



2016 Q2 The Book of Matthew Lesson 3 The Sermon on the Mount

SABBATH

Memory Verse: “When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law” Matthew 7:28 NIV

What do the current Presidential candidates want for themselves?

What outcomes do the Democratic and Republican parties want in the current Presidential election?

What outcome does the current electorate want from the Presidential election?

Recent surveys (2010) show that about 40% of Americans believe that Jesus is likely to return by 2050. This varies from 58% of white evangelical Christians, through 32% of Catholics to 27% of white mainline Protestants.[36]

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- Question: "What is the Second Coming of Jesus Christ?"
- Answer: The second coming of Jesus Christ is the hope of believers that God is in control of all things, and is faithful to the promises and prophecies in His Word. In His first coming, Jesus Christ came to earth as a baby in a manger in Bethlehem, just as prophesied. Jesus fulfilled many of the prophecies of the Messiah during His birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection. However, there are some prophecies regarding the Messiah that Jesus has not yet fulfilled. The second coming of Christ will be the return of Christ to fulfill these remaining prophecies. In His first coming, Jesus was the suffering Servant. In His second coming, Jesus will be the conquering King. In His first coming, Jesus arrived in the most humble of circumstances. In His second coming, Jesus will arrive with the armies of heaven at His side.

What was the context for Christ's delivery of the Sermon on the Mount?

- Sequence
 - Baptism
 - Fast and Temptation in the wilderness
 - Judean Ministry (approximately one year)
 - Healing of the invalid by pool of Bethesda.
 - Rejection by the religious establishment
 - After John was imprisoned, Jesus withdrew from Judea to Galilee
 - Preaching: “Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”
 - First disciples were recruited



- Going throughout Galilee teaching in synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every kind of sickness.
- Crowds flocked to see this new prophet
- Expectations
 - What was Christ's message?
 - It was about the "Kingdom"
 - "Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of heaven is near!" GNT Matt 4:17
 - Recruitment of Peter, Andrew, James & John
 - "The Jews looked for the coming One, not as a Saviour from sin, but as a great prince who should bring all nations under the supremacy of the Lion of the tribe of Judah." TMB 7.1
 - "In place of the one coarse garment which was their covering by day and their blanket at night, they hoped that Christ would give them the rich and costly robes of their conquerors." TMB 10.1

The Sermon on the Mount consumes approximately three chapters of Matthew:

- The Beatitudes
- The Believers and the relationship with the world (salt & light, the teachings of Moses & the prophetic writings, personal righteousness)
- Personal relationships
- Giving to the Poor: Prayer
- Fasting
- What you value (God vs wealth)
- Anxiety and God's provisions
- Judging others
- Prayer
- The Golden Rule
- The tree and its Fruit
- What foundation are you building on?

So why did Christ say these things?

- Rules of behavior?
- Principles of heaven?
- Guidelines for the believer?

Every teaching is a verbal description of what God is like

The Beatitudes... God is:

- not spiritually arrogant
- mourning for lost souls
- gentle
- hungers and thirsts for righteousness in His children
- merciful



- pure in heart
- peacemaker
- persecuted for the sake of doing the right thing
- insulted and persecuted
- subject of all sorts of evil sayings against Him

- Salt of the earth
- Light of the world
- The source of all of Moses teachings and the writings of the Prophets

- He is not angry with His brethren
- He only has good things to say about His children
- He will not divorce His wife except for unchastity

The Believers and the relationship with the world (salt & light, the teachings of Moses & the prophetic writings, personal righteousness)

- Personal relationships
- Giving to the Poor: Prayer
- Fasting
- What you value (God vs wealth)
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- The tree and its Fruit
- What foundation are you building on?

Read third paragraph. "The Sermon on the Mount is the most powerful sermon ever preached..."

Fourth paragraph: "And yet, we must not just listen to this sermon; **we must apply it.**

- How do we do that?
- How does anything we believe translate into something we are?

It seems it is easier to grab a set of rules of behavior and apply them to your external life than change what you believe and trust and alter the inner workings of your personality. We may adopt behavior for very selfish reasons:

- Talk a certain way
- Dress a certain way
- Limit activities to an accepted standard
- We can do all these things for an anticipated reward or benefit to us.
- And yet, we may not wholly agree with any of it. . .



We will never come to change our behavior to be God-like until we see God in a positive light and truly understand His character as portrayed in the Sermon on the Mount. That He is like those things.

We become like the object or person we worship and admire. (2 Corinthians 3:18)

“And eternal life means to know you, the only true God, and to know Jesus Christ, whom you sent.” John 17:3 GNT

It wasn't until fairly late in the writing of the New Testament that the statement of “God is Love” was made. (1 John 4:8)

However, the attributes of God had long previously been demonstrated from the Creation of the World to the demonstration by His Son that God is “others centered” in all His actions and principles.

- Happy, others centered, not showy, servanthood.
- 1 Corinthians 13
- Galatians 5:22 “The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness (humility), and self control.”

These texts are just a recapitulation of what God has demonstrated to the whole universe and are the center of the themes that angels love to see and tell. (1 Peter 1:10-12)

SUNDAY

Principles and Standards

First Question: Summarize what stands out the most in your mind about what the Sermon on the Mount says to you.

- What is it like to be like God?
- Happy, others centered, no showy, servanthood.
- See 1 Corinthians 13

Read fourth paragraph: “Ellen G. White writes: “In the sermon on the Mount He sought to undo the work that had been wrought by false education, and to give His hearers a right conception of His kingdom and of His own character. . .” The Desire of Ages p.299

MONDAY

The Sermon Versus the Law

Read the first paragraph. Would this same discussion take place over the law of gravity?

- If the law of God is a law enacted, maybe.
- The law is the principle upon which the universe is constructed.
- The consequences of replacing the law of God would be. . .

Read Genesis 15:6

- How does reading the same passage in a different translation alter your perception of what is



said?

- NIV: Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.
- NASB: Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.
- GNT: Abram put his trust in the Lord, and because of this the Lord was pleased with him and accepted him.
- Be wary of your translator!
- Preconceived ideas alter how you translate something. This is true whether the original language is Spanish, Hebrew, Greek or Swahili.

This whole page appears to be in the context of a legal understanding of salvation or at least an external process that is applied to an individual.

- **Salvation is about two people: A human being and God**
- We are saved by God
- We are not saved by a substance, process or transaction.
- We are saved by a gracious being “who loved us and gave himself for us.” Galatians 2:20

TUESDAY

The Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees

At the bottom half of the page: Read Micah 6:6-8

The next paragraph: Even in the Old Testament time. . .”

- “. . .the scribes and Pharisees were definitely not a model on how a follower of the Lord should live.”
- Who is a “model’ of humanity for us?
 - Only Christ! The church leaders should never be our model.
 - What then of the statement in 1 Corinthians 11:1?
 - Read 1 Corinthians 10:31- 33
 - Paul is not using his life as an example. He is encouraging them to use the same principles in their own working out of their lives.
 - Read Galatians 2:19, 20
 - Go back to the introduction of 1 Corinthians.
 - 1 Corinthians 1:12, 13 and then in 3:4 - 9



WEDNESDAY

The Principles of the Kingdom

Matthew 5:48 “You must be perfect - just as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

It is all about love.

Read last paragraph on page: “The important thing. . .”

THURSDAY

Receiving the Words of the Kingdom

Read Matthew 13:44 - 52

- Parables
 - Treasure
 - Pearl
 - Fish
 - Disciple brings out new and old out of his storage room to “implied: feed when necessary”
- “The other crucial point is the great value each man placed on what he had found.
- Read the last paragraph: How does that happen?
- “Christ has given us no assurance that to attain perfection of character is an easy matter. A noble, all-round character is not inherited. It does not come to us by accident. A noble character is earned by individual effort through the merits and grace and Christ. God gives the talents, the powers of the mind; we form the character. It is formed by hard, stern battles with self. Conflict after conflict must be waged against hereditary tendencies. We shall have to criticize ourselves closely, and allow not one unfavorable trait to remain uncorrected. . . .

A character formed according to the divine likeness is the only treasure that we can take from this world to the next. Those who are under the instruction of Christ in this world will take every divine attainment with them to the heavenly mansions. . . .

The heavenly intelligences will work with the human agent who seeks with determined faith that perfection of character which will reach out to perfection in action. To everyone engaged in this work Christ says, I am at your right hand to help you.

As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings.

Character is power. The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence. By revealing in our own life the character of Christ we cooperate with Him in the work of saving souls. It is only by revealing in our life His character that we can cooperate with Him. And the wider the sphere of our influence, the more good we may do. When those who profess to serve God follow Christ’s example, practicing the principles of the law in their daily life; when every act bears witness that they love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, then will the church have



power to move the world. . . .

We know not what results a day, an hour, or a moment may determine, and never should we begin the day without committing our ways to our heavenly Father. . . . When unconsciously we are in danger of exerting a wrong influence, the angels will be by our side, prompting us to a better course, choosing our words for us, and influencing our actions. Thus our influence may be a silent, unconscious, but mighty power in drawing others to Christ and the heavenly world.”

From Devotional: Our Father Cares, pp. 308, 309.

FRIDAY

Further Thoughts

Question #1: What would it be like living in a world where everyone followed the principles found in the Sermon on the Mount?

Don't worry.

We will get to find out: it is heaven!

Jesus' life was a retelling of all of the Old Testament stories