

The Sermon on the Mount (Part 1)

Matthew 4:22 - 5:3

The so-called “Sermon on the Mount” is the longest of Jesus’ public discourses. It covers three entire chapters (Matthew 5-7 cf. Luke 6:20-49).

The “sermon on the mount” appeals to modernistic churches who teach a “social gospel,” salvation by works, and living by “the golden rule” (7:12). Problem is, no one can keep the “golden rule” in this dispensation of grace.

I’ve heard liberal pastors say, “We need to get back to the sermon on the mount.” That kind of statement reveals the common false assumption that generally pervades modern Christianity—Namely the sermon on the mount is doctrinally binding upon the New Testament church today. Some even consider the sermon on the mount as “a handbook for Christian living.” Those who hold to this assumption have failed to “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,*” (2 Tim. 2:15).

We must rightly divide the Scripture dispensationally (the time period it pertains to) and to whom is being addressed (Jew, Gentiles, or the church).

One criticism against dispensationalists is we totally reject portions of Scripture, like the sermon on the mount, as having no bearing on the church today. Of course, this criticism is not true. While all the Bible is not be directed TO US *doctrinally*, all the Bible is FOR US as “*instruction in righteousness*” (2 Tim. 3:16).

I. The CONGREGATION (5:1).

- A. When Christ came the first time two thousand years ago, He was sent to “*the lost sheep of the house of Israel*” (Mt. 15:24). Paul called Christ, “*a minister of the circumcision*” (Rom. 15:8).
 - The *doctrinal* application of the sermon on the mount is to Israel (“*the circumcision*”), not the New Testament Church. [In the next message we will deal more specifically with the spiritual applications of the sermon on the mount.]

- B. While the sermon is directed primarily to Christ's disciples, it was also heard by a multitude (7:28-8:1). This illustrates that while the primary teaching was for Christ's disciples, there was also a message to the entire congregation in general.

II. The **CONTEXT** (Mt. 4:23-5:1).

➡ A verse out of context is a pretext.

➡ Delivered during the dispensation of LAW (5:17).

- A. Subject of Jesus preaching—*"the gospel of the kingdom"* (4:23). This is a different "gospel" than the gospel message we preach today. We preach *"the gospel of the grace of God"* as it is defined in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.
- There is no mention of Christ's death, burial and resurrection in the sermon on the mount.
- B. Addressed to those entering *"the kingdom of heaven"* (5:3, 10, 19, 20; 7:12, 21), not the *"kingdom of God."* *"The kingdom of heaven"* is a literal, physical, visible kingdom on earth with Christ reigning on the throne of David in Jerusalem.
- C. The sermon on the mount could be considered as "the constitution of the kingdom" or "charter of the kingdom." It basically lays down the "rules of the kingdom." This kingdom will be set up at the second advent of Christ after the tribulation period.

III. The **CONFLICTS**.

➡ Comparing the sermon on the mount, given under the law, to the ministry of Paul, under grace, we see several doctrinal conflicts.

- A. Danger in saying *"Raca"* or *"Thou fool"* (5:22). Were you ever tempted say to a brother, *"Raca?"* In danger of what "council?" Paul was not above calling someone, *"Thou fool"* (1 Cor. 15:36). Was he in danger of "hell fire?"
- B. No one brings any gift to *"the altar"* under Paul's ministry (5:23). There will be an altar during the millennial Kingdom.
- C. Turning the other cheek (5:39). When Paul was before Ananias and was unjustly smitten, he did not turn the other cheek (Acts 23:1-3).

IV. The CROSS.

- A. The sermon on the mount was given before the cross of Christ. We live on the N.T. side of the cross. If we would be saved today, we must find the message of God for us on *this* side of the cross. It is NOT “*the gospel of the kingdom.*” It is the “*the gospel of the of God*” (Acts 20:24; 1 Cor. 15:1-4).
- B. Entrance into “*the kingdom of heaven*” is by works (5:20; 7:21).
- C. Salvation today is by grace through faith—It is a gift of God apart from works (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Rom. 4:3-5; 10:4).

SUMMATION: You are either trusting your ability to live by the sermon on the mount, or you are trusting in Christ. It is simply —

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Rom. 10:9-13).