

Purpose of Man

July 19, 2020 ~ The Greatest Sermon (1 of 4) ~ Mat 5.1-16; 7.28-29

Introduction to the “The Greatest Sermon” Series

- ❖ Today we begin a 4-part series on the “Sermon on the Mount”
- ❖ This text consists of 111 verses (*a lot for 4 sermons*) / **28 vss** per on average
- ❖ Different ways of viewing / subdividing the 111 verses
 - ✧ It could easily consist of more than 4 sermons
 - Sinclair Ferguson (15), (30), (50), AW Pink (64 chs), Phil Kayser (9)
 - ✧ But it can be divided into 4 sermons with clear distinctions between them
- ❖ Why “Greatest”? / Not mine – hypocrisy / “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”

“Why is ‘Sermon on the Mount’ the Greatest Sermon?”

- ❖ Prior to Christ’s birth Judaism experienced “400 years of silence”
 - ✧ From 1400 to 400 BC Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, prophets wrote Bible
 - 400 to 0 ~ No prophets / No inspired writings / No word from God
 - ✧ Jesus ends that silence (40th book) ~ (*birth of Christianity – heart of Judaism*)
 - Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees buried truth deeply under ritual
 - ✧ Yet in only 111 verses Jesus reveals it and holds it up for all to see
 - In Sermon on the Mount Jesus began a heart transplant
 - Heart of Judaism is faintly flickering in its comatose body
 - Jesus and the Apostles extracted that heart and placed it in a new body
 - A body that rapidly rose to life after Pentecost
- ❖ This short sermon answers the basic questions of life, such as . . .
 - ✧ “What was man created to do?” “Who were men created to be?”
 - ✧ “What does God expect of man?” “How is man supposed to live?”
 - ✧ “For what will God judge man?” “For what will God reward man?”

What are the 4 Parts of the Series?

- ❖ “Purpose of Man” ~ 18 vss / Mat 5.1-16, 7.28-29 / “purpose & blessing”
- ❖ “Purpose of Law” ~ 32 vss / Mat 5.17-48 / “letter & spirit”
- ❖ “Faith for Living” ~ 34 vss / Mat 6.1-34 / “selflessness & service”
- ❖ “Faith for Dying” ~ 27 vss / Mat 7.1-27 / “actions & rewards”

Xition: Before we examine chapter 5 we’ll look at what preceded it . . .

v1 ~ “And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain”

❖ Chapter 4 covered:

- ❖ 1) Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness,
- ❖ 2) Arrest of John the Baptist,
- ❖ 3) Start of Christ’s healing and teaching ministry in Galilee, and the
- ❖ 4) Calling of 4 fishermen (*Peter, Andrew, James, John*) to be disciples
- ❖ v1 ~ “And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain”
 - 1st occurrence of the word “multitudes” in 4.25

❖ We could see here either one of 2 opposing views

1. Jesus could be providing for the multitudes by changing venues
 - This is a popular perspective – Many prefer this over the next . . .
 2. Jesus could be escaping the multitudes (*as he often did*)
 - Chapters 4.25 and 8.1 can be used to support this view
- ❖ Perhaps “multitudes” is not as important as “disciples”
 - Jesus’ lesson was for those referred to as His disciples

❖ Read Mt 7.28-29 ~ Jesus “taught them as one having authority”

- ❖ Jesus exercised leadership and authority in all He did
- ❖ 7.28 ~ “the people were astonished at His teaching”
 - John the Baptist wowed everyone / But one greater than John was here

Eight “Blessed” Statements (vss 3-10)

- ❖ Note the absence of personal pronouns in these verses
 - ❖ Jesus uses impersonal pronouns “those”, “they” – not “you”, “your”
 - ❖ He uses the article “the” to generalize or impersonalize each statement
- ❖ Jesus is not instructing His hearers in what to do or in who to be
 - ❖ These are objective statements of truth Jesus is making
 - What being made in the image of God entails
 - What walking in obedience to God entails
 - True happiness / fulfillment means identifying with these statements
- ❖ “Blessed” can be translated “happy” or “complete, fulfilled” / Read vss 3-5
 - ❖ “makarios” ~ “describes a believer in enviable position c/God’s favor”
 - ❖ Jesus is stating what will truly “fulfill” people in God’s economy

Xition: Let’s look at first 7 of 8 Beatitudes . . .

First 7 Statements Reflect Character or Conduct Flowing from Character

- ❖ Character aspects in phrases “poor in spirit”, “meek”, and “pure in heart”
- ❖ Conduct flowing from this: “mourn”, “hunger and thirst for righteousness”, “merciful”, “peacemakers”

7 Character and Conduct Statements Defined

- ❖ Character: Jl Packer passed away Friday – Let’s use him as our example
 - ✧ **v3** ~ “poor in spirit” ~ Acceptance of spiritual poverty – nothing in us
 - Justin Taylor of The Gospel Coalition wrote this in his eulogy
 - “In every encounter I had with him, I came away thinking of him not as a great man, but as a man who had personally encountered a Great Savior. Each time I had the deep sense of longing not to be more like Packer, but to be more like Christ.”
 - ✧ **v5** ~ “meek” ~ humbly have a high regard for others (*too easily falsified*)
 - Asked in 2015 how he would want to be remembered: “I should like to be remembered as someone who was always courteous in controversy, but without compromise.”
 - ✧ **v8** ~ “pure in heart” ~ trained wants of one’s mind and heart
 - A longtime friend of Packer’s, Timothy George said this of him: “His smile is irrepressible and his laughter can bring light to the most somber of meetings. His love for all things human and humane shines through. Ever impatient with shams of all kinds, his saintly character and spirituality run deep.”
- ❖ Conduct:
 - ✧ **v4** ~ “mourn” ~ Mourning is of our own sins, own evil and past acts, hurts
 - Prayer of Jabez – “keep me from evil that I may not cause pain” (1 Chr 4.10)
 - ✧ **v6** ~ “want righteousness” ~ Desperately desire to live uprightly
 - “hunger and thirst” ~ not satisfied until slaked – relentless in pursuit
 - “Unbroken” – thirst on raft / starvation in prison camp
 - ✧ **v7** ~ “mercy” ~ Self-awareness makes us patient and loving with others
 - ✧ **v9** ~ “peacemaking” ~ A fruit of righteousness is peace / We fight for it
- ❖ Much more time could be spent defining these terms
 - ✧ These traits or habits are not easily acquired or exercised
 - ✧ They’re never truly “ours” to own / We’re vessels reflecting God’s traits
 - ✧ God loans us good character and conduct as we devote ourselves to Him
- ❖ “Crucifixion of self” is a simple summation of these terms

Xition: Now we come to the 8th beatitude – the most impossible one . . .

The Consequence of Character & Conduct

- ❖ There are 8 Beatitudes / We've covered 7 under Character & Conduct
- ❖ The last in **v10** is a logical Consequence of the prior 7
- ❖ Read **v10** ~ "persecuted for righteousness' sake"
 - ❖ Remember blessed is not "reward", but "enviable position c/God's favor"
 - ❖ 1st and last are in the present – 6 in middle are future

"Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake"

- ❖ Some people's lives are hard because they're jerks
 - ❖ Read **Prv 30.33** ~ "For as the churning of milk produces butter, and wringing the nose produces blood, so the forcing of wrath produces strife."
 - ❖ Rude people are recompensed for bad behavior / but they deny deserving it
- ❖ Christians aren't immune to this / They can adopt a martyr attitude falsely
 - ❖ **III**: Missionary in Papua New Guinea – He was a jerk (*sought martyrdom*)
 - ❖ They can be rude, self-righteous, proud, arrogant, and entitled
 - Yet when criticized, they say it's due to their faith
 - ❖ Let's not do this – and let's not be swayed by this
 - We must investigate accusations to determine validity
 - ❖ **III**: Roommate in SoCal – complained of mistreatment of friend by Youth Pastor
- ❖ Let's guard against believing / not believing merely because it "fits our narrative"

Read **v11-12** ~ "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad"

- ❖ Note transition – "Blessed are you . . ." / Jesus is now talking to disciples
- ❖ While we may theoretically believe this to be true – we reject it practically
 - ❖ This response to persecution is inconsistent with our culture, values & desires
 - ❖ Instead of joy and gladness we experience indignation & moral outrage
 - "This is America after all..." / Many of us may respond poorly to persecution
- ❖ Saying ~ "Admitting a problem is the first step to resolving it."
 - ❖ Can we admit we're not ready to embrace persecution as apostles did?
 - ❖ Read **Acts 5.40-42** ~ "And they agreed .. preaching Jesus as the Christ"
 - "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name"
 - ❖ "Do you want to respond to persecution like they did?" "Rejoice in it?"
 - Such joy only flows from embracing character & conduct of first 7 beatitudes

Xition: Let's talk briefly about being salt and light . . .

v13 ~ “You are the salt of the earth”

- ❖ Jesus takes more direct aim at disciples – was theory, then passive, now active
 - ✧ No personal pronouns in 3-10, then “blessed are you”, now “You are”
- ❖ “Salt of the Earth”
 - ✧ Meaning of phrase – People that are “down to earth”, that “tell it like it is”
 - ✧ This definition is still partly true – “truth tellers .. no games .. no lies”
 - ✧ “But .. being salt in this world brings challenges”
 - Too many of us want other people to be salt . . . Maybe we’ll be butter . . .

v14-16 ~ “You are the light of the world”

- ❖ Again Jesus takes direct aim at those who would identify as His disciples
- ❖ “You may be light, but are you behaving as light ought to behave?”
 - ✧ Are you bringing the light of God’s wisdom, design, and glory to your world?
 - ✧ We can veil our lights in many subtle ways
 - ✧ We should examine ourselves and seek ways to increase our light
- ❖ When you need light you direct it – aim it – increase it if possible
 - ✧ We must do this because we (and others) need the light

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever”

- ❖ The Beatitudes capture that already, not yet aspect of our lives here on earth
- ❖ The 1st and 8th are stated as present realities – “theirs is the kingdom of heaven”
- ❖ The 2nd through 7th are all future rewards for earthly faithfulness – “they shall”

- Your purpose on earth is to glorify God
 - You do this through working, marrying, going to church
 - But you also do this through your character and conduct
- “You are not your own. You have been bought at a price.”

➤ Prayer and Song

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,
And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,
To God our Savior, who alone is wise,
Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.
Amen *pause* Go in peace . . .

Purpose of Man

July 19, 2020 ~ Sermon Handout ~ Mat 5.1-16; 7.28-29

1. The Sermon on the Mount was described as what medical procedure?

2. The 4 sermons are entitled 1) Purpose of _____, 2) Purpose of _____, 3) Faith for _____, and 4) Faith for _____.
3. What views were presented concerning the multitudes mentioned in verse 1?

4. The 8 beatitudes were grouped into three words starting with C: 1) C _____, 2) C _____, and 3) C _____.
5. List 3 character attributes exemplified by J I P _____, who passed away this past Friday: 1) _____, 2) _____, and 3) _____.
6. What is to be a Christian's response to persecution? R _____ and be _____.
7. If we're honest we'll admit that this response is inconsistent with 1) our c _____, 2) our v _____, and 3) our personal d _____.
8. For what reason did the apostles rejoice in Acts 5? "That they were _____."
9. List ways in which you can increase your role as SALT and LIGHT in your world

