

SERMON ON THE MOUNT ... PART 1

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There is quite varied content in the Bible — a whole chunk of it is history ... poetry ... wisdom — a large amount of prophecy which we've reviewed recently — but also a large portion of practical instruction in how to live our lives.

We live today in a crazy world — really odd — hardly any absolutes ... nowadays even some of the basics such as marriage ... which can be between 2 men or 2 women. Marry your dog? Marry a ghost? Also ... after thousands of years of man's history ... even gender is no longer clear!

As Bible believers ... we do have a text book which does actually give us clear instructions in how to live. At least as an aspiration — something that we can reach out for ... even if we occasionally fall short. At least we recognise where we should be.

Luke 6:40

40 "**A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.**

We are disciples (students)? When we are fully-trained ... we will be like the Lord Jesus? That's what Jesus says.

One question we could ask ourself is — am I like my teacher? Do we understand the importance of paying attention to our teacher?

Luke 6:46-49

46 "But **why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?**

47 "**Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them,** I will show you whom he is like:

48 "**He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock.** And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.

49 "But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

COME TO JESUS . HEAR HIS SAYINGS ... AND DO THEM. PUT INTO PRACTICE!

Today I want to review the most important sermon ever preached — the Sermon on the Mount. By The Lord Jesus — even though 1/3 of Americans think it was Billy Graham!

One writer: "The Sermon on The Mount is probably the best-known part of the teaching of Jesus, though arguably it is the least-understood, and **certainly it is the least obeyed**".

Let's review — and see how we are doing.

The whole sermon covers Matthew Chapters 5 and 6 and 7.

Matthew 5:1-10

1 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

2 **Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:**

3 "**Blessed are the poor in spirit,**

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 **Blessed are those who mourn,**

For they shall be comforted.

5 **Blessed are the meek,**

For they shall inherit the earth.

6 **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,**

For they shall be filled.

7 **Blessed are the merciful,**

For they shall obtain mercy.

8 **Blessed are the pure in heart,**

For they shall see God.

9 **Blessed are the peacemakers,**

For they shall be called sons of God.

10 **Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,**

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The 8 Beatitudes (from the Latin: Beati — **Be Divinely Joyful and Happy**. The Greek: Makarios). It is real.

Matthew 5:3

3 "**Blessed are the poor in spirit,
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

The first quality we need! It doesn't mean weak ... timid! Not "spiritually poor" either (rubbish at prayer and Bible study!).

Jesus was poor in spirit.

It has the meaning of: Not self-important ... not self-reliant ... not self-confident. **We should completely recognise our dependency on God**. He's the architect ... it's His plan ... He holds the future. He's the Judge!

People in this world want to be in complete control of their own lives. They won't accept anyone "dictating" to them — including God. That is the very opposite ... complete arrogance!

Isaiah 66:1-2

1 **Thus says the LORD:**

"Heaven is My throne,

And earth is My footstool.

Where is the house that you will build Me?

And where is the place of My rest?

2 **For all those things My hand has made,**

And all those things exist,"

Says the LORD.

"But on this one will I look:

**On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit,
And who trembles at My word.**

Poor and a contrite spirit. That is attractive to God.

If somebody recognises they're "empty" — God can fill them.

However ... if we want to be "the Boss" of our own lives ... achieve "success" the world's way — where is the room for God? How can God fit into our lives?

Is God in the driver's seat? Or us?

Matthew 5:4

**4 Blessed are those who mourn,
For they shall be comforted.**

Those that mourn ... doesn't mean to go around "mournful" ... miserable and complaining!

But ... if we have the mind of God ... we can't help but be affected by the impact on people's lives of a fallen world. Ignorance ... rebellion ... pride ... sin ... comes with a terrible cost in human suffering. Most live lives of quiet desperation.

Life could be so much better if people believed God. One day we all will be "comforted" — we can be now ... others may have to await the coming of the new heavens and the new earth.

With God's mind ... we can/should see the consequences of sin. And not just for us.

Where will same-sex relationships ... attacks on marriage ... gender-fluidity ... end? It will end in misery and destruction. It should help us to be better at praying for "Thy Kingdom come".

Matthew 5:5

**5 Blessed are the meek,
For they shall inherit the earth.**

The meek shall inherit the earth.

That does not mean weak ... quiet ... shy ... retiring. Moses was the meekest man on earth — yet he was one of Israel's greatest leaders. Jesus said of Himself "I am meek and lowly of heart". Although he was very meek ... He wasn't weak and retiring!! Jesus publicly took on hypocrites (Brood of vipers) ... He chased money-changers out of the temple (twice!). He was meek in a Biblical sense.

Meek in the Bible: Patient endurance in difficult circumstances — seeing the bigger picture — you're surrendered to God's will. A person who is not meek is resentful — agitated — seeking to force their own will.

To remain meek actually requires real strength and resilience!

Matthew 5:6

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

This suggests a passion ... an enthusiasm? If we're physically hungry/thirsty — we'd take action (pretty quickly!). Spiritual hunger is more important than physical hunger!

Do we hunger and thirst for righteousness? Or ... are we half-hearted ... Laodicean? Drifting ... drifting away?

The implication is if we're filled with righteousness ... something we must have ... it is easier to produce the fruits of verses 2-10.

Matthew 5:7-9

7 Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

Merciful ... not overlooking or condoning sin in other people ... but allowing for human weakness and at times ... ignorance.

We should be quick to forgive others.

Pure in heart ... God doesn't like mixtures! He likes things to be kept separate. God likes purity. We are charged to be "Pure in heart". Avoid stains and corruption of the world. We need to be single-minded. It's not easy.

James 4:6-10

6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

"God resists the proud,

But gives grace to the humble." (to the pure in spirit)

7 **Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

8 **Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.** Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

10 **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**

Purify your hearts. It takes a bit of action!

Be Vigilant! Are we overcoming the world?

A true disciple can only have one master. We can't afford to be unequally yoked to the world. Keep yourselves separate! Keep yourselves pure!

Finally in verse 9 — Be Peacemakers. We can't always achieve peace with everybody. Jesus couldn't achieve peace. Paul ... not everyone was at peace with Paul. He had his enemies. The other Apostles ... had enemies. Think of Jesus' return and the Wrath of The Lamb.

But ... for our part ... we should bring peace and calm into situations. Not "stirrers" or agitators ... provoking arguments and dissension.

Romans 12:17-21

17 **Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men.**

18 **If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.**

19 Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "**Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.**

20 **Therefore**

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;

If he is thirsty, give him a drink;

For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."

21 **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

Romans 12:17 (NASB)

17 **Never pay back evil for evil to anyone.** Respect what is right in the sight of all men.

Romans 12:17 (TPT)

17 **Never hold a grudge or try to get even,** but plan your life around the noblest way to benefit others.

We should aspire to do it God's way. Look at the next verse:

Proverbs 15:1-2

1 **A soft answer turns away wrath,** *(that will defuse a situation)*

But a harsh word stirs up anger.

2 **The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly,**

But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

Matthew 5:10

10 **Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,**
For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Persecuted — for righteousness sake. Because of the good life you are living.

The first 7 Beatitudes are “inner qualities” — this one is external ... it is other people who will persecute us. It comes with the territory. The closer we follow Christ ... the more we will be persecuted.

Mark 4:13-17

13 And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

14 **"The sower sows the word.**

15 "And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 "These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 "and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time.

Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble.

Persecution for the Word's sake ... because of the truth. If we're popular ... there may be a problem?!

Matthew 5:11-12

11 "**Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.**

12 "**Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

How many of these qualities do you have ... in abundance?