

The Sermon on the Mount Intro

Intro – Laying the groundwork for this series of messages on the Sermon on the Mount.

There is a lot to unpack (3 chapters)

There is profound blessing

There is intensity

There are challenges

We are going to go through it all during the next many weeks.

When we are through, I believe that we will have even more reverence for all the work that Jesus completed during His time here on earth.

There are several major recorded discourses of Jesus Christ

Here are four of them:

1. Sermon on the mount (Matthew chapters 5-7)
2. Major series of Kingdom parables (Matthew chapter 13)
3. Olivet discourse (Matthew chapters 24-25)
4. The Upper room (John chapters 14-17)

Side Note the length of the gospel of Matthew - Matthew, as a tax collector, most likely knew how to write in short hand as it was a common job requirement for that position at the time.

Before we get into the Sermon on the Mount, some context:

- What was going on?
- What was Jesus up to before this sermon?

Matthew Chapter 4: 23-25

Teaching, Preaching, and Healing

²³ Jesus was going all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every[Ⓜ] disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴ Then the news about Him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to Him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And He healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds followed Him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

Jesus went all over the place healing, casting out demons and preaching about **The good news of the Kingdom of God**

We could do a ten-week study on the Kingdom of God just by itself

The term “Kingdom of God or Kingdom of Heaven” appears over 80 times in the New Testament, largely in the gospels.

And it’s a central theme in Jesus’ teachings.

What is the Kingdom of God/Heaven?

- 1) God’s reign and rule over all things
- 2) The Kingdom of God here on earth was established when Jesus arrived (divinity of Jesus)

Jesus arrival and the kingdom of heaven preached by John the Baptist

Matthew 3:1-3 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Wilderness of Judea and saying, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!” For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:[Ⓜ] Prepare the way for the Lord;[Ⓜ] make His paths straight!

- 3) Jesus died to win victory over sin and death so that...
- 4) When we accept Jesus into our hearts, we become citizens of the kingdom of God/Heaven and begin a relationship with Him.
- 5) In this relationship with Jesus, He reigns in our hearts as King.
- 6) Jesus also promises to come a second time to complete His reign by creating a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21,22

So the Kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom right now where God reigns supreme and Jesus Christ is King.

Present state - The kingdom of heaven has come to those who have submitted themselves to Jesus to be governed by Him

Future state - The King will come to reign over the earth; the Kingdom of heaven will then be on earth ([Matthew 6:10](#); [Revelation 11:15](#)).

Why is this Kingdom of God important? I thought this was about the sermon on the mount?

What is the sermon on the mount?

Many scholars call the **Sermon on the Mount** - **The Great Manifesto of the Kingdom of God**

Manifesto (definition)

1. a public declaration of intentions, opinions, objectives, or motives, as one issued by a government, sovereign, or organization.
2. a mission statement or other document written and disseminated by an individual or group to enumerate or expound the guiding principles and beliefs that inform their actions.

The sermon on the mount tells us who we are in the Kingdom of God through the grace of God working in our lives.

Who was it addressed to?

His disciples/believers:

Matthew 5:1,2

When He saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. Then He began to teach them, saying:

But there were many other listeners by the end of this discourse in

Matthew 7:28-29

When Jesus had finished this sermon, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, because He was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

The Outline

The Manifesto of the Kingdom of God

Section 1 – Our relationship to ourselves (The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:3-16)

Section 2 – Our Relationship to the Law (Matthew 5:17-48)

Section 3 - Our Relationship to God (Matthew 6)

Section 4 - Our Relationship to others (Matthew 7)

Section 1 – Our relationship to ourselves (The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:3-16)

The first 16 verses of Matthew chapter 5 will show the true Christian and deal with character.

The rest of the Sermon on the mount will deal with the conduct or behavior that comes out of that character.

Blessed are the...

blessed translates to 'Oh how happy' or 'happy' (Greek word is Makarios)

There are eight Beatitudes that Jesus lists here:

The first seven will deal with items that make up the Christian character

The eighth will deal with the world's reaction to these characteristics

Important to note:

These beatitudes are not natural to us in a sinful, fallen state.

In fact, they are in direct contrast to the world.

Jesus is going to teach that true righteousness is inward.

"The Beatitudes place the emphasis on what we are as opposed to what we do." Chuck Smith

This is an important distinction to remember as we go through the sermon. Especially, when we get to the parts about the Law.

As citizens of the kingdom of God, living in the grace of our King, Jesus Christ, these Beatitudes are what we can be. They are not do-attitudes.

They flow from our inward character as we draw nearer and nearer to Him and He refines us.

Starting next week we will begin to unpack these beatitudes.

Section 2 - Our Relationship to the Law (Matthew 5:17-48)

This next section is difficult! It's the Law on steroids.

Here we have Jesus talking about the Law.

Certainly, the Jewish disciples were quite familiar with the Law.

Here we have Jesus saying things like:

“You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, Do not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment.” Matthew 5:21-22

I'm standing in a room of murderers!

Just like Jesus teaching that righteousness is inward, He teaches that sin is also inward.

This exposed the false righteousness of the Pharisees who taught that sin was what you did outwardly.

The Law of Moses was focused on outward actions. Thou shalt not steal, though shalt not kill, etc. These were outwardly identifiable actions. You can see when someone has stolen, murdered, etc.

Jesus turned that inwardly to demonstrate that the sin is not just in your outward actions, but rather in the heart.

Not just your outward actions, but your inward intentions as well!

I was thinking about this the other day.

- 1) The Law was supposed to show mankind that he has no hope to be reconciled to God in his own efforts. Man could not keep the Law. Maybe you could keep a few commandments on a good day. But certainly not the whole thing.
- 2) Isaiah pointed out in Isaiah 64:6 that our own righteousness is filthy rags.
- 3) The Jews that followed Jesus around probably were trying to follow the law to certain degrees. But had it become just habits and culture?
 - a. Example - Rich young ruler

⁷As He was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do so that I

may inherit eternal life?" ¹⁸ But Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone. ¹⁹ You know the commandments: 'DO NOT MURDER, DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY, DO NOT STEAL, DO NOT GIVE FALSE TESTIMONY, Do not defraud, HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER.'" ²⁰ And he said to Him, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth." ²¹ Looking at him, Jesus showed love to him and said to him, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." ²² But he was deeply dismayed by these words, and he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property. Mark 10:17-27

- 4) How many other Jews thought they were ok with the Law?
- 5) Jesus is about to turn them on their heads!

But Jesus begins this part with a very important declaration!

Matthew 5:17-20

"Don't assume that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸ For I assure you: Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter^α or one stroke of a letter will pass from the law until all things are accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches people to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus is the ONLY one to fulfill the Law. He did not destroy it.

Paul points out that without the Law, there is no knowledge of sin. You can and should read more about that in Romans 3

Section 3 - Our Relationship to God (Matthew 6)

Jesus starts out this section by telling us not to practice our righteousness in front of people to be seen by them.

Again, in the kingdom of God, it is the heart that Jesus is concerned with. So, we examine our motivations. Do you like to present a long, floury prayer so people can hear you and be impressed?

Jesus discusses several things in this section:

Giving – Which is how we relate to others

Prayer – How we relate to God

Denial of our own flesh – How we relate to ourselves

These are broken down by Jesus in this section:

- 1) **How to give** – don't give so people can see you. Your Father sees you and will reward you.
- 2) **How to pray** – don't pray to be seen by people. Pray in your private room, your Father sees you. Don't babble in your prayer, your Father knows what you need before you ask.
- 3) **The model prayer** (the Lord's prayer) – Jesus gives them what we know as the Lord's prayer.
- 4) **How to Forgive** – if you don't forgive others, your Father won't forgive you
- 5) **How to fast** – Don't put on a show while fasting. Don't show your fasting to people and your Father will reward you.
- 6) **God and possessions** – Don't collect treasures on earth. Because where your treasures are, that's where your heart is.
- 7) **The cure for anxiety** – Don't worry about your life, what you will eat and what you will drink.... BUT seek ye first the kingdom of God, and HIS righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.

This section is about how we posture our hearts. Do we posture them towards our King or the admiration of man?

Of course, there is a lot to unpack in the coming weeks with these topics.

Section 4 - Our Relationship to others (Matthew 7)

In this section Jesus discusses our relationship with our fellow man.

In all we do, we should seek the approval of God not the admiration of man.

And in our relationships with man, He admonishes us not to judge because the same measure you judge others will be what will be used to judge you.

If we are honest, doesn't our judgment of others generally stem from some bit of self-righteousness?

An old friend, Pastor Don, preached a message one time based on a Scripture here in

Matthew 7:1,2

"Do not judge, so that you won't be judged. ² For with the judgment you use, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Pastor Don said that God has allowed you this power over the way He will judge you. So act wisely!

Jesus admonishes us to keep asking, seeking and knocking. Your Father is faithful and you will be rewarded if you keep asking, seeking and knocking. Your earthly fathers know how to give good things, how much more does your heavenly Father want to give you good things??

Entering the Kingdom of God

Matthew 7:13, 14

¹³ "Enter through the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the road is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who go through it. ¹⁴ How narrow is the gate and difficult the road that leads to life, and few find it.

Matthew 7: 21

²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven.

Jesus is the narrow gate that we must enter the Kingdom of God through!

Jesus concludes

He admonishes us to be like a sensible person who builds his house upon a rock by listening AND acting upon the words in this sermon.

Matthew 7:28,29

²⁸ When Jesus had finished this sermon, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, ²⁹ because He was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

He was teaching like one who had authority, because He does! He is the King in the Kingdom of God. And this entire sermon is His manifesto.

If you are out there right now and you are feeling moved by these words... Maybe the kingdom of God is a new concept for you... Or you want to know more about this Jesus who fulfilled the Law and bore your sins on the cross... come talk to myself or Pastor Lisa after we conclude today.