

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - January 12, 2023

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Title: "The Sermon on The Mount"

Part I - Introduction

Scripture Reference: Matthew - Chapters 5-7

I. Introduction

A. It has been said that the Sermon on The Mount is one of the most misunderstood messages that Jesus ever gave. One group says it is God's Plan of Salvation and that if we ever hope to go to heaven, we must obey these rules.

B. Another group calls it a "Charter For World Peace" and begs the nations of the earth to accept it.

C. A third group tells us that the Sermon on The Mount does not apply to today, but that it will apply at some future time, perhaps during the Tribulation or the Millennial Kingdom.

D. I am convinced that **Matthew 5:20** was and still is the key to this very important sermon. It is in this verse that Jesus said the following: **"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."**

E. The main theme of the sermon is true righteousness. The religious leaders of Jesus' day had an artificial, external righteousness based on law. But the righteousness Jesus described is a true and vital righteousness that begins internally, in the heart.

F. The Pharisees were concerned about the minute details of conduct, but they neglected the major matters of Character.

Point: Conduct flows out of Character.

G. Whatever application the Sermon on The Mount may have to world problems, or to future events, it is certain that this sermon has definite applications for us today.

H. Jesus gave this message to individual believers, not to the unsaved world at large, simply because, the unsaved cannot and will not live up to the standards laid out in this sermon.

I. What was taught in the Sermon on The Mount is repeated in the New Testament Epistles for the Church today.

J. My prayer is that as we go through this and future lessons on this Great Sermon, you will be blessed, and even more motivated, to live a life that is pleasing and acceptable to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

II. Background/Context

A. As we will unfold during this study of the Sermon on The Mount, Jesus put forth many revolutionary truths in the minds of those Jewish religionists who heard them, and these truths have continued to have a great impact on the minds of readers, for now more than two thousand years later.

B. We will discover together during our study that the blessedness the Lord Jesus Christ offers is not dependent on self-effort or self-righteousness, but on the new nature that God gives.

C. Through God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, man can share

God's nature, which is characterized by true righteousness, and its consequences - blessedness and happiness. In Christ, we partake of our Lord's peace and happiness.

III. Background (Cont'd) - The Political Context

A. Most Jews of Jesus' day expected the Messiah to be, first of all, a military and political leader, who would deliver them from the yoke of Rome and establish a prosperous Jewish kingdom that would lead the world.

B. He would be greater than any king, leader, or prophet in history. After Jesus miraculously fed the multitudes on the far side of the Sea of Galilee, Scripture records - "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." (John 6:15).

C. Many of the Jewish people saw Jesus as the anticipated leader of a great welfare state in which even their routine physical needs would be provided. But Jesus would not allow Himself to be mistaken for that sort of king, and He disappeared from the crowd.

D. Later, when Pilate asked Jesus, "Art thou the King of the Jews?" The Lord replied - "**Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?**" Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? Jesus answered, **My kingdom is not of this world:** ..." (John 18:33c - 36a).

E. The force of the Sermon on the Mount is that the message

and work of the King are first and most importantly internal and not external, and it is spiritual and moral rather than physical and political.

Comments:

- 1) In the Sermon on The Mount, we do not find politics or social reform.
- 2) Our Lord's concern is for what men are because what you are determines what you will do!

F. The ideals and principles in the Sermon on The Mount are completely contrary to those of human societies and governments.

G. In Christ's kingdom the most exalted persons are those who are the lowest in the world's estimation, and vice versa.

IV. Background (Cont'd) - The Religious Context

A. Jesus lived in a highly complex religious society, one that included many professional religionists. Those professionals were in four primary groups: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, and the Zealots. Here is a brief introduction of these groups.

1. The Pharisees believed that right religion consisted in divine laws and religious tradition.
 - a. Their primary concern was fastidious (i.e., accurate and attentive observance) of the Mosaic law and of every minute detail of the traditions handed down by various rabbis over the centuries. They focused on adhering to the laws of the past.
2. The Sadducees focused on the present. They were the religious liberals who discounted most things supernatural and who modified both Scripture and traditions to fit

their own philosophy.

3. The **Essenes** were ascetics (i.e., those characterized by the practice of severe self-discipline and abstention from all forms of indulgence). As a result, right religion meant separation from the rest of society. They led very strict lives and lived in remote, barren areas such as Qumran, on the northwest edge of the Dead Sea.
4. The **Zealots** were fanatical nationalists who thought that the right religion centered in radical political activism. These Jewish revolutionaries looked down on fellow Jews who would not take up arms against Rome.

B. Consider this summary of the four primary groups of professional religionists. The Pharisees said, "Go back"; the Sadducees said, "Go ahead"; the Essenes said, "Go away"; and the Zealots said, "Go against."

C. The Pharisees were traditionalists; the Sadducees were modernists; the Essenes were separatists; and the Zealots were activists.

D. Jesus was not and could not be characterized by any of these groups. To the Pharisees He said that true spirituality is internal, not external, To the Sadducees Jesus said that it is God's way, not man's way.

E. To the Essenes He said that it is a matter of the heart, not the body. To the Zealots He said that it is a matter of worship, not revolution.

F. It is for the reasons just stated that I am convinced that

Matthew 5:20 was and still is the key to this very important sermon.

V. The Importance of The Sermon on The Mount

A. I believe there are at least five reasons why the Sermon on The Mount is important:

1. **First**, it shows the absolute **necessity of the new birth**. Its standards are much too high and demanding to be met by human power.
 - a. Only those who partake of God's own nature through Jesus Christ can fulfill such demands.
 - b. The standards of the Sermon on The Mount go far beyond those of Moses in the law, demanding not only righteous actions but righteous attitudes - not just that we do right but that we be right!
2. **Second**, the sermon intends to drive the listeners to Jesus Christ as man's only hope of meeting God's standards.
 - a. If man cannot live up to the divine standards on his own (and he cannot), he needs a supernatural power to enable him.
3. **Third**, this sermon gives God's pattern for happiness and for true success. It reveals the standards, the objectives, and the motivations that, with God's help, will fulfill what God has designed man to be. It is here that we find the way of joy, peace, and contentment.
4. **Fourth**, this sermon is perhaps the greatest scriptural resource for witnessing, for reaching others for Christ.

- a. A Christian who personifies these principles of Jesus will be a spiritual magnet, attracting others to the Lord who empowers us to live a life that pleases Him.

Point: A life that is obedient to the principles of the Sermon on The Mount is the Church's greatest tool for evangelism.

5. **Fifth**, a life lived in obedience to the Sermon on The Mount is the only life that is pleasing to Almighty God. This is the believer's highest reason for following Jesus' teaching - it pleases God!
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I trust that you have been blessed from this Introduction to the Sermon on The Mount. My prayer is that as you read, re-read, meditate, and live in obedience to the Word of God, that you will be abundantly blessed.

Now see how you do with responding to the questions that follow, based on the material covered in this lesson.

1. What is the theme of the Sermon on The Mount?

Answer: _____

2. Where else in Scripture is the Sermon on The Mount repeated?

Answer: _____

3. The blessedness that the Lord Jesus Christ offers is dependent on what?

Answer: _____

4. When Pilate asked Jesus - "Art thou the King of the Jews?"; What did Jesus say specifically about the location of His Kingdom? (Hint: John 18:36a)

Answer: _____

5. True or False. In the Sermon on The Mount, we find politics and social reform.

Answer: _____

6. Which professional religious group believed that right religion consisted in divine laws and religious tradition?

Answer: _____

7. Which professional religious group were religious liberals?

Answer: _____

8. In summarizing the various professional religious groups, which group said - "Go away"?

Answer: _____

9. Which group said - "Go against:?"

Answer: _____

10. In order for man to live up to the standards of the Sermon on The Mount, what is First of all a necessity?

Answer: _____

Let us now search the Scriptures as the Bereans did (Acts 17:11). Please fill in the blank spaces. All passages have been taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

"For in _____ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a _____."

[Galatians 6:15]

"For we are his _____, created in Christ Jesus unto _____ works, which God hath before _____ that we should _____ in them.

[Ephesians 2:10]

"I am the _____, ye are the _____; He that abideth in _____, and I in him, the same bringeth forth _____: for _____ me ye can do _____."

[John 15:5]

"Let this _____ be in you, which was also in _____:"

[Philippians 2:5]

"In his days Judah shall be saved, and _____ shall dwell _____:
and this is his name whereby he shall be called, _____
_____."

[Jeremiah 23:6]

"Therefore if any man be in _____, he is a new _____:" old
things are _____ away; behold, all things are become _____."

[2 Corinthians 5:17]

Thank you again for joining in on this study session and we will continue
with Part II during out next time together if, the Lord does not
Rapture us to Glory!

In The Master's Service,

//Pastor Austin//