

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT, PART 1

BIBLE TEXT: Matthew 5:1-48.

LESSON 19 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Matthew 5:1-48

¹ And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

² And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

³ Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

⁵ Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

¹² Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

¹³ ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Nine Christian Virtues -- Necessary for Entrance into Heaven

1. The poor in spirit -- humility -- theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, Matthew 5:3;

Matthew 18:4;

⁴ Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Proverbs 29:23;

²³ A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

Luke 14:11;

¹¹ For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

James 4:10.

¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

2. They that mourn -- contrition -- God's comfort bestowed on them, Matthew 5:4;

Psalms 34:18;

¹⁸ The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Isaiah 57:15.

¹⁵ For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

3. The meek of the earth -- meekness -- the earth their inheritance, Matthew 5:5;

Zephaniah 2:3;

³ Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD'S anger.

Matthew 11:29.

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

4. The hungry and thirsty -- spiritual desire -- spiritual satisfaction, Matthew 5:6;

Proverbs 27:7;

⁷ The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

Psalms 63: 1;

¹ O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

Isaiah 26:9.

⁹ With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments *are* in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

5. The merciful -- mercy -- God's mercy their reward, Matthew 5:7;

Matthew 6:14;

¹⁴ For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

¹⁷ ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰ For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

²¹ ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

Luke 10:36, 37.

³⁶ Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

³⁷ And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

6. The pure in heart -- holiness -- the privilege of seeing God, Matthew 5:8;

John 17:9-26;

⁹ I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

¹⁰ And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

¹¹ And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

¹² While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

¹³ And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

¹⁴ I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁵ I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

¹⁷ Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

¹⁸ As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

²⁰ Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

²¹ That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

²² And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

²³ I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

²⁴ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

²⁵ O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

²⁶ And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it*: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

I John 3:2, 3.

² Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

³ And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

7. The peacemakers -- peace of heart -- the children of God, Matthew 5 9;

Romans 14:19.

¹⁹ Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

8. Patience under persecution -- the Kingdom their reward, Matthew 5:10;

James 1:4.

⁴ But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

²⁵ Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

²⁶ Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

²⁷ ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

²⁹ And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

³⁰ And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

³¹ It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

³² But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

³³ ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

9. Bearing the reproach of the Cross -- Joy their reward, Matthew 5:11, 12;

Acts 5:41;

⁴¹ ¶ And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.

I Peter 2:20, 21;

²⁰ For what glory *is it*, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer *for it*, ye take it patiently, this *is* acceptable with God.

²¹ For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

I Peter 4:12-19.

¹² Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

¹³ But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

¹⁴ If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

¹⁵ But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an evildoer, or *as* a busybody in other men's matters.

¹⁶ Yet if *any man suffer* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

¹⁷ For the time *is come* that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if *it first begin* at us, what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

¹⁸ And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

¹⁹ Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

II The Old Law Interpreted in the Light of the New Dispensation

1. His disciples the salt of the earth and the light of the world, Matthew 5:13-16;

Matthew 4:19;

¹⁹ And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Luke 14:34, 35.

³⁴ ¶ Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

³⁵ It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

2. The law fulfilled by Christ that it might be fulfilled by Christians, Matthew 5:17-20;

Romans 8:3, 4.

³ For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

⁴ That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

3. Jesus' interpretation of the law against murder, Matthew 5:21-26;

Exodus 20:13:

¹³ Thou shalt not kill.

I John 3:15.

¹⁵ Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

4. Jesus' interpretation of the levy against adultery, Matthew 5:27-32;

Exodus 20:14.

¹⁴ Thou shalt not commit adultery.

5. Jesus' interpretation of forswearing oneself, Matthew 5:33-37;

³⁴ But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

³⁵ Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

³⁶ Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

³⁷ But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

³⁸ ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

³⁹ But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰ And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also.

⁴¹ And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

⁴² Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

⁴³ ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

⁴⁵ That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

⁴⁶ For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

⁴⁷ And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

Exodus 20:7;

⁷ Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

Leviticus 19:12;

¹² ¶ And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.

James 5:12.

¹² But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and *your* nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

6. Jesus' denunciation of the spirit of revenge, Matthew 5:38-42;

Leviticus 24: 20;

²⁰ Breach for breach, eye for eye, tooth for tooth: as he hath caused a blemish in a man, so shall it be done to him *again*.

Romans 12:19.

¹⁹ Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

7. Jesus' commandment to love our enemies, Matthew 5:43-47;

Romans 12:14.

¹⁴ Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

8. An urge to seek Christian perfection -- holiness, Matthew 5:48;

Genesis 17: 1;

¹ And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I *am* the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

Hebrews 6:1.

¹ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

NOTES:

When the Law was given on Mt. Sinai the Children of Israel drew back because of fear of the presence of God. At the delivering of the Sermon on the Mount, instead of judgment manifesting itself, we have grace manifested. And the people drew nigh to hear Jesus. John said that, the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and we have here a remarkable example of it.

"And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judæa, and from beyond Jordan" (Matthew 4:25). A great congregation was gathered upon the open mountainside. Jesus started His sermon with the formula for being blessed or for having true happiness.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit." What are we to get out of this first blessing He pronounces? Humility. It is not being poor in circumstances or knowledge -- it means being emptied of self-righteousness.

"Blessed are they that mourn." To "mourn" means to have contrition and sorrow for sin. The spirit of contrition does not end with praying through to victory. The further one proceeds spiritually, the greater expanses he sees yet to be obtained. The more expanses he sees, the more he perceives of God's protection and the more he sees of his own need.

"Blessed are the meek." Everything here is just about the reverse of what it is in the world. It is not the meek, but the aggressor, from whom the world has inherited its philosophy.

These beatitudes set forth the qualifications for entering the Kingdom of Heaven. We cannot enter Heaven itself unless first we have the Kingdom of Heaven within.

⁴⁸ Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

QUESTIONS

1. Commit to memory the nine Beatitudes.
2. What is meant by "the righteousness of the Pharisees"?
3. If our brother has something against us, whose responsibility is it to get the difficulty straightened out?
4. Name a man in the Old Testament who is called meek.
5. How do we become pure in heart?
6. Which Beatitude is a good promise for the seeker after God?
7. Name some ways in which Christ fulfilled the Law.
8. Name some ways in which we can let our light shine.
9. What is the connection between good works and letting our light shine?
10. What constitutes murder?
11. Give an example of going the "second mile."
12. In what way must a Christian's love differ from that of the publican?

In the country around the Dead Sea there was a coating of salt on its shores that was exposed to the winds, storms, and rains. Because of this exposure, it lost its savour and was fit for nothing. Jesus gives this example as a warning against backsliding. He also emphasizes the necessity of letting our light shine -- of being active in good works. It is by practice that we grow in the grace of God.

Jesus shows us the place the Law occupies. It was not because it was inferior in itself, or that it had been tried and had failed to work, that Jesus had to come; it was because God was bringing in a new dispensation that gave the true interpretation of the Law. His fulfilment of the Law is not what some people consider it to be: that He, fulfilling the Law, relieved them of all responsibility to the Law. It does not do that. Go through the New Testament from beginning to end, and you will find that the moral law is reiterated there. In the new dispensation emphasis is placed on conforming to the true spirit of the Law which necessitates having the Law written on our hearts. The fundamental moral laws, which have existed from the beginning have never passed away.

Jesus takes a clear stand against adultery. Today some are saying that if divorced persons are already legally married before coming into the church, it is not necessary to be separated. John the Baptist told Herod that it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife.

"Swear not at all . . . But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay." Some Christians have overlooked this injunction today. Most legal documents have the words "or affirm" inserted after the word "swear" because our forefathers objected to swearing. A Christian should not raise his hand to take an oath before God, but may affirm his words.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." "The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet" (Proverbs 27:7).

"Blessed are the merciful." In the world the man that extends mercy is often taken advantage of; so the motto sometimes has become, "Get the other fellow before he gets you." But God's mercy is offered to those who are merciful.

"Blessed are the pure in heart." That can be summed up in one word: Holiness. It is quite significant that this matter of holiness, or sanctification, is associated with seeing God. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. John wrote, "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." In other words, to see God one must be like Him. One can see what importance is developed in that matter of becoming like God. Jesus said at the close of this chapter: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

"Blessed are the peacemakers." This need not be defined as merely getting people together and settling a contention between them. A Christian, having peace in his heart, is naturally a peacemaker. Paul exhorts: "As much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." Jesus never tried to hide the fact that His disciples would suffer persecution. He said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you".

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you." Peter tells us, "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."