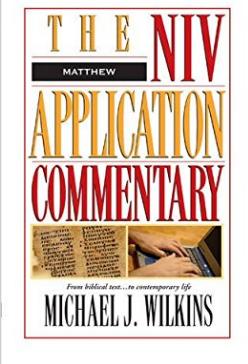


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The importance of the Gospel of Matthew in church history cannot be overstated. For Jewish readers, it affirmed the Messiahship of Jesus, referring consistently to the Scriptures to establish his credentials. For Gentile disciples, it provided powerful and dramatic support of their inclusion in God's kingdom. The cross of Christ had removed the division between Jew and non-Jew, and through Matthew's writings, we see Israel's God drawing the entire world to himself through Jesus. "The Gospel according to Matthew . . . Was the most widely read and frequently used of any of the four Gospels in the formative years of the church," writes Michael Wilkins. In this volume of the NIV Application Commentary, Wilkins explains Matthew's broad appeal not only to his ancient readers, but also to us today. Exploring the links between the Bible and our own times, Wilkins shares perspectives on Matthew's Gospel that reveal its enduring relevance for our twenty-first-century lives. Most Bible commentaries take us on a one-way trip from our world to the world of the Bible. But they leave us there, assuming that we can somehow make the return journey on our own. They focus on the original meaning of the passage but don't discuss its contemporary application. The information they offer is valuable?but the job is only half done! The NIV Application Commentary Series helps bring both halves of the interpretive task together. This unique, award-winning series shows readers how to bring an ancient message into our present-day context. It explains not only what the Bible meant but also how it speaks powerfully today. "This series promises to become an indispensable tool for every pastor and teacher who seeks to make the Bible's timeless message speak to this generation." Billy Graham "It takes more than interpretation of God's Word to change lives, it takes application. Application is the bottom line in preaching and teaching. Without it, we've missed the point of the Bible. The NIV Application Commentary is an outstanding resource for pastors and anyone else who is serious about developing 'doers of the Word.'" Rick Warren, Pastor Saddleback Valley Community Church



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Michael J. Wilkins (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is dean of the faculty and professor of New Testament language and literature at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, and the author of several books.

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