

Matthew 5  
Part 1 (1-20)  
His longest sermon recorded

- I. Matthew prepares us for the sermon on the mount. (1, 2)
  - A. Jesus takes advantage of His popularity. (cf. 4:23-25)
    1. Jesus teaches His disciples.
      - a. We are not told what mountain they were on. (cf. 14:23; 15:29; 28:16)
      - b. The disciples were the primary students, though many others may have heard these lessons.
    2. Jesus sets forth His wonderful teachings.
      - a. “He opened his mouth” may seem unnecessary to modern readers.
      - b. This solemn introduction prepares us for some significant teaching.
      - c. “and taught them” emphasizes His teaching rather than a herald or preacher. (cf. 3:1; 4:17)
  - B. The character of the kingdom is shown. (3-16)
    1. Some observations about the “beatitudes”.
      - a. All Christians are to possess these attitudes.
      - b. Christians are to possess all of these attitudes.
      - c. No one is born with these attitudes, must be developed and strengthened.
      - d. They show the difference between Christians and non-Christians.
      - e. The idea of being “blessed” is profound.
    2. Jesus defines proper character. (3-10)
      - a. “Poor in spirit” (3)= spiritual humility. The opposite of arrogance.
        - (1) Does not refer to physical poverty. One can be arrogant and poor.
        - (2) On the other hand, we can be humble and wealthy. (cf. 1 Tim. 6:17)
        - (3) Those with the proper disposition are fit “for the kingdom of heaven.”
      - b. “Mourn” (4)= to feel deep inward remorse through our knowledge of sin in our lives.
        - (1) True mourning leads to true repentance.
        - (2) This leads to a reformed life. (cf. 2 Cor. 7:8-11)
      - c. “Meek” (5)= a gentle, humble, considerate disposition
        - (1) This attitude results in goodwill toward people and obedience towards God. (cf. 11:29; 21:5)
        - (2) Meekness is not weakness, but submissiveness to God.
        - (3) “Inherit the earth” does not refer to dirt and rocks, but to God’s inheritance. (cf. 2 Pet 3:7, 10-13)
      - d. “Hunger and thirst after righteousness” (6)= a longing for God’s righteousness.
        - (1) Hunger and thirst are the body’s strongest desires.
        - (2) Shows us the passionate desire for these things, which carry over to our spiritual lives. (cf. Jn 4:13, 14; 7:37; Rev. 21:6)
        - (3) Those with this kind of appetite will be satisfied.
      - e. “Merciful” (7)= a sympathetic response, not a mere emotion. (cf. 9:27; 15:22)
        - (1) Jesus fulfills the greatest need we have. (cf. Heb. 2:17)
        - (2) Mercy flows in both directions. (cf. 6:12, 14, 15; 18:21, 22)
      - f. “Pure in heart” (8)= Chaste in the intellect of our spiritual life. (cf. 1 Tim. 1:5)
        - (1) Our heart determines our behavior. (cf. 5:28)

- (2) This pure heart comes from God. (cf. Ps 51:10)
    - g. “Peacemakers” (9)= making peace with God and for God.
      - (1) A common misconception is that we are to be peacekeepers.
      - (2) It is possible to enjoy and promote peace in the face of conflict. (cf. Jn 16:33; 1 Cor. 7:15)
      - (3) Since children have the characteristics of their father, peacemakers imitate God.
    - h. “Persecuted” (10)= Those willing to suffer loss and even injury for Christ. (cf. 1 Pet. 4:12-16)
      - (1) Those who suffer in this way are fit for the kingdom of heaven.
      - (2) A part of the lives of Christians at Smyrna. (cf. Rev. 2:8-11)
      - (3) Without this persecution we would not be fit for the kingdom.
  - 3. The world’s reaction to this type of character. (11,12)
    - a. Persecution results from maintaining proper character. (cf. 2 Tim. 3:12)
      - (1) Interestingly, one who suffers like this is considered “blessed”. (cf. 1 Pet. 3:14)
      - (2) Notice, “when” not “if”.
    - b. Persecution is reason to rejoice.
      - (1) It brings great reward in heaven. (which means before God)
      - (2) It places us in good company.
  - 4. The wonderful influence of this proper character. (13-16)
    - a. Those of the kingdom are like “salt” which both preserves and flavors.
      - (1) “Having lost its savor” or “flavor” Literally, = became foolish.
      - (2) Interestingly, we got our word “moron” from this Greek word.
      - (3) A “Christian” without proper character is as useless as this salt.
    - b. Those of the kingdom are to be like “light” in the darkness of this world.
      - (1) The true character of the kingdom can no more be hidden than a city set on a hill.
      - (2) Those of the kingdom must not attempt to hide this light.
      - (3) Practicing proper character is to glorify God, not oneself.
- C. Jesus’ relationship to Moses’ law. (17-20)
1. Observe: to the Jew the Law of Moses WAS SCRIPTURE.
    - a. As a result of this, they examined it in great detail.
      - (1) This close examination revealed a total of 613 commandments
      - (2) They break down as follows: 248 positive commands and 365 negative commands.
      - (3) Because Jesus often rebuked their legalism, the Jews considered Him an enemy of the law.
    - b. Jesus confirms the validity of the OT and shows His oneness with it.
    - c. Jesus points out that the legalistic Jews are the real enemies of God.
  2. Jesus was not opposed to the law. (17)
    - a. Jesus did not come from heaven to demolish or destroy.
      - (1) Destroy is a very strong word. Literally, to completely tear down. (cf. 24:2)
      - (2) “Law” and “prophets” = entire OT scriptures. (cf. 7:12; 22:40)
      - (3) “Fulfill” = bring something to completion, finishing something begun by another.
  3. The entire OT will be fulfilled. (18, 19)
    - a. The Law will remain intact but the purpose of the will was being fulfilled.
    - b. “Heaven and earth” = the totality of creation.
    - c. “Jot” = the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet

- d. “Tittle” = a tiny mark on some letters that distinguish them from other letters.
  - (1) It is a serious matter to break any scripture.
  - (2) “Shall break” is not an isolated breaking, but an attitude of doing away with the commandment.

True members of the kingdom must be more righteous than mere perceived righteousness.

- a. These Scribes and Pharisees do not qualify for Christ’s kingdom.
- b. Those who do qualify must exceed in righteousness.
- c. It would be hard to imagine anyone more self-righteous than a Pharisee.
- d. What appears to be righteousness is not always so.

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