through the community of his followers.

While I agree with much of what McIver argues, the basis for his ecclesiological view is questionable. Detaching realm from reign here will not necessarily support his argument. Nor is it a non-issue if Jesus is speaking about the presence of evil in the world as McIver asserts. For Jesus could be addressing the connection between the kingdom and the world and the presence of evil in the world in which the kingdom is made manifest. The expectation in Matthew is that the whole world would be God's kingdom; thus, to have evil in the midst of it is strange. Davies and Allison note the parable, most broadly, is about the righteous and sinners coexisting in the world—even when the kingdom is present.⁷¹ The pivot of the parable is the presence of the kingdom, but also the lack of purity in the present time.⁷²

More broadly, the parable explains the mystery of the kingdom; the kingdom is here but hidden, and hard to discern. Jesus is allowing the growth of the kingdom to be in the midst of evil. The kingdom is not present in complete purity, but present in and through those who are the sons of the master of the house. The kingdom is present in the embodiment of believers (the seeds) as McIver argues, but the space of the earth is transformed through these bodies. In this sense, a spatial view makes the debate whether this parable is about the world or the church a non-issue. For the application of parable goes beyond the righteous and sinners in the world and includes an application to the

⁷¹Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:409.

⁷²One can possibly acknowledge all three levels of a mixed community. The first order meaning to the parable is probably the world or the universalistic view, but there are ecclesiological, and even individual implications. The world contains the church and individuals. Therefore the debate about which one it is does not respect “the world” contains all of them.

church.⁷³ As Snodgrass notes, the focus of the parable is on the nature of the kingdom. Specifically, the kingdom is among the presence of evil.⁷⁴

Jesus comes reordering the space of earth by sowing seeds upon the earth, but acknowledges in this parable he will not rid the earth of evil in the present time. The kingdom is present, for this is a kingdom parable, but it is hidden. The kingdom is tied strongly to the presence of the master of the house and the presence of the seeds he is scattering. Although evil will still be within the midst of the crop, the kingdom will be purified in the last day when the land will be completely cleansed. In the parable Jesus presents the kingdom as a thirdspace, which includes physical, mental, and social space.

The Mustard Seed and Leaven

The parable of the mustard seed and the leaven (vv. 31-33) rests between the parable of the wheat and the weeds and its interpretation. Matthew and Mark place these parables in their collection of parables on the kingdom.⁷⁵ By locating it between the parable (of the wheat and the weeds) and its interpretation, Matthew hints to his readers that these parables are united by the hiddenness theme. I argued previously that the wheat and the weeds parable is about the relationship between the hidden presence of the kingdom and the presence of evil.⁷⁶ Many Jews would have a hard time understanding how this can be, but Jesus explains it must be so for now.

⁷³However one must balance the broader application to the church with clear Matthean texts about people being cut off from the body (18:15-20). R. T. France argues similarly saying that the field is the world in this parable, but the principle of ‘letting them grow together’ can be applied to the church as well. R. T. France, “A Pure Church? Ecclesiological Reflections from the Gospel of Matthew,” *Rural Theology* 4, no. 1 (2006): 5.

⁷⁴Snodgrass, *Stories with Intent*, 212.

⁷⁵Luke has the parable after the healing of the woman bound by Satan for eighteen years. Therefore Luke emphasizes more clearly the kingdom of God is present by inserting the parable after the story of the defeat of Satan.

⁷⁶Luz notes how in the history of interpretation there were ecclesiological interpretations, individual interpretations, cosmopolitical approaches, and eschatological approaches to these parables. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:258–60.

All of the previous parables have a field, or some sort of location where the seed is to go (many times more broadly called “the earth”). The field then becomes the theater where all is revealed. John Heil says:

The repetition of the term “on the earth” brings to a climax [the author’s] continual use of this image throughout the parable discourse, which leads the implied audience to associate the mustard seed sown upon the earth with the crowds of people Jesus is teaching in parable upon the earth.⁷⁷

The only parable which slightly deviates from this pattern is the parable of the leaven where the seed morphs into the dough. Matthew directs interpreters towards identifying the field in verse 44 with the world or the earth because of the contextual interplay between all of the parables.⁷⁸ If the parables are mutually interpreted, then the grain of mustard seed would be the word, or the sons of the kingdom in conjunction with the other parables.⁷⁹ These sons of the kingdom become the tree, which is representative for renewed Israel, for in the Old Testament a tree or some sort of vine is usually associated with Israel (Isa 5:1-2; Jer 2:21; Ezek 15:6; Hosea 10:1). The birds of the air are Gentiles who come and make place in the tree. As Davies and Allison say:

The image of a large tree with birds resting in it or under it was a traditional symbol for a great kingdom. Jewish tradition could also think of the messianic community as a planting one which would spread throughout the earth; (see Ps. Sol 14:2-3; 1 QH 6:14-16; 8:4-8; Isa 61:3; Acts of Thomas 146).⁸⁰

However, the kingdom disorders the Jews secondspace view of the kingdom, just as the presence of evil confuses their secondspace conceptions. They expected a “pure” kingdom, both in race and morality. Jesus creates a kingdom of Other-worlds, a tree where the Gentiles come and make place.

⁷⁷John Paul Heil, “Reader-Response and the Narrative Context of the Parables about Growing Seed in Mark 4:1-34.,” *CBQ* 54, no. 2 (1992): 284.

⁷⁸Warren Carter and John Paul Heil, *Matthew’s Parables: Audience-Oriented Perspectives* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1998), 87.

⁷⁹More broadly then one could say the mustard seed is the kingdom.

⁸⁰Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:420.

The parable of the leaven is even shorter than the mustard seed. Unlike the previous two parables, there is no talk of a field. The metaphor has changed from outside the house to a domestic metaphor. The kingdom of heaven is like leaven a woman hid in three measures of flour, and then all the flour is leavened. Notice that the “hidden” theme is becoming more pronounced. In the next parable the kingdom is a treasure *hidden* in the field (13:44).⁸¹ The locale of the kingdom is the theater in which the kingdom is hidden yet is also coming to light. The similarities between the parable of the leaven and the mustard seed can be explained in two ways. They both start out hidden, but grow. They both start out insignificant, and begin to assume and consume space.

The main debate concerning the parables of the mustard seed and leaven is whether they are about contrast or growth.⁸² Does the trajectory of mustard seed’s transformation imply growth, or is it about the contrast between the mustard seed and the tree? Is the leaven in the flour about the growth of the bread, or about the contrast between the unleavened flour and the leavened bread? These options are not easily deciphered between, and they may not be mutually contradictory.

Because the previous parables are both about the unexpected nature of the kingdom, both contrast and growth seem to work for these parables. The contrast model is also appropriate because the Jews may have been expecting a kingdom that was complete at the outset. However, Jesus shows the kingdom can still be here, but not as

⁸¹Usually the emphasis is on why it is called a treasure, but the question rarely arises of why it is hidden, and why it is in a field. In the string of parables the field seems to be the world.

⁸²Dodd agrees with Schweitzer that these parables are not about growth: “They are not to be taken as implying a long process of development introduced by the ministry of Jesus and to be consummated by His second advent, through the Church later understood them in that sense. As in the teaching of Jesus as a whole, so here, there is no long historical perspective: the eschaton, the divinely ordained climax of history is here. It has come by no human effort, but by act of God; and yet not by an arbitrary, catastrophic intervention, for it is the harvest following upon a long process of growth. This is the new element which the parables introduce.” Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 193. Luz says the parable of the seeds is not about contrast and therefore he naturally sees this one as growth as well. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:241.

they expected, in a different secondspace nature: like leaven, like a mustard seed, like the presence of Jesus and his followers. Ulrich Luz aptly says:

Jesus' original hearers were probably surprised above all by the choice of images. A mustard seed is not an object of comparison for the kingdom of God With this beginning the parable says: Something different from what you expect will become God's biblical tree! To what does this different beginning refer? The frequent supposition that Jesus speaks here of his own activity is certainly correct. *The kingdom of God is at work not with heavenly armies but with earthly disciples—not in victory over the Romans but in hidden exorcisms and healings.* Precisely this inconspicuous beginning will have an unexpected result.⁸³

The challenge to their conception of the kingdom is similar to the parable of the weeds where the implication is the Jews were expecting a kingdom free from all evil. Jesus uses the parable to subvert their understanding of the kingdom and explain to them what the kingdom is like now with the presence of Jesus. The kingdom of heaven is a counter-site.

But the kingdom is not only a counter-site, but a counter-site created and growing through seeds all wrapped up in a field. The field equals locale plus catalyst. The kingdom is not just the seed, but the seed growing in the field. The seeds, like people, are always situated. Davies and Allison say that because of the use of *αὐξάνω* (to grow or increase), throughout church history most exegetes have understood the parable to be more than a simply contrast. Modern interpreters, in part reacting against optimistic liberalism of the nineteenth century, have tended to think otherwise.⁸⁴ At first the impact of the kingdom people is almost imperceptible, but when it has grown (*αὐξάνω*), it is a large tree, or leavened bread. Lohfink says, "In his parables about the seed Jesus portrays a silent revolution, and the best symbol for it is growth. It happens in silence. Growing things make no noise."⁸⁵ The implied question of the parable is, "Could what is

⁸³Luz, *Matthew*, 2:261, emphasis added.

⁸⁴Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:419.

⁸⁵Lohfink, *Jesus of Nazareth*, 109.

happening with Jesus and his disciples really be the establishment of God's kingdom?"⁸⁶ One should be put off by what seems unimpressive. Like the mustard seed and the leaven, the mixed nature of the kingdom is unexpected. These seeds are the presence of the kingdom, but they will also naturally produce space that will turn into a great tree under which all the birds of the air will gather.

What unites these parables is the focus on the *identification* of the seed and the *locale* of the seed. The production of space upon the earth occurs through Jesus' body and his words, and through the bodies of his *ἐκκλησία*. The kingdom of heaven and the king of heaven come to reorder the kingdom of the earth. Jesus opposes through embodied performance; his words form space and his followers bodies form space. In the body of Jesus, the kingdom of heaven is at hand, even though the disciples and others may not realize it yet. It is here, but hidden in plain sight upon the earth. The kingdom is firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace.

Summary

The seed parables in Matthew 13 are subversive; they create a *Gegenwelt* the Jews did not expect. These parables are not only teaching, but vehicles of the world-building kingdom. Snodgrass rightly says the focus of these parables is on the organic unity between Jesus' present ministry in Israel and the coming kingdom of heaven. Unity is found in the parables in a number of different respects. All of them speak about the presence of the kingdom being both in the body of Jesus and the body of his disciples, but these seeds must be placed in a field. The double identification is because the "seeds" in

⁸⁶Luz asks, what is the church's place in this movement at the end of which is the kingdom of God? He only provides a negative answer, for according to him the Matthean church has not triumphed and Matthew most clearly connects the kingdom of God with judgment that will also come over the church. He says the church is not the beginning of the kingdom of God or its historical embodiment. At most the church has something to do with the *movement* of growth, the *process* of leavening. Luz, *Matthew*, 2:263. But as his commentary makes clear, this interpretation is a reaction to "triumphalist" and "ecclesiastical" interpretations.

all the parables are classified as both Jesus' words and his followers. These parables also present the kingdom as a thirdspace or a heterotopia. Rather than merely focusing on the temporal nature of the kingdom, the parables reveal Matthew and Jesus concerned themselves with the space or place of the kingdom. There is a "field" or a locale of the kingdom. The space upon which the Jesus and these disciples act is upon the earth. The space of the kingdom is physical (here in the presence of Jesus and the seeds), mental (common conceptions of the kingdom), and social (contesting and realigning common views of the kingdom). Another way to view the space of the kingdom is to view it as a heterotopia. Heterotopias are spaces of *otherness*, in which new modes of sociality can be imagined and practiced. They are neither here nor there, simultaneously physical and mental. Heterotopias exist in other sites, contesting them and provides a way of creating a reality outside of one's own reality.

Although it may seem like I have pigeonholed each parable to say the same thing, development also is at hand.⁸⁷ The parable of the sower teaches the kingdom is present and coming through people. However, Jesus' words will not be accepted by everyone, and there will be opposition to the overhaul of the earth. The parable of the weeds makes the mixed nature of the change more explicit and explains that although the kingdom is present with Jesus and his followers, there is also evil in the midst of it. The parable of the mustard seed and leaven communicates that although the kingdom may not look impressive here (probably in response to the previous two parables and the mixed nature), it is extraordinary. The mixed and hidden process of the kingdom should not discourage those who would follow Jesus, for mustard seed turns into a large garden plant and leaven diffuses in the flour. All of these parables speak about the nature of the

⁸⁷Liebenberg says that both the parable of the sower and the parable of the weeds talk about the kingdom in terms of people, but the sower maps the locations of the seed, while the parable of the weeds maps the properties of people. Jacobus Liebenberg, *The Language of the Kingdom: Parable, Aphorism, and Metaphor in the Sayings Material Common to the Synoptic Tradition and the Gospel of Thomas* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 181 n. 45

presence of the kingdom. The seed, or Jesus' words initiates the kingdom, and his words create a counter-site through people.

The parables do not identify how quickly or how effective the change upon the earth will be. In case one be too optimistic, Jesus makes clear that unbelief hampers the path towards God's kingdom. Some seeds fall upon rocky ground and weeds grow up with the wheat at other times, but the impediments to the growth and establishment of the kingdom do not completely halt its progress. The presence of the kingdom is tied to the generative word of the embodied Jesus and his disciples. The only way to stop the progress of the kingdom is to stop those who believe in it. The seeds parables in Matthew 13 confirm their presence shakes the earth. Spatial production is not explicit in these parables, but is a theme is weaved through each of them, for good seeds are sown and they will grow.

Conclusion

Jesus, the heavenly king, begins to reunite the two realms of heaven and earth through his words. In the Sermon on the Mount he calls his followers to be salt and light upon the earth. They are to have impact upon the space of the earth by living virtuous lives. In the mission discourse he sends them out as the twelve into the harvest (a field) to enter houses and bring peace to the houses. If the house rejects them, they are to shake the "earth" or dust off their feet signifying that the land is defiled. Finally, the parables of the kingdom are unified by a *location* which the seed enters, the earth. The seeds (words and followers of Jesus) cannot be conceived of in the abstract. The kingdom, according to Jesus in these parables, is enacted upon the earth. The field is the theater of the kingdom. The kingdom is here, but hidden in plain sight, for space is constituted by firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace. Jesus is engaging in a world-building activity, and he does this through his body, his words. Jesus' body and the body of his disciples are social symbols seeking to reorder the space of the earth, but how will he do this? As the next chapter will show, he will continue to create a community that is indistinguishable (or

hidden) from other men, who do not inhabit a separate city, or speak a strange dialect, or follow some outlandish way of life. Yet there is something extraordinary about their lives.⁸⁸

⁸⁸This language comes from *The Epistle to Diognetus* chaps. 5 and 6.

CHAPTER 7
THE MEEK COMMUNITY AND THE TEMPLE

Introduction

All the stories of Jesus are successions of states of embodiment. The biblical text is not interested in embodiment directly as a private or discrete phenomenon, but indirectly. The human body of Jesus is the communicative and expressive medium of the kingdom. Therefore, Jesus' body is the location of the kingdom, but he is also spreading the kingdom to other bodies, which also produce kingdom space upon the earth. The presence of Jesus' words reorders and disrupts the space of earth. Jesus is not discarding territory in Matthew, but expanding the territory. He is not blasé about the land promises or even personalizing them. Rather, Jesus inaugurates the new exodus, bringing people into the new land. The new land is physical, mental, and social. In the last chapter I examined three of the discourses (the Sermon on the Mount, the Commissioning of the Disciples, and the Kingdom Parables) and the extension of Jesus' body through words. Two discourses remain, the Community Discourse (Matt 18) and the Last Discourse (Matt 24-25). In the Community Discourse Jesus continues his world-building effort by creating a meek (πραῦς) space.¹ He ruptures the natural response to tensions and commands forgiveness, humility, and community integration. By so doing he creates a second and thirdspace.² In the last discourse, Jesus prophesies concerning the most important space

¹I am intentionally alluding to Matt 5:5 where the meek inherit the earth.

²Because firstspace is how people normally think of space, Matthew 18 is rarely spoken about in terms of spatial analysis. However expanding ones view of space allows one to see the space Jesus is creating here refers mainly to second and thirdspace, but second and thirdspace will have firstspace implications.

of day, the temple. He predicts its destruction and sets himself up as the *axis mundi*, where heaven and earth collide.

Community Discourse

In the community discourse Jesus continues his world-building effort by giving his community its *magna carta* in the fourth discourse (chapter 18). Eric Jacobsen notes that we live in a culture that has become convinced there is no longer any connection between *geography* and our experience of *community*.³ In the following paragraphs I hope to show that the community Jesus is creating is crammed with spatial guidelines and orientations. Jesus is seeking to create a meek *ἐκκλησία* space. Placelessness in the modern era plays a contributing role in the crisis of identity, but Jesus *places* his church and in so doing defines their identity. Geography, identity and community are all connected for Matthew 18 stands as an implementation of the beatitudes and especially of Matthew 5:5 where Jesus promises, “The meek will inherit the earth” (μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν).

The theme of the discourse is on the corporate life of those joined together by Jesus, with special attention given to the “strains and tensions” which appear in any community.⁴ Jesus instructs his community how to avoid disbanding in light of these tensions and instructs them on the nature of the fellowship. Implied in the instruction is a *contrast* with the proud communities of the earth who divide over such issues. In order to contest these communities and create a new one, Jesus instructs his disciples how to be world-builders by “breaking” the normal cycle of separation, anger, jealousy, and disunity. Rather, the community of heaven (which exists in the in-between) is characterized by

³Eric Jacobsen, *The Space Between: A Christian Engagement with the Built Environment* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 12. See also his previous book, idem, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2003).

⁴R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 672.

meekness, thirsting for righteousness, poorness in spirit, peacemaking, and forgiveness. Although the entire discourse could be examined from this perspective, at least four world-breaking teaching moments transpire to form Jesus' reordered space.

The first comes when Jesus forms his community around the meekness of children (18:1-6). The disciples still expected the kingdom to be a space where the elite, the socially and politically influential occupied positions of power.⁵ But Jesus challenges their conception of what it means to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Here is a break in expectation concerning *who* enters the kingdom. Jesus severs their firstspace and secondspace pre-conceived notions, thereby the kingdom appears as thirdspace. Children were powerless, without status, and utterly dependent upon others for support.⁶ The figure of a child could possibly be the unifying theme to the entire section and Jesus uses a child to redefine greatness in the kingdom. "Each unit in Matthew 18 contributes to a growing 'crescendo of care' that climaxes in the teaching regarding the unlimited forgiveness that Jesus' disciples will extend to one another."⁷ Everything that follows in

⁵In geographical theory there is a debate between the role of human agency and structuration. James Duncan has a chapter in the book *The Future of Geography* describing this conversation. In one account, institutions strongly determine action. This is called the structural approach. But the structural approach has been strongly criticized for its ability to adequately demonstrate the "ontological relationship between autonomous social structures and individual action." On the opposite side there is a model based wholly on individual attitudes and intentions. This may be called individualism. But the problem with this type of analysis is that it is overly individualistic and idealistic with little regard to the socio-cultural and institutional structures of which their individual acts are an integral aspect. Duncan writes, "The difficulty in constructing a workable theory of action is to avoid on the one hand determinism of the structural view and on the other idealism of some non-structural approaches." He rightly points to a dialectical relationship between structure and action. Action is affected by structure, and structure by action. James Duncan, "Individual Action and Political Power: A Structuration Perspective," in *The Future of Geography*, ed. R. J. Johnston (New York: Methuen, 1985), 174–89.

⁶Meier asserts, "In the ancient world, a child was a piece of property, not a full person. He had no rights, no defense, no means of assuring his own security." J. P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church and Morality in the First Gospel* (New York: Paulist, 1991), 128.

⁷J. A. Gibbs and J. J. Kloha, "'Following' Matthew 18: Interpreting Matthew 18:15-20 in Its Context," *CJ* 29, no. 1 (2003): 7. Davies and Allison argue that the six paragraphs are constituted in two triadic units that are linked through the shared terms "child/children" and "little ones" on the one hand and "brother" on the other hand. W. D. Davies and Dale Allison, *Matthew*, ICC (London: T & T Clark, 1988), 2:750.

chapter 18 fleshes out what it means to become “little.” To become little or meek refers not only to one’s attitude towards God, but before brothers and sisters in the community.⁸ Jesus reveals that the greatest in the kingdom are the neediest (or the meekest), and ministering to “little ones” is caring for Jesus (vv. 1-5). The disciples are to avoid at all costs causing them to stumble (vv. 5-10) and even seek one another out when sinned against personally (vv. 15-20). The limitlessness of this forgiveness is to match the forgiveness they have received from God (vv. 21-35).

R. T. France says the portrait which then emerges is an attractive one, for “status-consciousness” has no place and the focus is on mutual responsibility of all members.⁹ Thereby, the space of heaven is contrasted to the space of earth. The greatest in the kingdom of heaven will be like children. But does the simile of “like children” merely imply meekness? Davies and Allison list the following options for interpretation: (1) openness, (2) trust in God, (3) spontaneity, (4) to allow oneself to be given to it, because one cannot earn it, (5) humble, (6) learning to say ‘abba’ again, (7) receive the kingdom with affection.¹⁰ Some of these views are not mutually exclusive, but their own suspicion is that Jesus was encouraging them to begin their religious lives afresh, like a newborn child. This fits with the Fourth Gospel when Jesus says, “You have to be born from above/again (ἐὰν μή τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν).¹¹ Entering the kingdom then, which recalls entering the land in the OT, means being born from above. A new spatial orientation has to envelop one’s life. Entering the kingdom of heaven is only possible by the aboveness of the Spirit encasing someone. To enter a new spatial structure one must become a

⁸Tomás Joseph Surlis, *The Presence of the Risen Christ in the Community of Disciples: An Examination of the Ecclesiological Significance of Matthew 18:20* (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical, 2011), 73.

⁹France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 674.

¹⁰Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:757-58; John 3:7.

¹¹John purposefully has a dual meaning for ἄνωθεν here as John does repeatedly with words in the rest of his Gospel.

certain type of person, for a certain type of persons creates a certain type of place. The people formed by Jesus' words will create heterotopias, which contest all other spaces on the earth. Like a child's imaginative game, the new space exists inside the "other" space but creates a new reality within that space. It is on the earth, but not of it.

Second, Jesus instructs his community to cut off their hands or feet if they cause stumbling (18:7-9). Not only are the followers of Jesus to become to like children in their meekness, they are to welcome entering the kingdom with missing limbs if such action is required.¹² The action requires a great sense of the lack of self-importance and a hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt 5:6). Earthly space, will be grasping for the attention of the hands and feet of those who desire to enter the kingdom. The "other realm" is waging a war on peace that comes with the kingdom of heaven. To make a new world, the old world's grasp must be detached. Sometimes the hold is so strong, a cleaver is necessary. Interestingly, Matthew switches here from the language of entering the "kingdom of heaven" to entering "life" (ζωή). He contrasts this with being thrown into "the hell of fire" and the "eternal fire." Both ideas are locative, but illustrating the nature of the place by using descriptive nouns. The irony is evident for entering life means one has to forsake some of one's body, while holding tight to life means losing one's body. Jesus is reformulating how they think of the spatial structure of the new society. This reformulation commences with a willingness to sacrifice the body for a new body.

Third, Jesus calls the community to be peacemakers (Matt 5:9) in 18:15-17. The emphasis is on restoration, although the end result of a non-repentant person is separation. As McLister argues, although this passage is usually siphoned out of context for church discipline, yet it continues the idea that disciples are to show concern for one another.¹³

¹²The missing limbs is a metaphorical statement, as is the phrase in the Gospel.

¹³David McLister, "'Where Two or Three Are Gathered Together': Literary Structure as a Key to Meaning in Matt 17:22-20:19," *JETS* 39, no. 4 (1996): 555.

The way to form the space of this community is either to have people repent or to separate from those who do not. Corruption within the community can spread quickly. Proud and unrepentant people do great damage to a meek community. To create a new world the ways of the old world must be broken (in secondspace terms). The new community stands as the *axis mundi* between the new world and the old world. The people who do not repent are to be viewed as outside the community. They are defiled and the place they occupy is defiled. They are to be treated like a Gentile or tax collector. What the community binds on earth is bound in heaven, and what the community looses on earth is loosed in heaven.¹⁴ An unbreakable relationship between the horizontal and the vertical exists in the life of the Christian *ἐκκλησία*. This relationship should cause readers to recall the spatial theories presented in chapter 3 where space is defined open and relational. Space is subject to change and open to production, and this “realm terminology” is linked another “presence” text in 18:20.¹⁵ Thereby the relationship between the realms and the presence of Jesus are allied in Matthew’s narrative. What is bound in heaven and earth is done so *because* of the promise of Jesus’ presence. Jesus’ presence is the bond between the realms.

Fourth, Jesus instructs his disciples to forgive endlessly (18:21-35) which is another form of peacemaking. The way of the earth is an eye for eye, a tooth for a tooth, but the life of the new community is to be one of incessant forgiveness, of *πραΰς*. The contrast between the two spaces can be seen in the parable Jesus gives in response to Peter’s question in verse 21. Jesus says the kingdom of heaven can be compared (*δμοιόω*)

¹⁴The amount of disagreement over what binding (*δέω*) and loosing (*λύω*) mean is staggering. Davies and Allison list thirteen options for understanding the phrase. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:635-69. The best place to begin is with the point of agreement. Everyone concurs that the subject is *authority*, but the debate comes over what type of authority. Is it the authority to bind people? Laws? Forgive sins? Exorcisms? Vows? Teaching? Many of these views overlap, but the most satisfying and maybe the most unpopular view is the exorcistic one. In a chapter that ended up getting cut, I argued that the “binding” and “loosing” terms originally were exorcistic terms, although the application quickly was used in a wider sense for authority.

¹⁵This text is dealt with in chap. 8.

to a human king. The human king is full of generosity like the king of heaven, but the slaves do not respond in kind. The contrast is evident. The generosity and forgiveness of ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν is set in contrast to the slave who is harsh and unforgiving. The community is to be characterized by familial forgiveness. Their identity is wrapped up in their spatial location.

Therefore, Jesus in Matthew 18 is creating a meek thirdspace. It is more than simply physical and ideological, but also captures the imagination. He does so by instructing them to become like children, to go to great lengths to keep themselves from sin, to be peacemakers in the church, and to forgive one another. All of these instructions stand in contrast to the earthly space of the surrounding communities. Although this section was necessarily brief, the overviews do give a taste of type of space Jesus is creating with his community. The community Jesus sends out is to be a meek community, the peacemaking community challenging the spatial practices of the earth and thereby inheriting the earth. Michael Gorman says peace is a critical marker of ecclesial identity, “not merely as an ethical principle but as a sign of the presence of Jesus and of the church’s fellowship with him.”¹⁶ This section highlights the fact that firstspace is not the only way to conceive of space for Jesus himself contrasts meekness with pride. Those who are meek inherit the earth, or form thirdspace in Matthew 5:5. One last discourse is worth pursuing, for in it, Jesus rejects the one of the most important spaces in Judaism and in the first century.

The Last Discourse and the Unfinished Temple

The anthropologist Mircea Eliade remarks, “Man cannot live without a ‘sacred center’ which permits him to ‘cosmicize’ space and to communicate with the transhuman

¹⁶Michael Gorman, *The Death of a the Messiah and the Birth of the New Covenant: A (Not So) New Model of the Atonement* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 186.

world of heaven.”¹⁷ In many ancient cultures, the temple was considered a sacred center and was the place of ritual. Much work has been done on the temple, but not as frequently from a spatial perspective.¹⁸ Jackson and Henrie define sacred space as:

That portion of the earth’s surface which is recognized by individuals or groups as worthy of devotion, loyalty or esteem. Sacred space is sharply discriminated from the non-sacred profane world around it. Sacred space does not exist naturally, but is assigned sanctity as man defines, limits and characterizes it through his culture, experience and goals.¹⁹

Sacred space then is closely linked to social space, for sacred spaces are *assigned* sanctity. The temple within Jerusalem functions as a firstspace location, a secondspace covenantal projection, and an eschatological thirdspace vision. All three spaces need reordering.

My argument is that Jesus, by prophesying the end of the temple in 24:1-2 and fulfilling the role of the temple, is creating a thirdspace for the temple around his body. By prophesying he was performing a totalizing action upon the earth. By totalizing I mean that he was critiquing (and fulfilling) the entire earthly space, for the temple stood as a microcosm of the earth.²⁰ In the immediate context, the rejection of the temple was

¹⁷Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Williard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1957), 32-33. For a chapter on biblical sacred space, see Seth Kunin, *God’s Place in the World: Sacred Space and Sacred Place in Judaism* (New York: Cassell, 1998).

¹⁸Wenell’s article and chapter in her book is an exception. Karen Wenell, “Contested Temple Space and Visionary Kingdom Space in Mark 11-12,” *BibInt* 15, no. 3 (2007): 323-27; idem, *Jesus and Land: Sacred and Social Space in Second Temple Judaism*, LNTS (New York: T & T Clark, 2007), 21-56 She takes a more historical approach looking at the tabernacle, Solomon’s temple, the rebuilt temple, the Second Temple, the Samaritan temple, Qumran and Jerusalem temple and the Testament of Moses. .

¹⁹R. H. Jackson and R. Henrie, “Perception of Sacred Space,” *JCG* 3 (1983): 94.

²⁰Fulfillment includes both affirmation and condemnation of the current symbol. As Gurtner argues, Matthew’s narrative presents Jesus fulfilling the role of the Temple. Daniel Gurtner, *The Torn Veil: Matthew’s Exposition of the Death of Jesus*, SNTS (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 124-25. Although Matthew retains the prophecy of the destruction of the temple (Matt 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2), he does have Jesus’ lament over Jerusalem precede this prophecy indicating Jesus’ anguish over the reality of what he must do. Matthew himself highlights how Jesus comes in “fulfillment” (πληρῶω; 16x) of the many Hebrew Scripture systems. But it would be a *non-sequitur* to argue that he does not reject the temple. Davies and Allison argue that Jesus had no need to attack the temple writing after A.D. 70. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:143. But he did attack the temple system in many ways, and scholars debate whether the Gospel was written before AD 70. Lohmeyer argues that Jesus is anti-temple in Matthew, but this

against the Jewish leaders, but the condemnation of the Pharisees also stands as a symbol of broad rejection to the kingship of Jesus upon the earth. The temple was an overwhelmingly dominant presence in Judaism during the life of Jesus where religious, social, and political life was centered.²¹ Wenham says the temple stood as a “massive and proud symbol” in Jewish “national consciousness”; yet on another level, the sanctum was “built by a corrupt half-pagan king and run by a religiously corrupt and compromised hierarchy.”²² In this sense, Jesus’ relocation of the temple was not just contesting the religious leaders, but the Roman imperial, and more generally the entire earthly system.²³ Jesus’ body and his social interactions instigated a divine order for the space of earth. By contesting the space of the temple and rebuilding the temple with his body, Jesus was reordering the space of earth.

His words were a totalizing action in at least three ways. First, because the Jewish leadership can be viewed as representatives of rejection to Jesus’ message; second, because the temple was not only a seat of atonement, but was itself a totalizing institution; third, because the temple is a microcosm of the entire earth. In Jesus’ public words in

seems to go too far the other way. Ernst Lohmeyer, *Das Evangelium Des Matthäus*, 4th ed. (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1953), 184. The best language to retain concerning Jesus’ own attitude toward the temple according to Matthew is one of fulfillment.

²¹The Gospel writers have at least three sections on the temple. First, each writer has Jesus’ actions in the temple where he outs the traders (Mark 11:15-18; Matt 21:12-14; Luke 19:45-46). Second, they all have the prediction that the stones will be torn down (Mark 13:1-2; Matt 24:1-2; Luke 21:5-6). Third, they have the statement about Jesus being able to rebuild it in three days (Mark 14:56-59; Matt 26:60-61, 27:40; John 2:13-22; Acts 6:12-14). Normally, it is the former episode that receives the most attention. But the prediction of Jesus about the stones and the rebuilding of it is what will be focused on here.

²²David Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 172.

²³Carter argues that Jesus in the first Gospel contests the claims of divine sovereignty, presence, agency, and societal well-being and presents an alternative understanding of the world and life in it, which subverts imperial theology and legitimates a community with an alternative worldview and way of life. Warren Carter, “Contested Claims: Roman Imperial Theology and Matthew’s Gospel,” *BTB* 29, no. 2 (1999): 63.

Matthew 24, he was constituting space around himself, the new convergence of heaven and earth, the ladder fixed in the middle of the cosmos, the new temple. What Second-Temple Judaism had customarily conceived as being the future, Jesus symbolically through his actions brought into the immediate present. For Jesus, the temple was unfinished until he satisfied its aim.²⁴

Context of Matthew 24

The context of the last discourse (Matt 24-25) is contrasted to the first discourse (Matt 5-7). The woes parallel the blessings in the chapter immediately preceding chapter 24, forming a bookend.²⁵ The Sermon on the Mount and the parables of the kingdom have both been largely *integrative* proposals (although critiques are implied). Jesus teaches his disciples ethics, and what spatial tactics are involved in the *ἐκκλήσις*. The last discourse is different. Jesus derides the Pharisees and Sadducees and predicts the destruction of the temple, and therefore the discourse is *divisive*.²⁶ Integration is making a world. Division is breaking a world.²⁷ In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches positively how his disciples

²⁴Gurtner claims that no negative word is uttered about the temple itself, rather the confrontation is with the religious leaders. But Gurtner seems to be making a sharp distinction between people and place that does not respect how the people viewed their interrelationship. Therefore a critique of the temple was a critique of the people, and a critique of the people was a critique of the temple. Daniel Gurtner, "Matthew's Theology of the Temple and the 'Parting of the Ways': Christian Origins and the First Gospel," in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, eds. Daniel Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 130.

²⁵Theophilus gives the following arguments for parallelism between the discourses. (1) The discourse units 5-7 and 24-25 stand as the header and footer of teaching material in Matthew; (2) they are substantially longer than the three intervening teaching blocks; (3) the repeated phrase of blessing (9x) and woe (7x) occurs uniquely in Matt 5-7 and 24-25; (4) audience; (5) vocabulary; (6) thematic parallels; (7) idiomatic expressions; and (8) it does not lie outside reasonable possibility that attested parallels between the opening and closing chapters would have alerted readers to other such devices. Additional support is Matthew's use of Deut 27-30 where Israel's fate is determined by her response to Yahweh. Michael Theophilus, *The Abomination of Desolation in Matthew 24:15*, LNTS (New York: T & T Clark, 2012), 35-36.

²⁶Although I am asserting a sharp separation for clarity, all the discourses have elements of integration and division. Or in the terms I have been using of "world-making" by "world-breaking."

²⁷I am indebted to Matthew Sleeman for this observation.

are to be salt and light of the earth, but here he condemns the Scribes and the Pharisees for their lack of righteousness. The religious leaders do their deeds to be seen by others (23:5) and shut the kingdom in other people's face (23:13); they are blind guides (23:16) and are full of greed (23:25), and they murder prophets (23:34). Their actions cause Jesus to weep over Jerusalem, but because the religious leaders will not respond to him, he will leave their house desolate (23:38).²⁸ Matthew 24:1-2 reads,

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.

In Jesus' words, he rejects the firstspace stones of the temple, challenging the secondspace of the temple, looking forward to a thirdspace of the temple. An alternative spatial practice is implied in the prediction of the temple, but only by pairing the prophecy with his statement about it being rebuilt in three days (26:60-61) do readers learn that the alternative space is Jesus' body. Jesus' body constitutes the new space, and the new space destroys, replaces, and fulfills the temple.

The replacement of the temple with Jesus' body is a theme numerous scholars have observed.²⁹ C. K. Barrett says "the human body of Jesus was the place where a unique manifestation of God took place and consequently became the only true temple."³⁰

²⁸Jesus' words echo Jeremiah's denunciation of Jerusalem: "But if you will not heed these words, I swear by myself, says the Lord, that this house shall become a desolation. . . . I have forsaken my house, I have abandoned my heritage" (Jer 22:5; 12:7). If chapter 23 is a linking chapter, then the prophetic lament of the house left desolate coheres with Jesus' words in the next chapter. Davies and Allison see Matt 23 as the conclusion of controversies in chapters 21-22 and not as the beginning of a new discourse which extends through 25. But Theophilus argues that chapter 23 functions as a linking chapter, both a conclusion to 21-22 and introduction to 24-25. Theophilus, *The Abomination of Desolation*, 46. In chapter 24, Jesus expands on the house being desolate and foretells a time when the stones of the temple will be thrown down.

²⁹People normally spot this theme in John. Matthew's presentation is simply a different way of telling the same thing. For a summary of contemporary scholarship on this theme, especially in John, see Alan Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus' Body: The Temple Theme in the Gospel of John*, JSOT 220 (New York: Sheffield, 2002), 2-8.

³⁰C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John* (London: SPCK, 1978), 201.

Carson commented, “The human body of Jesus . . . [is] the living abode of God on the earth.”³¹ Kerr focuses on the community, saying John’s response to the temple’s destruction indicates “this new family, in a derivatory sense, [which] constitutes the new temple.”³² But more can be said. The land promises are not de-territorialized in Matthew. The land, Jerusalem, and the temple are reallocated in Jesus, but at the same time Matthew is genuinely concerned with these realities. Through the body of Jesus and his community new space is produced. Matthew remaps the sacred sites, while fulfilling them in a greater sense when Jesus asserts his claim over the whole earth. Matthew’s scheme does not de-territorialize things, rather he relocates and re-eschatologizes the territory of the temple.

A Totalizing Action

Jesus says not one stone (firstspace) will be left of the temple but all will be thrown down. This comes in the narrative speech about judgment of the religious leaders of his day.³³ Chapter 23 has been all about critiquing and judging the Scribes and the Pharisees. Karen Wenell says this passage of prophecy “highlights the destruction of the temple without any reference to the restoration of the temple.”³⁴ The statement that there will not be left a stone upon a stone (λίθος ἐπὶ λίθον) is a metaphor for total destruction that reverses the building process.³⁵ Most commentators see Jesus’ action of “leaving the temple” (ἐξέρχομαι/πορεύομαι) as symbolic. France notes Matthew uses two verbs of leaving here, when one would have sufficed.³⁶ He is abandoning the temple and the space

³¹D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 182.

³²Kerr, *The Temple of Jesus’ Body*, 65.

³³See France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 886.

³⁴Wenell, *Jesus and Land*, 50.

³⁵Donald Hagner, *Matthew*, WBC, vol. 2 (Dallas: Word, 1993), 688.

³⁶France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 887.

it represents.³⁷ Because the temple was sacred space (secondspace) and central (secondspace) to the lives of the Jewish people, Jesus' statement about each stone being thrown down symbolizes the tearing down of the authority structures that go with the present temple. Jesus was rejecting the space of the temple and the leaders of the temple who created the space. Implied here is that he is forming a new space around himself (thirdspace). Jesus' prediction of the destruction of the temple plays a significant role in the trial. In the trial, the religious leaders accuse Jesus before Caiaphas for saying he was able to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days (26:61). Although this saying is not included in Matthew 24, by the time of his trial and death Jesus was understood to have promised to rebuild and reconstitute the temple.

My argument is the rejection of the temple in Matthew 24:1-2 is a totalizing action, critiquing the entire earthly system. However is the word "totalizing" too broad? For admittedly in the Matthean context Jesus is opposing the Jewish system and religious leaders. A number of verses indicate a combat between Jesus and the religious leaders. "The scribes and the Pharisees" sit on Moses' seat . . . but do not do the works they do" (Matt 23:2). "They tie up heavy burdens" (v. 4), "they do all their deeds to be seen by others" (v. 5), "they love the place of honor" (v. 6). "But woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" (vv. 13, 15, 23, 29). "You blind fools" (v. 17), "You blind men" (v. 19). "Fill up then the measure of your fathers" (v. 32). "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets" (v. 37). With so much evidence of Jesus opposing the Jewish leaders in the passage, and in other Jewish sources, Theophilus concludes "that Israel's moral failure is linked with national destruction Matthew can be centrally located in the stream of Jewish theological material which responded to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D.70 by laying responsibility at the feet of the inhabitants."³⁸ In summary, for

³⁷Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:334.

³⁸Theophilus, *The Abomination of Desolation*, 73.

Theophilos and many others, the destruction of Jerusalem is because of *Israel's* rejection of her Messiah. However, Matthew's text can also be read in a wider sense. Jesus' action also shows a rejection of the crux of the entire earthly system, which Israel embodies in Jesus' day. In the historical context the Jewish leaders are the referent, but in the eschatological context it is also all earthly systems opposed to Jesus as king. These two interpretations don't have to be at odds, but can fit together. If Israel is a microcosm for the rest of humanity, then Jesus' woes upon the Pharisees and Sadducees are not only woes to the Pharisees and Sadducees living in the first century. The woes are to all those who "tie up heavy burdens upon people," and "do their deeds to be seen by others." The judgment is coming upon the Jewish leaders, but also those who construct space in a similar way.³⁹

Second, Jesus was performing a totalizing action upon the earth because the temple was a totalizing institution. The words of Jesus in Matthew 24:1-2 can only be understood if the role and function of the temple is understood. Perrin suggests in New Testament scholarship there is an instinctive propensity to see the temple's *raison d'être* as having exclusively to do with the religious impulse, specifically, the need to be forgiven.⁴⁰ The problem is not the religious impulse, but the exclusiveness of it. Such a narrow view will no longer suffice. Temples were indeed locations for worshipping the gods. Sometimes gods were conceived as living in the temple, a theme that is evident in the OT. The temple was a place for atonement, but it was also much more. They served

³⁹Lars Kierspel makes a similar argument in his dissertation on John's use of the term "Jews." He says when put into the narrative as a whole, the term "Jews" is an *inclusive* term observing the parallelism between the term *κόσμος* (world) and *οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι* (Jews) resulting in the conclusion that the "world" is the frame for the "Jews." No time exists to go into more of the merits of his argument, but Kierspel's argument does indicate an inclusiveness happening at a higher level in all the Gospels. Matthew probably was implying such by the time he wrote the Gospel because he was not merely concerned with what happened, but how it affected the present day and the days to come. The stories of Jesus were not only relevant to Jesus' day, but to Matthew's audience. Lars Kierspel, *The Jews and the World in the Fourth Gospel: Parallelism, Function, and Context* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2006).

⁴⁰Nicholas Perrin, *Jesus the Temple* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 7.

as places of residence, centers of learning, and many times contained dining halls. Therefore, they were not only religious centers, but also economic and social centers of society. Although the temptation is to disjoint the social, religious, political, and economic dimensions of life, in the ancient world they were wrapped together. They all converged upon the site or place of temple. Stewart notes how temples could function much the same as banks and credit unions today, and therefore could have a stimulating effect on local economies.⁴¹ Temples in ancient cultures were economic centers where a tremendous amount of money flowed through their space.⁴² The temple was also a political site, since controlling the temple in many ways meant having access to the Roman government's patronage and being able to define issues such as purity. The temple aristocracy collected a sizable income through the temple taxes and tithes, but it was not only the priests who had financial interest in the temple. Tanners, shoemakers, tentmakers, cattle dealers, and money changers all more or less lived from the sacrificial cult. Therefore, the temple contained the spatial practices of the religious, political, and economic spheres.

The temple was also important to the rural population. Josephus notes how farmers displayed loyalty to the temple by leaving their fields to protest when Caligula tried to have his statue set up in the temple (*Ant.* 18:274, 287). Herod built the temple. He was a pro-Roman policy maker whom some certainly associated with the temple. Levenson also demonstrates how the temple shares in the destiny of the king.⁴³ David bought the land upon which the temple was to stand from Ornan the Jebusite (2 Sam 24:15-25). Solomon, his son, ends up building the "First Temple" which was spatially close to the

⁴¹Eric Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus: An Alternative Spatial Practice in the Gospel of Mark* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), 142.

⁴²Kyu Sam Han, *Jerusalem and the Early Jesus Movement: The Q Community's Attitude Toward the Temple*, JSNT Supplement (New York: Sheffield, 2002), 49.

⁴³J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry in the Jewish Bible* (Minneapolis: Winston, 1985), 97.

king's palace. For much of early Israelite history, the fortunes of Jerusalem and the fortunes of the house of David were tied together. In 2 Samuel 7 David says he will build a house for the Lord, but the Lord instead promises David a house that will last forever. The institution of the temple is so tightly linked to the monarchy they are hard to pry apart. By replacing and fulfilling the temple, Jesus' body stands as the new house, the new spatial structure. The upholding of Jerusalem is a token of divine fidelity to the promises the Lord made to David. Han summarizes temples in ancient civilizations as exhibiting "a complex social system, functioning as 'meeting point', 'microcosm', 'symbolic center', and 'economic center'."⁴⁴ The temples were multidimensional institutions playing an important sociological role, creating and maintaining the loyalty of the people.

Third, Jesus' words were a totalizing action because the temple was a microcosm for the entire earth. Josephus interprets the structure of the temple as corresponding to the three cosmic regions (*War* 5.215-37). The outer court symbolizes the visible earth; the holy place represented the visible heavens; the holy of holies stood for the invisible heavenly dimension of the cosmos where God dwelt. J. D. Levenson observes 'heaven and earth' in the Old Testament may sometimes be a way of referring to Jerusalem or its temple, for which Jerusalem is a metonymy.⁴⁵ He looks at Isaiah 65:17-18 in support of the metonymy view where creating a new heavens and new earth is put in parallel with creating Jerusalem for rejoicing. Matthew, more than any other Gospel, emphasizes the pairing of heaven and earth.⁴⁶

The Hebrew Bible, and some of the non-canonical writings and the rabbinic

⁴⁴Han, *Jerusalem and the Early Jesus Movement*, 50.

⁴⁵Jon D. Levenson, "The Temple and the World," *JR* 64, no. 3 (1984): 294-95.

⁴⁶See Jonathan T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 326-27.

literature, viewed the temple (Jerusalem and Mount Zion) as located in the center of the earth.⁴⁷ According to the Hebrew Bible, Jerusalem was the hub of the world to which all nations would one day stream (Isa 60:10-14 Ps 69:35ff). *Jubilees* speaks of Mount Zion in Jerusalem as the navel of the earth.

And he knew that the Garden of Eden was the holy of holies, and the dwelling of the Lord. And Mount Sinai [was] in the midst of the desert and Mount Zion [was] in the midst of the navel of the earth. The three of these were created as holy places, one facing the other (8:19).

Ezekiel 5:5 says Jerusalem is in the midst of the nations and all around her are countries. Ezekiel 38:12 speaks of Israel dwelling in the navel of the earth. Geography in the ANE was a physical representation of transcendent reality. Where God dwelt was the center of the earth. Mapping things geographically was a visible form of Israel's theology. Since Jerusalem is central to Israel's worldview, it was also central to the cartography of the time. The temple therefore was not only at the center of religious, economic or political life, but the center of the cosmos. It was not only the center, but the *axis mundi* (the axis of the world), the point of junction between heaven, earth, and hell. The base of Mount Zion lies in the chaotic underworld, and its middle part is in the earth, and its head reaches into the heavens. By prophesying over the temple Jesus was ripping out the heart of the earth and inserting himself in the gaping hole the temple left. His mission was a reordering of the earth, with his body as the nucleus.

When Jesus announced not one stone was to be left on top of the temple, everyone concerned with its building was bound to feel personally affected. Numerous social meanings were attached to the temple space and control over temple space was vital in the ancient world. Wenell says in social conflict over spaces "each group sees the site from their own particular reference point and will manipulate the site in accordance

⁴⁷Levenson even says the theme of Jerusalem as the cosmic center of the world is more developed in rabbinic literature than in the Hebrew Bible. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion*, 120.

with their own interests.”⁴⁸ Jesus did not expunge the traders because trade was prohibited in the temple, but because their evil actions were symbolic for what the temple had become. The rulers of the temple and their social practice in general were what Jesus condemned. In Matthew 24, Jesus points to a temple not bound up with sinful human networks, but abundant in righteousness, and Jesus embodies righteousness. Jesus, by challenging the space of the temple in Matthew 24 and replacing it with his body, rewrites the space of the entire earth. Jesus presents a triadic expression of the new temple: a new way of being (firstspace), a new way of thinking (secondspace), and a new way of living (thirdspace). Jesus’ prophecy of the temple was a totalizing effort to overhaul the earth, starting with the center of space for the Jews.⁴⁹

Summary

The temple was a space reminding people of the heavenly order amid disordered human existence. The ideal order of heaven was ritualized as the people conformed to this heavenly order for a time. However, this heavenly order was on the earth and filled with symbols, images and items from (or out of) the earth. In a similar way the new space of Jesus’ body was both of the earth, and not of the earth. His body affirmed firstspace and secondspace, while also contesting firstspace and secondspace looking towards a thirdspace. In Matthew 24:1-2 Jesus rejects the temple. The temple space was the source of the religious leaders’ power. He rejects the space of the Scribes and Pharisees and creates a space around himself realigning their space. As Stewart says:

⁴⁸Wenell, “Contested Temple Space,” 328-29.

⁴⁹Now the incarnation is the *axis mundi*. Torrance writes, “This relation established between God and man in Jesus Christ constitutes him as *the place* in all space and time where God meets with man in the actualities of his human existence, and man meets with God and knows Him in His own divine Being. That is the place where the vertical and horizontal dimensionalities intersect, the place where human being is opened out to a transcendent ground in God and there the infinite Being of God penetrates into our existence and creates room for Himself within the horizontal dimensions of finite being in space and time.” Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), 75.

Jesus rejects their classifications of space and, in his teaching, begins to communicate a new one. Jesus rejects the fixed sacred space represented by the temple and the synagogues. It is to be replaced by a fluid sacred space centered on the person of Jesus.⁵⁰

In contesting temple space Jesus was not merely contesting it for the religious leaders, but rejecting the entire earthly order opposed to his rule. The temple statement was a totalizing action. The temple was a microcosm of the whole world, but Jesus redefines the temple in terms of anthropology. With his body he brings the kingdom of heaven to earth. Although Jesus remains silent against the accusation in the trial, John makes clear in his Gospel the statement about rebuilding it in three days is about “the temple of his body” (John 2:21). His body, and the body of his community will produce the kingdom of heaven on earth. The incarnation is what brings these two spheres together. Jesus’ body becomes the *axis mundi* where heaven and earth collide. His body is the connective between heaven and earth, and is the “and more” of thirdspace. Jesus was performing a totalizing action in his rejection of the temple, he was contesting all the spatial practices of the earth in the words found in Matthew 24:1-2. Jesus’ prophecy was a religious and political statement, an economic and monarchial claim. The sacred space of Jesus’ body was now the force field which renders all spaces he “touches” as sacred. He accomplished the overhaul of space by his words, spreading the message of the kingdom to all who would listen.

Conclusion

Jesus presented an imagined kingdom through his words. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus uses his words to call his followers to righteousness. The words of the king form the kingdom agents, and then his community *becomes* the kingdom force. Jesus and his followers are the attracting force that has impact on whether the nations believe and therefore changes the earth. The light of Jesus and his disciples changes the space of the

⁵⁰Stewart, *Gathered around Jesus*, 199.

earth and world. In Matthew 10, therefore, he sends them out to be world-builders and they form the space of the earth by entering houses and bringing peace with them. The people and place of the kingdom are tied together, for as the people are transformed so are the places.

Then Jesus, in Matthew 13, gives parables of the kingdom where the seeds and fields are accentuated. The seeds are both the “words of the kingdom” and the “agents of the kingdom.” The field is theater or stage upon which the enactment of the kingdom is performed. The kingdom is here but hidden in plain sight. It breaks into this world wherever there is a breakthrough of justice and peace in society. The presence of the kingdom resides in Jesus’ body and in his follower’s bodies. As Origen said, Jesus is the *αὐτοβασίλεια* “the kingdom in person.”⁵¹ In chapter 18 he directs his community toward humility and meekness. He instructs them concerning secondspace, seeking to form a firstspace and thirdspace and thereby be the ones to inherit the earth. Finally, in the last discourse Jesus contests the space of the temple with his words. Jesus replaces the temple with his body and the substitution was a totalizing action. Through his words, Jesus, the heavenly Son begins to shatter the dualism between heaven and earth, for he starts to re-create the earth as a place like heaven. For Lefebvre, *in order for* society to change, space must be changed. God the Father enacts the change through the incarnation of the Son. As Michael Spencer writes, “The incarnation is the complete refutation of every human system and institution that claims to control, possess, and distribute God.”⁵² In the incarnation, Jesus creates a heterotopia.

⁵¹See Origen, *Commentarium in Evangelium Matthaevi*, 14.7.10.

⁵²Michael Spencer, *Mere Churchianity: Finding Your Way Back to Jesus-Shaped Spirituality* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook, 2010), 90.

CHAPTER 8

A NEW WORLD AND THE CHURCH

Introduction

Jesus comes to reorder the space of the earth in Matthew. His project is not just some abstract notion of sovereignty or purely temporal in aim. His goal is to unite two spheres, two spaces, under the banner of the Davidic king. The two spheres can be united because space is open and porous. For too long biblical scholars scurried to physical locations as the only dimension of space and place, but postmodern geographers are beginning to speak of space in three different ways. Firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace contain a more full-bodied way of describing the complexity of space and how it interacts with human beings. Jesus initiates the upheaval of space, the inauguration of the kingdom by the presence of his body, and then promises his presence to his community. Chapter 2 demonstrated how Matthew was concerned with two themes. Both the spatial kingdom and the presence of Jesus (Immanuel) play large roles in Matthew's Gospel. Two other texts speak to the same themes. Matthew 19:28 (where Jesus mentions the *παλιγγενεσία*) and Matthew 18:20 conclude our spatial analysis of Matthew.

Παλιγγενεσία and Resurrection

Matthew 19:28 is unique among the Gospels in the use of the term *παλιγγενεσία*, sometimes translated “new creation” or “new world.” What did Matthew intend to communicate by using this term? Does it have spatial implications? In this section I argue that the “new world” is allied to the themes of place, bodies, and family. All three topics interact with one another in the surrounding context of Matthew.

Jesus says in Matthew 19:28 that in the *παλιγγενεσία* the Son of Man will sit

on his throne, and his followers will sit on the twelve thrones judging the tribes of Israel. Παλιγγενεσία is much debated and used only one other time in the New Testament (Titus 3:5).¹ Sim argues that Matthew is responsible for the word since it does not occur in the other Gospels.² Notably, Matthew uses a spatial term to describe the future. The term occurs in Philo (*Moses* 2.65) with reference to the renewal of life after the Flood and in Josephus (*Ant* 11.66) with reference to “rebirth” of Israel after the exile. In both of these locations it speaks of a “new earth,” which the Flood and the Exodus prefigured. Neither of these references concern the *eschaton*, but from the context of Matthew refers to the end of the age. France notes that it aptly sums up the OT eschatological hope of the new heavens and the new earth.³ But Burnett’s observes that though the term refers to the rebirth of the world, it can also mean the rebirth of the individual.⁴ As I have been arguing the link between the individual (or the body) and its relationship to place is a neglected emphasis.⁵

The new world and the new body go hand in hand. Jesus cannot reign in the new world without a new body.⁶ The new world and the resurrected body of Jesus cannot

¹For an extensive list of its use in Greco-Roman literature, see J. D. M. Derrett, “Palingenesia (Matthew 19:28),” *JSNT* 20 (1984): 51-58. Burnett has argued that the word is a central idea in Philo’s writings and basically means rebirth. F. W. Burnett, “Philo on Immortality: A Thematic Study of Philo’s Concept of Palingenesia,” *CBQ* 46 (1984): 447-70. See also Pennington’s article on the subject. Jonathan Pennington, “Heaven, Earth, and a New Genesis: Theological Cosmology in Matthew” in *Cosmology and New Testament Theology*, eds. Jonathan Pennington and Sean McDonough (New York: T&T Clark, 2008), 28-44.

²David C. Sim, “The Meaning of Palingenesia in Matthew 19.28,” *JSNT*, no. 50 (1993): 4.

³R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 743.

⁴F. W. Burnett, “Palingenesia in Matt. 19:28: A Window on the Matthean Community?” *JSNT* 17 (1983): 447.

⁵Tournier writes, “I sometimes wonder whether the relationship of people with places is not more stable than with their fellow human beings.” Paul Tournier, *A Place for You: Psychology and Religion* (New York: Harper Collins, 1968), 14.

⁶Cooper writes, “Perfected humanity, deified humanity, is always bodily humanity. The body ‘overwhelmed with the transcendence of divine glory’ (Maximus the Confessor) is a burning bush; it burns, but is never consumed. The material remains of a deceased Christian are therefore ‘holy’. Like a seed, the

be disjointed. N. T. Wright has persuasively shown that the resurrection refers to something that happened to bodies.⁷ Resurrection never meant going to heaven or escaping death or having a glorious postmortem existence, but rather coming to bodily life again after bodily death. A physical resurrection necessarily impinges on the physical and public world. Both the incarnation and the resurrection affirm the essential goodness of the physical creation and the role of embodiment within creation. When Jesus died upon the cross in Matthew, the bodies of many sleeping saints are raised. Matthew is attempting to communicate that the events of Jesus' death and resurrection are the start of a new age (temporally), but also of a new world (spatially). The Scriptures assert Jesus is the firstfruits, imagery that stems from Jewish festivals, when the full harvest would later come in.

The spatial *and* person-centered themes are evident in the context surrounding *παλιγγενεσία*, which references the idea of family. In 19:28 the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, but those who have followed him will also sit on twelve's thrones. The purpose of the new body is to rule wisely over God's new world. For whoever has left both "people" and "place" (Matthew says, "Left *houses* or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or *lands*") will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life (19:29). The words *οἶκος* (houses) and *ἀγρός* (lands) frame that which people forsake. In the early days of Christianity, to leave houses and lands was to leave family. According to J. D. Kingsbury, a distinctive feature of Matthew's Jesus is the unique relationship he enjoys with the Father.⁸ As Moxnes notes Jesus rarely ever uses the term "king" but

cold fleshly corpse that is buried, incinerated, or interred, while lifeless, still speaks of life, still anticipates its own transformation.... Perfected flesh, as we learn from Aquinas, is ecstatic, wounded flesh." Adam G. Cooper, *Life in the Flesh: An Anti-Gnostic Spiritual Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.

⁷N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003); idem, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperOne, 2008), 36.

⁸J. D. Kingsbury, *Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 78.

speaks frequently of God as Father and links this to the kingdom.⁹ God is the Father of Jesus in a unique way in Matthew, and those who follow Jesus also enter through him into an intimate familial relationship. They become sons and daughters of the Father. In Matthew, Jesus promises a new familial relationship to his people. Family metaphors are very important for self-definition of early Christian communities. Jesus refers to God as Father over 170 times in the Gospels.¹⁰ Jesus calls his disciples “sons of God (5:9); sons of your heavenly father (5:45); sons of the kingdom (5:9). God is “their” father (6:9) and the disciples are his true relatives (12:49).

This idea of family (or fictive kinship) may further support and enlighten spatial themes. Neither Greek nor Latin contains a term for our word “family.”¹¹ Margaret MacDonald says “There is considerable overlap in ancient terms with respect to what we normally consider as family, household, and kinship.”¹² In Greek literature one rather finds extensive discussions of *οἰκονομία*, or the management of households. “The emphasis on property is especially striking in comparison to modern concepts of family.”¹³ If one looks at the family under the banner of household they will see that

⁹Halvor Moxnes, “Landscape and Spatiality: Placing Jesus,” in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris (New York: Routledge, 2010), 104.

¹⁰Two of the Gospels emphasize the familial relationship more than the others. Matthew (44x) and John (109x) both underscore divine fatherhood more than any other NT writers. The largest concentration of God as Father references takes place in the Sermon on the Mount and it additionally contains a good number (8x) of references to *αδελφος*. Human fathers in Matthew are contrasted to the Father in heaven (10x). The connection between Father in heaven and kingdom of heaven should not be overlooked. As Jesus says, “Whoever does the will of his father in heaven is his brother, sister, and mother” (Matt 12:50).

¹¹As in the meaning of husband and wife with one or more children. Halvor Moxnes, “What Is Family? Problems in Constructing Early Christian Families,” in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and Metaphor*, ed. Halvor Moxnes (New York: Routledge, 1997), 20. *γένος* is too broad to denote just the nuclear family for it also could refer to a nation or people group.

¹²Margaret Y. MacDonald, “Kinship and Family in the New Testament World,” in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, 30.

¹³*Ibid.*

when the disciples were required to leave their families, they were also required to leave their house and fields. Mark 10:29-31 speaks not just of brothers, sisters, mother, and father, but of their houses and fields. The parallel to this passage is the context of Matthew 19:28 where a new world is promised. The *new space* and the *new family* are knotted together.

In the Greco-Roman world kinship often played a significant role, but with the arrival of the Roman Empire relations of power shifted to the emperor. The old clan and tribe system began to disappear and in Hellenistic times references to clans almost disappeared.¹⁴ Jesus, in Matthew 19:28, re-introduces the tribes with the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes (φυλή) of Israel. If they leave their spaces and their family they will *inherit* (κληρονομέω) the kingdom or the earth. The word κληρονομέω occurs three times in Matthew.¹⁵ It occurs both in the Sermon on the Mount and Matthew 19:29 and means to be an heir. In short, it is a familial term. Inheriting includes both the land promises and family ties.¹⁶ The new family is not just about a new relationship or emotional unit, but a new socio-economic space. The household is a part of the large social structure, the village, and the village is a part of the city.¹⁷

¹⁴Barclay says the family constituted one of Judaism's greatest strengths in the sometimes hostile atmosphere of the Graeco-Roman world. John Barclay, "The Family as the Bearer of Religion in Judaism and Early Christianity," in *Constructing Early Christian Families*, 72.

¹⁵The hope is also expressed in Second Temple Literature. Jesus ben Sirach prays, "Gather all the tribes of Jacob and give them their inheritance, as at the beginning (Sir 36:11). 2 Maccabees 2:18 says "We have hope in God that he will soon have mercy on us and will gather us from everyone under heaven into his holy place." According to Psalms of Solomon the Lord's Messiah "will distribute [the Jewish people] upon the land, according to their tribes" (Pss. Sol. 17:28).

¹⁶Echevarria argues the inheritance language in Paul is primarily future looking and it refers primarily to the Promised Land. I agree that it is about the land, but also see some present fulfillment of these promises. Miguel Echevarria, "The Future Inheritance of the Land in the Pauline Epistles" (Ph.D. diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014).

¹⁷Historically most scholars agree that there was a gradual scarcity of land, diminished landholdings, and many farmers were forced into existence as wage laborers. In light of this disintegration Jesus can be viewed as coming to reintegrate the space they had lost beginning with new family ties. Moxnes, "What Is Family?" 25.

In Matthew 19:28 Jesus says they will receive in return “a hundredfold and eternal life” (ἐκατονταπλασίονα λήμψεται καὶ ζωὴν αἰώνιον κληρονομήσει). The reward matches the sacrifice. Those who leave people and place will receive eternal life, which includes “more” people (family) and place. Eternal life is the new world and the promised resurrection shared by glorious embodied souls. The promise of the new world is a new space and new bodies. Eternal life is not just a temporal category but also a spatial category.¹⁸ Jesus reorders current family spatial structures and forms a new familial space around himself. In so doing, he moves away from political imagery and moves to images of household and fatherly care. He is presenting a kingdom as a thirdspace. As the context of Matthew 19:28 implies, new relationships amount to new spaces.

A present fulfillment of these promises is here in part. For those who followed Jesus are called new creations with new families. The new creation is not only a dream or a vision, it takes on an empirical reality in the community of God’s people. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17). “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Rom 8:15).¹⁹ Jesus comes to recreate all things, and this starts with the bodies of people. Creation still groans, but there is some sense in which the new construction project has begun. Jonathan Pennington writes concerning the theme:

The great Christian prayer is that God’s (heavenly) kingdom would come to earth (6:9-10); the Christian hope is *not* for an ethereal, heaven-situated existence, but the consummation of the heavenly realities coming into effect *on the earth*; not for a destruction of the earth and a kingdom that exists only in heaven, but for a *παλιγγενεσία*, a new genesis (19:28).²⁰

¹⁸This interpretation coheres with the promise made to Abraham (see Gen 12:1).

¹⁹An interesting theme to trace out along these lines is an examination of the Pauline “household codes” as a form of spatial production.

²⁰Jonathan T. Pennington, *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 326-27.

Therefore, Matthew envisions a new earth, a new genesis, where heaven comes down on earth and Jesus reigns. God makes earth heavenly through the heavenly Son who comes in flesh. The heavenization of earth depends on the earthenization of heaven, and this is not only in firstspace terms but includes secondspace and thirdspace Heaven comes down and transforms the earth rather than hovering above the earth, waiting for the saved to arrive.²¹ The kingdom of heaven is not just the rule of God, but a place his followers are praying in.

Where Two or Three Are Gathered

In the second chapter, I demonstrated how the presence of Jesus forms an *inclusio* in Matthew.²² The theme of Jesus being “with” his people is a distinctive part of Matthew’s narrative.²³ One other text speaks directly to the presence of Jesus with his community and directly links the theme of space and Jesus’ presence.

Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For (γάρ) where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them. (Matt 18:18-20)

This passage is usually treated in one of two ways. Sometimes it is ripped out of its context, while other times the “church discipline” context overwhelms a close analysis of presence theme. The reason this passage is important for my analysis is because it gives

²¹Brueggemann argues that hope rooted in heaven is not about going there, but about heaven coming here on earth. Walter Brueggemann, “The Hope of Heaven . . . on Earth,” *BTB* 29, no. 3 (1999): 100.

²²The Immanuel theme is contained in Matt 1:23, 18:20, and 28:20. Stanton claims the church in Matthew stands over against the synagogue in Matthew. The church is promised Jesus’ presence and divine protection. Graham Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992), 129.

²³A few scholars in recent years have argued that Matthew’s community is to be understood as a sect within Judaism. See Hagner’s footnote for a list of these scholars. Donald Hagner, “Holiness and Ecclesiology: The Church in Matthew,” in *Built Upon the Rock*, ed. Daniel Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 173 n. 5. But Hagner rightly says these scholars seriously underestimate the degrees of newness and the discontinuity with Israel that is found repeatedly in Matthew.

the ground or reason (*γάρ*) for the transactions between heaven and earth. What is bound or loosed on earth is done in heaven because of the presence of Jesus. The two spaces (heaven and earth) converge *through* the presence of Jesus according to Matthew. In this way, the presence of Jesus provides the key to understanding the spatiality of Matthew. Jesus' body is the microcosm of the united realms. It is in him, in his material body and communal body, that these realms are reconciled. In Matthew 18:20 readers see that heaven and earth are linked through his body, and the body of his community.

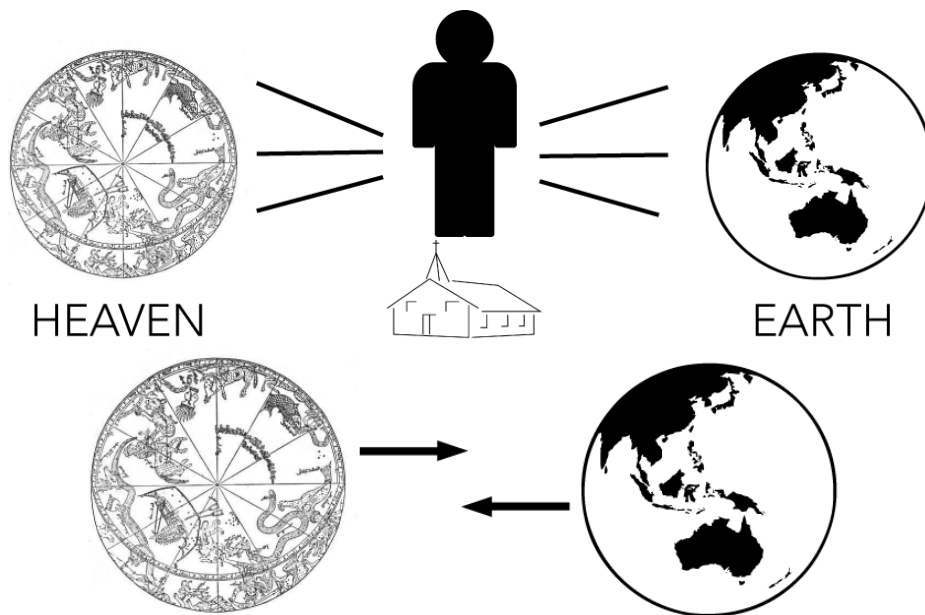


Figure 5. Jesus' presence pulling in heaven and earth

However, as noted in the analysis of Matthew 18, his community is to image him by being the meek community who is to inherit the earth. No other Gospel has this line about Jesus being with his community. The question remains as to what Jesus means by this phrase? The statement is deceptively simple, yet also contains many enigmas. *How* is Jesus with his *ἐκκλησία*? The typical answer consists of saying something along

one of two lines. Theologically, many point to Jesus' statements about the presence of the Spirit in the NT upon his absence. Others, in this specific text, view the language as Jesus' stamp of approval concerning the churches' actions. The μέσῳ (among) in this reading is interpreted in a metaphorical sense. My aim in this section to show these readings do not do justice to the text in light of Matthew's "presence" theme, and that the spatial and presence motifs are fused together.

Community of Heaven and Earth

Verse 19 makes the communal nature of the promises explicit when Jesus says, "If two of you agree on earth about anything," then it will be done by his Father in heaven. Verse 20 reinforces the communal nature of the promise by explaining it is when "two or three are gathered." Why does Jesus say he is μέσῳ (in the middle or among) them? What is the nature of this community that they are promised this? The answer lies in two interrelated observations.

First, the church is unique according to this passage because it has the presence of Jesus. However, notice it is the church, the "two" or "two or three" that is unique, not the individual. The difference between "one" and "two or three" is that there is more than one individual involved. Jesus here is not promising his presence to individuals, but to his community. So what is it about his community that makes it a special residence of Jesus' presence? I think it is the basic feature of the community being *a place of social interaction*. Although this observation seems obvious and less than relevant, when compared with an individual this is where the difference is most prominent. It is "where" two or three are gathered (συνάγω). Notice this is a spatial promise of where. The people *in a place* are given this promise.

The two greatest commandments according to Jesus are relational commandments, love God and love your neighbor. All of the fruits of the Spirit in Paul are deeds that can only be carried out when one is "with" other people. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control are all done "to"

people. There is always an object to love, to patience, and kindness. Similarly, the Sermon on Mount instructs those who are angry with their brothers (5:22), those who have divisions with their brothers (5:23), those who have lustful intents (5:28-29), those who take oaths (5:34-37), and those who want to take revenge (5:38-39). Each command has to do a communal problem and the way to respond. John in his Gospel speaks of those believe in Jesus doing “greater works.” These are not necessarily “more miracles,” but a reference to the social order established by Jesus’ death, resurrection and ascension (John 14:12).²⁴ The two or three are vitally important for the presence of the Jesus, because Jesus wants the Godhead’s interpersonal relationship in heaven reflected upon the earth. The church in this sense is the already of the kingdom upon the earth. When two or three are gathered, Jesus promises to be with them in so far that they are mirroring the relationship he has with the Father and the Spirit. So the first observation concerns the communal nature of the gathering and how it is a place of social interaction. A communal gathering must have two things present, firstspace and secondspace.

Second, the community becomes the *ladder between heaven and earth*.²⁵

Matthew emphasizes not only the communal character of the community, but the spatial nature. The realms are linked by the presence of Jesus with the community. Notice the spatial terms that abound in the section. Whatever is bound on *earth*, is done so in *heaven*. Whatever is loosed on *earth*, is done so in *heaven*. Whatever is asked on *earth*, will be done by the Father in *heaven*. He says for *where* (οὐ) two or three gathered, *there* (ἐκεῖ) Jesus is among them. Matthew uses two locative adverbs to describe the location of the church, οὐ and ἐκεῖ. BDAG says οὐ (1) marks a position in space, (2) marks a

²⁴D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 495.

²⁵Augustine said the church is now “the ladder of heaven on which God descends to earth and the one [ladder] through whom we ascend to him who descend through her [the church] to us.” See Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 154 n. 257.

situation or a set of circumstances.²⁶ Both are probably implied by the word in Matthew 18, but the primary meaning seems to be number one. The “οἶ” is both a specific and a mobile location on the earth. Specific in the sense that the promise is given to the church, but mobile in that that the church is mobile, and wherever the church is, there the presence of Jesus resides. So the promise contains both localization and globalization.²⁷ Similarly, BDAG explains ἐκεῖ can mean (1) a reference to a position in the immediate vicinity, (2) a reference to a position relatively distant.²⁸ From the context it seems the word is being used in the first way. The reason the two realms are linked is because Jesus is “among” the church. So Jesus’ presence is the key, but it is his presence with the “two or three.” The two cannot be separated. Although some might claim I am collapsing Christology into ecclesiology, I don’t see another way to explain this text. The presence of Jesus is in a place, and that place is the church.

Jesus’ Presence

But the question remains concerning what type of presence this is? Or what way *is* Christ present? A number of options present themselves:

- (1) Jesus is omnipresent (*ubiquitos*).
- (2) Jesus is absent in one nature, but present in another.
- (3) Jesus is using μέσσω metaphorically, meaning he approves and supports what the church does.
- (4) Jesus so identifies with his church, that they are one.²⁹

Option *one* of Jesus’ omnipresence does not really answer the question for the desire is to

²⁶BDAG, 732.

²⁷For an excellent analysis of the localizing force of the Eucharist, see William Cavanaugh, “The World in a Wafer: A Geography of the Eucharist as Resistance to Globalization,” *Modern Theology* 15 (1999).

²⁸BDAG, 301.

²⁹The nature of this “oneness” is dealt with in the section on *totus Christus*.

examine in what *manner* Jesus is present. Whatever its merits, option one seems to sidestep the question.³⁰ Christ everywhere means Jesus of Nazareth nowhere. Others, theologically, argue for option *two*, Jesus is absent in one nature but present in another.³¹ This is a fair assessment. Most take this view with the Holy Spirit collapsing the distance. T. F. Torrance and Douglas Farrow have both argued the whole dispute about the ‘ubiquity’ of Christ and his ‘localized’ ascended body was founded on a faulty conception of space.³² While I agree with their analysis of space, their analysis is not respecting Matthew’s distinctive portrayal.³³ As I noted at the beginning of chapter 2, Matthew conspicuously has both the ascension and the bestowal of the Spirit absent in his narrative.³⁴ He ends his Gospel with Jesus standing on the mountain with his people promising them his presence. Therefore, although theologically one can affirm option two, Matthew may be communicating another aspect of Jesus’ presence.

Many opt for option *three* in Matthew (the metaphorical argument), but based on Matthew’s narrative, it seems this will not do.³⁵ For Jesus is not just approving of the

³⁰Gregg Allison argues that the God-man Jesus is ontologically present everywhere and spiritually present either to bless or to judge in some of the church’s activities, specifically referencing the Lord’s Supper, Matt 28:20, and Matt 18:20. Yet it does not seem that Matthew is arguing is that Jesus is merely spiritually present. Gregg Allison, *Sojourners and Strangers: The Doctrine of the Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 395-97.

³¹Michael Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 13-34; Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*.

³²Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 172-80. T. F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Resurrection* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 123-35. John Calvin also argued this view. See Gerritt Scott Dawson, *Jesus Ascended: The Meaning of Christ’s Continuing Incarnation* (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 46-50.

³³Sleeman likewise says of Acts, “Jesus’ continuing activity cannot be reduced simply to the Spirit and/or the church as his replacement. Luke’s Christology are more complex than such binary explanations.” Matthew Sleeman, *Geography and the Ascension Narrative in Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 264.

³⁴Osborne runs to the Spirit here as the answer to the presence question. Grant Osborne, *Matthew*, ECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 688.

³⁵Frankmölle takes this approach arguing that Jesus being with his disciples is analogous to the OT concept of Yahweh being with his people to assist and guide them. H. Frankmölle, *Jahwebund Und Kirche Christi* (Münster, Germany: Aschendorff, 1974), 36.

church's actions, but promising them that he is Immanuel.³⁶ Tying 18:20 with Jesus' promise in 28:20 leaves interpreters questioning a merely metaphorical statement.

This leaves interpreters with option *four*: Jesus so identifies with his church, that they are one. This is supported by both (1) intratextual references in Matthew and (2) the history of interpretation. As already examined in chapter 2, maybe the most dominant theme in Matthew is Jesus' presence with his people. One other text outside Matthew 1:23, 18:20, and 28:20 speaks to the indissoluble relationship. Matthew 25:31-46 contains the famous parable of the sheep and the goats. This passage explicates the nature of the presence of Jesus with his people. Both the wicked and the righteous received a pronouncement from the King. They will either inherit the kingdom or they will be forced to depart from the king.³⁷ The ground for this pronouncement is the actions or deeds of the people. They either feed, clothed, or visited Jesus, or they did not feed, clothe or visit Jesus. Both the righteous and the wicked are surprised when the king says this and ask *when* did this happen?³⁸ The King answers, "Truly, I say to you, as did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me." Jesus affirms when the "brothers" (ἀδελφός) are either helped or shunned, *he* is helped or shunned. Jesus identifies with his church in such a way that they are one. As Gerard Rossé says, "for the most ancient post-Easter community there did not exist only a past and a future of Jesus, but also the

³⁶Calvin saw that neither a Eutychian response (Jesus is omnipresent) nor a Nestorian one (absent in one nature but present in the other) will do, since either way Christ's humanity is neutralized. . . . "A 'species of absence' and a 'species of presence' thus qualify our communion with Christ, who remains in heaven until the day of judgment. It is *we* who require Eucharistic relocation." See Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 176-77.

³⁷Notice the juxtaposition of the inheriting a "place" with the condemnation of departing from a "person."

³⁸Matthew Sleeman had an interesting question on the passage in a personal conversation about the nature of the surprise. Is the astonishment taken away in the telling of the parable, or will the dumbfoundedness still take place? Because this is a parable about the last day that there will still be an element of surprise.

presence of Jesus as the Risen one.”³⁹ Jesus and his church are now the new family with Jesus as the head and his church as the body. The world is infused with the presence of Jesus through the church according to Matthew.

Second, the fusion of the church and Christ is supported by the history of interpretation. Although time does not allow a full treatment a few highlights will be noted.⁴⁰ Tertullian says concerning this very passage: “In a company of two is the church (cf. Matt. 18:20); but the church is Christ (i.e. as being His body). When, then you cast yourself as your brethren’s knees, you are handling Christ, you are entreating Christ.”⁴¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s dissertation essentially argued for the formula “Christ existing as community.”⁴² Bonhoeffer speaks of the church being a piece of the world in that she is beneath the curse, yet also the presence of God in the world. She is really in the world and really the presence of God in the world. This does not mean Christ and the church are identical, but that Christ is present in and for the world, in and through the church, which is his body on earth.⁴³ Jesus therefore is an ‘expansive symbol’ with a ‘fringe of unexhausted suggestions’ in Matthew. According to Paul, the church is the “body of Christ.” Jesus is mysteriously absent from the world, but present in the world as well. For

³⁹Gerard Rossé, *L'Ecclesiologia Di Matteo: Interpretazione Di Mt. 18:20* (Roma: Città Nuova, 1987), 17.

⁴⁰For a compilation of the ecclesiology of the fathers and their views on Matt 18:20, see Tomás Joseph Surlis, *The Presence of the Risen Christ in the Community of Disciples: An Examination of the Ecclesiological Significance of Matthew 18:20* (Roma: Gregorian & Biblical, 2011), 99-165.

⁴¹Tertullian, *On Repentance* 10 (ANF 3:664).

⁴²Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Sanctorum Communio: A Theological Study of the Sociology of the Church* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998), 139.

⁴³Bonhoeffer explicitly did not draw a complete identification: “A complete identification between Christ and the church-community cannot be made, since Christ has ascended into heaven and is now with God, and we still await Christ’s coming.” *Ibid.*, 140.

the church is to be the sacrament of the divine presence upon the earth.⁴⁴ He can be both present and absent because firstspace and secondspace are not the only spatial dimensions.

Conclusion

Earthly kingdoms have always been *grounded* in heavenly kingdoms (see Daniel 2 and 7). Or maybe better, earthly kingdoms have always been taken their inspiration from the heavenly kingdom. The problem is that earthly kingdoms begin to think they are closed and self-sufficient, but Jesus came show this world is “charged” with presences. God’s dimension (heaven) saturates and permeates the present world (the earth) in Matthew *via* the body of Jesus. The world, the earth, is open and vulnerable, not shut and unable to change. For Matthew, the kingdom is not just the rule or sovereignty of God. How could it be? For rule can never be carried out in the abstract. The resurrected body of Jesus means that the king will be placed. He will be rooted. The kingdom is place. The kingdom is people. The kingdom is family. Jesus, through Matthew, promises a new world where his family will reign. For Jesus puts people in a new spatial familial sphere becoming their heavenly father in contrast to earthly fathers. A new familial space amounts to a new spatial place. They will reign over a place, with new bodies. But for now, Jesus promises his presence to the church. The body of Christ communally is the link between heaven and earth. Through his body, his presence, his community he marries heaven and earth, and he promises his “two or three” they will have his presence.

⁴⁴Joseph Ratzinger writes, “She [the church] is there so that the world may become a sphere for God’s presence, the sphere of the covenant between God and men.” Joseph Ratzinger, *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith: The Church as Communion* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2005), 287.

CHAPTER 9
THE KINGDOM AS THIRDSPACE

Introduction

Oliver O'Donovan says, "Contemporary Western society is marked by the loss of the sense of place, and its intellectual traditions, far from controlling the loss, have encouraged it."¹ O'Donovan continues asserting that place *should* be a major topic of conversation among theologians. However, the spatial kingdom conversation has been stunted, in part due to the influence of Dalman and Ladd. They, as all of us, were influenced by those who came before them. The days of Galileo and Newton saw enormous change, and one result was the dominance of abstract and extensive space. Localized space and place was neglected.² Although Newton's conception of space has had supremacy, Leibniz's relational view is gaining popularity. French philosopher Henri Lefebvre reminds us that that systems of spatialisation are historically conditioned, not merely physical arrangements of things, but patterns of social action and routine, as well as historical conceptions of the world. Although a resurgence in examining the land and spatial dimensions in the Scripture are underway, scholars in biblical studies still view space too narrowly, either as a monolectic or a dialectic (firstspace and secondspace). A trialectic of space begins to open up new ways of thinking of space. Thirdspace rouses Other-worlds and spaces beyond what is presently known.

¹Oliver O'Donovan, "The Loss of a Sense of Place," *ITQ*, no. 55 (1989): 44, 48. But O'Donovan seems to have never returned to the theme himself.

²The contributors of *Why Place Matters* detail how place has been neglected in modern America. Wilfred McClay and Ted McAllister, eds., *Why Place Matters: Geography, Identity, and Civic Life in Modern America* (New York: Encounter, 2014).

References to οὐρανός and γη in Matthew were a conduit for this thirdspace impulse and overcomes reductionistic dialectic views of the presence of the spatial kingdom. My argument has been that Jesus comes to earth in Matthew as the heavenly king to reorder the space of the earth. The two realms are colliding in his ministry, even in his person. Jesus' body is a microcosm of the united realms: fully God, fully human.



Figure 6. Jesus' body as microcosm of heaven and earth

Therefore, metaphysically, spatial change begins in the body. As Mary Douglas notes, most symbolic behavior must work through the human body.³ The spatial kingdom is becoming through Jesus' presence, and one can see this in his deeds (Part 2) and his words (Part 3).⁴ In the exorcism Jesus conquers Beelzebul, the lord of the earth, by entering into

³Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology* (New York: Pantheon, 1970), vii.

⁴A scene at the end of the *The Return of the King* speaks to all of these themes. King Aragorn's presence brings about healing to firstspace, secondspace, and the realization of thirdspace is finally complete: "But when Aragorn arose all that beheld him gazed in silence, for it seemed to them that he was revealed to them now for the first time. Tall as the sea-kings of old, he stood above all that were near; ancient of days he seemed and yet in the flower of manhood; and wisdom sat upon his brow, and strength and healing were in his hands, and a light was about him. And then Faramir cried: 'Behold the King!' . . . In his time the City was made more fair than it had ever been, even in the days of its first glory; and it was filled with trees and with fountains, and its gates were wrought of mithril and steel, and its streets were paved with white marble; and the Folk of the Mountain laboured in it, and the Folk of the Wood rejoiced to come there; and all was healed and made good, and the houses were filled with men and women and the laughter of children, and no window was blind nor any courtyard empty; and after the ending of the Third

his house and binding him. He binds him by performing an exorcism, which has locative implications and demonstrates that the kingdom of God is extending (Matt 12:28). By plundering Satan's property (the body of the human being), Jesus proves he is lord of the earth and is reordering the space of the earth (through rescuing human bodies). The intersection between people and place is thereby made evident in Jesus' deed of exorcism.⁵ Jesus does this exorcism by the Spirit. The Spirit in Matthew is tied to the new creation or new exodus. God's people (their bodies) are the empirical reality of the new creation. By the Spirit, Jesus is rewriting the space of the earth.

He also reorders the space of the earth through the working of his words in his community (Part 3). In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus called his disciples to be salt and light upon the earth. He expected them to have impact upon the space of the earth and be agents of renewal. When he sends them out in Matthew 10, they are to go reclaiming the land as the twelve disciples and bringing peace to houses. If people reject them, they are to shake the dust (land) off their feet signaling that the land and the people are defiled. In the kingdom parables Jesus explains to his disciples that the earth is the theater upon which the kingdom of heaven is being enacted. The kingdom is here but hidden in plain sight, because metaphysically it is launched in human bodies. Jesus employs his words and human bodies as seeds upon the earth that will grow up and alter the space of the earth. The community discourse calls Jesus' people to be the meek community who will inherit the earth. They will enter the kingdom by being like children and limitlessly forgiving people. Finally, in the last discourse Jesus prophesies about the destruction of the temple and places his body at the center of the cosmos.

Age of the world into the new age it preserved the memory and the glory of the years that were gone." J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Return of the King* (New York: Ballantine, 1965), 304.

⁵Gallagher has an interesting insight about human's first place: "The unique feature of our first place is, of course, that it is also a person." Winifred Gallagher, *The Power of Place: How Our Surroundings Shape Our Thoughts, Emotions, and Actions* (New York: Poseidon, 1993), 106.

My aim was to help readers see the importance of space and place (and their relationship to people) in Jesus' ministry. Recent spatial theories were helpful in this regard for it allowed one to break out of the normal cage of spatial thought. Two Matthean texts concluded my spatial analysis of Matthew. First, Matthew uses the term *παλιγγενεσία* in 19:28 to speak of the new world. The new world is intertwined with a new familial relationship. New family, in Matthew, means new space. The way to partake of the new space is to enter into a new family, for those who leave earthly families will receive a heavenly family (19:29). The household of the ancient world referred to the physical structure (firstspace), the kinds of relationship or social community that characterized the gathering (secondspace), and Jesus presents the kingdom as a thirdspace (real, imaginary and more).

Finally, Matthew 18:20 formed an *inclusio* with chapter 2 on the dominating Immanuel theme in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus confers his work to his church and promises them his presence forming an identity bond between the two. Jesus' Immanuel presence does not cease when he leaves the earth according to Matthew. The final scene in the Gospel is a picture of the disciples 'on the mountain', an intermediary site, where the heavenly and earthly meet. Jesus does not ascend, and the disciples do not descend. Authority 'from below' and authority 'from above' embrace where Jesus and the church function as the ladder between the two realms. As Jesus' body is a microcosm of the two realms and began the process of reuniting the realms, so too Matthew presents the community as the link between the two spaces. Jesus was an embodiment of the kingdom space, and his community is to be the same. His community is the empirical reality of the new creation. In Christ's life, death, and resurrection, the space of the earth has been put to death and also come to life. A new world of possibilities is now ahead, for the lived practices of Jesus (thirdspace) challenged the expected use of earthly kingdoms. Jesus took over the earthly space to "master space."

Similarly, in some ways, the "Occupy Wall Street" movement in America

(2008-9) central strategy was to take over symbolic public spaces near the centers of financial power with semi-permanent encampments. “Occupy” was designed to “master space” in hopes of dislodging those dominating that space.⁶ American citizens occupied a space which did not belong to them according to culture, but they sought to change the way the space was perceived by camping out and claiming the space for themselves. Jesus occupied the space of earth and thrust his flag deep into the soil claiming it was the land of the king. The Jews understood this in part, but as the parables show, they did not understand that the occupation would be a process, and there still would be evil in the midst of the kingdom. My argument is that Jesus is producing all three spaces in Matthew: material, ideological, and imaginative. To look at space from a purely static view, or the kingdom from a merely temporal view, does not do justice to Matthew’s presentation. The “Occupy” movement is another helpful way to think of critical spatiality. For in the movement the understanding unconsciously exists that there is physical space, mental space, and even imaginative space.

Human presence can potentially change the space. Occupiers took up physical space (firstspace; Zuccotti Park) that ideologically and culturally stood for the wealthiest citizens (secondspace). In their demonstration, they sought to take over and change the space that was, because they imagined a space that could be (thirdspace). A poster of the movement had a ballerina balancing on the top of the Goldman and Sachs charging bull.⁷ The juxtaposition of peace and beauty stood on top of a wrath-filled muscle bound beast. The bull symbolized the wealthy charging against those less fortunate, while the ballerina tiptoed on the back of the beast for peace and justice. In a similar way, Jesus came and occupied the space of the earth contesting the symbols that stood for injustice and

⁶Andy Crouch, *Playing God: Redeeming the Gift of Power* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2013), 48-49.

⁷Goldman and Sachs Group Inc. is an American multinational investment banking firm.

corruption. He stood upon the beast's back and declared, "This land is mine!"⁸ He presented a kingdom that was thirdspace (social and imaginary).

Kingdom as Thirdspace

That the kingdom is a thirdspace is closely tied to my thesis. A long tradition of writings exist about imaginary places. Writers such as Plato, Homer, Pliny, C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien all describe imaginary places for different purposes.⁹ In the *Dictionary of Imaginary Places* the authors write, "the imaginary universe is a place of astonishing richness and diversity: here are worlds created to satisfy an urgent desire for perfection,...others,...brought to life to find a home for magic, where the impossible does not clash with its surroundings."¹⁰ As Moxnes says, "these worlds may be created from a desire to control and to rule but they may also have another motivation—to create an ideal place that serves as a criticism of the present world."¹¹ Such was the purpose of Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).¹²

I have placed the kingdom in the "imagined places" category, not because it is "imaginary," but because it allows readers to envision how a real place might be

⁸"This Land is Mine" is a 1943 American war film set in a Nazi-occupied European country. Jean Renoir, dir., *This Land is Mine*, Perf. Charles Laughton, Maureen O'Hara, George Sanders, produced by Jean-Renoir-Dudly Nichols, 1943.

⁹See also Umberto Eco, *The Book of Legendary Lands* (New York: Rizzoli Ex Libris, 2013). He defines legendary lands as "places of various kinds that have only one characteristic in common: whether they depend on ancient legends whose origins are lost in the mists of time or whether they are in effect a modern invention, they have created flows of belief.

¹⁰Alberto Manguel and Gianni Guadalupi, *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places* (Toronto: Knopf, 1999), xi.

¹¹Halvor Moxnes, *Putting Jesus in His Place: A Radical Vision of Household and Kingdom* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 109.

¹²Paul Ricoeur says utopia is the mode in which one radically re-thinks the nature of family, consumption, government, religion and so on. From "nowhere" emerges the most formidable challenge to what-is. Utopia performs the function of social subversion. Paul Ricoeur, "Imagination in Discourse and Action," in *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics*, trans. Kathleen Blamey et. al., (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1991), 184.

envisioned differently. Although I mentioned the role of imagination at the outset, some readers may critique me for dropping the language for the most part throughout the rest of the work,¹³ but this was intentional. Rather than speaking of the imagination, I wanted to present the picture I saw and allow readers to make the image present. In Jesus' words and his deeds, he presents evocative images of the kingdom. They speak not only to the intellect, but to the imagination. As Graham Ward notes in his article "Narrative and Ethics" no one has been to Tolkien's Minas Tirath, or the plains of Gondor, or the forest of Fangorn.¹⁴ In a similar way, no modern person was there when Jesus cast out demons, or walked on the water, or welcomed sinners, or delivered his Sermon on the Mount. However, many have seen a city and thought of Gondor, or been inspired by the beauty of Rohan. Many have used the beatitudes as a form of hope in Sermon on the Mount when suffering. Ward says that in each of these literary cases we are dealing with aspects of presence and absence, or more strictly, making *present* when absent.¹⁵ Narratives cause one to use their imagination to make something absent present.¹⁶

But the *making present* in each instance is a creative act, as *making* indicates. We are neither passively observing nor discovering another world. In fact the language of 'another world' confused the act of perceiving with the act of imagining. It is not

¹³Reading is a 'poiesis' or creating act, where a transformative existential act is actualized. It is not a matter of escapism but expansion.

¹⁴Graham Ward, "Narrative and Ethics: The Structures of Believing and the Practices of Hope," *Literature and Theology* 20 (2006): 440. Ward closes his article saying, "No one has been to Minas Tirith with its great walls and its tall towers, and yet. . . . Anyone who had read of the battles fought over Minas Tirith, of the tragedy and the victory experienced by its people, finds intimations of Minas Tirith in every reference to a medieval citadel. And every forest entered will tremble with the elfin light of Lorien. For the imaginary inhabits the very possibility of apprehending the irreducibility of the real." *Ibid.*, 457.

¹⁵Ward, "Narrative and Ethics," 440.

¹⁶Ward uses Sartre when he says to read a novel is preparing to discover a whole world, which is not that of perception, but neither is it that of mental images. . . . "To read it so realize contact with the irreal world on the signs. The irreal is without doubt present, but simultaneously 'cannot be seen, touched, smelled.'" Sartre goes onto to say when reading we are not dealing with mental images, but as in theater we are in the presence of a world and we attribute to that world as much existence as we do to that of theater. The seeing is of another order than image-making. *Ibid.*, 442-3.

that we enter another world, like Alice through the looking-glass, but we constitute another world, internally, that expands our own being in the world, externally.¹⁷

As Kari Syreeni notes, the Lord's Prayer expresses a hope to bring the two realms of heaven and earth together in a harmonious whole; as things are in heaven, so they should be on earth.¹⁸ How soon or in what succession of progress the divine ideal will be realized is not indicated, yet it must at least begin with those imagining/longing for a heaven upon earth. The spatial kingdom requires some imagination.¹⁹ By the imagination, Matthew incites readers to craft the future, and that is why Matthew unfolds the kingdom in parables, in pictures, in the embodiment of the Son of God.²⁰ By reading the Sermon on the Mount, by engaging with the kingdom parables in Matthew 13, readers and the original hearers were not "entering" another world at the present, but they were expanding their own world externally by listening and obeying Jesus' words. By so doing, all those who receive these words in every generation critique the social structures of the day with their own expanding world.

Paul Ricoeur says the imagination is given a central role in the critique and transformation of the social *status quo*.²¹ For Ricoeur, action is rooted in imaginative possibility. It empowers one to act, for it engenders alternative belief-possibilities.²²

¹⁷Ibid., 440.

¹⁸Kari Syreeni, "Between Heaven and Earth: On the Structure of Matthew's Symbolic Universe," *JSNT*, no. 40 (1990): 4.

¹⁹As Lewis Hyde said, "Without the imagination we can do no more than spin the future out of the logic of the present; we will never be led into new life because we can only work from the known. . . . The artist completes the act of imagination by accepting the gift and laboring to give it to the real." Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Creativity and the Artist in the Modern World* (New York: Random House, 2007), 252.

²⁰One of Emily Dickenson's poems (#632) says, "The Brain—is wider than the Sky— \ For— put them side by side— \ The one the other will contain \ With ease—and you—beside—"

²¹For William Blake, the imagination was the absolute enemy of reason, a sign of inspiration, an entrance into a larger world of truth. Edward Hirsch, *A Poet's Glossary* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2014), 297.

²²Ricoeur, "Imagination in Discourse and Action," 177. Ricoeur writes, "It is indeed through the anticipatory imagination of acting that I 'try out' different possible courses of action and that I 'play,' in

Could this be why Paul calls his readers “citizens of heaven” (Phil 3:20)? He wants people to begin behaving like they are already in the new kingdom. Jesus too was using his imagination to create a place both real, imaginary and more. He inflamed a picture of the kingdom of heaven through his own embodiment, and then this embodiment was written down for many to also enter into this other utopian place. The goal of the kingdom is *a place*. As James K. A. Smith has noted, we are *teleological* creatures whose love is aimed at different ends or goals.

The *telos* to which our love is aimed is not a list of idea or propositions or doctrines; it is not a list of abstract, disembodied concepts or values. . . . A vision of the good life captures our hearts and imaginations not by providing a set of rules or ideas, but by painting a picture of what it looks like for us to flourish and live well. This is why such pictures are communicated most powerfully in stories, legends, myths, plays, novels and films rather than dissertations, messages, and monographs.²³

The vision of the kingdom is the best story, legend, and myth. Jesus instates the story that envelops all other stories. He did not merely present a list of propositions and doctrines but a vision of the good life. He brought those under the snare of the devil back into place; he used a social vision in the Sermon on Mount to paint a picture of human flourishing; he spoke to people in parables anticipating depictions of the kingdom; he critiqued the towering figures of his day, undercutting their authority.

As Ward also notes, certain theologians are beginning to affirm the Scriptures as a new world to be inhabited, a story-shaped world that shapes the world the readers inhabit.²⁴ By painting an alluring picture of the good life he triggered imaginations so that

the good life began to seep into the fiber of our being and thus govern and shape our decisions, actions and habits. Thus we become certain kinds of people; we begin to emulate, mimic, and mirror the particular vision that we desire. . . . We become little microcosms of that envisioned world as we try to embody it in the here and now.²⁵

the precise sense of the word, with possible practices. . . . Imagination is involved in the very process of motivation.” Ricoeur ties the imagination to metaphor earlier in the essay.

²³James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009), 53.

²⁴Ward, “Narrative and Ethics,” 439.

²⁵Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 54.

Matthew’s text, like all good literature, transcends its historical particularity. Matthew also speaks to modern society, where people long for “ideal” places, where sex trafficking, murder, theft, pride, arrogance, are all wiped away. Jesus presents, for both modern society and those living in the first century, an alternative way to structure places and material practices.

The kingdom in Matthew is a thirdspace and becoming. It is simultaneously physical (firstspace), mental (secondspace), and social (both and also). The dualistic tension between the space of the kingdom being present or absent is reductionistic, for it is both and. The space of the kingdom is both real and imaginary. It is real in the localization of bodies upon the earth who enter into this world, and imaginary in that Christ’s resurrected body is located in the heavens and the fulfillment of the space of the kingdom is still to come. This conception fits nicely into the temporal description of the kingdom being both “already” and “not yet.” As noted in the introduction, the temporal lens on the kingdom has had pride of place, but space and time cannot be disassociated. I have attempted to focus on the spatial nature of the kingdom and the categories of critical spatiality allow one to conceive of the space of the kingdom as both present and absent in a similar way to the temporal category of already/not yet.

Table 5. Kingdom of heaven as spatial and temporal

The Kingdom of Heaven	
<i>Temporal</i>	<i>Spatial</i>
Already: here in Jesus’ body	Firstspace: material space in Jesus’ body and his community Secondspace: the ideological presentation of space by Jesus and his community
Not Yet: coming in fullness in Jesus’ return	Thirdspace: real and imaginary, and more, here and not yet here.

Critical Spatiality: A Reflection

Although critical spatiality provides a helpful grid for examining spatial concepts, it also can be critiqued *by* Matthew.²⁶ Like the speech-act theory, I employed an outside source to better categorize and understand certain aspects of the biblical text. The speech-act theory describes how people use words, while critical spatiality is a more expansive understanding of spatiality. Chapter 3 explained that critical spatiality comes from geographers and philosophers who are regularly Marxist in their outlook. One could argue these theories are not conceptually helpful or just patently false, but I affirm they are both true and beneficial. This does not mean they cannot be refined.

As Edward Casey noted in chapter 3, in modern absolute space God has departed. Unfortunately, for the geographers and philosophers of critical spatiality it is no different.²⁷ According to Lefebvre, space is subject to humans and controllable by them in an absolute sense.²⁸ Social geographers say geography is literally humans ‘writing the earth.’ Lefebvre and the other theorists have no intrusion of the Godhead into their theories. From a Christian perspective their theories are deistic or even atheistic. Space is not ultimately under the control of humans but under the control of the sovereign creator. It is God’s earth, his writing, his space. As Karl Barth says,

what we have and know as our space does not exist apart from God’s space. On the contrary, by it and in it God’s space is always and altogether in our space as well. As, then we are in our space, we are in one way or another in God’s space at the same time. Indeed, we are far more in God’s space than in our created space.²⁹

²⁶Matthew Sleeman has already proposed Christian scholars moving in this direction in his article. Matthew Sleeman, “Critical Spatial Theory 2.0,” in *Constructions of Space V: Place Space and Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, eds. Christl Maier and Gert Prinsloo (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 49-66.

²⁷Although it is biblical scholars who are using the term critical spatiality I am using it here to avoid confusion.

²⁸Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1991), 28.

²⁹Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. Geoffrey Bromiley and Thomas Torrance, trans. G. W. Thomson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), II.1:476.

Outside biblical studies supernaturalism is erased, but in my analysis the supernatural is ever present. Ultimately, it is God's space as Barth affirms. Humans are only in control of space in a secondary sense. Matthew's Gospel makes this explicit with the presence of Jesus. It is by his entering into space that the place of the earth changes, and he is the one to give authority to carry on his work to his people. Without Jesus, according to Matthew, the space of the earth would be propelled down the deterioration pathway.

Second, the theorists generally view life as a dialectic—history moves only by conflicts between opposing forces. Although the Scripture does present opposing forces, as seen in the Beelzebul controversy, these theorists are not acknowledging the complex relationship with space, power, and servanthood.³⁰ There is no introduction of an ethic of servanthood, which takes those that are the weakest, those that are socially outcast, and brings them into the space of servanthood rather than power. Matthew 23:11 says, “The greatest among you shall be your servant.” The kingdom presented in the Scriptures is an upside-down kingdom, for the first will be last and the last first. It is a space that contradicts and contests all other spaces, for the space consists virtue, goodness, and perfect beauty. To salt and light the earth means to be meek, kind, gentle, giving, and humble. In this space even the marginalized, the sick, the guilty become one with the king. Scripture does not deny conflict or even a dialectic, but also argues that history moves forward through love and servanthood. Although Jesus came to reorder the space of the earth (which included conflict), the means or way he did this was through service, acceptance, and ultimately a death. The Scriptures argue this death is the decisive picture of love, the decisive picture of reordering the physical and social space of the earth.

Third, Marx, and many who follow Marx, subscribe to some form of monism or pantheism. While secularism has forced Christians to an “un-enchanted” view of the universe, Christians need to be careful to not completely erase the distinction between

³⁰Edward Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places*, 86–87.

creator and creation. Critical spatiality teeters on the edge of infusing creation with the Godhead. God does communicate through created things, but he also is separate and distinct from them. Matthew presents the kingdom as joined to the realm of heaven, and the earth is the stage upon which this kingdom is enacted.

My thesis has been that Jesus comes to reorder the space of the earth through the presence of his body. He then confers this authority to the church. Both the individual and communal body of Christ act to reconcile the two realms of heaven and earth. The kingdom must include a spatial aspect, for the kingdom is people, place, and power. Critical spatiality was a useful tool to examine Matthew, for it helped break one out of a narrow view of spatiality. It allowed a more expansive way to view the kingdom in Matthew from a spatial angle, exemplifying God's interaction with space and place.

Further Areas of Research

In closing, a few areas of research exist where more work could be done around this topic. A number of ideas came to me while working on this project that could be a thesis in their own right. First, I did not trace the concept of space and place in ancient Jewish, Greek, and Roman thought. Possibly the earliest Christians conceived of space and place not as absolute, but localized and under construction. My argument did not attempt to assert this, but rather to say this view of space is a universally true human experience. Although a few works touch on the subject in the footnotes, a more in-depth study, especially of the Second Temple literature could be done and would be useful to scholars.³¹ My suspicion is that a detailed analysis would confirm a more expansive understanding of space.

Second, the Eucharistic language of "this is my body" in the Last Supper continually emerged as worthy of more reflection. Jesus, in The Last Supper, was creating

³¹Max Jammer, *Concepts of Space: The History and Theories of Space in Physics* (New York: Dover, 1993); Keimpe Algra, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought* (New York: Brill, 1995).

a thirdspace, that was real, imaginary, and more. I wonder if a critical spatiality could bring some clarity to the absence/presence of Christ in the meal? Third, it would be interesting to trace the spatial story of the first two chapters of Matthew noting how Jesus is walking in the footsteps of Israel. The geographical references abound in chapter 2 and are always tied to fulfillment.³² Although the nature of the fulfillment has been run over a number of times, a more detailed spatial analysis of these fulfillments are not usually commented on.³³

Finally, I wish I could have spent more time on the death and resurrection of Jesus. My emphasis has been on the body of Christ in his ministry partially because this is an aspect which has been neglected. There seemed to be enough to say concerning the extension of his body through his words and deeds, and also the conferral of authority to his community. Ultimately, Jesus sacrifices his body for the renewal of all things. In Matthew's text the death and resurrection of Jesus are central, and not examining these texts do not mean they do not fit into the thesis, or that they are unimportant.

³²Stendahl notes the domination of geographical names in Matt 2 and says that the geographical information gives structure to chapter 2, while personal names give structure to chapter 1. Krister Stendahl, "Quis et Unde? An Analysis of Matthew 1-2," in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. Graham Stanton (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 57-59.

³³R. T. France, "The Formula-Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication," *NTS* 27 (1981): 233-51.

APPENDIX

THE KINGDOM, THE BODY OF CHRIST, AND PLACE-MAKING

Introduction

A number of implications and questions arise concerning the nature of the church and its relationship to the kingdom. Throughout the previous chapters I have been asserting an important role of the church in the carrying on of Jesus' work. Is the church the embodiment of Christ to the world, the sacrament of the kingdom, the replacement of Christ on the earth, an extension of the incarnation, the body of Christ? And what is the relationship between the church and the kingdom? Should one follow G. E. Ladd's proposal of the relationship? All of these questions have been combed through in the history of interpretation, many times dividing Catholics, Orthodox, and Protestants. A spatial perspective on the presence of the kingdom provides a different entry point to these discussions. Rather than viewing the kingdom as purely temporal, the spatial view asks different questions and arrives at different answers.

The Kingdom and the Church

What then is the relationship between the kingdom and the church? G. E. Ladd famously said the following:

While there is an inseparable relationship between the Kingdom and the church, they are not to be identified. The Kingdom takes its point of departure from God, the church from human beings. The Kingdom is God's reign and the realm in which the blessings of his reign are experienced; the church is the fellowship of those who have experienced God's reign and entered into the enjoyment of its blessings. The Kingdom creates the church, works through the church, and is proclaimed in the world by the church. There can be no Kingdom without a church – those who have acknowledged God's rule – and there can be no church without God's Kingdom; but

they remain two distinguishable concepts: the rule of God and the fellowship of men and women.¹

John Bright states, “There is no tendency in the New Testament to identify the visible church with the Kingdom of God The Church is indeed the people of the Kingdom of Christ, but the visible church is not that Kingdom.”² H. Richard Niebuhr in his book *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry* said, “The Church is no more the kingdom of God than natural science is nature or written history the course of human events. It [the church] is the subject that apprehends its Object [the kingdom].”³ He goes on to say the kingdom is an immaterial, spiritual reality while the church is a material, visible, reality. As one can see, the turn in scholarship is to affirm there is a relationship, but also a distinction. As Scot McKnight asserts:

there is a widespread ‘consensus’ that kingdom and church are not identical, but everyone knows there is some connection between the two The oddity of this seeming consensus is that there is a widespread lack of attempting to articulate the relationship of church and kingdom other than by way of denying they are identical.⁴

The lack of clarity stems from the majority of scholars affirming the primary meaning of the word “*βασιλεια*” is “kingly rule” or “kingship” or “sovereignty” and all other meanings as secondary and derivative.⁵ But as we have seen, narrowing the kingdom to

¹G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 117.

²John Bright, *The Kingdom of God* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), 236.

³H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Purpose of the Church and Its Ministry: Reflections on the Aims of Theological Education* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 19–20.

⁴Scot McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2014), 85. Scot McKnight graciously sent me a pre-released copy of his book after my first draft was complete. His conclusions in his book lined up with mine in significant ways despite some differences in approaching the topic. He uses Matt 16:16-19 to defend his view of the relationship between the kingdom and church and argues that kingdom necessarily means “people.” I also had a chapter on the passage that I ended up deleting because of space constraints.

⁵Other scholars note that reign must include realm but do not conduct a detailed analysis of it but simply note it in passing: Craig Blomberg, *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012), 302-305; Eugene Merrell, *Everlasting Dominion: Theology of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: B & H, 2006), 278; Stephen Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 62; Herman Ridderbos, *The Coming Kingdom* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1962), 26; J. C. O’Neill, “The Kingdom of God,” *NovT* 35, no. 2 (1993): 130-31.

an immaterial or reign only concept is not how the Scripture presents it. Neither the space nor the people of the kingdom are labeled as secondary or derivative.⁶ Ladd and Dalman asserted that view maybe to avoid other problems, but the previously held relationship between the church and the kingdom are based on a particular definition of the kingdom.⁷ Therefore, if one disagrees with Ladd's definition of the kingdom, then the relationship between the church and the kingdom should also be reexamined.

Notice how in Ladd's quote, the people and place aspect are asserted at the start of the definition of the kingdom, but then dropped. "The reign of God is experienced by the church" but not the realm. The church is from human beings, but the kingdom from God according to Ladd. The kingdom is viewed as God's reign, not the co-reign of people, but if people, place, and power are all held in tension in one's definition of the kingdom then the grounding of the distinction can be questioned. What if the realm begins in the body of Christ in the dual form of the incarnation and the *ἐκκλησία*?⁸ Ladd's conception of the relationship between the kingdom and church may be partially stunted

⁶McKnight in a footnote says the reason s may also be because the "rule" shapes Protestant scholarship while "realm and rule" have more presence in both Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy. McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, 260 n. 4.

⁷France asserts that the church is a definable empirical entity, but the kingdom of God is not. France continues to define the kingdom as simply sovereignty or reign. He explicitly says it is not a thing, but an abstract idea. He even states that translations should just provide the correct translation of βασιλεία as "the reign of God." I for one am glad that translators did not take him up on this idea! R. T. France, "The Church and the Kingdom of God: Some Hermeneutical Issues," in *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization*, ed. D. A. Carson (Exeter, England: Paternoster, 1984), 31.

⁸Matthew Sleeman gives the example of a thirdspace in Platform 9¾ at King's Cross Station in J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter novels. Platform 9¾ is the portal to get to the wizard school Hogwarts. It is located on the wall between platform 9 and 10 and students must run right at the wall on September 1 before 11am or else it shuts. Platform 9¾ functions as a secondspace projection inscribed in a literary 'canon' and also now has a firstspace position in the station's architecture. But for those who have immersed themselves in Rowling's world, it cannot be reduced to either the firstspace or secondspace. For it occasions a thirdspace, pointing to a magical world that is both real and imaginary, both present and absent: so too the church. It functions as an intermediary world, a heterotopia, between heaven and earth where both the new creation and old creation are interacting. Heavenly citizens are interacting on earth, waiting for their full redemption. The shocking thing, as Matt 13 points out, is that Jesus waits to uproot the bad weeds until judgment day.

because his definition of the kingdom overemphasizes reign at the expense of both people and place. Take all three of these ideas together and the relationship between the kingdom and the church can be more precise.

Historically, according to the Catholic tradition, the kingdom of God on earth is identified with the church.⁹ R. Newton Flew notes that Luther, Bucer, and Calvin passed this interpretation onto traditional Protestant exegesis. “Thus the Dragnet (in Matthew 13) is identified with the Church in Calvin’s commentary on the gospels. The “field” in the parables of the tares is allegorized as the Church.”¹⁰ If the kingdom of Christ has begun in the church, as Brunner suggests, the church must surely be the kingdom in process of actualization, that is, the coming of the kingdom which is to come.¹¹ The coming of the kingdom is visible in the church, which is the body of Christ, is the unique instrument by which all things shall be subdued by him. McKnight puts it similarly saying “the church, then, is what is present and peopled in the realization of the kingdom now.” He then clarifies even further asserting “there is not a kingdom now outside the church.”¹² John Howard Yoder asserted, “The kingdom of God is a social order, not a hidden one.”¹³ The church is *not* the kingdom in its fullness, but the church is a manifestation of the kingdom, or an outpost of the kingdom.¹⁴ The church then is the sign of the kingdom. The two are woven together, as they always have been. The willing

⁹No doubt influenced by their view of the relationship between Christ and the church as detailed above.

¹⁰R. Newton Flew, *Jesus and His Church: A Study in the Idea of the Ecclesia in the New Testament* (New York: Abingdon, 1938), 27.

¹¹Emil Brunner, *The Divine Imperative: A Study in Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2002), 526.

¹²McKnight, *Kingdom Conspiracy*, 87.

¹³John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 105.

¹⁴I am indebted to Russell Moore for the language of outpost here. Russell Moore, *The Kingdom of Christ: The New Evangelical Perspective* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 141.

subjects, who acknowledge the Kingship of Christ and welcome His reign, are the *ἐκκλησία*, the embodiment of the kingdom on the earth.¹⁵

The Doctrine of Totus Christus

Theologians in the previous pages may be uncomfortable with the close relationship I have painted between Christ and his church. They may hear the echoing voices of the early church bouncing off the walls and discern faintly the words *totus Christus*.¹⁶ Does a spatial perspective of the presence of the kingdom help in the debate over *totus Christus*? Although I do not think a spatial perspective answers all the questions, looking at the doctrine through the lens of Matthew's text does give some warrant for Protestants to affirm a greater unity between Christ and the church than they have previously, while also not making a hasty ontological correlation.

Jesus' Presence

Typically, Protestants take the "body of Christ" to be a metaphor similar to other images the NT used to discuss the nature and function of the church.¹⁷ However,

¹⁵While working on the project, some asked if I was simply asserting the church as the answer to the present fulfillment of the spatial kingdom? My answer is a qualified yes. The qualification comes in the acknowledgement that a full yes would simply be asserting a "firstspace" answer to the question. But from the outset I have argued that we need to expand our view of space. The Sojan categories (firstspace, secondspace, thirdspace) begin to assist with the problematic tension between presence and absence. Firstspace is not the totality of spatial consideration, nor is secondspace. Therefore the kingdom is present spatially in the church as a thirdspace, just like the kingdom is a thirdspace. In Matthew, the church is the place earthing heavenly thirdspace in their deeds and words. Adopting the thirdspace category for the church (like the kingdom) teeters along the knives edge of not underemphasizing or overemphasizing the church's role. Or in the systematic theology categories, it splits the difference between an over-realized eschatology and an under-realized eschatology. The church is present in firstspace categories, but it is also has secondspace categories attached to it. Yet for those who have entered the church, they also realize that the church is "real, imaginary and something more." The "more" comes in hope deferred.

¹⁶Thanks goes to Bryan Baise for sending me his paper on the subject of *totus Christus* which pointed me to many good resources. The concept is defined on the next page.

¹⁷M. Barth argues the church exists through Jesus, but Jesus never exists through the church. Markus Barth, "Chapter on the Church, the Body of Christ: Interpretation of 1 Corinthians," *Int* 12, no. 2 (1958): 131-56.

Catholic and Orthodox theologians see 1 Corinthians 12:27 where Paul says “you are Christ’s body” as more than a mere metaphor, but a statement of reality speaking to the indissoluble relationship between Christ and his church. This has become known as the doctrine of *totus Christus*, which asserts the identity between Christ and his church is so complete that Christ and his church are now one and the same person. Through the Spirit, Christ is organically united to his body, the church, so that he is with her *totus Christus, caput et membra* (the whole Christ, head and members). Christ and his church are not only related conceptually, but *ontically* and *metaphysically*. The two have become one singular reality.¹⁸

Most agree that the doctrine stems from Augustine, who asserted it in his preaching of the Psalms.¹⁹ Augustine say that Christ is to be taken no longer as individual, but in His fullness, that is, with the whole church, with all the members, of whom He is the Head, as constituting one unit, one whole, one person, as it were.²⁰ For Augustine, the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Word is necessarily linked to the doctrine of the church

¹⁸Some Catholics and Orthodox deny complete identity and equality of the Church and Christ. Bulgakov says that although the church is the Body of Christ, it is not the Christ—the God-man. Sergeĭ Nikolaevich Bulgakov, *The Orthodox Church* (New York: St. Vladimirs Seminary Press, 1997), 1. Henri de Lubac says the Church is not attributed to what belongs to God alone: “We do not adore her. We do not believe in the Church in the same sense as we believe in God, for the Church herself believes in God, and she is the ‘Church of God.’” Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism: A Study of Dogma in Relation to the Corporate Destiny of Mankind* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1950), 29. But de Lubac does go onto say that the discussion of the divine and human is fatal and the experience of Protestantism should serve as a sufficient warning.

¹⁹See all four of Grabowski’s articles on the doctrine in Augustine. Stanislaus Justin Grabowski, “St. Augustine and the Doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ (Part I),” *TS* 7, no. 1 (1946): 72-125; idem, “Sinners and the Mystical Body of Christ According to St. Augustine (Part 2),” *TS* 9, no. 1 (1948): 47-84; idem, “The Holy Ghost in the Mystical Body of Christ According to St. Augustine (Part 1),” *TS* 5, no. 4 (1944): 453-83; idem, “The Holy Ghost in the Mystical Body of Christ According to St. Augustine (Part 2),” *Theological Studies* 6, no. 1 (1945): 62-84. Grabowski says these views are common to the tradition anterior to Augustine’s time. He also lists the following people as adopting this view: Clement, Ignatius, Irenaeus, Origen, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Hilary, St. Athanasius, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. John Chrysostom, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Ambrose, Peter Lombard, William of Auxerre, Hugo of St. Victor, Alexander of Hales, St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, St. Thomas.

²⁰Augustine, *Sermo* 341.1.1 (PL 39:1493).

as the body of Christ.²¹ Ignatius uses the term ἔνωσις (union) to compare the relationship between Christ and the church. Ignatius says that wherever Christ is, there is the Catholic Church, meaning that Christ and His church are quite inseparable.²² Christ is the Head of the church in the sense that the “head cannot be born without members, since God promises union, that is, Himself.” MacGregor writes that in no writer is the ontological reality of the church as the body of Christ more vividly expounded than in Ignatius.²³

The doctrine continues in contemporary Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions. Catholic theologians Henri de Lubac and Hans Urs von Balthasar both affirm the doctrine. Henri de Lubac says the church is Jesus Christ spread abroad and communicated and completes the work of spiritual reunion, which was made necessary by sin.²⁴ She (the church) is the sacrament of God, she represents him, and makes him present. “She not only carries on his work, but she is his very continuation.”²⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar

²¹Karl Adam says that “for Augustine the union of the members of Christ with their Head, our Incarnate Saviour, not only stands at the centre of Augustine’s doctrine of redemption, but is in the very heart of his theology.” Karl Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism* (New York: Crossroad, 1997), 48. And according to Augustine there exists between the Church and the Body of Christ an identity, not indeed of external manifestation but of inward nature: the Church is the sole place wherein Christ works in his members through the Holy Spirit. Although the argument that *totus Christus* began in Augustine is widely accepted, the seeds of the doctrine are debated and may have been planted by Tyconius, the Donatist theologian, whose “Book of Rules” sets out seven principles or “keys” of sorts for see the mysteries of Scripture. See, William Harmless, *Augustine in His Own Words* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2010), 191-93.

²²Farrow says Irenaeus would put it like this, “Where the church is, there is the Spirit of God.” Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 69.

²³Geddes MacGregor, *Corpus Christi: The Nature of the Church According to the Reformed Tradition* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1958), 173.

²⁴de Lubac, *Catholicism*, 17. He also notes that the church was attached to geographical considerations. St. Ambrose saw the church embracing both the earth and sky with Christ set above for sun. Augustine says that the Church is without restriction of space and extends from seas to sea.

²⁵*Ibid.*, 29. He continues saying that is why schism is always anathematized as vigorously as heresy. For destruction of unity is a corruption of truth, and the poison of dissension is as baneful as that of false doctrine.

asserts there is no ambiguity between the two.²⁶ Karl Adam thinks of the church as a historical institution and the eschatological kingdom where there is progressive unfolding from seed to full flower.²⁷ The church is an extension of the incarnation, the body of Christ, and the Roman Catholic Church is the “realization on earth of the Kingdom of God.”²⁸ Pope Benedict XVI noted the synthesis of head and member as a “fusion of existences.”²⁹ According to Michael Horton, John Milbank revives “ecclesiological universalism, a cosmic Christology, and an exemplarist atonement doctrine—all subservient to the notion of the church as the extension of the incarnation.”³⁰ For Milbank, it is the role of the Spirit who merges with the church to fill the vacuum left by Christ’s absence. Milbank says, “Christ’s appeal must still after all work within history: there must really in some sense exist the *ἐκκλησία*. His example must somewhere and somehow be followed . . . which [is] realize[d] [in] the hypostatic presence of the Holy Spirit.”³¹

Contemporary Orthodox theologians also subscribe to *totus Christus*. Horton notes how John Zizioulas in his *Being as Communion* argues for distinct contributions of each divine person.³² The Father and Son work *within* history, but the Spirit is *beyond*

²⁶“The Church is, at one and the same time, the redeemed world in course of becoming Christ’s instrument for the full redemption of the world. Consequently, the individual members of the Church in time is not, actually, functional as regards to the Church, as if it were the executive bearer of this function. He is, rather function in and with the Church as a whole.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Church and World* (Montreal: Palm, 1967), 107–8.

²⁷Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, xi.

²⁸Ibid., 14.

²⁹Joseph Ratzinger, *Called to Communion: Understanding the Church Today* (San Francisco: St. Ignatius, 1996), 37.

³⁰Michael Horton, *People and Place: A Covenant Ecclesiology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 162.

³¹John Milbank, *Being Reconciled: Ontology and Pardon* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 110–11, 115.

³²John Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2002).

history, and he raises the Son from death and brings into history the last days. The pneumatological grounding accounts for the “corporate personality” and therefore Christ is not just one, but many.

Michael Horton, a Protestant, argues that although there is much to commend in all these proposals, “A covenantal head is fundamentally a different concept than a corporate personality.”³³ The covenantal headship view asserts Christ is the representative head, while the corporate personality assimilates the many to the one.³⁴ There is real affinity but also real difference between Christ and the church. The body of Christ metaphor is neither a univocal description nor an equivocal figure of speech.³⁵ The phrase, the body of Christ, in 1 Corinthians 12:12 is employed to affirm the plurality as much as the unity.

Christ is not now present on earth in his natural body, and his *ekklesial* body cannot serve as his substitute. Yet the church is not orphaned by its ascended Lord, since the Spirit unites us to Christ and therefore to each other in a communion of faith, hope, and love.³⁶

Robert Saucy in agreement with Horton argues that the NT does not corroborate such high claims for the church based on the test of the three offices of Christ as prophet, priest, and king.³⁷ Each of these functional roles for Christ and church, according to Saucy, resist the incarnational categories for ecclesiology. For example, in Saucy’s conception of Christ and the church as prophet he argues that ecclesiology must be subordinate to Christology because of the issue of self-reflectivity. Jesus preaches God’s

³³Horton, *People and Place*, 165.

³⁴Grabowski writes, “It seemed that theologians and apologists who followed in the wake of the sixteenth century were so intent upon this external and visible Church that they lost sight of the Church as the Mystical body of Christ.” Grabowski, “St. Augustine and the Doctrine of the Mystical Body,” 123.

³⁵Horton, *People and Place*, 187.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 189.

³⁷Mark Saucy, “Evangelicals, Catholics, and Orthodox Together: Is the Church the Extension of the Incarnation?” *JETS* 43, no. 2 (2000): 193-212.

truth, but he also declares he himself *is* the truth. In contrast, the church never in the NT speaks in such a self-reflective manner. The church proclaims, preaches, testifies, shows, teaches, remembers, and confesses that Jesus is the Christ.³⁸ “This NT pattern is theocentric and Christocentric, but not ecclesiocentric.”³⁹ Under the priestly banner Saucy affirms that in the NT or God or Christ are “Savior” and never the church who is the mediation of salvation’s benefits. Under the category of king, Saucy argues the kingdom is always “God’s” and “Christ’s” but never is the *ἐκκλησία* seen as king.⁴⁰

Exegetical and Spatial Considerations

Saucy closes his article warning against incarnational categories for the church. He asserts the “body of Christ” metaphor takes on too much weight in the Catholic and Orthodox traditions, for the metaphor is simply one of the many metaphors Paul uses as a description of the church.⁴¹ Additionally, the function of the image in Paul is to illustrate in occasional letters the interior relations of the church such as unity and mutuality. However, Saucy does not turn to the Gospels to see if the metaphor is substantiated by earlier traditions. I agree with Saucy that if all one had was Paul’s metaphor that making these four words carry such weight would be unfair.

However other evidence in the NT gives reason for one to pause and consider the claim. A number of texts may illustrate the bringing together of Christ and his church. First, when Saul is on his way to persecute the church in Damascus in Acts 9, Jesus stops him and says, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting *me*?” Jesus does not ask, “Why are you persecuting my church?” Rather Jesus identifies himself the church. The persecution

³⁸Ibid., 197.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., 205.

⁴¹Minear catalogues more than eighty NT images for the Church. Paul S. Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), 222-23.

that the church is facing at the hands of Saul according to Jesus is happening to himself. Now, of course this does not necessarily mean ontological unity exists, but Jesus does assert there is a oneness between himself and the church, a oneness that maybe some theologians would say is not nuanced enough.

Second, other metaphors in the NT point toward a brave sense of solidarity between Christ and his church. Jesus is described as the foundation stone and the living stone, but Peter also identifies those in the church as “living stones” (1 Pt 2:4). Jesus is the living stone and so are the members of his church. The metaphor is such that there is unity. They are all part of one building, but distinction also exists, for Christ is the cornerstone and occupies a central place in the building. So too with the body of Christ metaphor, Christ is the head. Christ is the keystone, and the Christians are built upon Christ. The church is God’s building, and Paul says that the temple of God dwells in the church (1 Cor 3:9-16).

A third metaphor the scriptures speak of is Christ as the Bridegroom and the church as his Bride. Revelation 21:9 says the Bride is the wife of the Lamb. A bride and a bridegroom are one flesh after their union. Christ is united to the faithful as a husband is to his wife. Just as man is head of his wife, Christ is Head of the church. A fifth metaphor is the one of the branches grafted into the tree. It is hard to imagine that all these metaphors are coincidental. As Grabowski says, “It would be incorrect, therefore, to state that St. Paul conveys the doctrine of the spiritual union existing between Christ and the Christians exclusively under the analogy of the body.”⁴²

Finally, as I have been arguing all along, evidence exists in the Matthew that the church is given the presence of Jesus and many times identified with Jesus. A spatial view of the kingdom allows one to see that Jesus, in his body, contests the kingdom of the earth and that he confers this authority to other bodies when he leaves. If my thesis is

⁴²Grabowski, “St. Augustine and the Doctrine of the Mystical Body,” 90.

correct, that the human body is the localization of the kingdom, then the corporate body of Christ is also a localization of the kingdom, but only in the sense that they acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah and proclaim his name, thereby contesting all spaces of the earth and bringing them under the rule of Jesus. Although the church exists through Jesus, Jesus also exists through the church, for in Matthew's narrative he never leaves. He promises he will always be with them and then the Gospel ends. He is Immanuel in Matthew's Gospel, the embodiment of the kingdom of heaven and earth.

But there are also a few problems with *totus Christus*. The analogy of a married couple clarifies the first confusion. Both Matthew and Paul use the phrase "one flesh," which stems from Genesis 2:24, in their description of sexual union. Jesus' discussion on divorce in Matthew 19:5-6 says a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife. Matthew then adds to Genesis says, "So they are no longer two but one flesh" (*ὥστε οὐκέτι εἰσὶν δύο ἀλλὰ σὰρξ μία*). One may be tempted to argue the "one flesh" language is another argument for ontological unity between Christ and the church, but is Matthew saying husband and wife are ontologically one now? Although his language of unity is vigorous, another passage in Paul raises doubts about the ontic correlation. Paul, twice in his letters, speaks of "one flesh" (1 Cor 6:16; Eph 5:31). In 1 Corinthians 6:16 the situation is quite different from both Matthew and Ephesians. For Paul is speaking of one joining their body with a prostitute. Paul says, "The two will become one flesh." Clearly Paul is not saying a man and a prostitute are ontologically the same after sexual union, just as the distinctions between husband and wife are not erased after their union. Genesis 2:24 is about a man "holding fast (*προσκολληθήσεται*) to his wife." *Προσκολλάω* means to adhere closely, faithfully devoted, joined to. Paul skirts along a thin knife's edge of absolute unity, while not collapsing two into one. Therefore, when Paul follows his "one flesh" statement in Ephesians 5:32 with saying, "This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church" he is not necessarily saying they are ontically one. For the metaphor does not seem to imply that. Rather, the profoundness or

mysteriousness of it comes in a complete affirmation of unity, while also not folding two into one.

The second problem with *totus Christus* is that it does not respect the absence of Christ.⁴³ Peter Orr argues that if the absence of Christ is more carefully delineated, then the paradox of the absence and presence of Christ disappears.⁴⁴ Christ's presence is always mediated presence because Christ possesses a discrete, localizable body which means he is located.⁴⁵ If Christ is located, then he can and must be distinguished from both the church and the Holy Spirit. Jesus' presence is mediated through three distinct modes: (1) epiphanic, (2) dynamic, (3) bodily. Orr examines 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 8 arguing the church is not an extension of the incarnation, but is the means by which Christ exercise his lordship over the world. Although many interpret the "body of Christ" statements in 1 Corinthians as Jesus' embodiment within the world, for Paul the motif is not used to describe the interaction between Christ and the word but the relationship between Christ and the church. According to Orr, the collapse of distinctions between Christ, believer, and the Spirit does not fit with a close reading of the 'body' texts. In each case Paul maintains a distinction between Christ, believer, and the Spirit. The Spirit mediates Christ to his body. Orr is right about respecting the absence of Christ and the

⁴³Although, Graham Ward says the absencing of Jesus is not a decisive break: "The withdrawal of the body of Jesus must be understood in terms of the Logos creating a space within himself, a womb, within which the Church will expand and creation be recreated. In this way, the body of the Church and the body of the world are enfolded through resurrection within the Godhead. The body of Jesus Christ is not lost, nor does it reside now in heaven as a discrete object of veneration. The body of Jesus Christ, the body of God, is permeable, transcorporeal, transpositional. Within it all other bodies are situated and given their significance." Graham Ward, John Millbank, and Catherine Pickstock, eds., *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* (London: Routledge, 1999), 176.

⁴⁴Peter Orr, *Christ Absent and Present: A Study in Pauline Christology* (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2014).

⁴⁵John Calvin says, "Thus the ascension means that we cannot know God by transcending space and time, by leaping beyond the limits of our place on earth, but only by encountering God and his saving work within space and time, within our actual physical existence." John Calvin, quoted in Gerritt Scott Dawson, *Jesus Ascended: The Meaning of Christ's Continuing Incarnation* (New York: T & T Clark, 2004), 50.

localized body of Christ, but the Gospel of Matthew sufficiently demonstrates at least one problem with Orr's thesis. For Matthew, the Spirit does not come, yet Jesus still promises he will be with his community forever. It may be implied that the Spirit is part of this transaction, except it is peculiar that Jesus never ascends (or leaves) in Matthew and promises them his presence forever.⁴⁶ Although this admittedly is an argument from silence, the silence is deafening. Again, this does not overturn Orr's thesis, but it does throw some questions in the midst of the discussion.

The presence and absence question might be answered by expanding ones conception of space. As I have argued, space is simultaneously physical (firstspace), mental (secondspace) and more (thirdspace). Could Christ's presence with his church be conceived as real, imagined, and more, like the nature of the presence of the kingdom? The dichotomy of whether one is "here" or "not here" may be reductionistic, and modern people should understand the complexity of the issue with the burgeoning field of social media. Much of the decision here depends on one's presuppositions entering the text rather than close analysis of the text. For both arguments are viable and argued in the history of interpretation, but I think the evidence from the text at least opens up the possibility that Protestants should consider the profoundness of the relationship between Christ and the church.⁴⁷ That is not to say that there is necessarily an *ontological* relationship, but it is

⁴⁶Farrow says some build lopsidedly on the wonderful promises of presence in Matthew: "In neither case are presence and absence brought into their right relation, for they are not seen *together*." Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 3. While Farrow is right, he is also not noting the abundance of evidence outside Matthew for the presence of Christ with his church.

⁴⁷Although Karl Barth did not fully ascribe to *totus Christus*, he did in some form. Mangina notes the following conversation in his book. Joseph L. Mangina, *Karl Barth: Theologian of Christian Witness* (Louisville: John Knox/Westminster, 2004), 165.

Student: Does 'Body of Christ' have any sociological meaning for you?

Barth: Yes, if seen Christologically. The Church is *indirectly* identical with Jesus Christ. He is not without his Body. We *believe* in the *totus Christus*, and that includes his body on earth. But it is a living body, so we came back to the notion of event.

Student: Is the body an event?

Barth: Yes, bodily existence is an event

Student: Is it not dangerous to say *totus Christus*?

Barth: No, we are only Christ's Body, not the head. This means that we can never have a 'head' of the

more than mere identification. There is a mystery to it.

Place-Making

Although this dissertation has focused on Jesus' creation of place it may be helpful to comment briefly on practical steps of place-making in the modern era. For human identity is bound up with place, and place is bound up with human identity. As Craig Bartholomew argues, "place is so constituent of human beings that perhaps that is why it has been over-looked."⁴⁸ Walter Brueggemann said, "Our humanness is always about historical placement in the earth."⁴⁹ The mobility of this generation thwarts the recognition of this concept. However people can never really lose a sense of attachment and identity to place. Whether it be Japan, the cross fit gym down the street, the tribe in Papua New Guinea, or the coffee shop, people identify with places. From the very beginning in the Scriptures this has been the case. Adam was created to live in the Garden, and displacement was at the heart of God's judgment. Framing the storyline in this way, then the re-placement of God's people would be the goal. Peter Berger defines religion as "the human enterprise by which a sacred cosmos is established." Religion, like almost all other forms of human society, endeavors in the task of world-building. Without the primary processes of *world-constructions* or *world-maintenance* there can be no social existence according to Berger. If re-placement is a theme and goal in Scripture, then an important question must concern how one can practically be a place-maker? What type of

Church on earth; this is the Roman Catholic heresy.

Student: But should we say that his body is not yet perfect?

Barth: I would rather say, 'His body is not yet *revealed*.' What we see is imperfection, but what we need is *apokalypsis*."

See also Barth's comments in *Church Dogmatics*. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, ed. Geoffrey Bromiley and Thomas Torrance, trans. G. W. Thomson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2010), 215-20.

⁴⁸Craig Bartholomew, *Where Mortals Dwell: A Christian View of Place for Today* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 5.

⁴⁹Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise, and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 3.

directions does Jesus give to his community?⁵⁰ Mark Mitchell, in his chapter “Making Places,” details four ways one can foster a more rooted existence and cultivate the art of place-making.⁵¹

First, one must realize a sense of limits. Ethical cosmopolitanism seeks to embrace all of humanity with its moral vision. While the aim is good, it is better to advocate a role of actual moral duties being determined “by accidentals of place and therefore ethical cosmopolitanism is a combination of negative moral duties of respect for all and positive duties to particular people within our particular places.”⁵² Moral good to all human beings is rooted in all human beings being equal in moral worth and dignity, which Jesus affirmed. Jesus himself is an example of realizing his limits and focusing on healing and speaking to those near to him in terms of proximity. He himself covered a tiny portion of the earth’s surface in his ministry, but his ministry has been a great cause of good worldwide. Therefore, to embrace all of humanity in a moral vision is not opposed to rootedness and local and particular ethical accomplishments.

Second, Mitchell notes that one must come to orient their lives around long-term commitments and recognition of natural duties. Although it popular to leave one’s “options open,” commitments unearth the very best kinds of human goods.⁵³ Commitment to family, to spouse, to community, to the city, to the nation, to the church, to religion is

⁵⁰John Gager notes in his book I. C. Jarvie’s four basic traits of cults: (1) the promise of heaven on earth, (2) the overthrow or reversal of the present social order, (3) a terrific release of emotional energy, (4) a brief life span to the movement itself. Gager adds a fifth, the central role of a messianic, prophetic, or charismatic leader. Gager also questions the fourth category because Christianity has had longevity. John G. Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1975), 16.

⁵¹Mark Mitchell, “Making Places: The Cosmopolitan Temptation,” in *Why Place Matters*, 84-101. Ward distinguishes between “*poesis*” meaning ‘making’ as in ‘creating’ and *praxis*. *Praxis* means being involved in an activity, whole *poesis* means not representing or mirroring nature of re-presenting or creating it anew. Ward, “Narrative and Ethics,” 449.

⁵²Mitchell, “Making Places,” 99.

⁵³*Ibid.*

paramount in place-making. Ephemeral and transitory lives are hailed as the adventurous and pleasurable existence, but long-term commitments make for lasting happiness. Jesus himself had a long-term commitment to his Father's will, and long-term commitments to his community saying that he would never leave or forsake them.

Third, Mitchell says limits and long-term commitments can be better realized if one recovers the language and sense of providence, vocation, and stewardship. If God exists, he created everything in its order and therefore certain actions are prohibited while others are encouraged. Encouraged actions in the Scriptures are love, generosity, forgiveness, unity, and patience. The actions denounced are gossip, judgementalism, anger, dissensions, greed, and jealousy. Additionally one must realize that different people are given different vocations. Some are called to replace windows, others to cut grass, and a few to be leaders of nations. In all of these tasks there should be stewardship, where each person works to love their neighbor as they want to be loved. Every task is important, no matter how insignificant it seems.

Fourth, Mitchell says place-making is an art that requires time and practice.⁵⁴ One brush stroke will not do the job. Nor will an ethic without hard work, care or thought be successful. Place-making cannot be accomplished in an afternoon but is accomplished through a lifetime of good deeds and good will. Mitchell says:

Neighborliness is one facet of place-making. As one becomes a good neighbor, one helps to create the small fibers that bind people and place together. Related to neighborliness is friendship, one of the sweetest goods in life and one that is only fully realizable in terms of particularity.⁵⁵

Neighborliness might be the most neglected Christian virtue because modernism has compartmentalized our homes where they become a place where one only rests and recharges rather than serves and sacrifices.

⁵⁴Ibid., 100.

⁵⁵Ibid.

Fifth, I would argue that place-making includes both the built environment and the natural environment.⁵⁶ Firstspace does matter, although it is not the whole of spatial vitality. Modernity has fallen in love with the swift, effortless and abstract. Entire neighborhoods are constructed in the matter of weeks, with cookie cutter houses that all have the same front door knob and kitchen cabinets.⁵⁷ Rivers are polluted so companies can save money on transporting waste. However, place-making includes creating “things” that linger, are beautiful, and have a positive impact upon the ground they rest. Environment shapes the human spirit, and the human spirit shapes the environment one constructs. Why is it that when people visit Europe they go to visit Notre Dame? Why do people visit castles or theaters? The answer is because the architects created something that was enduring and inherently beautiful. Philip Sheldrak says modernist ‘design rationalism’ divides cities into zones for living, working, leisure, and shopping, fragmenting the rituals of daily life.⁵⁸ He notes how Michel de Certeau opposed modernism’s a-historical tendencies and strongly emphasized the power of narrative to shape environments and transform them. “Stories take ownership of space, define boundaries and create bridges between individuals.”⁵⁹ The city then becomes a commodity with separate zones that are soon abandoned as their usefulness wanes. However, Sheldrake emphasizes that a recovery of the idea of sacred space could help the city. He is worth quoting in full here:

⁵⁶I am indebted to Jacobsen’s book on the subject. Eric Jacobsen, *The Space Between: A Christian Engagement with the Built Environment* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 14-15.

⁵⁷Kunstler traces the historical journey of America showing how Americans came to view their landscape as a commodity for exploitation rather than a social resource. He criticized zoning laws, automobiles, and building regulations. People yearn for place yet “deface what they deeply desire.” James Howard Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America’s Man-Made Landscape* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993).

⁵⁸Philip Sheldrake, “Placing the Sacred: Transcendence and the City,” *Literature and Theology* 21, no. 3 (2007): 245.

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 251. Sheldrake goes on to say, “The premodern city underlined the importance of memory, a spirituality of city life focused on ‘the common good’ and a sense of ‘the sacred.’”

What difference does the idea of ‘the sacred’ make to an ethics of urban design? It encapsulates a vision of ultimate value in human existence---an ‘interpreted world’, if you like. This moves ethics beyond a limited utilitarian understanding of ‘the moral life’ towards a notion of virtue as both the training of desire and as wisdom. One might add that ‘the sacred’, by introducing a critical note of otherness, grounds what is important about existence in something greater than the enhancement of self. We need urban designs that, like the medieval cathedral, speak to us of ‘the condition of the world’, liberate us from a sense of fundamental estrangement and counteract ‘a nihilistic and pessimistic vision of the world’. ‘The sacred’ also has resonances of *reverence* and *awe*. ‘Reverence’ must also, surely, refer to a reverence for environment, for other people and for life itself and ‘awe’ is not the same as being oppressed by the sheer size of buildings. . . . As we confront urban futures in the twenty-first century, the key question is ‘what are cities *for*?’ The good city is before everything the *humane* city. . . we must replace alienation, isolation, crime, congestion and pollution by community, participation, energy, aesthetics and joy.⁶⁰

The *humane* city is what Jesus sought to establish. In the Beelzebul controversy he entered into Satan’s city and bound him so that human flourishing could occur. He did this by freeing a body from the grasp of Satan. The Sermon on the Mount is a picture of the *humane* city. A humane city is person-centered. The British architect Richard Rogers has been a proponent of a person-centered architecture and planning with his ‘open-minded space’ which enables a variety of uses and in which as many people as possible become participants.⁶¹ Historically, urban cultures have only worked when they were participatory and affirmative of people and their values. Aesthetics and ethics cannot be divorced from one another.⁶²

Roger Scruton agrees saying we need a more comprehensive view of the city (or fill in the blank) as an aesthetic creation.⁶³ Things degenerate when they are seen as

⁶⁰Ibid., 252-53.

⁶¹Richard Rogers, *Richard Rogers and Architects: From the House to the City* (New York: Goodman, 2011).

⁶²Sheldrake continues by saying one needs to work out the connections between aesthetics and human well-being. Humans need to recover a sense that architecture and design relate to visions of life in a number of ways; architecture contributes to constructions of reality. Sheldrake, “Placing the Sacred,” 255.

⁶³Kunstler writes, “The great suburban build-out is over. . . . We shall have to live with its consequences for a long time. The chief consequence is that the living arrangement most Americans think of as ‘normal’ is bankrupting us both personally and at every level of government. . . . A further consequence is that two generations have grown up and matured in America without experiencing what it is like to live in a human habitat of quality. We have lost so much culture in the sense of how to build things

mere instruments, temporary structures that are abandoned when their purpose is fulfilled.⁶⁴ Places that are not mere instruments stand the test of time and in turn create experiences that cause other places to be made. Artists too, in their music, paintings, and graphic design sometimes need to make products that are full of beauty and reflection. Desks, phones, tables, computers, book covers, and rhythms are all a part of what it means to be place-makers.

We need a renewed culture of building, a communal enterprise that includes architects, skilled artisans, patrons, founders, developers, and financiers. And let me hypothesize further that we need a renewed culture of building for the sake of our individual and communal and trans-generational flourishing; and that for the sake of human flourishing human beings should make walkable mixed-use settlements of streets and squares and foreground buildings and background buildings; and should make buildings that are durable, comfortable, beautiful, and with a sense of decorum suited to the building task at hand.⁶⁵

Humans are embodied creatures. Therefore their interactions with place, with architecture, and with materialism matters.

well. Bodies of knowledge and sets of skills that took centuries to develop were tossed into the garbage, and we will not get them back easily. The culture of architecture was lost to Modernism and its dogmas. The culture of town planning was handed over to lawyers and bureaucrats, with pockets of resistance mopped up by the automobile, highway, and real estate interests. . . . You might say the overall consequence is that we have lost our sense of consequence. Living in places where nothing is connected properly, we have forgotten that connections are important.” Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere*, 245-46.

⁶⁴Roger Scruton, “A Plea for Beauty: A Manifesto for a New Urbanism,” in *Why Place Matters* (New York: Encounter, 2014), 158. Scruton says the proof is found in the old cities of Europe. People choose to live in the center of Paris, Rome, Prague, or London rather than the periphery. These are flourishing cities, in which people of every class and occupation live side by side in mutual dependency. People wish to live in the center of Paris because it is beautiful.

⁶⁵Philip Bess, “Metaphysical Realism, Modernity, and Traditional Cultures of Building,” in *Why Place Matters*, 131-32.

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ABSTRACT

PEOPLE AND PLACE: A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF THE KINGDOM IN MATTHEW

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This dissertation seeks to answer the following question: how do recent spatial theories help one interpret Jesus' bringing of the kingdom in Matthew? The thesis argued that Jesus comes to reorder the space of the earth in Matthew uniting the two realms of heaven and earth through his body and through the body of his community.

Chapter 1 demonstrates that although a resurgence in examining the land and spatial dimensions in the Scripture are underway, scholars in biblical studies still view space too narrowly. The conversation surrounding the spatial kingdom has been stunted in part due to the influence of Gustaf Dalman and George Eldon Ladd's definition of the kingdom.

Chapter 2 examines two of Matthew's distinct themes, his focus on the spatial nature of the kingdom and the presence of Jesus. References to *οὐρανός* and *γη* and the Immanuel theme both provide warrant for examining the spatial kingdom in Matthew's narrative.

Chapter 3 overviews recent advances in spatial theory arguing for a view called critical spatiality. Critical spatiality provides a way to understand space as a social product. Three categories for spatial understanding expand the conception of space. Space is physical, ideological, and imaginative. A trialectic of space, rather than a dialectic, begins to open up new ways of thinking of space.

Chapter 4 examines one of the deeds of Jesus from a spatial perspective.

When Jesus contests Beelzebul in Matthew 12, he challenges the “lord of the earth.” By entering Satan’s house, conquering him, and bestowing life to the exorcised person he reorders the space of the earth.

Chapter 5 argues that the Spirit, in the Beelzebul controversy and Matthew more generally, inaugurates the new exodus/creation. Exorcisms are at least partly about power over place and the exorcism is one way in which the spatial kingdom is becoming in Jesus’ ministry.

Chapter 6 broadens the scope and moves to an overview of the first three discourses in Matthew. Jesus’ words create worlds in the Sermon on the Mount where he calls his disciples to be salt and light on the earth. In the commissioning of the disciples, Jesus tells his disciples to go out bringing peace to places by healing the sick, raising the dead, and casting out demons. Jesus then explains in the kingdom parables that the space of the earth is the theater upon which the kingdom is enacted. The kingdom is here but hidden in plain sight upon the earth.

Chapter 7 covers the last two discourses of Matthew. Jesus forms a meek community in the community discourse, creating a place in contrast to the communities of the earth. In the last discourse, Jesus contests the most important sacred space in the ancient world, the temple, and replaces it with his body.

Chapter 8 analyzes two final texts that provide an *inclusio* to chapter 2. Both the spatial kingdom and the Immanuel theme are spoken of in Matthew 19:28 and 18:20 respectively. In Matthew 19:28 Jesus speaks of the new world and the new family. Then Jesus promises his presence to his church in Matthew 18:20, so that they can continue the spatial work.

Chapter 9 argues Jesus’ body and presence are the key to uniting the spatial and presence themes in Matthew. The body of Jesus is a microcosm of heaven and earth, and the kingdom is a heterotopia, a thirdspace.

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