

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

A Study of Matthew 5-7

Sermon on the Mount: A Study of Matthew 5–7

by C.J. Harris, PhD

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Introduction

The Sermon on the Mount is practical Christianity. With one critical teaching after another, Jesus cuts through centuries of tradition, laws, and culture to reveal a picture of life in God's kingdom. He overturns outward formalism and impossible religious codes, speaking directly to the heart of the gathered crowd. His path is different than anything they have seen or imagined.

Even today, the Sermon feels countercultural. The world system favors the powerful, the proud, and the self-serving. But Jesus blesses the meek—the peacemakers that hunger for His righteousness. Ignoring earthly distractions, we pursue God's kingdom above all else. If we, by His grace, walk the path shown here, we become salt and light in a world of decay and darkness. Jesus calls us to do good and reflect the Father's glory.

I wrote this study out of a desire to become a better citizen of the kingdom. Yet every time I read these passages, the words of Jesus pull me back to prayer, seeking His grace. I trust your own study reminds you of our complete dependence on God. And as you read, I pray you'll store up many of the same heavenly treasures that have enriched me.

By His Grace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C.J. Harris". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent initial "C".

C.J. Harris

In This Book

Reading Exercises—Starting in Lesson 2, each lesson includes three reading exercises that challenge you to study Scripture on your own and prepare for class. Your teacher may talk about some of these passages and the way they relate to the Sermon on the Mount.

Lesson Preview—Starting in Lesson 3, these questions give you the chance to think about some of the discussion topics that may come up in class.

Teacher’s Lesson Outlines—This section summarizes the main points of each lecture while serving as a foundation for your own notes.

Scripture Memory List

Lesson	Scripture	Signature
1	Matthew 4:17	
2	Luke 4:43	
3	Matthew 5:3–6	
4	Matthew 5:7–10	
5	Matthew 5:14, 16	
6	Matthew 5:17–18	
7	Matthew 5:29	
8	Matthew 5:43–44	
9	Matthew 6:1	
10	Matthew 6:9–13	
11	Matthew 6:24	
12	Matthew 7:12	
13	Matthew 7:13–14	

LESSON 1

An Introduction to the Sermon

Teacher's Lesson

The Source Texts

Matthew 5–7

Luke 6:17–49

I. The Significance of the Sermon

- A. It's the _____ sermon recorded in the New Testament.
- B. It's the _____ sermon of Jesus recorded in the Scriptures.
- C. It includes many _____ passages, including . . .
 1. The Beatitudes (5:3–12), including “Blessed are the meek,” and others
 2. The imagery of believers as “salt” and “light” (5:13–16)
 3. The promise that no part of the Law will pass away (5:18)
 4. The warning to cut off your own hand if it leads you to sin (5:29–30)
 5. The warnings about divorce and immorality (5:31–32)
 6. The command to “turn the other cheek” (5:39)

7. The command to “go the extra mile” (5:41)
8. The command to love your enemies (5:44–45)
9. The idea of a “prayer closet” (6:6)
10. The model of prayer we call “the Lord’s Prayer” (6:9–13)
11. The encouragement to “lay up treasures in heaven” (6:19–21)
12. The warning that we “cannot serve two masters” (6:24)
13. The encouragement to let tomorrow worry about itself (6:25–34)
14. The command to “seek first the kingdom of God” (6:33)
15. The warning to “judge not, that you be not judged” (7:1)
16. The encouragement to ask, seek, and knock (7:7–8)
17. The principle we call “the Golden Rule” (7:12)
18. The imagery of the “straight and narrow” path (7:13–14)
19. The idea of judging a tree “by its fruit” (7:16–20)
20. The warning that not all who say, “Lord, Lord,” will enter heaven (7:21)
21. The imagery of houses built on “rock” or “sand” (7:24–27)

II. The Context of the Sermon

A. The sermon’s place in the Book of Matthew

1. Matthew 1–2: _____
2. Matthew 3: _____
3. Matthew 4: _____
 - a. Jesus preached a message: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven draws near” (v. 17).
 - b. Jesus calls _____ (vv. 18–22).
 - c. Jesus heals many people and increases His fame (vv. 23–25).

B. The sermon's place in Israel

1. On the _____ shore of the Sea of Galilee
2. Near the town of _____

III. Interpretations of the Sermon

A. The _____ View

Within this view, the Sermon becomes the primary set of instructions for believers, whose purpose is to make the physical world a better place.

B. The _____ View

Within this view, the Sermon doesn't matter as much until the end times, when Christ will return and establish His physical kingdom.

C. The _____ View

Within this view, the Sermon expands upon the Old Testament Law, addressing inner motivations in addition to outer actions.

D. The _____ View

This view—held by the author—claims that Christ offered this Sermon as an explanation of how to live as a citizen of His spiritual kingdom. These principles represent His expectations for us right now.

LESSON 2

An Outline of the Sermon

Student Reading

In the coming week, you can prepare for the second teacher's lesson by reading through the entire Sermon on the Mount. A broad overview will help you better appreciate the individual teachings.

First Reading: Matthew 5

Future passages in this study may be shorter, but for now, read all of Matthew 5 to spot the biggest themes and principles.

- ⦿ We call verses 2–12 the Beatitudes. Who is the only person that could possibly bless us in the ways described here? _____
- ⦿ According to verses 10–12, are all persecuted people blessed? Explain your answer. _____

- ⦿ Why should believers think and act differently than the rest of the world (v. 16)? _____

- ⦿ Read verses 17–20 again. Based on your knowledge of the Bible, do you think the principles in this sermon are easier or harder to live than the Old Testament Law? Why? _____

- ⦿ If you had to point to a single, core evil that leads to all the sins mentioned in verses 27–42, what would that evil be? What’s the cause of all this wrongdoing? _____

- ⦿ Describe the meaning of verses 44–45 in your own words.

Second Reading: Matthew 6

In this chapter, Jesus continues to explain how the citizens of His kingdom will act. Note the ways He challenges and encourages His student-followers.

- ⦿ Whose approval should we seek whenever we help others or pray (vv. 4, 6)? _____

- ⦿ Read verses 7–13 again. What distinguishes a prayer to God from a spell or incantation? _____

⦿ How do you think that fasting—from food or from anything else—can help believers today? _____

⦿ Based on your knowledge of the Bible, what do you think “treasure” in heaven is? _____

⦿ In verses 25–34, Jesus argues that we needn’t be anxious over physical needs like food or clothing. Summarize His reasons in your own words:

○ Verse 25: Life involves more than physical needs.

○ Verses 26, 30: _____

○ Verse 27: _____

○ Verses 32–33: _____

○ Verse 34: _____

Third Reading: Matthew 7

In this final chapter of the sermon, Jesus emphasizes the importance of our relationship to God the Father.

- ⦿ According to Jesus in verses 1–5, what is the danger of judging others unfairly? _____

- ⦿ Based on your knowledge of the Bible, what good things (v. 11) can we ask from God? _____

- ⦿ Write out the Golden Rule in your own words (v. 12): _____

- ⦿ Based on your knowledge of the Bible, what do you think are the signs (v. 20) of a false teacher? _____

Read verses 24–27 again and consider how the principles in this sermon can steady your life. How does peace follow wisdom?

Teacher's Lesson

Outline of the Sermon

- A. What citizens of the kingdom _____ (5:3–16)
 - 1. Our heart-attitudes (vv. 3–10)
 - 2. Our purpose in this world (vv. 11–16)
- B. What citizens of the kingdom _____ (5:17–7:27)
 - 1. Our relationship to the Law (5:17–48)
 - a. We fulfill it in _____ and in _____ .
 - b. We follow it to _____ .
 - 2. The faith behind our devotion (6:1–34)
 - a. We serve and worship to _____
(vv. 1–18).
 - b. We lay up treasures in our _____
(vv. 19–24).
 - c. We do not _____ like others do (vv. 25–34).
 - 3. How we relate to the Judge of the kingdom (7:1–27)
 - a. We judge others only _____ (vv. 1–6).
 - b. We take confidence in God's _____
(vv. 7–12).
 - c. We choose Christ as our _____
(vv. 13–27).

LESSON 3

The Beatitudes— Portrait of a Christian, Part 1

Student Reading

First Reading: Matthew 18:21–25

In this passage, Jesus shares the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant. Consider the story and answer the questions below.

- ⦿ What kind of answer do you think Peter wanted from Jesus (v. 21)? _____

- ⦿ What was the consequence of the servant's unpaid debt (v. 25)?

- ⦿ How did the servant avoid this consequence (vv. 26–27)? _____

⦿ When the servant demanded a much smaller debt from another servant, what did that debtor do (v. 29)? _____

⦿ In your opinion, was the king's anger justified (vv. 32–34)? Why or why not? _____

⦿ Describe the relationship between our gratitude and mercy.

Second Reading: Isaiah 40

In this passage, after thirty-nine chapters of warnings and judgment, the prophet Isaiah reminds the people of Israel that their God is supreme. He offers them hope by promising a future Savior and an eternal kingdom.

⦿ Why are people not a good foundation for our hope (vv. 6–8)?

⦿ How does God treat His children (vv. 10–11)? _____

- ⦿ Why would Isaiah use a terrifying description of God to comfort the people (vv. 12–26)? _____

- ⦿ What promise does Isaiah offer those who place their hope in God (vv. 28–31)? What do you think this gift means? _____

- ⦿ What attribute or characteristic of God have you found the most comforting? _____

Third Reading: Psalm 37

In this psalm, David contrasts the fate of wicked people and the fate of the righteous.

- ⦿ What shouldn't worry or frustrate us (vv. 1–2)? _____

- ⦿ What attitudes does David contrast with worry or frustration (vv. 3–4, 7)? _____

⦿ What does God promise repeatedly to those who are peaceful, who place their hope in Him (vv. 9, 11, 22, 29, 34)? _____

⦿ What big difference does David point out between the wicked and the righteous in verses 14, 16, 21, 25–26? _____

⦿ Where do the righteous keep the law of their God (v. 31)?

⦿ What image does David use to describe God in verses 39–40?

Preview

Before your next class time, briefly read Matthew 5:3–10 and consider the following questions:

⦿ What do you think “poor in spirit” means (v. 3)?

⦿ Do you think verse 5 includes roughly the same promise as you read in Psalm 37, or does Jesus mean something more?

Teacher's Lesson

Initial Observations

In *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, Martin Lloyd-Jones offers five general observations on the Beatitudes. These are summarized below:

1. _____ Christians should be like this.
2. All Christians should manifest _____ these characteristics.
3. None of these refer to _____ tendencies.
4. These mark the _____ differences between Christians and unbelievers.
5. Christians and unbelievers belong to _____ realms.

I. Blessed are the poor in spirit (v. 3).

- A. Definition: _____; a complete absence of self-reliance
- B. Implications
 1. We are incapable of spiritual good, so _____ must work in us.
 2. This heart-attitude is a biblical _____.
- C. Blessing—Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
 1. We find _____.
 2. We recognize and enjoy Christ's _____ in our lives.

II. Blessed are they that mourn (v. 4).

- A. Definition: _____ over sin and its effects

B. Implications

1. We recognize sin as _____.
2. We regret and condemn sin.
3. We _____ from sin.
4. We _____ others overtaken by sin.

C. Blessing—They will be comforted.

1. The comfort of salvation and assurance
2. The comfort of forgiveness and security
3. The comfort of eternity and glorification

III. Blessed are the meek (v. 5).

A. Definition: Recognizing our position, we _____ ourselves to God.

B. Implications

1. We choose a better _____.
2. We desire God's _____.
3. We do not _____ for our own sake.

C. Blessing—They will inherit the earth.

1. We remain _____ in the present.
2. We find hope in our unmatched _____.

IV. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness (v. 6).

A. Definition: a desire to be _____ with God and _____ from sin

B. Implications

1. We need the righteousness of God.
 - a. Hunger and thirst are _____.
 - b. Hunger and thirst _____.
2. We reject _____ as a goal.

C. Blessing—They will be filled.

1. God satisfies those who _____ Him.
2. God is the one who accomplishes this work.
 - a. At the point of salvation, God fills us with _____ righteousness.
 - b. Today, God continues to _____ us through Christ's righteousness.
 - c. One day, God will _____ us in perfect righteousness.