

SERMON ON THE MOUNT ... PART 3

JAMIE MCNAB

5.1.19

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' most famous sermon! A clear teaching for His disciples.

Some common errors:

- (1) Jesus was teaching the Jews under the Old Covenant — so none of it is relevant to us! Foolishness!
- (2) Jesus was showing us how inadequate the Old Testament is — and is in a sense ... upgrading the Old Testament laws to be "more Christian" — which subtly demeans the Old Testament! To show that it is primitive — basic!
- (3) The Pharisees and Sadducees were "super-righteous" individuals and Jesus was creating impossible standards — telling us that our righteousness should exceed that of the Pharisees ... Sadducees ... Scribes.

All 3 views are wrong!

We started looking at Jesus' illustrations last week in Matthew Chapter 5.

Jesus repeatedly said: "You have heard (not read) ... But I say".

What His disciples had heard was the tainted or contaminated teaching of the Pharisees — hypocrites — whom Jesus accused of making the Word of God of no effect by their traditions.

Jesus upheld and restored the Old Testament teaching in its pure ... original form ... cleansed away the traditions of the elders.

For example:

- Thou shalt not murder ... but also don't be angry without a cause. Jesus reinforces what the scriptures already said — the teaching of Leviticus 19:17-18. You shall not hate your brother in your heart.

- Thou shalt not commit adultery. But Jesus also points to the 10th commandment — don't covet your neighbour's wife in your heart. Job had made a covenant with his eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman. It was Old Testament teaching! Not something new!
- Don't put away your wife (other than Porneia). This was not a new standard. God has always hated divorce — and calls it treachery in Malachi Chapter 2.

This is a big challenge in our society ... where apparently 40%-50% of marriages end in divorce — and today — fornication is "normal".

- Don't swear falsely. Your word should be good ... true ... honest. There is no need to copy the Pharisees who swear by heaven or the temple etc. But if you are going to vow (for example: marriage vows) or pledge — think it through carefully first (Ecclesiastes Chapter 5).

Matthew 5:38-42

38 "**You have heard** that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' *(It's okay to go and get your revenge ... up to the level of damage you have received. That is not what Jesus teaches or the Old Testament taught)*

39 "**But I tell you not to resist an evil person.** But **whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.**

40 "If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also.

41 "And **whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.**

42 "Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away.

The Pharisees took the scriptures out of context — they taught that you could retaliate ... it was right and proper to get your "pound of flesh". That is not what the scriptures taught.

The Old Testament does mention "eye for an eye" ... but is in the context of due legal process carried out by appointed judges. Part of the civil justice system.

Deuteronomy 19:15-21

15 "**One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.**

16 "If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing,

17 "then both men in the controversy shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who serve in those days. (A formal court setting)

18 "And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother,

19 "then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother; so you shall put away the evil from among you.

20 "And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you.

21 "Your eye shall not pity: life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Judges are objective ... independent ... and must apply the law fairly. The punishment must fit the crime.

It has nothing to do with your personal vengeance. Just because someone has slighted you — even treated you badly — does not mean you can seek personal vengeance (as the Pharisees taught). They were twisting/misusing half of a verse.

Leviticus 19:18

18 'You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

No vengeance!

Jesus wasn't introducing a new rule.

"To slap on the cheek" = to insult. Don't "resist" — oppose in kind. Don't retaliate. Don't be aggressive. Be a peacemaker.

We also saw in Matthew 5:41: "Compel you to go a mile". People occupying a military position ... like the Romans ... who could enlist your assistance. Don't seethe ... get bitter. Why not even offer to be more helpful?

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; (Proverbs 25)

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.

Paul gives the same teaching. And backs it up with Old Testament references (Deuteronomy 32 and Proverbs 25).

Matthew 5:43-47

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' (Not Biblical)

44 "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, (Jesus isn't changing scripture ... He is correcting their teachings. They were so wrong!)

45 "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

47 "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?

"Hate your enemies"? That was an addition of the Pharisees!

Jesus upholds the pure ... original teaching. Be alert even to your enemy's needs.

Exodus 23:4-5

4 "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again.

5 "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, and you would refrain from helping it, you shall surely help him with it.

Be even helpful even to your enemies. Old Testament!

Proverbs 24:17-18

17 **Do not rejoice when your enemy falls,
And do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles;**
18 **Lest the LORD see it, and it displease Him,
And He turn away His wrath from him.**

Don't laugh when your enemy is in trouble.

Proverbs 25:21-22

21 **If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat;
And if he is thirsty, give him water to drink;**
22 **For so you will heap coals of fire on his head,
And the LORD will reward you.**

Quoted by Paul in Romans Chapter 12.

To summarise this section of Matthew Chapter 5. Jesus was not introducing new Christian ideas — not contradicting or even upgrading the Old Testament. But ... simply restoring the truth of God — as it should be practiced by His disciples.

And ... none of this is impossibly difficult?

- Don't be angry or hate others
- Don't lust
- Don't make false promises ... be truthful
- Let God take vengeance for you
- Love your neighbours ... even your enemies

Matthew 5:48

48 **"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.**

We should have higher standards than the Pharisees!

Matthew 6:1-4

1 **"Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them.** Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven.
2 **"Therefore, when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men.** Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

3 "But when you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

4 "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly.

Action required!

Matthew 6:1 (NASB)

1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them;

Our charitable deeds may be seen — but we shouldn't be doing them to be seen. Wrong motive!

Matthew 6:5-15

5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

6 "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

7 "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. (*We still need to ask ... it's polite*)

9 "In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.

10 Your kingdom come.

Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,

As we forgive our debtors.

13 And do not lead us into temptation,

But deliver us from the evil one.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

14 "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Hypocrites pray ... to be seen.

Our prayer life should be private.

No need for vain repetition. Or long prayers just for the sake of it. We're not going to win God over by going on and on.

The rabbis taught: "Whenever the righteous make their prayer long ... their prayer is heard".

And note: We're praying to "Our Father" which implies a close ... family relationship. Not some remote ... aloof ... distant being.

Matthew 6:16-18

16 "**Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting.** Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

17 "But you, **when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,**
18 "**so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.**

When you fast ... NOT "IF"!!

But ... not to be seen ... unlike the Pharisees.

Matthew 6:19-34

19 "**Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth,** where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

20 "but **lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,** where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

21 "**For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

22 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.

23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 "**No one can serve two masters**; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and mammon.**

25 "Therefore ***I say to you*, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?**

26 "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

27 "**Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?**

28 "So **why do you worry about clothing?** Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

29 "and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 "**Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?**

31 "**Therefore do not worry**, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

32 "For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 "**But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.**

34 "**Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.** Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Don't be so concerned about money and material things. TRUST YOUR FATHER.

Compare to the Pharisees ... who loved money. They loved money ... chased money.

Luke 16:10-14

10 "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.

11 "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 "And if you have not been faithful in what is another man's, who will give you what is your own?

13 "**No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.**"

14 Now **the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.**

(KJV: "Covetous" — but Greek is "Lovers of silver" ... as in money)

1 Timothy 6:6-11

6 **Now godliness with contentment is great gain.**

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

9 But **those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.**

10 **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.**

11 **But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.**

The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

And people who don't have much money can still love it!

We're all familiar with the impact of money — and the desire for money — even in religion. Tele-evangelists with private jets (Gerald Flurry ...too!) ... multi-million \$\$\$ homes ... **Churches of God are not exempt.** The desire for riches and power ... can be found almost anywhere!

But ... they should not be found among Jesus' disciples. "Give us this day our daily bread".