

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matthew Chapters 5-7



Jesus gave the sermon as a standard for all Christians, realizing that it's requirements cannot be met in our own power. The Sermon of the Mount (Matthew chapters 5-7) is ONE, unified teaching. Dallas Willard explains, "The aim of the sermon is to help people come to hopeful and realistic terms with their lives here on earth by clarifying, in concrete terms, the nature of the kingdom into which they are now invited by Jesus call".

Beatitudes

Jesus starts off with the "Beatitudes" (Matthew 5:3-12). He tells us how to be truly "blessed" – blessing being our ultimate well being and distinctive spiritual joy. Blessing (shalom) has also been defined as "incorporating the meaning of wholeness, of joy, of well being, of holistic peace ..., of the condition of inner satisfaction expressed by Jesus in John 14:27 where he said 'my peace I give unto you, not as the world gives'".

Jesus disputes the conventional wisdom which says the wealthy and influential enjoy more of God's blessings. The beatitudes have been described as "lifestyle goals", "basis for ethical behavior", "standards for believers" and gets to the heart of the quality of life that God intends for us. The closer we come to Jesus standards, the more we experience the blessing of God.

There are 8 "counsels" contained:

1) Verse 3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven".

"Poor in spirit" is opposite of "rich in pride". Speaks of being humble, not proud. Other relevant scriptures:

Matthew 18:4

Matthew 23:12

James 1:9-11, 4:1-10 (especially v. 6)

Gal 6:4

2) Verse 4: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted"

"Mourn" = to care deeply; deep concern

3) Verse 5: “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth”

Meek = humility (application of humility to behavior)

“Power under control” (e.g. Moses in Number 12:3)

Psalms 37:11

4) Verse 6: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled”

Seeking after God – seeking a right relationship with God; seeking what is good, just, right and equitable

Psalms 42:1-2

5) Verse 7: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy”

Merciful = compassionate

Mathew 18:21-35

6) Verse 8: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God”

Heart = center of our being, including our mind, will and emotions

Pure in heart = integrity; clean and undefiled in thoughts, feelings and behaviors

Psalms 51:6-12

Phil 4:8

7) Verse 9: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God”

Peacemaker = one who causes peace, who causes quietness and rest; one who seeks to build and sustain unity

Matthew 12:25

8) Verses 10-12: “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you”.

This beatitude is a call to commitment – standing up for what we believe even when it costs us something.

Matthew 10:32-39

Case Study: Stephen in Acts 7

Salt & Light (Matthew 5:13-16)

It is ordinary people like us - living out the Beatitudes with God's help – which are to be the Salt & Light of the world! We should be doing good deeds in the name of God (Jesus) and for His glory! (verse 16; I Cor 10:31; Col 3:17).

Salt = flavoring and preserving

Light = illuminates the darkness caused by Satan and the world. Jesus is the “light of the world” and we are to be His reflectors (refer to John 8:12, 9:5, 12:46; I John 1:5-7).

Fulfillment of the Law (Matthew 5:17-20)

Jesus fulfilled the law in that He gave it its full meaning. Jesus lived a sinless life, and perfectly kept both the letter and spirit of the moral Old Testament law. His righteousness is imputed to us when we believe in and receive the gift of salvation that He offers (Eph 2:14-16; 2 Cor 5:21; John 1:12-13).

Jesus emphasizes the Law's deep, underlying principles and total commitment to it rather than mere external acknowledgement and obedience. He emphasizes the “spirit” of the law, not merely the “letter” of the law.

Jesus refutes the hypocritical, pharisaical legalism – and at the same time validates the value of the Old Testament law as rightly intended. The heart of the moral Old Testament Law consists of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) and to Love God and Love People (Duet 6:4-6; Lev 19:9-19).

The Pharisees and scribes missed the boat by focusing on external actions; God wants our internal hearts to be right, and out of good hearts to flow love and good deeds (see Matthew 12:3-37; 23:1-28).

Living the Kingdom Life In Every Day Situations (Matthew 5:21-48)

Jesus contrasts the externalistic interpretation of the rabbis on one hand - versus the correct interpretation based on goodness flowing from our hearts on the other. He works through six specific situations in which He contrasts goodness flowing from our hearts versus legalistic actions.

OLD INTERPETATION OF LAW VS. NEW KINGDOM LIVING STANDARDS

Situation	Old “Law”	New Kingdom Living
1. Matthew 5:21-26 Irritation with another person	No murder	Intense desire to be of help. No anger or contempt; seek reconciliation.
2. Matthew 5:27 – 30 Sexual attraction	No intercourse	No cultivation of lust. Be holy in thought and deed (refer to James 1:13-15 for Lust → Action → “Death” progression).

3. Matthew 5:31-32 Unhappiness with marriage	Give “pink slip”; very easy divorce	Divorce should be rare.
4. Matthew 5:33 – 37 Wanting someone to believe something	Keep vow/oath made to convince	Only say how things are or are not. No verbal manipulation (refer to Eccl 5:4-9).
5. Matthew 5:38 – 42 Being personally injured	Inflict exactly the same injury on offender (get revenge)	Don’t harm, but help the one who has damaged you.
6. Matthew 5: 43-48 Having an enemy	Hate your enemy	Love and bless your enemy, as the heavenly Father does (refer to Jesus example in Luke 23:32-34).

Sincere Good Works - (Matthew 6:1-18)

Doing the right things for the wrong reasons (e.g. to gain the honor and recognition of others) undermines the purity of our good works. Jesus encourages us to let our good deeds be seen so that onlookers will glorify God (chapter 5), not that they will be impressed by us (chapter 6).

[Concept of the “Audience of One” (Col 3:17, 23-24). Jesus should be the audience that motivates us and that we play to. We should do everything as if we were doing it for Him and for His glory].

Jesus desires for His followers to do sincere (properly motivated) good works. Sincere good works draw us closer to God, strengthens His Kingdom, benefit others and benefit ourselves. Three specific works are highlighted in this section:

1) Giving (verses 1-4)

Giving should be motivated by our desire to help people, not bring honor to us. God will reward us for properly motivated giving.

2) Prayer (verses 5-15)

Prayer should be sincere from the heart, not techniques or formulas to try and manipulate God. The Lord’s prayer models a balance including worship, focus on God’s kingdom, character development and meeting of needs.

3) Fasting (verses 16-18)

Fasting helps us focus on God and attract His attention. It humbles and softens us, and helps us better concentrate and increase our sensitivity to working of the Spirit.

Don't Worry About Worldly Things – Seek God's Kingdom and His Righteousness (Matthew 6:25-34)

- We need to avoid loving the world (James 4:4; I John 2:15-17); we should be content with having our basic needs met and not weary ourselves out trying to gain money/possessions (I Tim 6:6-11)
- We should not worry, but trust God to provide (prayer is a tool to help us focus on Him instead of worrying – Phil 4:6-7; I Peter 5:7)
- Our priority in life should be to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness – God is capable of meeting our earthly needs (Phil 4:19)

Treasures in Heaven (Matthew 6:19-24)

TREASURE PRINCIPLE

Treasure Principle:

“You can't take it with you – but you can send it on ahead!”

Jim Elliot: “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose”.

The Bible mentions the ability to earn “crowns”, “praise”, “treasure” and “rewards” (I Cor 9:25; II Tim 4:8; Jam 1:12; I Pet 5:4; Rev 2:10; I Cor 4:5; Mat 5:11-12, 6:19-20; Eph 6:8; Col 3:23-24; Rev 22:12). **Perhaps our greatest reward will be to hear “well done, good and faithful servant!”.**

Parable of the Talents from Matthew 25:14-30 “... Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness! ...”.

Matthew 6:19-21

Luke 12:13-34

What is this “treasure in heaven”?

Includes:

- Power (Luke 19:15-19)
- Possessions (Mat 19:21)
- Pleasures (Psalm 16:11)
- “10,000 percent” return on our investment! (Mat 19:29)
- Jesus is our ultimate treasure (Phil 3:7-11)

Treasure Principle Key #1:
“God owns everything. I’m His money manager”.

Psalms 24:1
Psalms 50:12
Psalms 89:11
Psalms 100:3
I Cor 4:7
I Cor 6:19-20
I Cor 10:26
Mat 25:14-30

Treasure Principle #2:
“My heart always goes where I put God’s money”.

Mat 6:21
Exodus 36:2-7
2 Cor 8:1-7

Treasure Principle #3:
“Heaven, not earth, is my home”.

Roadblocks to giving?

Heb 11:13-16
2 Cor 5:20
Phil 3:20

Treasure Principle #4:
“I should live not for the dot but for the line”.

Ecc 5:10-15

Treasure Principle #5:
“Giving is the only antidote to materialism”.

I Tim 6:6-11, 17-19
Luke 19:1-10

Treasure Principle #6:
“God prospers me not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving”.

2 Cor 9:6-11
2 Cor 8:14-15
Acts 20:35

Taking a Look at Matthew Chapter Seven

Matthew 7:1-11 “Attributes of Christian Love”

Jesus illustrates Christian love with three attributes:

- 1) Should not judge (condemn or blame) those around us (verses 1-5)
- 2) Not force “wonderful things” upon people – teaching should be given in accordance with the spiritual capacity of the learner (verse 6)
- 3) Should just ask what we want from people – and from God (verses 7-11)

Matthew 7:12 “The Golden Rule”

Matthew 7:12 “So **in everything, do** to others **what you would have them do to you**, for this sums up the Law and the prophets”. (fyi – shorter version found in Luke 6:31).

The Golden Rule is **inclusive** (“in everything”), **proactive and action oriented** (“do”), **positive** (“do to others what you would have them do to you”), and it’s **personal** (“you”).

Matthew 7:13-14 “Narrow vs. Wide Roads”

Going with the crowd and the easy route often leads to destruction.

Matthew 7:15-23 “A Tree and It’s Fruit”

- People’s outward actions reveal their inward character
- Knowing God and doing properly motivated works are what counts; “religious” works apart from God have no real eternal value

Matthew 7:24-27 “Wise vs. Foolish Builder”

**** SEE LESSON HANDOUT RE: PARABLE OF TWO BUILDERS ****

Matthew 7:28-29 Post Sermon

Jesus teaching is amazing, authoritative and divine – not the teaching of a mere man!