

Life in a Fallen World

The Sermon on the Mount: The Manifesto of Jesus

Matthew 4.23 – 7.29

Kingdom Life in a Fallen World

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Introduction

Why Study the Sermon on the Mount?

1. The death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ demands it.
Titus 2.13-14 our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ . . . gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
2. My need to see my need for regeneration and the Holy Spirit's work within me demands it.
Ephesians 2.10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
Romans 7.6 we serve . . . in the new life of the Spirit.
Galatians 5.25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.
3. Experiencing blessing requires knowing and living the Sermon better.
1 Peter 3.9 for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing.
4. Evangelism necessitates a witness of the Christian life lived in accordance with the Sermon.
"what the Church needs to do is not to organize evangelistic campaigns to attract outside people, but to begin herself to live the Christian life." D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, 18.

How to Study the Sermon on the Mount

1. Look at the Sermon as a whole.
"Unless we have understood and grasped the Sermon on the Mount as a whole, we cannot understand properly any one of its particular injunctions." Lloyd-Jones, 22
2. There is a logical sequence to the Sermon. There is a spiritual order to the Sermon.
To really understand a particular teaching of Jesus, we need to see it in its logical and spiritual context.
3. This means also that it is fruitless to discuss a particular injunction of the Sermon with a person unless he is a Christian.
Matthew 5.1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.
1 Corinthians 2.14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.
"The appeals of the gospel in terms of conduct and ethics and morality are always based on the assumption that the people to whom the injunctions are addressed are Christian."
Lloyd-Jones, 23

How the Sermon is Organized

1. General Teaching (5.3-16)
 - A. The character of the Christian described in positive terms (3-10)
 - B. The character of the Christian described in negative terms, as proved by the reaction of the world (11-12)
 - C. The relation of the Christian to the world (or, the function of the Christian in society) (13-16)
2. Particular Teachings (5.17 – 7.29)
 - A. Living in accordance with the law of God (5.17-48)
 - B. Living in the presence of God the Father (chapter 6) (God as Father)
 - C. Living in the fear of God (chapter 7) (God as Judge)

How to Interpret the Sermon on the Mount

General Principles

1. The Sermon is a description of character and not a code of ethics, it is a description of what Christians are meant to be

- a. it is still ethical teaching, just not a principal code
- b. it is descriptive rather than prescriptive
 - Ephesians 4:1-24** walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ¹⁷ you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ²² put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life . . . ²³ and . . . ²⁴ put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.
- 2. Any imperative, therefore, can be summed up by, “Be what, in fact, you are.”
- 3. Do not focus on individual “injunctions” so as to separate them from the whole; do not take a mechanical approach to the teaching of the Sermon
E.g., “If I applied the ‘give your cloak also’ *rule* conscientiously, I soon would have an empty closet.” (Luther)
- 4. Rather, cultivate a spirit (character) that is *always* willing to carry out, and under certain conditions and circumstances actualizes, the particular teaching

Negative Tests

- 1. If one ever finds himself disagreeing with the Sermon at any point, there is something wrong with the person (not regenerated) or his interpretation is wrong.
- 2. If my interpretation makes any teaching ridiculous, I can be certain that I am not interpreting the teaching correctly.
E.g., the cloak illustration above; ‘turn the cheek’ = pacifism
- 3. If I find any expectation in the Sermon to be impossible for me, my interpretation is wrong or I am not regenerate

1. *The Kingdom of God Has Come (4.23 – 5.2)*

I. General Context of the Sermon

- A. Outline of Matthew (Note: “when Jesus had finished saying these things” at 7.28, 11.1, 13.53, 19.1, 26.1)
- | | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1. Identity | } | 1. Narrative about the Coming of the King (1-4) |
| | | 1. Discourse: Sermon on the Mount (5-7) |
| 2. Authority | } | 2. Narrative on the King’s Deeds (8-9) |
| | | 2. Discourse: Kingdom Mission (10) |
| | } | 3. Narrative on Opposition to the King (11-12) |
| | | 3. Discourse: Parables about the Kingdom of God (13) |
| | } | 4. Narrative on the Withdrawal of the King (14-16) |
| | | 4. Discourse: Kingdom Instructions (17-18) |
| 3. Victory | } | 5. Narrative on Further Teaching and the Triumphal Entry of the King (19-22) |
| | | 5. Discourse: Kingdom Judgment (23-25) |
| | | 6. Narrative on the Passion and Resurrection of the King (26-28) |

Jesus is presented as Savior *and* Lord, Redeemer *and* Teacher

The forgiven, redeemed, saved life *is* the holy life whose character the Sermon on the Mount reveals.

- B. Theme of the five didactic sections of Matthew: the kingdom of God
Matthew introduces the theme of his gospel: **Matthew 4:17, 23** ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." ²³ And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom . . .

The kingdom of God has come.

- C. What is the kingdom of God?
Kingdom of heaven = kingdom of God
Rule/reign of God
Working out of God’s sovereign (and gracious) will
Church = the people (citizens, subjects) of the kingdom
- D. Chief theme of Matthew: Jesus as the king of the Kingdom of God
Where he is, he reigns; where he reigns *is* the kingdom
So, in Matthew’s day, the gospel of the kingdom, already at hand *was* being proclaimed
Promised by the OT prophets, proclaimed by Jesus as present, therefore, the urgent call to repent
Living out the Sermon requires a right relationship with Jesus; it means bowing to his authority (7.29)
Myth: separating Christ as Savior and Christ as King, or Lord; we do not “make him Lord” or King any more than we make him Savior; living in the kingdom means that Jesus is king/lord
- E. Unity of theme: life in the kingdom under King Jesus
Those who belong to the kingdom are described
His hearers (that includes us today) are challenged re their/our relationship to the Kingdom
- Jesus, the Model
Teacher, preacher

- F. Progression of thought
Each unit builds on what has gone before; building, expanding, developing
Wise builder: solid foundation of the Beatitudes
building the picture of the lifestyle of the Christian
- G. Jesus' wise illustrations and application
They are not about himself
They do not aim to entertain
They do not aim merely to keep the hearers attention
His purpose in his illustrations is to open the listeners' consciences and
help them to realize their true spiritual condition before God
That's how illustration and application go hand in hand
- H. Living out the manifesto
What the Sermon shows us how to do

II. Specific Content

Not so much a standard (standards) to live up to, but a relationship – a King to live with

A glorious vision of what the King intends our lives to be

- A. The already . . . not yet nature of the kingdom of God
Kingdom “at hand” (4.17), yet we are to pray, “your kingdom come”
(6.10)
We belong now to the kingdom of heaven by faith
We live now in the kingdom of the world (though we do not belong to it)
Our lifestyle ought to reflect the kingdom to which we belong, even in a
context where it is opposed by the kingdom of the world and its
king
This will inevitably lead to . . .
- B. The persecution of kingdom citizens
Like king, like subject
we struggle against the world
we struggle within as well, because we were once of the world

Ephesians 2.1-3 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-- ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

The greater our maturity in the Spirit, the greater will be our conflict with the world and our inner conflict with worldly desires

Romans 8.23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

This means that when we contrast the Kingdom of God with the Kingdom of the World, to be positive means necessarily to be negative: we reject the claims and characteristics of the world; we ought to feel as if we don't belong

C. The center of our citizenship

Heaven

But to be salt and light, we must be *in* the world

As the kingdom was inaugurated at Christ's first parousia, so it will be consummated at his final parousia

Revelation 11.15 The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.

The Sermon on the Mount: Here and now live the Christ-like life in the world: kingdom life in a fallen world.

2. ***What are you before God? (5.3-5)***
3. ***Filled with Righteousness and Mercy (5.6-7)***
4. ***Purity, Peace and Persecution (5.8-12)***

I. Old Testament Covenantal Context

Blessedness: the distinctive spiritual joy that accrues to us from our salvation and inheritance of the Kingdom of Heaven.

A. Blessing and curse (Deuteronomy 28)

1-14: promised blessings resulting from covenant obedience

15-68: curses that result from disobedience

Summary of blessing: fellowship with God (“I will be your God and you will be my people”; Leviticus 26.5, 12)

Beatitudes: describe the blessings that belong to those whose lives show the marks of covenant obedience (being of the Kingdom of Heaven)

See Deuteronomy 27.11-13;
Joshua 8.30-31a, 33-34

B. Exposition of Old Testament Scripture

Beatitudes take themes from Psalms and Isaiah

Isaiah 61.1-2 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound	Matthew 5.3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Isaiah 61.2 to comfort all who mourn	Matthew 5.4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Psalm 37.11 But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.	Matthew 5.5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Psalm 42.2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. Isaiah 55.1 Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters	Matthew 5.6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
Psalm 24.3-4 ³ Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? ⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.	Matthew 5.8 ⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

C. What we are (what the power of God’s kingdom makes us)

What we are seen to be in the presence of God is what we really are

- could I stand before the King in pride?
- could I stand before him, in my filthy rags (sins), smiling?
- could I stand before him, in myself, confident?

The Beatitudes are not imperatives telling us what we are to do, they describe what the power of God’s kingdom makes us.

D. The blessings that come from having these characteristics . . . is having these characteristics!

Transformed into the likeness of Christ

Colossians 3.9-10 you have put off the old self with its practices ¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.

Beatitudes are not a blueprint for how to get into heaven, but marks of those who already belong.

II. The Beatitudes

<p style="text-align: center;">Characteristic</p> <p>2. What are you before God? (5.3-5) 3. Filled with Righteousness and Mercy (5.6-7) 4. Purity, Peace and Persecution (5.8-12)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Blessing</p> <p>5. Future Blessings Now (5.1-12)</p>
<p>A. <i>The Poor in Spirit</i></p> <p>1. Meaning: our condition Not morbid, poor self-esteem (not Eeyore!) Not poor in estate: poor because of sin – improvidence or excess Not spiritually poor (without grace) Not poor-spirited (mean-spirited, base) Not voluntarily, self-righteously poor Not humility, but it begets humility (cause- effect) OT: poor = weak, helpless, needy captives who seek God as their only refuge, salvation, hope Just as those poor financially cannot accomplish anything that requires money; those poor in spirit realize they are hopeless to accomplish anything spiritually (being nothing, we can do nothing)</p> <p>2. Examples Luke 15.17-18 But when he came to himself, he said, . . . ¹⁸ “I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.’” Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling; Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless, look to Thee for grace; Foul, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Saviour, or I die. A. M Toplady, <i>Rock of Ages</i></p> <p>3. Requirement to be filled with the Spirit We see our real condition before God, that we have no righteousness of our own to plead (Romans 3.10-12), that we have utter nothingness, that our only hope is in the Lord Jesus Christ; through regeneration our position changes To be filled with Spirit, we must become spiritually emptied; we must lose all; we must become poor in spirit</p>	<p><i>Kingdom of Heaven</i> (literally, of the heavens) Beatitudes begin and end with the Kingdom This is the chief blessing: to be taken from the world into the Kingdom of God This includes and is explained further by the other six blessings All the future kingdom blessings are experienced <i>now</i> by Christ’s people</p>

<p>Being thus poor in spirit, we are driven to mourning</p>	
<p>B. Mourners Grief and sorrow brought on by sense of profound loss (in this context, loss of standing before our Maker)</p> <p>1. Object of my mourning: My sinfulness → My regret that I have disappointed the Lord (a mark of regeneration), not because of consequences I mourn, not just because of lack, but because of want Being poor in spirit, I mourn because of it— because I am like <i>that</i> I mourn the sinfulness in the world</p> <p>2. Differed from depression Depression is self-focused Spiritual mourning comes from being driven out of myself, to see God in his holiness and <i>grace</i>, to cry out with Paul: Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! Romans 7:24-25 Seeing that God will bring me comfort</p> <p>3. The places of law and grace in our mourning Law convicts me of my sin, grace softens my heart and causes me to mourn my sin I mourn my sin especially because it grieves the Lord and God who forgives my sin</p> <p>4. True spiritual experience (regeneration) stretches our emotional response to the gospel → higher <u>joys</u> deeper <u>sorrows</u></p>	<p><i>Comfort</i> <i>com</i> – with <i>fortis</i> - strength <i>παρακαλέω</i>: to encourage, comfort, console</p> <p>Luke 4.17-21 He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." ²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ And he began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."</p> <p>Mourning from sin's guilt, shame, regret and alienation can only be consoled by the Lord Jesus Christ</p> <p>Luke 18.9-14 ⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortionists, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. . . . ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."</p>
<p>C. Meek</p> <p>1. Results from The mourning that comes from being poor in spirit begets meekness (note the logical sequence)</p> <p>2. Definition: the humble strength that belongs</p>	<p><i>Inherit the earth</i></p> <p>I was created for dominion and stewardship under God In the Fall, man sought to seize the world for ourselves (opposite of meekness)</p>

to the one who has learned to submit to difficulties knowing that in everything God is working for his good (Romans 8.28)

3. Examples

Moses: from proud prince to meek shepherd (40 years in the wilderness)

Same with me:

- God wants me to be meek
- he breaks my pride and self-sufficiency
- he sends trials and wilderness experiences
- he reveals my secret, self-centered ambitions
- he patiently changes me

Jesus

Isaiah 53.3-7 He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; . . . he was despised, and we esteemed him not. ⁴ . . . we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his stripes we are healed. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth.

War stallion describe with *πραῦς*: power under control

4. How obtained

Knowing God, I discover who (what) I am; seeing myself for what I am before God, and looking to him alone for grace and mercy, I become poor in spirit; I mourn because of how I have disappointed him; I bow to his will in all things, de-throning myself before God and before others

5. Meek in regards to God Others

Summary: driven into myself and discovering what I am, becoming poor in spirit, mourning my sin, I turn to God for his sovereign grace and am driven out of myself, becoming meek in my relation to God and toward others.

(this is the reductionistic materialist's predicament)

Through Christ's suffering, he was given "all authority in heaven and earth" (Matthew 28.19)

Those with eyes of faith see his reign, and reign with him – *now* in part

One day God will transform the kingdom of this world into his kingdom (Revelation 11.15)

We already experience this kingdom, and as its stewards, we experience it as our inheritance

The righteous steward deals with others meekly

<p>Meekness: rather than seeking to establish my priorities, I hunger and thirst for God's.</p>	
<p>D. <i>Hunger and thirst for righteousness</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Out of self With no resources of my own (nothing in my hand I bring), I look to Jesus Christ to meet my needs and the needs of the world 2. Righteousness, a definition Conformity to a norm (perfect, personal obedience) OT: associated with covenant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God always does what he ought • righteousness as justice • righteousness as right relationship (your God, my people) 3. Understanding what it means to hunger and thirst Long for a right relationship with God (recall Romans 3.11) Long to be reckoned righteous in his sight Long to live rightly in the world Long to see right relationships restored in the world (e.g., do I desire God's condemnation for Al Kaida or their reconciliation to God and others?) 4. Three dimensions of righteousness <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. provided by Jesus 2 Corinthians 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. b. Christ as Savior <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • saves us from sin's condemnation (justice), but also from sin's power (sanctification) • pardon and release (redemption) I should hunger and thirst for right (sinless) living as well as forgiveness (not forgiveness without right living) c. seeking the establishment of God's righteousness everywhere <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not Crusades, but evangelism • missions and societal reformation are norms, not alternatives 	<p><i>Satisfaction:</i> <i>χορτάζω</i> – satisfy; passive, to eat to one's fill, be satisfied</p> <p>Filled with the fruit of righteousness everything I need will be provided if I passionately seek his righteousness</p> <p>Filled with right relationships with God with the people of God with the world</p>

<p>God doesn't want my poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, hunger to paralyze me, but to turn me away from myself to his righteousness, from a heart absorbed with self to a heart dominated by God and others, from his righteousness, to others in their need for mercy</p>	
<p>E. <i>Merciful</i> Right relationship with others causes me to be merciful</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mercy: a source or a result of receiving mercy? Being merciful results (always) from receiving Christ and experiencing the grace and mercy of God If I am not merciful, it is because I have not received mercy 2. How mercy relates to the consequences of sin in the lives of others (Good Samaritan, Luke 10.30ff) mercy relieves the consequences of sin in the lives of others <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sin against them • their own sin stooping and restoring dignity to a life broken by sin 3. Mercy and costly service (recall Good Samaritan) in mercy I do not hide behind unbiblical scruples in order to protect myself from costly service (the priest and Levite did not want to chance becoming unclean by touching a dead body) 4. Mercy as a touchstone (a piece of schist [multi-layered, metamorphic stone] or jasper used to test gold alloys by the marks they make when touching the stone; therefore, a standard or criterion) without mercy, we are seen to be without Christ (see 1) <p>Matthew 18.23-35 ²³ "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. ²⁵ And since he could not pay, his</p>	<p><i>Receiving God's mercy</i></p> <p>Mercy is God stooping down to me in my weakness and inability and bringing me healing, restoration, and ability (among other things, to be merciful). God's mercy continues to defend and protect me in my weakness</p>

master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the master of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him, he began to choke him, saying, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ He refused and went and put him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³² Then his master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Micah 6:8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness (ἔλεος – mercy) and to walk humbly with your God?

Summary: the poor in spirit mourn for their sins, are comforted, and are, therefore, marked by a meek (gentle) spirit because of seeing who they are face to face with God; the presence of God instills a passion for righteousness, which is satisfied by God's grace (imputation); this righteousness issues forth in merciful action toward others, the natural result of having experienced mercy; the touchstone of mercy makes manifest a new heart of purity

F. *Pure*

1. Hearts morally clean

Ezekiel 36:25-27 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses . . . ²⁶ And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

2. Hearts committed to the Lord alone (single-heartedness)

purity is absence of impurities
no place for duplicity, divided allegiance
("purity of heart is to will one thing" – Kierkegaard)
purity of heart gazes at one thing

Seeing God

Psalm 24:3-4 Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? ⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

- In the here and now (e.g., prophetic visions (Isaiah 6.1; Ezekiel 1.28))
- In Christ God is visible, but only to the eyes of faith (John 1.14; 14.9)
- Already . . . not yet . . .

The Beatific Vision

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. **Revelation 22:3-4** the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. ⁴ They will see his face

A vision of God will instill a passion to bring others to peace with him

	To Moses: no one can see my face and live; he was hidden in the cleft of the rock
<p>G. <i>Peacemakers</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is peace? Positively: wholeness, health, well-being → salvation; that which makes for one's highest good Negatively: Not necessarily the absence of conflict 2. Peace with God Cessation of hostilities between God and me is what gives me peace To be a peacemaker, then, mandates evangelism to bring this same reconciliation to others 3. Peace with fellow-believers Ephesians 4.1-3 walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. How? Colossians 3.15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called 4. As far as possible, peace with mankind Hebrews 12.14 Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Romans 12.18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Peacemakers are peaceable, not quarrelsome Peacemakers are pacifiers, who seek to resolve conflict (especially between man and God) 	<p><i>Children of God</i> (See God as Father)</p> <p>The ultimate blessing: to be Christ-like is to be Son-like</p> <p>The greatest experience: to see/experience God as Father</p> <p>Children inherit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>characteristics</i> of their fathers (in his image) • <i>blessings</i> (wealth) from their fathers
<p>H. <i>Persecuted</i></p> <p>Why would a meek, righteous and pure (“good”), merciful peacemaker be persecuted?</p> <p>2 Timothy 3.12 Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For righteousness sake The world is in rebellion against God; anything is acceptable except his will, his characteristics; therefore, our righteousness (our beatitudinous living) drives the world to animosity toward us 	

<p>E.g., public school terrorist drills: homeschoolers as terrorists (CA), Fundamental Christian sect as terrorist (NJ?)</p> <p>It is our loyalty to and demonstration of God’s righteousness that brings the world’s persecution</p> <p>2. On account of Jesus (Matthew 5.11) Specifically, it is our loyalty to Jesus: what does mention of that name set off?</p> <p>3. The world’s reaction when we are poor in spirit, mourn our sin, live meekly before God and Man, long for God’s righteousness, show mercy to others, live pure lives, and seek peace</p> <p>Displaying the righteousness of Christ, we convict others; there are only two responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submit to Christ • seek to silence (crucify) him (and us) <p>We follow a crucified Savior; we ought not “be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening” 1 Peter 4.12</p> <p>Rather, we should “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials” (James 1.2) for we are in the kingdom to come!</p>	<p><i>Kingdom of heaven</i></p> <p>All the <u>marks</u> (characteristics) of the kingdom’s presence must be realized <i>in us</i> and, so, all the <u>blessings</u> of the Beatitudes together are realized <i>by us</i>.</p>
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6. *The Christian in the World (5.13-16)*

The Beatitudes conclude with clear indication of the conflict between the Kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of the world. The true church is too different (and threatening) for the world to tolerate it. Are those who belong to the Kingdom of Heaven to be “seeker friendly” in terms of being so like the world that the world does not see this difference? How are those who belong to the Kingdom of God to live in a fallen and hostile world so that they can make an impact for God’s glory among it?

What we are as kingdom people (what God has made us):

I. The Salt of the Earth

A. Characteristics

1. Small and (seemingly) insignificant in a power-dominated culture
2. Able to influence and permeate the whole world
3. Salt is cheap, but it’s worth surpasses its “value”

B. Uses

1. Preservation

- a. the world, if left to itself, rots and deteriorates: moral decay
- b. like salt on jerky, Christians prevent putrefaction in the culture
- c. Ezekiel 16.4
 - 1) Jewish practice of rubbing newborn babies with salt
 - 2) prevented the “spoiling” of the swaddling clothes by cleansing and preventing bacterial overgrowth
- d. Judges 9.45
 - 1) a city destroyed had salt scattered over it as symbol that it would not be allowed to grow back
 - 2) salt used as a means to render infertile
 - 3) Christians make the world less fertile for ungodly influences
 - 4) e.g., look into my eye; can you see that I don’t give a . . . defecation?

2. Seasoning

- a. Christians improve the flavor of the culture
- b. we show the attractiveness and holiness of our Lord
 - 1) our speech should be seasoned with salt (Colossians 4.6; cf. Ephesians 4.29)
 - 2) speech is like salt
 - a) too little: no flavoring
 - b) too much: unpleasant
- c. salt’s purpose is not for it’s taste to overpower but to bring out the flavor of the main flavor
 - 1) Christians bring out the flavor of Jesus Christ
 - 2) if I am too much tasted, it will be unpleasant

3. Symbol of Faithfulness

- a. Leviticus 2.13: salt accompanied sacrifices as the “salt of the covenant”
- b. this was a symbol of faithfulness by the offerer to the covenant

- C. Lost saltiness
 - 1. Worthless: all the characteristics lost
 - 2. Our ability to preserve the world depends on our being different from it
 - 3. Ferguson: “Why should the church be so concerned to tell the world that it is not really very different from the world?”
 - 4. The church should not so much seek to be a comfortable place for the lost as a place to find comfort
 - 5. If I no longer preserve, season, show covenant faithfulness within this fallen world, if I am not different, I have lost saltiness

II. The Light of the World

- A. The darkness of the world
 - 1. Those who are in Christ have been brought out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of light (John 8.12)
 - 2. We are to walk as children of light (Ephesians 5.8-14) who expose the deeds of darkness around us
 - 3. I need to realize the extent of the darkness of this world
 - a. darkness makes it difficult to distinguish one object from another (those of the world are so surrounded by such deep darkness that they cannot see their moral and spiritual foolishness)
 - b. makes it difficult to find my way
 - 1) those surrounded by such deep darkness could never find their way out
 - 2) turning on the light (regeneration) is a sovereign act of God’s grace
 - 3)
- B. *The Light of the world*
 - 1. The Light is Jesus Christ
 - 2. We are to let our lights shine before the world so that they give glory the heavenly Father
 - 3. The purpose of light
 - a. to be seen
 - b. to show the way/location (city on a hill): we are to show the Christ-like life to the world
 - c. to dispel darkness (lamp)
- C. The light of *the world*
 - 1. The sphere of the church’s influence (mission) is the world
 - 2. I am to shine to the end of the earth (Acts 1.8)

7. *Jesus, the Law, and the Christian (5.17-20)*

The place of the Law in the Christian Life

- I. What is the Law?
 - A. *Torah (Nomos)*
 1. Commandment
 2. Principle
 3. Instruction
 4. Related to moral, religious, social and political life
 - B. Commandments of God
 1. Jesus in this sermon is speaking specifically about the commandments given through the ministry of Moses
 2. The way of salvation and kingdom entrance was not by way of meritorious obedience of the law
 3. Does this imply antinomianism?
 - a. if obedience does not earn salvation, what is the motivation to keep it?
 - b. Free from the law,
O blessed condition!
I can sin as I please
And still have remission.
 4. Jesus does not preach antinomianism (vv. 17, 18)
 - a. Christians are not to nullify the law but uphold it (Romans 3.31)
 - b. keeping the requirements of the law does not bring salvation, but these requirements are “fully met” in Christians as we live according to the Spirit (Romans 8.3,4)
 - c. we are to hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5.6)
- II. The Continuing Validity of the Law
 - A. The Old Testament basis of the Beatitudes (see above, chapters 2-4, [I])
 - B. The blessed kingdom life fulfills the law and prophets (5.17)
 1. Matthew presents Jesus as the one who fulfills the prophets
 2. Matthew 1.22; 2.6, 15, 17, 23; 4.14
 - C. The law does three things:
 1. expresses the character of God and his will for man
 - a. a life conformed to God’s law is his intention for me
 - b. if I have restored fellowship with God, I will live by his will, fulfilling his intention
 2. teaches the true character of man as created by God
 3. reveals the character of salvation (obedient fellowship)
- III. The Present Fulfillment of the Law

To know what the law really means, look at Jesus and what he does

 - A. Jesus fulfills the law in his doctrinal teaching
 1. The power of God’s law is experienced in the exposition of Jesus
 2. The significance of the law’s commands are revealed in the teaching of Jesus
 - B. Jesus fulfills the law in his deeds

1. The law was written in his heart
 2. His life reveals the real meaning of the law
 3. Jesus revealed in doing the law of his Father
 4. His life(style) illustrates the law of God
- C. Jesus fulfills the law in his death
1. The holiness of the law is revealed in the penalty Jesus bore
 - a. on our behalf for breaking the law
 - b. he stood in our place before the judgment seat of the Father
 2. It is at the cross alone that we see the fullness of the curse and judgment of breaking covenant with God
 3. His death is a prism that allows us to see the components of God's law
 - a. the Old Testament believer saw the law as the law
 - b. after the death of Christ we see the law in its components
 - 1) moral
 - 2) ceremonial
 - 3) civil
 - c. through fulfillment, certain elements of the law were "abolished" in terms of ongoing demand
 - 1) as foreshadows of what was to come in the sacrifice of the Son, the ceremonial law was no longer required (or meaningful)
 - 2) their real meaning and significance were to prefigure the sacrifice of the Son of God
 - 3) after his sacrifice, no further sacrifices were necessary, and therefore they could not be meaningful, and therefore they could not be required and were not purposeful
 - 4) they are not binding on the church of the new covenant
 - 5) this aspect of the law was designed to last only until Christ came
 - d. other aspects of the law were no longer necessary because they applied to the nation of Israel as separated from the rest of the nations
 - 1) as the church in the new covenant, the people of God are from all nations
 - 2) the church is not governed by the civil code that was given to the nation Israel
- D. Jesus fulfills the law in his disciples
1. Jesus writes the law upon the hearts of his people through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Jeremiah 31.33)
 2. We delight to do what the law requires because it comes from our hearts to do so
 3. No longer an external rule that is burdensome, the law is within and "natural" for Christians
 4. The law is an expression of our love for Christ
 - a. just as physical love needs the boundaries of marriage to allow it to accomplish its intended purpose, the law

provides the tracks that keep our Christian walk on the proper line

- b. the law does not restrict us, however, but allows us freedom to move heavenward

IV. True Characteristics of the law

A. The deep spirituality of the law

1. Righteousness must surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees
2. Only God's gift of righteousness (written upon the hearts of flesh) can bring entrance into the gates of the heavenly kingdom
3. Christ's two-fold accomplishment
 - a. shares his righteousness with us by imputation
 - b. sanctifies and transforms us so that we "do the law" (Ephesians 2.10)
4. Jesus' teaching in vv. 21-48 reveal the true meaning of keeping the law
 - a. you have heard
 - 1) in the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees
 - 2) not in the law
 - b. but I say to you
 - 1) true heart conformity
 - 2) real, spiritual obedience
 - 3) attitude and intent are important

B. The distinguishing function of the law

1. Our attitude to the law reveals our attitude to God himself
 - a. treat it lightly and we profess a "light" God
 - b. love and keep even the least of the commandments, and teach others to do so, and we reveal love for Christ, his father and his kingdom
2. Though not a basis for meriting entrance into the kingdom, obedience to the law does provide a test to distinguish between those who belong to the kingdom and those who do not
 - a. not between carnal Christians and spiritual Christians
 - b. not between those who know Jesus only as Savior and those who know him as Savior and Lord
 - c. joyful conformity to the law of God reveals a heart with the law written upon it expressed through such joyful living

8. *The Pure in Heart (5.21-32)*

I. You have heard . . . but I say

Whether we keep or break the law, whether we encourage others, by our words and lives, to keep or break it is the standard of evaluation of our kingdom citizenship. *But this is in no way the standard for **entrance into** the kingdom of God.*

The contrast Jesus introduces here is not between what he says and what the law says, but between what he says the law says and what the 1st century religious leaders said the law says.

Jesus gives illustrations of the real significance of Old Testament law in two groups of three: murder/adultery/divorce; oaths/turn the cheek/love your enemies

- A. Not to abolish, but to fulfill
 - 1. Not one little part of the law will pass away until it is accomplished
 - 2. If Jesus were to annul any part of the law, he would negate his purpose to fulfill the law
- B. The basic contrast
 - 1. Not so much between what is said, but who says them
 - 2. The issue is one of authority
 - 3. ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω: “but I, **I** am saying to you” (or, “but I myself am saying”)
- C. The words of the sayings
 - 1. The words that Jesus “corrects” are Scripture plus or minus
 - 2. Some Scripture with additions
 - 3. Some Scripture contradictions (“hate you enemies”)
- D. Exposition, not contradiction
Jesus gives us the *authoritarian* exegesis of God’s word.
- E. The real contrast
 - 1. Law according to Jesus vs. law according to tradition and traditionalists
 - 2. Jesus does not use his customary “it has been written” to introduce his Scripture exposition, he uses “it was said”
 - 3. Jesus contradicts the rabbis, not the Old Testament

EXCURSUS: JESUS AS THE TRUE ISRAEL IN MATTHEW’S CONTEXT

- 1. Jesus, the Son of God called out of Egypt (Matthew 2.15)
- 2. Jesus passing through the waters of baptism (Matthew 3.13-17)
- 3. Jesus tested in wilderness (Matthew 4.1-11)
- 4. Jesus delivers and expounds the law from the mountain (Matthew 5.1ff)

II. Murder without knives

A. When is murder really murder?

- 1. Religious leaders narrowed down the application of the law

2. Jesus returns the law to its full force
 3. Not just the act, but the thought
 4. Not only avoid the act, but avoid anything that would lead to it
 5. Pursue that which would promote the opposite
 6. Jesus does not insinuate that anger is as bad as actual murder (the law's penalties make it clear that this is not so)
 7. All degrees in his progression (murder, anger, insult) reveal the same heart condition, just differing in degree
 8. This does not forbid calling a spade a spade, or calling transgression, sin
Matthew 23:17 You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that has made the gold sacred?
 9. What is forbidden is a spirit of animosity and hatred – for this is self-centered
- B. A scale of seriousness?
Probably not; that would read too much into his words (eisegesis)
- C. The necessity and urgency of reconciliation
1. When God's word forbids an action, it commands its positive counterpart
 2. To be right-related to God means to be right-related to his creatures
 - a. in the church
 - b. in the community
 3. Jesus emphasizes my fault in broken relationships
 - a. "your brother has something against you"
 - b. "your accuser"
 - c. as far as possible, remove all basis for enmity
 - d. not a public airing of "dirty linen" but private reconciliation
 - 1) "First be reconciled to your brother"
 - 2) "Come to terms quickly with your accuser"

III. Adultery in the Heart

A. Deuteronomy 24

¹When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she finds no favor in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her

1. Scripture standard for divorce: something "indecent"
 - a. *ervah*: Meaning: *nakedness*; Usage in Old Testament: bare (1), indecency (1), indecent (1), nakedness (48), shame (1), undefended parts (2)
 - b. traditionalists focused on "finds no favor"
chen: Meaning: *favor, grace*; Usage in Old Testament: adornment (1), charm (1), charm (1), charming (1), favor (51), grace (8), graceful (2), gracious (3), pleases (1).
 - 1) if he did not like her cooking
 - 2) if he did not like her looks
2. Jesus shows that the real intent of the law was to protect women from capricious action by their husbands

- B. Adultery is an act of the heart, not just an act of the body
 - 1. The law demands purity of heart, integrity toward others
 - 2. Pharisees and scribes were interested in listing the (limited) number of acts that broke the law
 - 3. Jesus was interested in the full understanding of God's standard for his people
 - 4. Any sexual immorality is in his view
 - 5. The lust that leads to adultery leads to hell
 - 6. Jesus does not preach ignoring people
 - a. not looking
 - b. not appreciating their gifts and graces
 - 7. He forbids looking in order to lust: πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι αὐτήν
- C. Gift of sexuality
 - 1. Unequivocally good
 - 2. Purpose: companionship (Genesis 2.18)
 - 3. Character: commitment (Genesis 2.24)
 - 4. Consequences: ruin marital joy, whether it occurs before or during marriage
- D. Adultery and God's commandments
 - 1. Adultery
 - 2. Disobedience of God
 - 3. Coveting
 - 4. Theft of another's companion
 - 5. Idolatry
- E. How do we keep our way pure?
 - 1. Consequences of yielding to sinful lust (where it leads): hell
 - 2. Deal with the real cause of sin
 - a. right eye, right hand
 - b. my left eye/hand might be given up to God, but not my right (favorite lust)
 - 3. Act decisively
 - a. immediate cleansing does not allow the bacteria of sin to grow
 - b. the pain now prevents the pain of hell later
 - c. drastic action needed is an index of the radical danger of the consequences of sin
 - 4. Realize the relative insignificance of the object of lust
 - a. it is not the whole of life, no matter how much it seems so
 - b. weigh against its consequences
 - c. weigh against what is mine by abandoning it
- F. New perspective
 - 1. Though my right eye has sinned and I cannot erase the memory of it
 - 2. Though the pain is great to do so
 - 3. Cut out the offending thing
 - 4. Forgiveness is assured
 - 5. I am able
 - 1 Corinthians 10.13 – No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability,

but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

IV. Divorce

- A. God's attitude about divorce
 - Malachi 2.14-16: Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. ¹⁵ Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth. ¹⁶ For the man who hates and divorces, says the LORD, the God of Israel, covers his garment with violence, says the LORD of hosts. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and do not be faithless.
 - 1. Ground: *πορνεία*; Meaning: fornication; Usage: fornication (4), fornications (2), immoralities (1), immorality (16), sexual immorality (1), unchastity (1)
 - 2. How does it "make" a woman commit adultery?
 - a. She was 'forced' to re-marry for the sake of her support
 - b. only if her husband committed adultery would she be free to re-marry, because he was, in essence, dead to her
- B. The death penalty for divorce
 - 1. Leviticus 20.10 If a man commits adultery with the wife of his neighbor, both the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.
 - 2. If exacted, the marriage was ended and the surviving (offended) spouse free to marry
 - 3. Principle: it is right to act as if the penalty had been carried out
- C. The clear teaching of the Scripture: God's design for marriage is that it is permanent
- D. This is Jesus' corrective for divorce-on-demand
 - 1. Destruction of marriage is carnage in God's sight
 - 2. It destroys whole families
- E. Divorce on unbiblical grounds
 - 1. Adds to sin, does not correct it
 - 2. May implicate others (subsequent spouses) in our sin
- F. Scripture on sexual immorality
 - Though the death penalty is no longer in effect for sexual immorality, its effect is still relevant
- G. Remarriage
 - 1. The effect – the marriage has ceased to be – allows re-marriage *for the offended party*
 - 2. The offender (and anyone with whom he is involved) cannot re-marry without being guilty of further adultery
- H. Gouge out anything that might destroy the joy of your marital relationship

9. ***Oaths, Eyes, and Enemies (5.33-48)***

Second triad of illustrations: “Again you have heard that it was said”

I. Oaths

A. Oaths and vows

1. Oath: concerned with future actions
2. Vow: related to objects and their use

B. Absolute forbidding of oath-taking?

1. Ferguson’s position
 - a. not absolute
 - b. Jesus in essence took oath before high priest
 - c. Jesus forbids swearing by creation (leaving out God made them non-binding)
 - 1) hypocrisy
 - 2) dishonesty (an oath/vow was no oath/vow though it was meant to be taken that way)
 - d. no promise can be made, no word spoken, without it being done in the presence of God
2. *The Westminster Confession of Faith*

CHAP. XXII. - Of Lawful Oaths and Vows.

1. A lawful oath is part of religious worship¹, wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calls God to witness what he asserts, or promises, and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he swears.

¹Deuteronomy 6.13; 10.20

2. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear, and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence. Therefore, to swear vainly, or rashly, by that glorious and dreadful Name; or, to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful, and to be abhorred. Yet, as in matters of weight and moment, an oath is warranted by the Word of God, under the new testament as well as under the old; so a lawful oath, being imposed by lawful authority, in such matters, ought to be taken.

3. Calvin (Institutes, Book 2, Chapter 8, section 26): Does not the Sermon on the Mount forbid this kind of oath?

- a. To take an absolutist position against all oaths is to dash against Christ, making him an enemy of the Father
- b. the eternal God not only permits, but commands the use of oaths (Exodus 22.10f)
- c. Christ is one with the Father (John 7.16), declares only that which comes from the Father (John 10.18), and therefore, cannot contradict him
- d. Jesus does not come to slacken or tighten the law but to bring back the true and genuine understanding which had been corrupted by the Jewish authorities

- e. Christ condemned oaths that transgressed the rule of the law
 - f. Jesus is focusing on swearing falsely
 - g. “at all” refers to the forms of oaths following, not the verb “to take an oath” [though all lexicons say that with the negative this is adverbial, not adjectival]
 - h. Christ removes all excuses by listing the common forms of oaths
 - i. he refutes the “wily sophistry of those who see nothing wrong in idly tossing about indirect oaths – as if they spared God’s sacred name, when it is actually engraved upon all his benefits”
 - j. injury is done to God’s majesty when we “intend only to seek confirmation of our statements from God’s holy name” [in swearing we must be binding ourselves before God, not just seeking “confirmation” of what we say]
 - k. Christ forbids us to “swear at all” and thus deprives us of license from any rashness
 - l. if “at all” were absolute, why did he go on to list a limited number of forms of oaths?
 - m. “From these words it is sufficiently clear that Christ has met the quibbles whereby the Jews thought their fault lightened”
4. Additional thoughts
- a. the context emphasizes the condition of my heart in the keeping of the law
 - b. as the teaching re calling a man a fool does not negate the need to recognize fools for who they are (Psalm 14.1, Proverbs 1.7), so the forbidding of swearing “at all” does not negate the biblical use of a proper oath before God
 - c. so, as in the *Confession*, I may take an oath in God’s name in a court of law, if it is done to bind myself to him, not to render confirmation to my words
 - d. my heart must be right in taking the oath, with no “wily sophistry” or “idly tossing about” such invocation
- C. The problems with the oaths of Jesus’ day
- 1. Utter hypocrisy
 - 2. Deep-seated dishonesty
- D. Renounce duplicity

II. Turn the Other Cheek

- A. *Lex talionis* (law of retaliation) (Deuteronomy 19.21 – Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.)
- 1. Purpose: to limit and restrain retaliation and revenge
 - 2. ἀντιστῆναι (ἀνθίστημι): set oneself against, oppose, resist, withstand; stand one's ground
 - a. as a legal term, do not take you neighbor to court
 - b. do not stand on your rights
- B. The Christian and “rights”

- Do not make personal rights the basis for my relations with others
- C. Turning the cheek
1. More an insult (attack on reputation) than an injury (attack on body)
 2. Fine for such an insult was a man's annual wages
 3. Do not stand on my rights and seek to reaffirm my dignity
 4. My response to insult ought to be gracious just as is my God's response to the insults of my sin
 5. Romans 12.19-21 – Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." ²⁰ To the contrary, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.
- D. Giving the tunic
1. The virtually sacrosanct nature of the cloak (Exodus 22.26, 27)
 2. Tunic = inner garment (shirt); cloak = outer garment (coat)
 3. When I meet with opposition and persecution, do not stand on my rights
- E. Going the extra mile
1. ἀγγαρεύω requisition, press into service (originally for the Persian royal post; in Roman times for any military or civil service), then force, compel
 2. Roman law: a soldier could demand an occupied people to carry their baggage 1 mile (μίλιον, ου, τό [Latin loanword: *mille*] a Roman mile, literally a thousand paces; as a fixed measure, a distance of 8 stades, about 4,850 feet, 1,480 meters)
 3. E.g., Simon of Cyrene
 4. Jews especially hated this humiliation
 5. To show that I do not stand on my rights is to show that I serve a greater Emperor
- F. Give to those who beg or borrow
- The law, which restrains evil acts, is meant to teach me to live a lifestyle of grace toward others – the positive opposite to the forbidden sin

III. Love your Enemies

The law "love your neighbor" is meant to restrain your hatred, not limit your love

- A. Loving like the Father : he loves his enemies
- B. Loving like the world: love only those who love me
- C. The mark of perfection
 1. I am to be extra-ordinary because my Father is extra-ordinary
 2. Perfection is the way the Father's love is reflected on his "enemies"
 3. The mark of perfection in me
 - a. my love ought not to be determined by the loveliness or loveableness of another
 - b. not conditional on first being loved
 - c. not only directed toward those who will love in return
 - d. controlled by the knowledge that my Father loved me "even though a sinner" (1 John 4.10 – In this is love, not

that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.)

- e. being different (what more are you doing than others?)
the church too often tries to be little different from the world under the guise of attracting the world
- f. I am called to give everything for Christ and to him – no matter what it costs

10. *Life with Father (6.1-8, 16-18)*

- I. Motives: why we do what we do (to be seen by men, or to please God?)
 - A. *Why* we do something is as important as *what* we do
 - B. Self-discipline, self-denial
 - C. “Righteousness” for others to see is no righteousness at all

- II. Illustrations
 - A. Giving
 - 1. The trumpeted “gift” is no gift at all
 - 2. It is actually a purchase, and the only recompense of the act
 - 3. ἀπέχουσι (ἀπέχω) to receive in full what is due, to be paid in full, receive in full; commercial transaction = ‘provide a receipt for a sum paid in full’, used both lit. and fig.
 - 4. Jesus does preclude giving, just the public display of it
 - B. Praying
 - 1. Pray in secret
 - 2. Pray to the Father, not for others to hear
 - 3. Pray succinctly, not ostentatiously
 - 4. Pray, forgetting about myself (self-centeredly) and forgetting about others (insofar as I desire recognition from them)
 - C. Fasting
 - 1. Avoid self-pity and hypocritical self-righteousness
 - 2. Fast and practice self-discipline; it is essential for the Christian life
 - 3. Not for show, but for the Father

- III. The Danger
 - A. Conversion does not remove the presence of sin in my life, though it is dethroned
 - B. Practical holiness ought not to be substituted for true sanctification (hypocrisy)

- IV. The Remedy
 - A. Understand and deal with my own heart and do not fall prey to the deceitfulness of sin
 - 1. **Hebrews 3.13** But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.
 - 2. Mortify (put to death) the flesh (**Romans 8.13** For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.)
 - B. Guard, too, against Pharisaism
 - 1. God as a slave-driver
 - 2. Insecurity before God
 - 3. This is a peril not only for me, but to others (**Matthew 23.15** Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.)
 - C. Know God as my heavenly Father
When I give because I love my Father, pray because I trust him to care for my needs, or fast because I long to submit my whole being to his will, I

have my reward from the Father (“who is in secret. And . . . will reward you”)

- D. What reward am I looking for?
1. Heavenly reward?
 2. Reward from men?

11. *How to Pray and Live (6.9-15)*

I. Introduction

- A. How I think of God is the most important influence on the way I live: theology determines practice
- B. Paradox of Christian life
 - 1. An instinct to hide from the Father because of his glory and my sin
 - 2. Some anxiety will be part and parcel of my life until the kingdom comes in glory
 - 3. The pain and shame of my failure is mixed with the joy and relief of his marvelous grace
 - 4. Fellowship with God means sorrow for sin, joy for forgiveness and grace
 - 5. the struggle of prayer
 - a. not struggle to persuade God
 - b. struggle to be subdued by him
 - c. struggle to lay my life before him openly
- C. The Lord's Prayer
 - 1. A model prayer
 - 2. An outline of the Christian life, providing fixed points of concern for the family of God
 - 3. Statement of life's priorities
 - 4. Truly, the prayer of the Father's Children

II. The Worship of the Father

- A. Adoration: greatness of God
 - 1. In heaven
 - 2. Creator – creature distinction
 - 3. Incomprehensible
 - 4. I need his help to realize just how holy he really is
- B. Intimacy: God as our Father
 - 1. I dare to call him Father (not inapprehensible)
 - 2. Liturgy of Chrysostom: "Grant that we may dare to call on thee as Father, and to say, 'Our Father'"
 - 3. He gave me (new) life
 - 4. He is near and he cares for me
- C. Fellowship: corporate nature of the Christian life
 - 1. "Our" Father
 - 2. I share my privileges as a child of God with all of his chosen

III. The Kingdom of the Father

- A. Present reality, future perfection
 - 1. It has come in Jesus
 - 2. Yet to come in full glory
 - 3. Living in the time between the inauguration and consummation of the kingdom, the overlap of the ages
 - 4. Living "in between the times" causes me struggles
 - 5. Thus the urgency of praying, "Your kingdom come, your will be done as in heaven so on the earth"
- B. Bowing to God's sovereign purposes

- Praying for the kingdom means committing to the way of the cross
- C. Evangelism
 - To pray “your kingdom come” is to pray for the spread of the gospel
- D. Searching God’s will in Scripture
 1. See and do the will of God
 2. It is found in his word
 3. I must know his word
 4. I must allow it to mold me in such a way as to make me wise and able to apply it in life
- E. Praying for Christ’s parousia
 1. The coming of the kingdom is the coming of the King
 2. Knowing that his kingdom is coming allows an eternal perspective to history
 3. There is a destiny that King Jesus controls!

IV. The Sustenance of the Father

The prayer moves from God and his glory to man and his need. His glory does not detract from my life but is the sun around which my life must revolve if I am to experience his light and life. Made for his glory, my life is not right without giving him glory.

- A. Bread for tomorrow
 1. ἐπιούσιος, ον according to Origen, De Orat. 27.7, coined by the evangelists.
 2. deriving it from ἐπὶ and οὐσία – necessary for existence (in agreement with Origen, Chrysostom, and Jerome)
 3. a substantivizing of ἐπὶ τὴν οὐσαν sc. ἡμέραν for the current day, for today
from ἡ ἐπιούσα sc. ἡμέρα: in the meaning ‘come to’: give us this day the bread that comes to it, i.e. belongs to it
 4. for the following day (from ἡ ἐπιούσα sc. ἡμέρα)
deriving it from ἐπιέναι ‘be coming’; on the analogy of τὸ ἐπιόν – ‘the future’, bread for the future
- B. Last Day blessings

Ferguson, taking the third sense, suggests a reference to the blessings of the last days being requested to be given to me now

V. The Grace of the Father

- A. Introduction
 1. Prayer is not easy
 2. I do not have to merit entrance into the presence of the Father
 3. I come as one conscious of my sins
 4. With the burden of my sins I approach God in prayer begging forgiveness
- B. Our forgiveness: result of forgiveness or results from forgiveness?
 1. I receive forgiveness when I cast myself on his mercy (I mourn), not when (because) I forgive others
 2. I cannot receive forgiveness without forgiving others because I will necessarily forgive others if I realize my Father’s forgiveness

3. When I realize my debt to the Father and receive his gracious forgiveness, I cannot but share it with others
4. “Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.”

VI. The Protection of the Father

A. Does God tempt?

1. God tempts no one (James 1.13-14: Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.)
2. Jesus was tempted “*by the Devil*” but he was “*led by the Spirit*” to the wilderness (**Matthew 4.1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.)
 - a. Luke 4:1 Ἰησοῦς δὲ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου ὑπέστρεψεν ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰορδάνου καὶ ἤγετο ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ
 - b. ἤγετο: imperfect tense, “was being led”
 - c. even (or, especially) when I am being led by the Spirit, I will be tested by Satan (the Evil One)

B. Praying for deliverance

1. My trust must never be in my ability to resist the Evil One, but my trust must be in my heavenly Father
2. The ultimate testing comes when the world, my flesh, and Satan conspire together
3. In such times, I must pray to my Father who is willing and able to deliver me

12. *Anxiety States Cured (6.19-34)*

I. Introduction

- A. From “do not be hypocrites” in verses 1-18, Jesus turns to “do not be anxious”
- B. Cause of anxiety
 - 1. Same as cause of hypocrisy
 - 2. Focus on self
 - 3. More than negative thinking about life; it is thinking “untheologically” about life
 - a. more than low self-esteem
 - b. Psalm 10.4 – All his thoughts are, "There is no God."
- C. Cure
 - 1. Recognize that the father knows, sees and understands my needs
 - 2. Realize that he cares for and accepts me in Christ
 - a. on the basis of grace
 - b. not merit

II. Jesus’ Diagnosis

Jesus teaches that anxiety can be traced to three factors in my life.

- A. Having your treasure in the wrong place
 - 1. Two options: heaven or earth
 - 2. Worldly possessions belong to a fading world
 - a. moth and consuming destroy
 - b. seeds sown among the thorns
 - 3. The heavenly-minded
 - a. brings the atmosphere of heaven to earth
 - b. not “too heavenly-minded to be of any earthly use”
- B. Thinking about life the wrong way
 - 1. The eye of the soul and the heart are the same thing
 - 2. Poor spiritual vision, having the wrong priorities, influences all my life
- C. Serving the wrong kind of master
 - 1. I am made to have a master; God made me for himself
 - 2. Worship is an integral part of my nature
 - 3. My predicament” serving the creature rather than the Creator (Romans 1.25)
 - 4. Life in the kingdom of God calls for single-minded allegiance to the King

III. Jesus’ Prescription

God transforms my life by the renewing of my mind as I study his word and submit to its teaching.

- A. Look at the whole of life
 - 1. When I become anxious about something, it dominates my thinking
 - 2. The basic necessities of life (eating, drinking, clothing), which ought to serve me, become my master in my anxiety
- B. Look at the nature of life
 - 1. Worrying never got anyone anywhere

2. My life is in the Father's hands
 - a. he designed it
 - b. he has planned the end from the beginning
 - c. he plans each step
 - d. he provides all I need to fulfill his purpose
 - e. when it is finished, he will bring me home
 3. I have anxiety only when I take my life out of his hands and take it into my own hands
- C. Look at the Father's generosity
1. All the trees of the garden but one
 2. Doubt about the Father's generosity led to the Fall
 3. My anxiety comes from the same suspicion
 4. Jesus' logic: the *a minore ad maius* argument
 - a. from the lesser to the greater
 - b. if the Father cares for the birds and the flowers, how much more for me
- D. Seek first the kingdom of God
1. Anxiety is never cured by getting more of what I already have
 2. The cure is the assurance that my needs are met by my King
 - a. all I need he provides
 - b. much of what I think I need, I really do not need
 - c. therefore, I no longer want it
- In the place of anxiety, I have contentment.

13. 20/20 Vision (7.1-12)

I. God as Father and Judge

A. Brief Outline

1. Chapter 5: Implications of the coming of the Kingdom of God
2. Chapter 6: Freedom in the fatherhood of God
3. Chapter 7: Impact of the judgment of God on my life

B. The complementarity of God as father and judge

1. Rejecting the judgment of God rejects his fatherhood
2. Rejecting God as father brings the judgment of God
3. Jesus introduces us to God as father, then as judge
4. Knowing my father as judge is sanctifying and restraining, leading me to pursue holiness as I relate to him
5. Awareness of God as judge encourages me to be merciful and gentle toward others

II. Seeing More Clearly

A. Avoiding judgment?

1. God's judgment on my life is based on my life
2. This is not an absolute denial of judgment
 - a. that would be to treat good and evil alike
 - b. Jesus goes on to say: "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs"

B. Attitude about the sins of others (Matthew 7.3-5) (neither does Jesus categorically condemn dealing with the sins of others (cf. Mathew 18.15ff))

1. It must be done sensitively, mercifully
2. it can only be done by the poor in spirit who mourns
3. it requires a repentant heart
4. I must first deal with my sin
5. then, relieve the brother of the speck

C. How and when may we judge? (Matthew 7.6, 7)

1. What Jesus condemns is focusing on another's sins when the sin in my life is greater (I should always see the sin in my life as greater); Jesus condemns *ensoriousness*
2. Nathan to David: "You are the man!" (2 Samuel 11.1-17)
3. Such censoriousness is *hypocrisy*
4. The heart that has experienced the grace, mercy and forgiveness of The Judge will always tend toward restraint and mercy in judgment toward others

III. Seeing Others More Clearly

A. Being discriminating

1. In evangelism, move on from those who obviously and stubbornly reject the gospel and go to others
2. Jesus – and by his guidance also the apostles – practiced this
3. The wisdom of appropriate activity

B. How to recognize the dogs and pigs: by their response to the gospel

C. The wisdom of appropriate activity

1. It is inappropriate to cast pearls before pigs

2. It is inappropriate of me as a Christians to engage in activities that are antagonistic to the gospel, even in the name of spreading the gospel
3. This also applies if I get stuck in some extra-biblical tradition or activity that is no longer appropriate because it is contemporarily irrelevant
4. I must be relevant (appropriate) to the culture *in* which I live without being inappropriate to the gospel by being *of* the culture

IV. Seeing God More Clearly

- A. Motivation for showing love to others: recognition of the Father's provision, counsel, direction
- B. Beggars' logic
 1. Persist in asking for God's grace
 2. Heavenly Father : earthly father → "how much more"
 3. Jesus returns to God as father to show that my judge is my father
 4. The Righteous Judge of all creation, who is able to declare me justified, is my Father who has taken out adoption papers on my behalf and calls me "son"!
- C. Golden rule
 1. Summary of the Law and Prophets
 - a. it deals with the "horizontal" aspect of the Law and Prophets
 - b. only when I see that I am a beggar before the Lord with nothing to offer (poor in spirit) . . .
 - c. only when I see that I am heir of God's grace . . .
 - d. then can I be sufficiently set free from self-centeredness to put others first, doing for/to others what I would appreciate receiving from others
 2. Common throughout history of "wisdom literature" (philosophy)
 - a. e.g., Confucius, Kant
 - b. almost universally stated in the negative
 - c. such a form is less demanding
 - 1) forbidding action rather than prescribing it
 - 2) it is easier to not do something to another than to do something for another

14. Choices (7.13-29)

I. Introduction

The Sermon on the Mount is to instruct us, transform our thoughts and emotions, challenge us to a new course of life (a new life)

We are called to let the power of God's word change us

Instruction, illumination, moral challenge, emotional stimulation

Decision: choosing the way of the world or the way of the Lord

II. The Choice of Entrances

A. Choice of entrance (wide gate, small gate)

B. Choice of roads (broad way, narrow way)

C. Choice of companions (the crowd, the few)

D. Choice of destinies (life, death)

Really only one choice between two alternatives; only as we live in light of the future can we make right choices now; in cultivation of the eternal perspective, I am not deceived by the riches of this world; what I have now in part (kingdom of heaven, comfort, inheritance of earth, righteous satisfaction, mercy, vision of God *as Father*), I will have perfectly (in full)

III. The Choice of Influences (The Christian life is a life of conflict)

Recognizing false prophets (those who falsify God's word)

A. By his attitude toward the people of God
He uses the sheep for his own benefit rather than laying down his life for them.

B. By the fruit of his teaching
The character manifested in his hearers reveals what the false prophet teaches in word and deed

Beware especially of those who cultivate the loyalty of their hearers (e.g., Baker, Swaggart vs. Mark Ross)

C. By his priorities
Success before godliness
Position before service
Expression of gifts before expression of grace (it is possible to exercise "spiritual gifts" and yet be a total stranger to saving grace)

IV. The Choice of Foundations

A. Recognizing those with good foundations

Psalm 73:1-28 Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. ² But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped. ³ For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴ For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek. ⁵ They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind. ¹² Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches. ¹³ All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. ¹⁴ For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning. ¹⁶ But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, ¹⁷ until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end. ¹⁸ Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin. ¹⁹ How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors. ²¹ When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart, ²² I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you. ²³ Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand. ²⁴ You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory. ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ²⁷ For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you. ²⁸ But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

A prophet is one who forth-tells the truth of God to the people in such a way as to influence how they live.

Obedience

Beatitudes

- B. A solid foundation
 - 1. Hearing, learning and agreeing with God's word
 - 2. Obedience to Christ's word

- V. Response to the Teaching
 - A. Astonishment
 - B. Obedience?

I will know the level of my obedience by realizing the Beatitudes in my life.