FROM THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

SERMON ON THE MOUNT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE PASTOR	2
3 WAYS TO PARTICIPATE	3
HOW TO S.O.A.P	4
HOW TO P.R.A.Y	6
MATTHEW BIO	8
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT PART 1	9
WEEK 1 (THE BEATITUDES) MATTHEW 5:1-12	10
WEEK 2 (SALT AND LIGHT) MATTHEW 5:13-20	17
WEEK 3 (ANGER) MATTHEW 5:21-26	22
WEEK 4 (LUST DIVORCE OATHS) MATTHEW 5:27-37	27
WEEK 5 (RETALIATION LOVE YOUR ENEMIES) MATTHEW 5:38-48	33
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT PART 2	41
WEEK 6 (TEACHING ABOUT GIVING TO THE NEEDY) MATTHEW 6:1-18 .	42
WEEK 7 (TEACHING ABOUT PRAYER AND FASTING) MATTHEW 6:9-13 MATTHEW 7:7-11	48
WEEK 8 (TREASURES IN HEAVEN) MATTHEW 6:19-24	54
WEEK 9 (DO NOT BE ANXIOUS) MATTHEW 6:25-34	60
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT PART 3	67
WEEK 10 (DO NOT JUDGE OTHERS) MATTHEW 7:1-6	68
WEEK 11 (EFFECTIVE PRAYER) MATTHEW 7:7-12	73
WEEK 12 (BUILDING ON A SOLID FOUNDATION) MATTHEW 7:13-29 .	79
NEXT STEP	84
PRAYER JOURNAL	85

Are you ready to live dangerously?

Really? Think about it for a minute before you just say, "yes". Are you ready to live your life in a way that some may describe as risky or reckless? I'm not talking about jumping out of plane, swimming with great white sharks, eating day old sushi or going on tour with the Grateful Dead. I'm talking about living your life according to the teachings of a homeless, itinerant preacher, who traveled the countryside with a band of misfits, performing miracles and calling a generation to a higher way of living. That preacher was Jesus, and the higher way of living was a radical call to discipleship.

Nearly 2000 years ago, Jesus sat down on a hillside along the shores of the Sea of Galilee and in one flawless sermon, outlined the best life that our Heavenly Father wants for us. This sermon was a revelation through Jesus to His people, a manifesto for Christians. The crowd was amazed by the counter-cultural teaching and dumbfounded by the direct, no-holds-barred instruction. Their lives were forever changed by the words of the Sermon on the Mount. It's time we take a closer look at those words once again.

If I were to summarize the Sermon on the Mount in a single sentence, I would say something like this, "How to live a fully dedicated life that is pleasing to God and glorifies His grace." I think the words of the Sermon on the Mount serve as a radical wake-up call for Christians to live wholeheartedly for God through faith, not simply through external actions of keeping the law. Jesus didn't give us a list of rules to follow, but an invitation to live under grace and experience blessings and rewards from living a Christ-like life.

There has never been a more powerful and counter-culture teaching than the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is calling His followers to wake up from a sleepy, comfortable, safe life and live dangerously.

Dare to live differently than our culture.

Defy the status quo and love boldly.

Capture the heart of Jesus and experience a dangerous, thrilling life of adventure.

Don't play it safe! Climb this mountain with us and discover the joy of a DANGEROUS life.

Climbing with you,



Pastor Jason

3 WAYS YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

INDIVIDUALLY

If you find yourself doing this study alone, worry not. This study will be mostly reflective, as you will ask yourself questions while seeking out God's given destiny for you. It is our hope and prayer that by the time this study is over, you will have found others that you can do life with.

WITH YOUR GROUP

This study is optimized for a group setting and requires very little teaching. As you go through the study, know that it's not about getting through every single question. Build on each other to create a better sense of community and belonging that will add value to your life while living God's best version of you.

WITH YOUR FAMILY

If you're doing this study with your family, what a great opportunity for you to guide your family and see clearly who Jesus is. This guide was set up to help facilitate conversation, so don't feel like you must go through every question or teach. Tailor the questions, if needed, for young ones to better understand the conversation. This is a living document and can be shaped to easily fit the family dynamic.

HOW TO USE S.O.A.P.

Open your Bible and ask God to illuminate what He wants you to learn and apply today. God's Word says that the Holy Spirit "will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13) and will help you understand what you read from the scriptures. Read the passage slowly and look for that specific "gem" of truth that jumps off the page and grabs your attention.

SCRIPTURE

Choose one Bible verse that stands out to me and copy it word for word.

OBSERVATION

What does this verse teach me about my relationship with God?

APPLICATION

How will I be different because of what I've read today?

PRAYER

Write out a prayer asking God to help me live out what I've just learned.



HOW TO P.R.A.Y.

There is no special formula for prayer. There are no "buzz words" or phrases that capture God's attention more than any other. Prayer is pouring your honest, surrendered heart out to God and seeking His answers to your struggles. When asked by His disciples about prayer, Jesus responded with the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13).

"This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.""

Jesus' response points out four key attributes of prayer. We've made an acrostic to make it easy to remember every time you pray. This isn't a formula, but if you need a little direction in your prayers, this serves as a great guide.

PRAISE: Praise God for who He is and His attributes. Begin by giving Him your worship and adoration.

REPENT: Confess to God the things you have done in word, thought or deed which led you into sin. Confess and repent.

ASK: After you have spent time in praise and repentance, make your requests known to God by asking Him to provide your needs. YIELD: God is always at work around you. Take time to notice when He invites you to join Him to become part of His mission.

As we pray through this season, be praying for clarity. Pray...Father help me to see Jesus clearly. As we see Jesus clearly it will help us answer two questions that we all wrestle with...Who am I? and Why am I here? Jesus is the filter that helps us answer those two questions. Make prayer a key part of this study and use the prayer journal in the back of this workbook to track how God is responding to your prayers.



MATTHEW

Matthew, also known as Levi, was a tax collector for the Roman Empire. His job was to collect taxes from the Jews that lived in Capernaum. Tax collectors were not well-liked, and the Pharisees considered them sinners because they were known to collect more money than what was owed, keeping the surplus for themselves. The Pharisees referred to Matthew and others as scum during an exchange with Jesus, in verses 9:10-13. Jesus' response was, "Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do...For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners."

Jesus calls Matthew to follow Him and Matthew becomes one of the twelve disciples. The gospel of Matthew, the first book of the New Testament, is Matthew's eyewitness recording of his time following Jesus. It is in this book where the Sermon on the Mount is recorded.

DISCOVER THE JOY OF A DANGEROUS LIFE!

There has never been a more powerful and counter-cultural teaching than the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is calling His followers to wake up from a sleepy, comfortable, safe life and live dangerously. Climb this mountain with us and discover the joy of a DANGEROUS life.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

PART 1

MATTHEW 5:1-12

One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, 2 and he began to teach them.

- 3 "God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- 4 God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- 5 God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.
- 6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.
- 7 God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- 8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.
- 9 God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.
- 10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- 11 "God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.



THE BEATITUDES

MATTHEW 5:1-12

LOOK BACK

• When was a specific time you felt especially close to God? What was going on in your life during that season?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 5:1-10

- Matthew records this amazing sermon from Jesus, which comes after Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom; healing those who were sick and delivering those who were demonized. Nine times Jesus says, "God blesses…" This Greek word for blesses is *makrios*. It means to confer prosperity upon, to be fortunate, to offer encouragement, or to bring pleasure. What is your understanding of what it means to be blessed by God?
- For what kind of people is God preparing His Kingdom? What kind of attitude are we called to have as disciples of Jesus? Isaiah 57:15 says, "The high and lofty one who lives in eternity, the Holy One, says this: 'I live in the high and holy place with those whose spirits are contrite and humble. I restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts." How does this give us insight into the first few "beatitudes"?
- Take your time and go through each of the "beatitudes". Reflect on your attitude about each example Jesus gives. Do you see that you're spiritually poor? Do you mourn over this world's rebellion against God? Are you humbly and gently seeking to walk in obedience? Do you hunger and thirst for justice? Are you merciful toward those who don't deserve mercy? Is your heart purely seeking God above all else? Are you working to share the message of peace with those who are God's enemies? Are you boldly doing what is right, even when faced with persecution? How is God calling you to change? How does

having the right attitude impact the way you live?

Read Matthew 5:11-12

• We must remind ourselves that there is a difference between stirring up conflict, and obediently following Jesus. What are your thoughts about persecution? Have you ever been mistreated by someone for simply being a disciple of Jesus? How do you usually respond? How does Jesus teach us to respond? Does it encourage you to remember the saints who have been persecuted in the past?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK



LOOK AHEAD

- You could hang out in this passage for weeks and still barely break through the surface of Jesus' teachings. How will you remind yourself of these things? Are you surrounded by brothers and sisters in Christ who can challenge you to live this way?
- What is one change that God is calling you to make with your way of thinking?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

Jesus begins this powerful sermon with the promise of blessings to a people who are called to surrender and suffer. Often, we view our blessings as merely temporal and worldly things: money, cars, gadgets, and luxurious lifestyles. But Jesus has something altogether different in mind. He is calling out to people who are willing to give up everything and follow Him to an everlasting Kingdom, to blessings that will never fade away. Jesus began His public ministry with these words, "Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near." How is your attitude when it comes to the things of God?

S.O.A.P.

Monday – Isaiah 66:1-4 Thursday – Isaiah 57:14-21

Tuesday – Luke 6:20-26 Friday – Psalm 24

Wednesday – Isaiah 57:1-13



MATTHEW 5:13-20

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. 14 "You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. 15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

17 "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. 19 So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. 20 "But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

SALT AND LIGHT

MATTHEW 5:13-20

LOOK BACK

- How was your prayer life this past week?
- What changes have you seen God working in your heart?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 5:13-16

- Jesus' illustration about salt is specifically about its taste and flavor. If you sprinkled salt on your eggs or french-fries, only to find that the flavor did not change at all, what would you do with that salt? With salt being a "flavor enhancer", how should we reflect on Jesus' words that, "You are the salt of the earth?" Are you, through the power of the Holy Spirit, obeying Jesus' commands and allowing God to use you to bring flavor to the earth?
- "God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil. All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants." These are the words of Jesus as recorded in John chapter 3. How does this relate to Jesus' teaching that, "You are the light of the world"? What are some ways that we, as followers of Jesus, hide the light that He has given? How can you expect the world to react to your obedience to Jesus' commands?

Read Matthew 5:17-20

• Understanding what Jesus is teaching here will help us grasp the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. It is important that we consider these teachings from two perspectives: 1) In our own strength, we have failed miserably to keep God's commands. We need His

- mercy. 2) Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we will grow to reflect God in this world and live according to His desires for us. Do you see how God's commands point to the cross?
- This passage of scripture is used by many "false teachers" to say that we are required, by God, to follow the Old Testament commandments for salvation. Write down some observations you make in this section of scripture regarding the law.
- Consider the context and setting of this teaching from Jesus. Who is His audience? What was different about them, in the time Jesus preached this sermon, compared to us now? What hadn't happened yet? What covenant were they under at that time? What covenant are we under? (hint: Luke 22:20)
- Jesus said in John 5:39-40, "You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the scriptures point to me! Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life." While studying the Sermon on the Mount, we must remember that the law and the prophets were meant to point to Jesus. Consider these words from the Apostle Paul, "For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God." (Rom. 10:4) The truth is that none of us can fully obey God's laws. How do Jesus' teachings here point us to "the Gospel or Good News" as it is taught in Romans 1:16-17 & 1 Corinthians 15:1-4?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- How do Jesus' promises and teachings in this section of scripture impact your understanding and gratitude regarding His life, death, burial, and resurrection?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

In the beginning of His sermon, Jesus outlined ways of living that are nothing short of dangerous. How does Jesus describe a life lived in accordance with His teachings? He uses salt and light to make His point. Those who, through the power of the Holy Spirit, live for the Kingdom of God will preserve goodness and truth while they are on the earth. The law and the prophets witnessed about the coming Messiah. Now that He had arrived, He made sure that all people were made aware of God's call to righteous living. God's law, as recorded for us in the Old Testament, is His standard for righteousness. The law reveals sin in the human heart. It shows us that we can never earn favor from God by our own behavior. To quote the Apostle Paul, "...the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so we receive God's promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ." (Gal. 3:22) The righteousness that Jesus earned and gives to His disciples is the only righteousness that will allow you to enter the Kingdom of God. And here is the icing on the cake; through your repentance and faith in Jesus, God gifts you with His Holy Spirit, who will help you and give you the strength to obey God's commands. How do you respond to such an amazing gift of grace?

S.O.A.P.

Monday - Romans 7:1-13

Thursday - Romans 8:1-25

Tuesday - Galatians 3:1-14

Friday - Act 1:1-11

Wednesday - Galatians 3:15-29



MATTHEW 5:21-26

21 "You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' 22 But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.

23 "So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, 24 leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

25 "When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 And if that happens, you surely won't be free again until you have paid the last penny.

ANGER

MATTHEW 5:21-26

LOOK BACK

• The last study focused greatly on God's high call to righteous living and our inability, in our own strength, to keep His commandments. What is your heart response to the teaching that Jesus came to fulfill the law on your behalf?



LOOK UP

Read Matthew 5:21-26

- When studying the Bible, it is vital to put things in the right context. The word translated as angry comes from the Greek word *orgizo*. It means to provoke, enrage, or become exasperated. The level of anger that Jesus is describing is compared with the sixth commandment, "You must not murder." (Exo. 20:13) This anger is the kind that can overtake you and lead you into gross sin. Jesus is bringing out the intention and the heart behind the old commandment. How does Jesus elevate the requirement of the law? How do you stack up with the intention behind this law? How do you handle your angry thoughts about a person?
- Our attitude towards others reflects our relationship with God. "If someone says, 'I love God,' but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar...those who love God must also love their fellow believers." (1 Jn. 4:20-21) Bold question: In regards to anger, are you living as a hypocrite in God's eyes? How is Jesus teaching His disciples to handle broken relationships?
- Observe how this illustration from Jesus escalates. What can we learn from this? What specifically is Jesus telling us regarding our differences with others?
- Ephesians 4:26-27 says, "...don't sin by letting anger control you.' Don't let the sun go down while you're still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil." Are you aware of the ways that the devil tries to influence you to sin in your daily life? What are some of his tactics?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- Who are you angry with? Maybe you wouldn't murder them, but do you treat them as though they are dead? Jesus is calling you to forgive them, reconcile with them, and then come worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

"Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires." (James 1:19) These words from the Apostle James are just as true today as they were almost 2000 years ago. If you ask a random person why they believe they're going to heaven when they die, you are very likely to hear them defend their own goodness and bring up that they've never murdered anyone. But what does Jesus say about this? Your anger, your rage toward another, is murder in God's eyes. All of us have failed to keep this commandment at some point or another. All of us are murderers at heart, no matter how long ago it was when we were overwhelmed with anger. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5:3 NASB) Be broken over your sin. Understand that you are poor and needy. The Gospel or "Good News" about Jesus is that He paid the debt that you owed for your sins. He kept God's law perfectly and then paid the penalty on behalf of sinners. Cry out to Him for mercy. From a thankful heart, forgive those who have wronged you. Seek reconciliation. Let the light that Christ has given you shine for all to see, so that everyone will praise your Heavenly Father.

S.O.A.P.

Monday - 1 Corinthians 13

Thursday - Ephesians 4:17-31

Tuesday – Proverbs 15:27-35

Friday - Colossians 3:1-17

Wednesday - Ecclesiastes 7:1-14

MATTHEW 5:27-37

27 "You have heard the commandment that says, 'You must not commit adultery.' 28 But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 So if your eye—even your good eye—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your hand—even your stronger hand—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

31 "You have heard the law that says, 'A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.' 32 But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.

33 "You have also heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the LORD.' 34 But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, 'By heaven!' because heaven is God's throne. 35 And do not say, 'By the earth!' because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, 'By Jerusalem!' for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. 36 Do not even say, 'By my head!' for you can't turn one hair white or black. 37 Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Anything beyond this is from the evil one.



LUST | DIVORCE | OATHS

MATTHEW 5:27-37

LOOK BACK

• As mentioned in the previous study, Jesus sought to bring out the intention and the heart behind the old covenant commandments. How does Jesus make you think differently about law and rule keeping? Do you see how the law reveals God's character?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 5:27-30

- We live in a society that relishes in fantasy, often with a focus on "inappropriate" content. Different industries that are built around lust and fantasy bring in billions upon billions of dollars each year. What does this passage of scripture tell us that Jesus would say about this?
- As He did with murder, Jesus reveals to us that committing adultery is more than a physical act. It has to do with desires. The penalty for adultery, as recorded in Leviticus 20, was death. Few commands bring us into judgment as quickly as this one. What doors or roads in your life lead to this sin? How is Jesus calling you to deal with them?
- Hyperbole is defined as the use of exaggerated statements or claims, to emphasize a point, and are not meant to be taken literally. Jesus is making several points here. As you consider His words, what is He really saying? Is it your hand or your eye that truly causes you to sin? What is it that causes you to sin?

Read Matthew 5:31-32

• Jesus speaks about divorce on a level that is unheard of in our day. If you are not married, have you prayerfully considered the significance that God has placed upon marriage? If you are married, is your behavior helping to strengthen and grow your marriage.

riage or are you tearing it apart?

Read Matthew 5:33-37

• Remember Jesus' words, "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world." Truthfulness is a rarity in a world that is running from God. Jesus tells us not to make vows and oaths, not to swear upon anything. Why is this? Are you known as a trustworthy person? Do those who know you hear your "yes", as yes, and your "no", as no?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- How can you apply Jesus' teachings to your everyday life?
- How can you encourage your brothers and sisters in Christ to do the same?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

If you are a disciple of Jesus Christ, it is because He has offered you forgiveness for your sins and you have believed in Him and accepted Him as your Lord. You are called to examine yourself, to find anything in you that leads you to sin and take every step necessary to remove it. Jesus was not hesitant to talk about hell. God's holiness and goodness demands that He punish sin, and those who live in it. Thankfully, we don't need to gouge out our eyes and cut off our hands. We have a God who has given us an open invitation to humbly come to Him. He is the great surgeon who can remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. The Holy Spirit causes us to be born again and gives us the desires to live in accordance with God's ways. Therefore, the Apostle Paul wrote, "This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun." Look beneath the surface of your life. What do you see? Can you say with the Psalmist, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life."

S.O.A.P.

Monday: Romans 15:5-13 Thursday: Matthew 6:19-34

Tuesday: Psalm 37:3-7 Friday: Psalm 28:6-9

Wednesday: Proverbs 3:5-12

MATTHEW 5:38-48

38 "You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. 40 If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. 41 If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. 42 Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow.

43 "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. 44 But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! 45 In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. 46 If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. 47 If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. 48 But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

RETALIATION | LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

MATTHEW 5:38-48

LOOK BACK

• Think back to the previous lesson, how have Jesus' teachings about the seriousness of sinful behavior affected you?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 5:38-42

- In the Old Testament, the commands regarding retaliation were put in place to maintain justice and purge evil from the Israelites, see Deut. 19:20-21. This prevented inappropriate punishment but also showed God's people what true justice looked like. Punishment was neither too strict nor too lenient. What does justice look like in our country today? Do our civil leaders abide by God's desire for the punishment to fit the crime?
- Take a moment and be honest; what is your gut reaction to being wronged? Jesus, our King, tells us that we are not to seek personal revenge. Instead, we are to do good toward those who wrong us, even when we don't feel like it. Why is this so difficult? What are ways that you can grow and respond to being mistreated that will glorify God?

Read Matthew 5:43-48

- Many people will return love to those who are loving, but we are called to return love
 to all people, no matter how they treat us. It's easy to show kindness to those who look,
 think, and act like us. What are some examples where the teachings of Jesus apply in
 your everyday life?
- Romans 5:10 (NIV) says, "For if, while we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we



be saved through his life!" How does this verse relate with Jesus' teachings about loving our enemies? Who is our greatest example? How does the forgiveness you've received from God affect the way you think about those who are your "enemies"?

"But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." The word perfect comes from the Greek word *teleios*. It means to be complete, brought to an end, wanting nothing. The idea here is that Jesus' disciples are to look like God; to reflect God in the way they live and the way they treat others. While none of us have arrived at perfection, God, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, is shaping us to be more like Christ. What is one aspect of your life where God is growing you right now? What's the next step?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- Considering this passage, who specifically do you need to pray for? How can you remind yourself to continue to pray for that person?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

Only God can give us the strength to love as He loves. And His love is perfect. If you are in Christ, do you realize that one day you will be perfect? The Apostle John wrote this, "Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is. And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure." (I John 3:3) Loving like God is truly supernatural. It goes against every fiber of our natural instinct.

But again, God can give you the strength to walk in His commands and His ways. Are you willing to surrender your desires and your ways to Him and live under His authority? Do you trust Him to do what He has said He will do?

S.O.A.P.

Monday - James 4:1-10

Thursday - Philippians 3:8-21

Tuesday - Exodus 21:12-36

Friday - John 3:1-21

Wednesday - Acts 14:1-18





THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

PART 2

MATTHEW 6:1-18

"Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. 2 When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. 3 But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. 4 Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

5 "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. 6 But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you. 7 "When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. 8 Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! 9 Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

10 May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

11 Give us today the food we need,

12 and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

13 And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.

14 "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. 15 But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

16 "And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. 17 But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. 18 Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.



TEACHING ABOUT GIVING TO THE NEEDY

MATTHEW 6:1-18

LOOK BACK

- As you studied God's word, what did He reveal to you this past week?
- Who in your life set the standard of how you should give?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 6:1-4

- What are some of the things you have seen recently of people doing "good"? How did you find out about it?
- What do you think Jesus means when he says, "They have received their reward"?
- How do you give? How do you serve others? When you do these things, do you struggle with desire to share your deeds for all to see? If you don't struggle with it, why not?
- Why do we feel the need to share everything we do? What is the motive behind this?
- How did Jesus demonstrate to others His righteous deeds?

Read Matthew 6:5-18

- What is your prayer life like?
- Do you find it difficult to pray? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Jesus wants you to pray in secret?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- Beginning this week, how can we begin to model this behavior that Jesus calls for? Take an inventory, what was for man to see and what is for God to see? Pray He would reveal the things that are superficial and hypocritical in your life and leave that mindset behind. This week, practice your good deeds and prayer in God's presence and see what He does with it.
- How can you apply the teachings of this passage of scripture this week?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

How incredible is the word of God! These scriptures we read are timeless, and these lessons remain true to this day. Keep in mind that when Jesus was talking to this crowd, they were all religious. They grew up knowing the scriptures. They knew what He was talking about when he said to them, "When you do these things." This wasn't a question of if, but when? This was the norm for every Jew of that time. They were already doing these things. They saw the poor representation around them and didn't have the right mind when approaching the Heavenly Father. Jesus calling God His "Heavenly Father" would have been strange to them because they didn't understand there was supposed to be a relationship with God like in the days of Adam. The relationship was severed due to the sins of man, but Jesus was going to be the one to redeem this relationship. Jesus was preparing these Jews for the eventual return to that father-son relationship. He's showing them how to worship rightly and that the praise of man is not a reward you want. That reward is earthly and will die and burn up in the test of fire, leaving nothing to show for it. When we read verse one, we know that Jesus is not referring to a righteous deed of God, or good fruit. He is talking about an earthly one when He says, "Your." We should practice the things of God, leave our own righteousness at the door, and put on His righteousness. Ask yourself this question, "When I post my deeds online, what do I really want by doing this?"

S.O.A.P.

Monday - Matthew 6:1

Thursday - Matthew 6:5-6

Tuesday - Matthew 6:2

Friday - Matthew 6:7-8

Wednesday - Matthew 6:3-4



MATTHEW 6:9-13 & 7:7-11

Matthew 6:9-13 NOTES

9 Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,

may your name be kept holy.

10 May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth,

as it is in heaven.

11 Give us today the food we need,

12 and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

13 And don't let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

Matthew 7:7-11

7 "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

9 "You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? 10 Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! 11 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.



TEACHING ABOUT PRAYER AND FASTING

MATTHEW 6:9-13 | MATTHEW 7:7-11

LOOK BACK

- As you studied God's word, what did He reveal to you this past week?
- What were some of your childlike prayers growing up?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 6:9-13

- What was your prayer life like growing up? Was prayer part of your upbringing?
- The opening line in this prayer, in verse 9, is "Our Father in heaven." This has two important meanings. One is that He's our dad, or daddy. But He also has the title of "ruler of all things." When you pray to the Heavenly Father, do you pray to Him as Father or Sovereign Ruler? Or both?
- When Jesus prays this prayer, he mentions a Kingdom to come and the will that will see it through. When you pray, is it your will or His will? What's the difference?
- When you pray, do you pray for those who have hurt you? Would this be the hardest part of your prayer? Why or why not? How much time do we spend on this in our prayer life?

Read Matthew 7:7-11

- When we ask God for anything, is it in the vein of Christ's model prayer in Matthew 6? What is usually the focus of your prayers?
- When we seek, are we seeking in the scriptures? With anticipation of God's Kingdom? When you hear of "God's Kingdom", what do you think it means?
- When we knock, are we continuing to pray with perseverance? How often do you pray?



SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- Spend this next week in prayer and in scripture. Really be intentional to ask, seek, and knock through this next week and see what God reveals to you. Put prayer into practice throughout this study.
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

Again, it's not a question of if we pray but when. Jesus models for us a prayer that reveals what is really at the center of who God is. God is the creator and ruler of all things, and all things will submit and come under His will. When we ask, seek, and knock we should do so in the same way Jesus taught us. We should seek first His kingdom and THEN whatever we ask will be given. If we are doing this, then the things we ask for will begin to change, as we align ourselves to His will. God's will be done. When we posture ourselves in front of a holy God, we should approach him as both Father (daddy) as well as the sovereign ruler of all creation.

S.O.A.P.

Monday - Matthew 6:9-10

Thursday - Matthew 7:7-8

Tuesday - Matthew 6:11-12

Friday - Matthew 7:9-11

Wednesday - Matthew 6:13-15



MATTHEW 6:19-24

19 "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. 21 Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

22 "Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. 23 But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

24 "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.



TREASURES IN HEAVEN

MATTHEW 6:19-24

LOOK BACK

- As you studied God's word, what did He reveal to you this past week?
- Growing up, what possession(s) did you treasure most?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 6:19-24

- What are some treasures we lay up for ourselves here on earth? What are some treasures we lay up in heaven?
- Verse 21 says, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be." Where is your heart right now in this moment? What has a hold of it right now?
- The eyes are a gateway to everything good and evil. The light in us is already dark, per scripture. If we are already dark inside, what are the things that can bring light from outside to within?
- You cannot serve both God and money. You must hate one. That is a pretty strong use of words. Whom do you serve?

SERMON OUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- Examine your heart at this moment. What area in your life is God asking you to give something up? What has a hold of you that you need shed, let go, surrender so that you can serve God? Pray that God would reveal the things in your life that have taken your heart captive and ask that it would be released.
- How can you apply the teachings of this passage of scripture this week?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

The eye and the heart have a very interesting connection. As if everything that enters the eye, whether light or darkness, is stored in the heart. One is dependent on the other and seem to share a relationship of such. The language in this section of scripture is very difficult and hard to accept. Not only are we dark on the inside, we also have the ability to hate God. In verse 24, Jesus says we are either in love with our creator or we out right despise/hate Him. It's hard to even fathom hating God but that's how Jesus wants us to understand the importance of one's treasure AND where we lay it up. God is not interested in half submission or half of a relationship. With God its either surrender or perish. The first commandment given is very clear. There is only one God and there won't be anything else. Everything we bind up here on Earth will perish. The only thing that will matter is what you do with Jesus Christ. It's not enough to passively receive the word. We must accept the truth as well. Where do you store your treasure?

S.O.A.P.

Monday - Matthew 6: 22-23 Thursday - Matthew 6: 22-23

Tuesday - Matthew 6:20 Friday - Matthew 6:24

Wednesday - Matthew 6:21



MATTHEW 6:25-34

25 "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? 27 Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

28 "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, 29 yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. 30 And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

31 "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' 32 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. 33 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

34 "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

DON'T BE ANXIOUS

MATTHEW 6:25-34

LOOK BACK

- As you studied God's word, what did He reveal to you this past week?
- What is something you have never had to worry about?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 6:25-34

• Verse 25 says, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life..." Are you anxious? If so, why? About what?





- The birds and the lilies are mentioned here in these verses, as well as the grass, and God provides for all of these. Do you find it difficult to trust God? Why or why not?
- It seems that verses 19-24 have a correlation with verses 25-34. Why do you think this is? Remember there's a reason we have words like, "Therefore".
- Instead of worrying about everyday life, what should we do? Why? What's the benefit?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- We are all worried about something. What are you worried about today? Do you tend to worry more about tomorrow? In your prayer time this week, center your prayers around what is happening today. Do your best to leave tomorrow alone for a bit and focus on God, on what He has for you today. Make this a practice in your prayer life and see how God will change your fear into peace.
- How can you apply the teachings of this passage of scripture this week?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

When the conjunction "therefore" is used in the text, it normally means, consequently, or as a result of. There is such a strong positive correlation between our treasures and our worries, or the lack thereof. The more we try to hold on to the things of this world, and the more we try to bind up things such as idols, money, or whatever is in the place of Jesus Christ, it will lead to worry and anxiety, and ultimately destroy you. The reason why the birds, the lilies, and the grass have no worries is because they are ultimately reliant on God's provision for them every day. So, their focus is on today, not tomorrow. If God provides for them, how



much more do you think He is willing to do for you? So, what do we do? We surrender everything to Him! THEN, all these things will be added to you. It's either going to be His kingdom or no kingdom. Which one are you seeking after?

S.O.A.P.

Monday - Matthew 6:25

Thursday - Matthew 6:31-33

Tuesday - Matthew 6:26-27

Friday - Matthew 6:34

Wednesday - Matthew 6:28-30



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

PART 3

MATTHEW 7:1-6

"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. 2 For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

3 "And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? 4 How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

6 "Don't waste what is holy on people who are unholy. Don't throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you.

JUDGING OTHERS

MATTHEW 7:1-6

LOOK BACK

- Jesus tells us not to worry. How many ill effects of worry are you experiencing?
- God should be first in our life; He should be our priority. What's important for you? Wait to answer and be honest, even if it's not easy to confess.

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 7:1-6

- The passage includes some of Jesus' most eye-opening, and most misunderstood words recorded for us in the Bible, "Do not judge others..." Many people think that Jesus' message stops there, that He was literally saying no one is allowed to judge anyone, ever. But if that were true there would be no society. There would be no accountability. Most importantly there would be no Gospel. How would we forgive anyone for the wrongs they had committed? What could you say to someone who was doing wrong?
- One clue to understanding Jesus is to read the entire passage in context. Jesus is really pointing at motives. Does Jesus expect us to be tolerant of everything? We are to oppose evil and stand for the truth just as Jesus and His disciples did. So, what is Jesus saying? He is saying we must use the same standard for others that we use for the person in the mirror. Are you overly critical of others while never critical of yourself? Do you extend yourself grace upon grace but point out every flaw you see in others? What are other ways that people abuse and misuse these words of Jesus?
- One key to this passage is found in verse 5. Jesus isn't saying that we need to be perfect before we correct others. He is making a judgment against His disciples being hypocritical. Why does Jesus refer to there being a "log in your eye" but a "speck in your friend's eye?" How does John 7:24 help us with understanding Jesus' teaching about rightly judging?



SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- How can you be praying for God to help you have a more compassionate heart when dealing with others? What impact does love have when we are trying to offer help and guidance to a brother or sister?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

It's so easy to judge, but not to judge correctly. Judging does have two sides – righteous and unrighteous. Contrary to popular belief, Jesus never criticized the Pharisees for their condemnation of sin. Rather, He criticized them for their hypocrisy. "Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees – their hypocrisy." (Luke 12:1) Even in today's churches we have many who attend, give, serve, and greet, but unrepentantly harbor hate and lust in their hearts. We must judge ourselves before looking to correct others. When we judge incorrectly, it's usually because we're trying to make ourselves feel better. But rightly judging comes from love and love comes from God. Let's spend more time with Jesus. Let Him continue to cleanse our hearts and minds, and instruct us how to judge correctly.

S.O.A.P.

Monday - 2 Timothy 3:14-17 Thursday - John 8:1-8

Tuesday - Luke 6:37-49 Friday - James 4:11-12

Wednesday - Romans 2:1-11

MATTHEW 7:7-12

7 "Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

9 "You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? 10 Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! 11 So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

12 "Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.

EFFECTIVE PRAYER

MATTHEW 7:7-12

LOOK BACK

• How has your view on judging others changed in light of the last lesson? Is God's Word clear on how we are to judge?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 7:7-12

- This is the second time in His sermon that Jesus is addressing the subject of prayer. Jesus' big push here is that we must persist in prayer. Do you ever give up after a few efforts to pray? Why? What do you conclude about God in these times?
- Continuing to communicate with God takes faith, focus, and follow through. Don't give up on God. Continue to seek Him. Continue to ask Him for more knowledge, patience, love and understanding. Do you recognize His voice in your life?
- What do we need to do to improve our relationship with God? Why does He want us to communicate with Him?
- God is such a good father and loves us so much He wants us to be persistent in our approach to Him. As we grow in our relationship with God and learn He is a loving Father we learn to pray for what is good for us. As believers, how can we grow in our understanding of the depth of God's love? Are you challenged by this text?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK



LOOK AHEAD

- What adjustments can you make in your prayer life to receive good gifts from your Heavenly Father?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

We should be grateful for time spent with God as we enter a time of prayer to communicate with Him. God is a good Father. He is gentle. Our time with Him is never wasted. Good things come in prayer even if they are not what we ask for. Prayer opens our heart for God to put in good things. Prayer makes us people of love. Prayer should make us aware of God's peace as we learn how much we are loved. Take some time to thank your Heavenly Father for prayer. Thank Him for the ability to talk with Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand the call on your life and to grow in holiness. Trust in God's faithfulness, all in Jesus' name.

S.O.A.P.

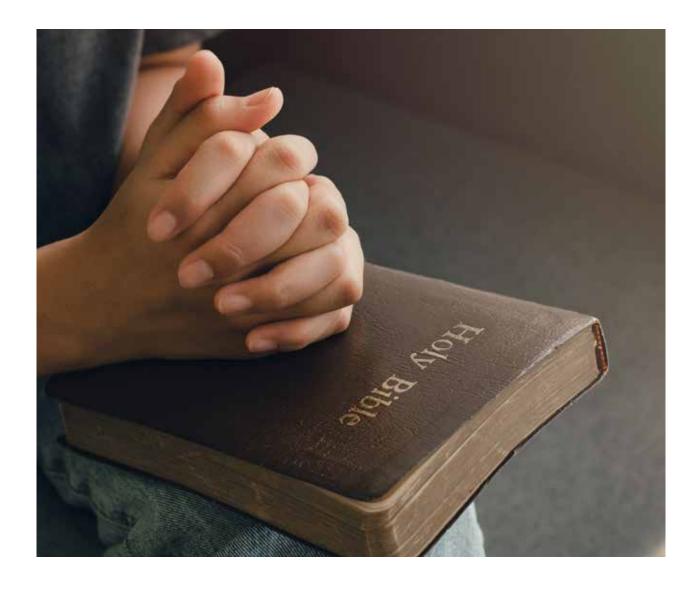
Monday – Romans 13:8-10

Tuesday - Mark 12:29-34

Wednesday – Jeremiah 29:12-13

Thursday – Galatians 5:14

Friday – James 1:5-8





MATTHEW 7:13-29

13 "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. 14 But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

15 "Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. 16 You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. 18 A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. 19 So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. 20 Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

21 "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. 22 On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' 23 But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'

24 "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. 25 Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. 26 But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. 27 When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

28 When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.

BUILDING ON A SOLID FOUNDATION

MATTHEW 7:13-29

LOOK BACK

• How were your prayers since the previous study? How have you grown in your understanding of God's love for you?

LOOK UP

Read Matthew 7:13-14

• In John 14:6 Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me". Are you more comfortable to say that you know about Jesus? Or that you know Jesus? Why is the way of God's Kingdom so narrow?

Read Matthew 7:15-20

We need to honor our King by hearing His Word and then putting it into practice. Do
not be deceived by those who respond from a mere intellectual standpoint but show no
evidence of the grace of God in their lives. How do we guard against the false prophets
and false teachings?

Read Matthew 7:21-23

• As we near the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us it is possible for a person to be deceived about their own salvation. This is one of the most fearful texts in scripture. There are several questions that we want to take time to discuss. How do Jesus' words here relate back to His teaching about false prophets, especially verse 20? What is the object of your faith? Is it in your works? Or in the Savior? What other questions come to mind regarding this passage?



Read Matthew 7:24-29

• Following and honoring Jesus involves self-denial and exclusiveness in serving Him. We are called to die to ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow Him. This life is not easy and it's not without trials. What observations do you make in this passage? Which house receives the rain, floodwaters, and winds? Which house does your faith reflect?

SERMON QUESTION OF THE WEEK

LOOK AHEAD

- Thinking about your own strength, what have Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount shown you about yourself and your ability to live according to His standards?
- Thinking about God's promise to gift you with His Holy Spirit upon accepting Jesus as your Savior, what are your thoughts about God's call on your life and how you should live?
- Close in prayer.

FINAL THOUGHT

Jesus dwells within us. He is the source of our lives. Yet, we can still let our mind, our will, and our emotions ignore Him. Am I living a life that honors Him? As a Christ follower, am I striving to be more like Him? Am I putting into practice, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the teachings I'm reading and hearing from His Word? Am I playing a game with God? Is my life a reflection of Him, or am I just going through the motions? The day will come when all people will stand before Him and account for their lives. Will we hear Him say, "Well done, my good and faithful servant" or will He say, "I never knew you"? Thought provoking, isn't it? Scary, isn't it? Today is the day to ask, seek, and knock. Where are we in our relationship with Him? We shouldn't want to live another day without making the decision to obey Him and submit to His Kingdom.

S.O.A.P.

Monday - Philippians 1:21

Thursday - Colossians 1:10

Tuesday - John 1:1-5

Friday - Galatians 2:20

Wednesday - 1 Corinthians 3:3



NEXT STEPS

We would love to CONNECT with you and help you take your next step in faith. Text CONNECT to 904-204-2876 or scan the QR code.





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