

# ***The Beatitudes Part 1***

## **Matthew 5:1-10**



*Matthew 5:1-10*  
*Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. 2 And He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is*

*the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the lowly, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

.....

Jesus sits down and begins to reveal to the crowd how the King rules in His kingdom. He starts with nine blessings, nine characteristics of kingdom members, and nine effects or responses from the King. Within these nine blessing, we see a progression of kingdom living. We start as poor in spirit but in the end we are so spiritually filled the world rejects us. We start as mourners over our sin, but in the end we are so filled with righteousness that the world persecutes us. We

are called to the kingdom as one with the world, and we finish in the kingdom as victorious Saints, set apart, clearly distinguished from the world as a servant of the King.

**Our Start in the Kingdom** Jesus begins with the truth that only those who are poor in spirit, spiritually crouched down low like beggars on the street, will inherit the kingdom of heaven. So complete is their spiritual poverty that they must rely exclusively on an external source for their spiritual sustenance. This is just like a beggar, who has no means to provide for himself. So too are those that inherit the kingdom. They have no source of spiritual nourishment, spiritual existence, or spiritual life apart from that which they receive out of the generosity of the King who blesses them richly.

This spiritual poverty is accompanied by a deep mourning in the soul from the position of despair over sin. We realize that we have no means to save ourself, and we will perish, short of the intervention of a savior, so we mourn. And yet the King brings forth comfort. The comfort is that we no longer need to mourn over our sin, because He has forgiven our sin. We receive the comfort of forgiveness and the comfort of saving faith only after a deep mourning over the desperate state of our condition.

The King is establishing His Kingdom. And the message is not about the reformation of man, but about the transformation of man. Jesus is not interested in modifying the behavior of man, but about creating a new nature in man. And as His sermon unfolds the crowd will start to understand that the Law is insufficient to save, that it is impossible to please God through works alone. The crowd is going to realize, they need a savior, and that is precisely who is sitting in their midst.

# ***The Beatitudes Part 2***

## **Matthew 5:3-10**



*Matthew 5:3-10*  
*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the*

*lowly, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

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The beatitudes, the blessings of God, show us the unfolding of God's progressive work of salvation for those who serve Christ, the King, in His Kingdom. We enter the Kingdom lowly, then we grow, and to finish strong is to be a champion of the Gospel and of righteousness.

**1. Our Start in the Kingdom** We come to the kingdom realizing the source of all spiritual nourishment, sustenance, and life is external from us. The poor in spirit have nothing to offer the king. Our blessing is the kingdom itself. Our

spiritual poverty develops into a deep sorrow over our sin. We cry out for rescue and we are met with comfort from the King; forgiveness of sin and rescue from judgement.

The humble heart has a low view of self and a high view of others. Our inheritance becomes the earth. A promise of the restoration of Israel and our participation in Christ's rule over the nations in the millennial Kingdom.

**2. Our Growth in the Kingdom:** As we grow in faith, our appetite in life is no longer one of sin but of righteousness. Christ is the full satisfaction of our thirst and hunger for righteousness. Our righteousness is supplied by God, satisfied in Christ, and tended by our feasting on the scriptures. The outpouring of righteous pursuits is a character of mercy. We give mercy and we will receive mercy. We forgive others, and the Father will forgive us. The best way we can identify with Christ and bring credibility to our witness is by showing mercy in a lost world. Our pure heart has God as the source. It is manifested from "the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit." We keep a pure heart through regular cleansing and holy living. Only those who are born again will see God face to face.

We enter the Kingdom low, but the King brings us up. We never forget where we started, but we also do not stay in the starting blocks. Kingdom living relies on God for provision, is sensitive to sin, keeps a humble heart, shows mercy, seeks righteousness and maintains holy living. The Kingdom life cannot be counterfeited. It is born of God and He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

# ***The Beatitudes Part 3***

## **Matthew 5:3-12**



**Matthew 5:3-12**  
*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4*

*“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5*

*“Blessed are the lowly, for they shall inherit the earth. 6*

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 “Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

.....  
The beatitudes show us the unfolding of God’s progressive work of salvation in the life of those who serve Christ in His Kingdom.

**1) Our Start in the Kingdom** We enter the Kingdom with a deep sense of spiritual poverty, overcome with sorrow for our sin, and because of this we are humiliated before the throne of the King. In response, the God grants us entry into the kingdom, provides us comfort through the forgiveness of sin, and promises us a future inheritance.

**2) Our Growth in the Kingdom** We grow in the Kingdom as a result of God’s work of salvation in our lives. Our appetite for sin is replaced by a hunger and thirst for righteousness in which Jesus is the complete satisfaction. The outpouring of our new character is an attitude of mercy, one mindful of God’s great mercy in our lives. God puts in us a pure heart, which we maintain through holy living and regular purification. Because of this, we will see God face to face.

**3) Our Finish in the Kingdom** The result of God's work of salvation in our lives is that the world will know us as peacemakers. The peacemaker brings the message of reconciliation between God and man through the gospel. Just as Christ went about His Father’s business, so also do those who are called sons of God. In the end, persecution will come. It is good to be persecuted for righteousness’s sake. Both, for our righteous living and for the righteousness we reveal to the world through Christ. Our finish is with the promise of the Kingdom. Though we started lowly, we finish exalted by God in victory.

Until Christ returns, the world is under the power of the Prince of the Air. When the world rejects and persecutes you because of Christ, you are in great fellowship with the prophets of old, the saints gone by, and Jesus Himself. This is good company to be in and great is your reward in heaven.



# ***Salt and Light***

## **Matthew 5:13-16**



*Matthew 5:13-16*  
*"You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out*

*to be trampled under foot by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; 15 "nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

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The chief aim of the Christian experience is to glorify the Father who is in heaven. Jesus teaches us that as His disciples we can achieve this by being salt and light. Scripture gives us several ways we can fulfill Christ's instructions practically in our lives.

**1) Being the Salt of the Earth** To be the salt of the earth means that first, we are to be a salt that seasons. When food lacks flavor, we season with salt to change it and make it acceptable to eat. We are known as salt when the

message we proclaim is that man lacks what is needed and his condition must be changed. That it is only through Christ that man may become acceptable to God. Second, we should be a salt that preserves. The presence of the Church in the world preserves creation from God's final judgement. So long as the church remains and work, God is not done drawing the nations to Himself. Third, we are to be a salt that stays pure. A salt that is corrupted with impurities does not function as intended. As salt, we stay pure through holy living and righteous works. Fourth, we are to be a salt that works. Salt is no good to anyone if it stays in the salt shaker, neither is the Christian who neglects their work for the Kingdom in the world.

**2) Being the Light of the World** We shine as light by displaying righteous living and proclaiming the light of Christ to the world. We are light to the world. That means our ministry, witness, and works are not confined to one nation, language, or people, but to everyone everywhere. We position our light both publicly and privately. On the "hill" and on the "lampstand". It should shine brightly in our community and in our home. Our light is dimmed or hidden when our life is corrupted by sin or when we fail to be a witnesses for Christ.

Our call to action from Christ is to Glorify God with our works, live a distinct life, proclaim the Gospel, stay pure, and leave no aspect of our life hidden from our walk of faith. Our highest call and duty in life is to glorify the Father with our witness of Christ to the world.

# God's Standard for Eternal Life: Perfection

Matthew 5:17-20



*Matthew 5:17-20  
"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 18 "For truly I say to you, until heaven and*

*earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

.....  
Jesus is about to destroy the prevailing religious view of the day. The Pharisees believed and taught the people that it is only through the right works, done the right way, by the right people, that maybe eternal life could be gained. Jesus makes it clear, the Pharisees are not even close to earning eternal life. The good news is that we are made acceptable to God because Christ achieved what we could not: He lived a perfect life.

**1) Jesus Establishes the Standard** Using the Pharisees as an example, Jesus says it is going to take a lot more than that. The Pharisees were the pinnacle of religious works in the first century. Yet, even their life lacked what Christ required for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus will later reveal, it is not about being good enough, God requires perfection for all who may enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

**2) Jesus Meets the Standard** The great testimony of Scripture is that Jesus alone has perfectly fulfilled the Law through His life. From circumcision, through baptism, and ending at the Cross, Christ did what God required of all humanity perfectly. It is the consistent and clear testimony of the New Testament writers that Christ's life is distinguished by perfect righteousness. He is sinless and achieved what no man could.

**3) Jesus Appropriates What God Requires** The great truth lost to His first century crowd, but revealed to us today, is that it is by faith alone that God exchanges our sin for Christ's perfect righteousness. All who believe are made perfect in Christ at the Cross. No works are required and no payment is due.

Until the end, the Law remains. It serves to condemn those who reject Christ, and to justify those who believe. Not because the Law saves, but the Law is the standard by which Christ's perfect life is measured. The righteousness of Christ in how we become justified before God.

# ***God's Word and Man's Tradition: An Overview***

## **Matthew 5:17-48**



When Christ came to Israel, he found His people bound by two authorities over their lives: the written word of God, and the oral traditions of man. Christ rejects the traditions and affirms the Scriptures for His people.

**1. Christ Defines the Problem** The Scriptures are the subject of the remainder of chapter 5 and at the heart of Christ's issue with the religious leaders in the

nation. By setting up oral tradition as authoritative over the people, the Scripture became compromised. The result was a cold, mechanical, and impersonal religion that did not honor or please God. It was the Scribes and the Pharisees that had led the nation astray. Their traditions created a burden too great to bear for the people of God.

**2) Christ Confronts the Problem** Christ repeatedly pits what tradition says against what He, the Word of God, says. Since the time of Moses, the oral tradition has competed for the hearts of the people. They have let go of the commands of God and are holding to the rules of man. But Jesus makes it clear: it is not about what man says, it is all about what the King says. Christ rejects the oral tradition and asserts the Word of God as binding for His people.

Scripture alone is the single authority over the lives of those in Christ's Kingdom. The burden of human tradition is great, but the burden of the King is light. What is impossible for us to achieve by our works, is possible for God to give by grace through faith.



# War and Murder

## Matthew 5:21-26



*Matthew 5:21-26  
“You have heard  
that it was said to  
the ancients, ‘You  
shall not murder’  
and “whoever  
murders shall be  
guilty before the  
court.’ 22 “But I  
say to you that  
everyone who is*

*angry with his brother shall be guilty before the courts; and  
whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ shall be guilty before the  
Sanhedrin; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty  
enough to go into the fiery hell. 23 “Therefore if you are  
presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that  
your brother has something against you, 24 “leave your  
offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to  
your brother, and then come and present your offering. 25  
“Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are  
with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you  
over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be  
thrown into prison. 26 “Truly I say to you, you will not come  
out of there until you have paid up the last quadrans.*

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There have been those in the past that have  
approached Matthew 5:21-22 as a mandate from Christ to

observe pacifism. Some would say that any taking of a life is murder and those that fight in war are guilty of murder. This is a severe misappropriation of what Christ, and the whole council of Scripture teaches concerning war and murder. Scripture teaches that those Christians who serve in war out of duty to country can do so with a clear conscience.

**1. The Biblical Definition of Murder** The scripture is clear: God does not permit murder under any circumstances. Murder however is different from killing. In the first murder, Abel was innocent and Cain acted out of malice. Biblical murder then is the shedding of innocent blood from a malicious heart. Where the taking of human life is just and free from malice, then that is not murder.

**2) God Ordained Human Government** God established human government to punish evil and reward good. God ordains governing authorities and He empowers those authorities to wield the sword on His behalf. Government serves as ministers of God to bring wrath on the one who practices evil. The military is the sword of God's ordained institution. War is not murder. The warfighter who takes life in battle, not out of malice, but out of duty to the nation is fully operating within what God ordained as just for the institution of government.

God has ordained human government to reward good and punish evil on His behalf. The nation that wields its sword correctly is justified before God and does so under His authority.

# ***Sin is the Symptom, and Christ is the Cure***

**Matthew 5:27-30**



*Matthew 5:27-30  
“You have heard  
that it was said,  
‘You shall not  
commit adultery’;  
28 “but I say to  
you that everyone  
who looks at a  
woman to lust for  
her has already*

*committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 “But if your right  
eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for  
it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than  
for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 “And if your  
right hand causes you to stumble, 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 go into hell.*

.....  
The Law addresses the symptoms, but Christ is the cure for the disease of the human heart. To live in Christ’s Kingdom, you may need to make drastic changes in your life.

**1) The Symptom of Man's Condition is Sin** The Law was not given to make man good, but to expose the disease of humanity; to bring about the knowledge of sin.

**2) The Disease of Man's Soul is a Wicked Heart** The Law addresses our actions, but Christ is concerned about our attitudes. The heart is deceitful above all things and it is from the heart that evil comes in our lives.

**3) The Cure for Man is a New Heart and a New Life** It is the pure at heart that will see God. When we repent and believe in Christ, God will remove our heart of stone and give us a heart of flesh. When God saves you, you need to be prepared to make some drastic lifestyle changes. Your relationships, activities, and even your employment can be the source of a cause to stumble in the faith. We must be willing to cut-off anything that hinders our obedient walk of faith.

In the Kingdom of Heaven, man does not need more rules for life. Man needs complete transformation not reformation. The one who desires to enter the Kingdom needs to be prepared to make some drastic lifestyle changes, least they stumble, or worse miss the Kingdom all together.



# **Marriage and Divorce**

## **Matthew 5:31-32**



*Matthew 5:31-32  
“Now it was said,  
‘Whoever sends  
his wife away, let  
him give her a  
certificate of  
divorce’; 32 “but I  
say to you that  
everyone who  
divorces his wife,*

*except for the reason of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.*

The Bible offers four conditions where divorce or physical separation in marriage is permitted. First, sexual immorality serves as the primary justification for biblical divorce. Second, personal safety from injury or death is reason to get out of the house and away from the spouse. Third, when an unbelieving spouse abandons their Christian counterpart, a believer is no longer bound to them. Fourth, upon death of a spouse, Christians are no longer bound to their spouse in the eyes of God.

God has a very high view of marriage. It serves to symbolize how Christ relates to His Church. While the Bible offers provision for divorce, the supreme Bridegroom will never leave you or forsake you. The Church must not allow the world to corrupt our understanding of what God has instituted for all of mankind.

.....  
To best understand what God thinks about divorce, we need to first understand what God thinks about marriage.

**1) Marriage is an Institution Ordained by God** God established marriage as the first institution among humanity. It is between a man and a woman, who leave their parents and unite together, under God, to form a new family unit.

**2) God’s Purpose for Marriage** God established marriage for a variety of purposes. First, as a means to fill the earth through procreation. Second, as a means to nurture the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health of people. Third, as a means to illustrate God's ideal relationship between mankind and Himself.

**3) The Biblical View of Divorce** When sin entered the world it corrupted everything. God created marriage as good, yet because of sin, this divine institution has been corrupted.

# ***A Person of Character: The One Who's Word is Trustworthy***

## **Matthew 5:33-37**



**Matthew 5:33-37**  
*"Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your oaths to the Lord.' 34 'But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by*

*heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of The Great King. 36 'Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 'But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of the evil one.*

.....  
The quickest way to discredit your witness for Christ in the world is to be known as a person who's word is untrustworthy. When we develop a reputation for not keeping our word to others, then we not only profane the name of God, but now our declaration of the Gospel to the world cannot be trusted.

**1) The Corruption of God's People** In the Old Testament, God placed a premium on those that swore an oath in His name. The highest order of obligating a person to their word

was when a person was bound by oath before God. Because of this, the Jews had developed a practice of "evasive swearing", whereby they could make oaths, and break them, and believe this practice was justified.

**2) The Confrontation of God's People** Jesus sets the record straight. No matter what you swear by, everything is owned by God, and so every oath is binding in His sight. There is no such thing as "evasive swearing". If you do not fulfill your word, you are profaning the very name of God.

**3) The Correction of God's People** The solution is to be trustworthy in all circumstances. Let your "yes be yes" and your "no be no". It is not about how you can manipulate God's word to cheat people in good conscience. It is about being known simply as a man or women of God who's word can be trusted.

Kingdom living means you are known as a man or women of your word. That when you say you are going to do something, you do it, and if you cannot, or do not intend to do something, you are honest and let your "no be no."

# ***“Eye for an Eye” or “Turn the Other Cheek”?***

## **Matthew 5:38-42**



*Matthew 5:38-42  
“You have heard  
that it was said,  
‘An eye for an eye,  
and a tooth for a  
tooth.’ 39 “But I  
say to you, do not  
resist an evil*

*person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the  
other to him also. 40 “And if anyone wants to sue you and  
take your tunic, let him have your garment also. 41 “And  
whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 “Give  
to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who  
wants to borrow from you.*

.....

One can often hear people characterize the Old Testament as an “eye for an eye” and the New Testament as “turn the other cheek”. In reality, it is not an either/or proposition, but that both Law and Grace are integral parts of the Old and New Testaments. Jesus is telling us that God will take care of enforcing the Law, and we are responsible for representing Grace in the world.

**1) Understanding God’s Law** God’s Law is diverse and provides requirements for moral, ceremonial, and judicial aspects concerning life in Israel. God enforced His Law both personally and through appointed leaders in the nation. Today, God’s justice is demonstrated in our modern court system through retribution and restitution as given in the

Old Testament. Because of sin, God has and will continue to enforce His Law on earth until the end.

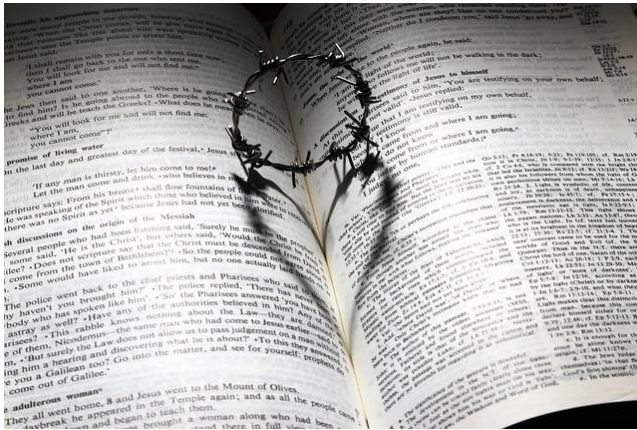
**2) Living God’s Grace** Jesus teaches that the Christian is to be both free from accusation according to the Law, and must respond to lawlessness with grace. When the Christian acts like Christ in the world, the world will see Christ in their midst. When the Christian responds to the world in like manner, Christ is hidden from the lost. We are called to be gracious in the face of hostility and adversity because through our demonstration of grace, the sinner may come to repentance and faith in a full knowledge of Christ.

As God pours out His grace upon us, we are to dispense that grace liberally in the world. Just as we are to be joyful and generous givers of our money to meet the needs of others, even more so are we to give generously of the grace that we have received. Christians do this and leave God and His ministers of justice to exact retribution for law breakers.



# Love and Hate in the Kingdom of Heaven

## Matthew 5:43-48



**Matthew 5:43-48**  
***“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute***

***you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 “And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.***

The Old Testament is clear, that we are to love our neighbor. However, from a practical sense, that can be hard sometimes. To get around this, the Jews developed a very narrow definition for who their neighbor was. God never commanded Israel to hate their enemies. He did however use Israel to bring about His judgment on different nations in the past. By the first century, the Jews were using this as a license to justify wrong attitudes and actions towards those they determined where their enemies.

- 1) We are to Love not Hate** Jesus’s solution to this condition is whether you see someone as a neighbor or an enemy, love them both. The Bible gives us at least three practical ways to love our enemy. There is a right and wrong way to demonstrate love:
- 2) Loving Your Enemy Has Salvation as it’s End** We demonstrate true love for our enemies when we reprove sin. Sin leads to death, and there is no greater hatred then to hide the gift of life from those dead in their sin.
- 3) Loving Your Enemy Has the Bible as it’s Source** The biblical definition of love is not the world’s definition of love. 1 Cor 13:4-8 shows that love is counterintuitive to our nature. It is showing the opposite of what our flesh is feeling. It is not dependent on how you feel or what someone deserves, it is rooted in God’s Word.
- 4) Loving Your Enemy is a Natural Fruit of Your New Birth in Christ** God’s Spirit within us produces good fruit. The first of which is love. We have everything we need in Christ to obey His commands. As hard as it might seem to love your enemy, the only reason you “cannot love your enemy” is because you are fighting against the Spirit of God within you.

If you are in the Kingdom, you are a son of your Father who is in heaven. Son’s act like their fathers. For the world to know your Father, they first encounter Him through you. The world might not come to know God, because He is hidden by your life. Live like a son of God, and the world will start to see God, and it just might be that God will use you to bring about salvation in the lives of those around you.

# Glory Be to God Alone

## Matthew 6:1-4



*Matthew 6:1-4  
"Beware of  
doing your  
righteousness  
before men to  
be noticed by  
them; otherwise  
you have no  
reward with  
your Father who*

*is in heaven. 2 "Therefore, when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 3 "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.*

.....

When we start to confuse God's works for our works, then pride can creep in and all of a sudden, we are seeking and receiving the glory due to God alone.

**1) Our Pride Robs God of His Glory** The religious rulers in Israel were guilty of unbridled pride. The motivation for everything they did was "to be glorified by men." However, Isaiah teaches three truths concerning pride and God's glory. First, everyone is created for the purpose of glorifying God. Second, God will not share His glory. Third, we are never

more like Satan than when we allow our pride to steal God's glory. Humanity's greatest sin then is to deny God His glory and not give thanks to Him.

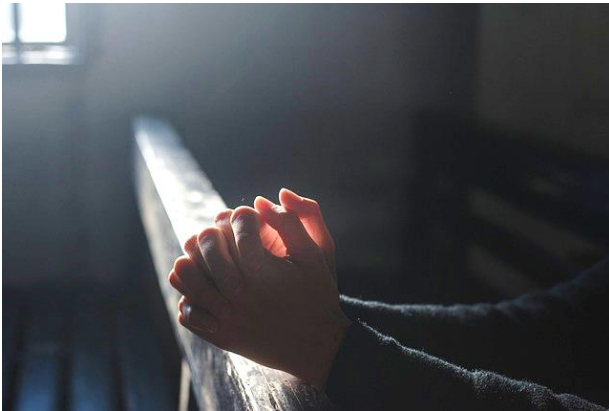
### **2) Great is the Reward for Those who Give God the Glory**

God blesses us to bless others. When we give to the poor in secret, they will praise God as the result of His provision flowing through us. When the focus of our giving is to glorify God, then we can claim the promise of reward from God. The promised reward is not for this life, but the next. We do not approach scripture expecting something in return. God does not owe us a wage, but chooses in His grace to reward those who are faithful to Him.

The question today is what motivates your good works? Is it so the people might know how generous you are, how smart you are, how religious you are? If so, then you have missed the whole point. God created us to glorify Him. He will not share His glory with anyone or anything. Only in the sin of pride do we seek and receive the glory, honor, and thanksgiving that belongs exclusively to God. We give to those in need in such a way that God is honored, God is glorified, and thanks is given to God and not us. Let us remember, that in all we do: Glory belongs to God alone.

# ***The Lord's Prayer Part I***

## **Matthew 6:5-15**



*Matthew 6:5-15 "And when you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have*

*their reward in full. 6 "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you. 7 "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words. 8 "Therefore, do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. 9 "Pray then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 'Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. 11 'Give us this day our daily bread. 12 'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 'And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.] 14 "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.*

.....  
The Lord's Prayer has been an integral part of worship in the Church from the very beginning. But more than just

the words, there is a lesson to learn on how it is that we should pray to God.

**1) Our Prayer Should Adore God** Christ's model prayer starts with us giving our adoration to God. The opening verses demonstrate our expression of both a deep love and profound respect for God. There is no higher adoration before God then when we declare and cherish His holiness in His presence.

**2) Our Supplication Should Be Wholly Dependent on God's Provision** We go to prayer often times to ask God for something. It is in humility, and with thanksgiving, that we approach our loving and gracious Heavenly Father for His generous and satisfying provision. Jesus desires that we let go of our independent spirit, let go of our old way of life, trust God, and He will provide.

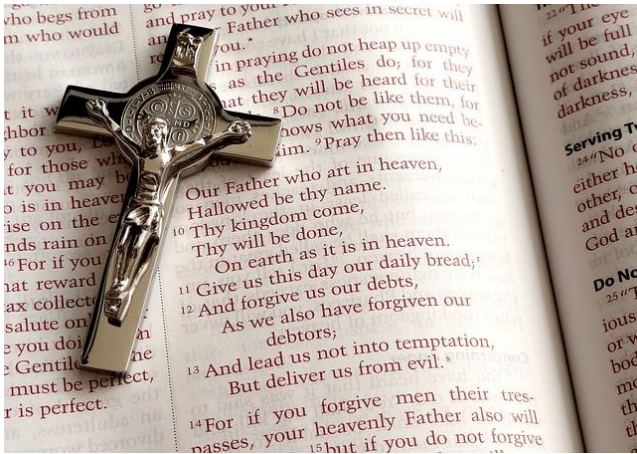
**3) Our Supplication Should Be Intercessory** When we pray, it is not from a selfish heart, but a heart that seeks God's provision in the life of others. Jesus desires a person who has a heart for others and who actively reaches out to God on their behalf. Our prayer life can become out of balance if we are never or rarely pray for others.

Jesus teaches us to pray in such a way that it is pleasing to God. It starts with the correct view of God, one marked by adoration, in an attitude of love and reverence for the Holy One on His throne. We approach His throne with supplication, asking from a thankful and trusting heart for His continued provision in our lives. And in so doing, we do not forget those around us, but offer intercession as often as we pray, so that God may be glorified through His mighty deeds.



# ***The Lord's Prayer Part II***

## **Matthew 6:9-15**



**Matthew 6:9-15**  
***“Pray then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 10 ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. 11 ‘Give***

***us this day our daily bread. 12 ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.] 14 “For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 “But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.***

.....  
The Lord’s model for prayer starts with our adoration of God. It is out of this deep love and respect that we ask for His gracious provision. Our supplication is not selfish, but intercessory as we seek God’s blessing in the life of others. This model continues with additional considerations:

**1) Our Prayer Should Seek Purification** We ask for and receive purification from sin in our life every time we approach the throne of God. Even for the Christian, sin can create a barrier that hinders our fellowship with God. But if

we confess our sin, He is faithful and will purify us from all unrighteousness.

**2) Our Prayer Should Not Be Hypocritical** Jesus does not like a hypocrite. We cannot expect forgiveness in our lives if we do not forgive others. If you are holding a grudge against anyone, because they did you wrong, you need to exercise forgiveness immediately lest you experience the chastening of God.

**3) Our Prayer Should Seek Righteousness** God has already done everything He is going to do for your salvation, and has already given you everything you need to experience a successful Christian life. The deliverance we receive from evil is not so we can just fall back into the snare of sin, but so we can become mature in our righteousness, stumble less, and honor God with our lives.

When we pray, we approach God’s throne in adoration and we are wholly dependent on His provision. We intercede on behalf of others and we purify our hearts in a way that is not hypocritical. Through prayer, we continuously pursue righteousness as the chief aim in our lives. Our prayer should always remind us that God is who He has declared Himself to be, and that He will do what He has already promised to do in our lives.

## **When You Fast**

### **Matthew 6:16-18**



*Matthew 6:16-18*  
*"Now Whenever*  
*you fast, do not*  
*put on a gloomy*  
*face as the*  
*hypocrites do, for*  
*they neglect their*  
*appearance so*  
*that they will be*  
*noticed by men*  
*when they are*

*fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. 17*  
*"But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face*  
*18 "so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by*  
*your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is*  
*done in secret will reward you.*

.....  
In our culture today, fasting has become nothing more than a gimmick associated with dieting and a "healthier self image". In the church, fasting is rarely encountered as an element of faith and worship. However, it may just be that we are missing an opportunity to draw closer to God through prayer and fasting.

**1) Fasting in the Old Testament** Fasting had its origins starting with Moses. But it was not a result of God's command, rather it developed out of a practical devotion of faith. Fasting matured into a way to draw near to God, to seeking His council or His provision, and often was an element of mourning. By the end of the Old Testament,

fasting had become an part of regular ceremonial religious activities.

**2) Fasting in the First Century** By the first century, fasting had become corrupted. Just like the blasting of trumpets, the long public prayers, and the over sized phylacteries and tassels, now fasting was accompanied by exaggerated appearance. Like religious theater, fasting no longer honored God or brought anyone closer to God.

**3) Fasting Today** Not only did fasting apply to Jesus's first century audience, but it also applies to us today. Remember, Christ is describing what life in the Kingdom of God looks like. The Kingdom is the same Kingdom Christians are living in today. Just as we ought to give to the poor and pray, so also are there occasions where fasting is appropriate.

Fasting remains an acceptable element of worship in the Church. It is to be a personal and private act of devotion where you lay aside food for a period time. It should be accompanied by prayer, and when you fast, it is for the purpose of drawing nearer to God and seeking His will or provision in your circumstances.

# ***A Review: The Sermon on the Mount at a Glance***

## **Matthew 5:1-6:18**



The Sermon on the Mount contains foundational teachings for the Church from Jesus. Christ reveals the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven for every generation through profound and simple teaching. How we understand this sermon will effect how we live and experience our faith as Christ intended.

**1) One Greater Than Moses (Matt 5:1-2)** As Jesus sits down and begins to teach, the message to His crowd is that one greater than Moses is here. Where Moses went up on the mountain to meet with God and then came down to teach the people, Christ goes up and teaches from the mountain as one who has the authority of God.

**2) God's Blessing and Provision (Matt 5:3-12)** Jesus begins His sermon with the blessings of God. He presents eight conditions of the one who is blessed and eight provisions from the King. Christ is describing our start, growth, and finish in the Kingdom. And through these blessings, the audience learns that entry into the Kingdom of Heaven is not a function of doing the Law, or works, but wholly a function of how we approach the King who alone is the source of our eternal life.

**3) Perfection Required and Perfection Given (Matt 5:13-48)** Jesus establishes righteousness as the primary means for entering the Kingdom of Heaven. It is not just any righteousness, but that perfect righteousness is required by God. So if you are seeking a righteousness that comes from doing the Law, then it becomes impossible to enter the Kingdom by works. But, if you are seeking a righteousness that comes from God and is by faith in Christ, then the Kingdom is available for all who believe.

**4) Living Your Faith Practically (Matt 6:1-18)** Jesus issues a warning: If our motivations for doing righteousness is to impress others, then God will not reward that. But if our walk of faith has God as the subject of our worship, then rich is our reward in heaven. When we live out our faith as a hypocrite, we steal the glory due to God alone. But when we live out our faith correctly, then the world sees the grace of God working out in our lives and they just might turn to Him for salvation.

In Chapter 5 of Matthew, we discovered how we get into the Kingdom of Heaven. In Chapter 6 of Matthew we discover how we are to think and behave in the Kingdom of Heaven right now. Chapter 5 is about receiving the provision from God that alone saves a person. Chapter 6 is about living out that salvation in a manner that honors God and points the world to Him.



# On Materialism and Wealth

## Matthew 6:19-24



Matthew 6:19-24  
19 *"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 "But*

*store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 "The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 23 "But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! 24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.*

.....

Wealth can be both the greatest blessing or the greatest curse among humanity. A blessing, in that God often times has increased His provision in the lives of His people so that they may bear good fruit and bless others in the Kingdom. And a curse, in that wealth can blind a person from what truly matters in life; serving God and not money.

**1) A Foolish Pursuit in Life** When the number one focus and purpose of your life is to accumulate wealth or accumulate material possessions for yourself, then that is a life wasted. You are not a bad or foolish person if you have wealth. The great alarm being rang all throughout Scripture is that if your pursuit of riches is the main source of your security, your hope, and your purpose in life then you are a fool. Because God alone is the only sure source for our eternal security, our eternal hope, and our chief purpose in life.

**2) The Right Focus for Life** The antidote to materialism is storing up for ourselves treasure in heaven. We can do this practically by doing good, being rich in good deeds, being generous, and being ever ready to share out of the abundance of what God has so graciously given to us. Whether you have one dollar or a million dollars, it all belongs to God and He has richly supplied it to us. Being rich towards God with what we receive has others as our focus and not us.

**3) A Call to Service** Christ's message is clear: you cannot serve two masters. Do not be deceived. If you think you can blend Jesus together with worldly pursuits you are mistaken. Inevitably you will love one and hate the other. You have to choose, either serve God or serve wealth.

In what are you trusting for your security, hope, and purpose in life? Money cannot save you. When the blessing of money results in being rich towards God, then your treasure in heaven is great. But when storing up riches and treasure is done for purely selfish reasons, then your life is foolish in the end. Trust God and turn to Him as your source of security, hope, and purpose in this life and the next.

# **Trust: God's Cure for Worry**

## **Matthew 6:25-34**



*Matthew 6:25-34  
"For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body as to what you will put on. Is*

*not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? 27 "And who of you by being worried can add a single cubit to his life span? 28 "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29 yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will he not much more clothe you? You of little faith! 31 "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32 "For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. 34 "So do not worry about tomorrow; for*

*tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

.....  
Having anxiety in your life is normal. But when worry consumes your life, you can become virtually powerless in your faith. Jesus speaks practical wisdom for gaining victory over worry in life.

**1) Remember God's Provision** There is more to life than worrying about the basic necessities. God demonstrates everyday in creation that He is trustworthy to provide for all living things. Scripture shows us that God faithfully provided for His people in the past. Trust God, He will provide.

**2) Keep the Right Perspective** Jesus reminds us that we are the crown jewel of God's creation. Because of this, God has humanity as the chief focus of His work. God is on our side and He will perfect the good work He began in us. When we keep the right perspective, we realize that in light of eternity, we are wasting our time spending it on worrying about our life.

**3) Have the Right Priorities** Our priority in life is to seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness. It is only through faith in Jesus that we can receive the Kingdom and experience His righteousness. When we live our lives marked by trust and obedience to Christ, then we receive the fullness of God's blessing. Worry disappears when Christ appears as the chief focus of your life.

Too much worry in life can paralyze your faith. But Jesus has given us some practical wisdom for breaking the bondage of worry; Trust God. Remember His provision; He will not let you down. Keep the right perspective; God is on your side. And set the right priority for your life; trust in Christ and obey Him. There is victory over worry through trust in Christ.

# Judging Others: When, Who, and How?

## Matthew 7:1-6



*Matthew 7:1-6*  
*"Do not judge, so that you will not be judged. 2 "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with what measure you measure, it*

*will be measured to you. 3 "And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? 5 "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. 6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.*

One of the most misquoted scriptures applied in the church is that Christians are "to judge not lest we be judged." Christ does not prohibit Christians from judging one another, rather He gives us both a warning and a way to do it correctly.

**1) A Warning Against Hypocrisy** Christ's prohibition concerning judgement is for all who would be quick to point out the faults in someone else's life, meanwhile they are

guilty 10 fold of doing the exact same thing! The problem with hypocritical judgement is that it never has restoration of our brother or sister in Christ as its aim; it only seeks to satisfying our own self righteousness. When we judge others out of hypocrisy we are exposing ourselves to divine retribution.

**2) A Mandate for the Church** Christ is not prohibiting our call to confront sin in the life of other believers. It is not that you should never exercise judgment, but you have to be prepared to do it. We must first repent of the sin in our life so we can help restore our fellow brother or sister in Christ to holy living. The hardest part of this lesson to learn is to receive the correction concerning sin in our life and respond in repentance.

**3) A Caution Among the World** The unsaved do not need reformation, they need complete transformation. You cannot scream, berate, or condemn a sinner into heaven. Correcting an unbeliever is like throwing the pearls of God's truth into the slop pit of a hog. The world needs the Gospel. It is the Gospel that brings about a new birth. Not lessons on morality.

Christ prohibits correcting sin from a position of self righteous hypocrisy. Rather, we must correct sin in the life of our brothers and sisters in Christ in such a way that is free from hypocrisy; that seeks restoration and not condemnation as the goal; and is done privately and in a spirit of gentleness. We are to correct in the Church, and evangelize in the world.



# 5 Reasons Why We May Not Get What We Ask For

## Matthew 7:7-12



*Matthew 7:7-12*  
*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 "for everyone who asks receives,*

*and he who seeks find, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 9 "Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? 10 "Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? 11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him! 12 "Therefore, in all things, whatever you want people to do for you, so do for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

.....  
Jesus says "ask and it will be given to you." This is a great truth, but sometimes we ask of God and it seems like He does not give. Scripture tells us five reasons why we might not get what we ask for.

**1) We Have a Condemning Heart: (1 John 3:21-22)** If you are experiencing a hinderance to Christ's promise, John would call you to a time of examination and confession over any unrepented of sin in your life.

**2) We have the Wrong Motives: (James 4:2-3)** The question from James is to ask yourself "what are my motives for making this request of God?" Because if our motives are impure then we are guaranteed not to experience the power of receiving what we ask.

**3) We Lack Faith: (James 1:5-7)** If we have no faith behind our petition to God, or when we doubt, then we "ought not to expect that we will receive anything from the Lord." Believe and receive.

**4) We Have the Wrong Will: (1 John 5:14-15)** When we ask for that which is in the will of God, then we can have confidence He will give. If our petition is our will and not His will, then there is no confidence in our request.

**5) We are not Prepared to Wait: (Psalm 40:1)** Sometimes we think that God will respond to our request immediately. But the practical reality is we will often find ourselves in a period of waiting on God to fulfill His promise to us.

God's promises are trustworthy. When it comes to asking and receiving, our attitudes and actions can either help or hurt our request. If you do not get what you ask for, examine yourself to see if you have placed a barrier between you and God.

# ***Two Gates, Two Roads, and Two Destinations: Part 1***

## **Matthew 7:13-14**



**Matthew 7:13-14**  
*"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter*

*through it. 14 "For the gate is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it."*

---

**1) The Two Gates** The final teachings of the Sermon on the Mount opens with a great truth about life. There are two gates in our life, one is narrow and the other is wide. These gates lead to two ways of life, one is constricted and the other is broad. And at the end of these two ways of life are two destinations, one is eternal life and the other is destruction. There is no third option. Wherever you are in life today you are heading towards one of two destinations: eternal life or destruction.

**The Gate to Eternal Life is Narrow:** Why is the gate to eternal life narrow? Because every person must enter into eternal life through Jesus Christ alone. The Gospel is exclusive. It is about Jesus. There is no other name and no other way to eternal life. In Jesus Christ alone is our full provision for sin and righteousness before God. However, the Gospel is also inclusive. It is available to every person everywhere. No

matter who you are, where you are from, what you have done, eternal life is available to you right now through Jesus.

**Few Will Find the Narrow Gate:** Why will only a few find eternal life? Because every person must choose to accept or reject the Gospel of Christ. God is not going to force you through the narrow gate and you cannot be brought in by a friend or family member. The reality is that many will weight in the balance the greatest choice of their life: choose Christ and follow Him, or cling to the deceptive lure of a sin. Sadly, many will choose their sin over the righteousness of Christ.

Our eternity hinges on two gates. One that is narrow and leads to eternal life, and one that is broad which leads to destruction. Today, choose to follow Jesus and set a new course for your eternity.

# ***Two Gates, Two Roads, and Two Destinations: Part 2***

## **Matthew 7:13-14**



*Matthew 7:13-14  
"Enter through  
the narrow gate;  
for the gate is  
wide and the way  
is broad that  
leads to  
destruction, and  
there are many*

*who enter through it. 14 "For the gate is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

---

**1) The Two Gates** Everyone who is born enters the world through the wide gate that leads to destruction and the only way to change the course for your eternity is to enter through the narrow gate to life. The gate to eternal life is narrow because everyone who enters must do so through Jesus Christ alone. The Gospel is exclusive, it is about Jesus and no other. However, the Gospel is inclusive and is available to "whomsoever" believes. Few will find this gate because every person must make a choice: follow Christ or cling to sin.

### **2) The Two Roads**

**The Broad Road:** The road to destruction is broad because on it you will find every rebellion, every transgression, and every trespass of God's Word to His special creation. Everyone who is ever born starts in a lane, and as they grow up they rebel against God. They find this sin and switch lanes, then they find that sin and switch lanes. There are

some driving as fast as they can through life swerving from lane to lane, jumping from sin to sin, all the while cursing God with their lives. There is not happy end for those on the broad road.

**The Constricted Road:** The way to eternal life is constricted for all who believe, because it is measured by your obedience to Christ. And the expectation is not that you are a morally perfect person for the rest of your days, but the expectation is that you are consciously, visibly, actively walking in a way worthy of Jesus. It means that the chief aim of your life is obedience to Christ. To be a disciple of Christ is to be the one who follows Him.

Our eternity hinges on two gates, which are followed by two ways, and these ways end at two destinations. Today, choose to follow Jesus and set a new course for your eternity.



# ***Two Gates, Two Roads, and Two Destinations: Part 3***

## **Matthew 7:13-14**



**Matthew 7:13-14**  
*"Enter through  
the narrow gate;  
for the gate is  
wide and the way  
is broad that  
leads to  
destruction, and  
there are many*

all the unrighteous dead where the ungodly suffer eternal punishment. Hell is literal and eternal. But for those who repent of their sin and believe in Jesus Christ, then their end is unto eternal life in His presence. It is God's will that none should perish but that all should come to repentance. You can escape the coming wrath and eternity is hell today by trusting in Jesus for your eternity in heaven.

Our eternity hinges on two gates, which are followed by two ways, and these ways end at two destinations. Today, choose to follow Jesus and set a new course for your eternity.

*who enter through it. 14 "For the gate is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

.....

**1) The Two Gates:** Everyone who is born enters the world through the wide gate that leads to destruction and the only way to change the course for your eternity is to enter through the narrow gate to life. The gate to eternal life is narrow because everyone who enters must do so through Jesus Christ alone. Few will find this gate because every person must make a choice: follow Christ or cling to sin.

**2) The Two Roads:** The road to destruction is broad because on it you will find every rebellion, every transgression, and every trespass of God's Word to His special creation. However, for those who enter through the narrow gate, the way of their life is now constricted. The Christian life is one marked by obedience to Christ and His word. To be a disciple of Christ is to be the one who follows Him and His way.

**3) The Two Destinations:** Every person ever born will spend an eternity somewhere. For those who reject Christ, their end is in destruction. Hell is the final place of destruction for

# ***The Fruit of the False Prophet***

**Matthew 7:15-20**



*Matthew 7:15-20*  
*"Beware of the*  
*false prophets,*  
*who come to you*  
*in sheep's*  
*clothing, but*  
*inwardly are*  
*ravenous wolves.*  
*16 "You will know*  
*them by their*

*fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from*  
*thistles? 17 "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the*  
*bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot bear bad*  
*fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 "Every tree that*  
*does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*  
*20 "So then, you will know them by their fruits.*

.....

Every generation within the church must "beware of the false prophets. In light of this, Jesus has three key points to teach us that will help guard the church from their destructive influences.

**1) False Prophets are Deceptive** We often think that a false prophet would be instantly recognizable and easy to spot. But Jesus says "they are wolves in sheep's clothing." The false prophet looks just like we do, talks like we do, and at first glance, they appear to be one of the sheep of God. But there is one big difference: they are ungodly, they are perverts of grace, and they are blasphemers against God.

**2) False Prophets Produce Bad Fruit** Jesus tells us that we have a practical way to recognize a false prophet; by their fruit. The produce of their work, of their efforts, of their speech, attitudes, actions, will all be bad. It is impossible for them to produce good fruit. Their fruit will give them away. Scripture gives several characteristics of the bad fruit, but three are particularly important: they deny the humanity of Christ; they deny the deity of Christ; and they pervert grace as a license to sin. The false prophet brings division, not unity; lies, not truth; a lifestyle of sin, not righteousness. They divide churches, they exploit people, they destroy lives, and they lead people astray.

**3) False Prophets are Marked for Destruction** Jesus gives us a great promise of victory over the enemy: they will be cut down and cast into the fire. To be a false prophet means there is no benefit, there is no victory, there is no eternal gain to be had. The wolf in sheep's clothing will be exposed and will be consumed by the eternal fire of God.

These words from Jesus are both a warning to the world and a word of encouragement to His church. We are to fight the good fight, and contend earnestly for the faith, and in the end, Jesus promises He will issue the just punishment for the false prophet. Yet this morning there is hope for the false prophet because no fruit is so bad that it cannot be washed clean in the blood of Jesus. There is eternal hope available in Christ, even for the false prophets in the world.

# ***The Fate of the False Disciple***

## **Matthew 7:21-23**



*Matthew 7:21-23*  
*"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will*

*enter. 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, in Your name did we not prophesy, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'"*

.....

The false prophets of Matthew 7:15-20 will inevitably produce false disciples. "Many" will believe the lies of the false prophets and in the end will be rejected by Christ. The two main lies of the false prophet in our culture today are two fold: either they call their followers to believe in a counterfeit Jesus; or, they convince their followers to call evil good. In either case, there is no life in a counterfeit Jesus, and there is no salvation for those who do not acknowledge sin.

**1) The False Disciple Does Not Know Jesus** When Jesus declares to the false disciples "away from me, I never knew you" the implication is that He never knew them because they were deceived to believe in a counterfeit Jesus. The genuine Jesus who saves humanity from their sin is known

by what Scripture declares to be true. The true Christ is fully God, fully man, sinless in life, sufficient in death, was raised on the third day, exalted by God, and will come again. If the Jesus you are trusting in for salvation is different than the Jesus revealed in the Bible, then you have placed your trust in a counterfeit.

**2) The False Disciple Does Not Obey God** When Jesus says that only "those who do the will of my Father" will enter heaven, that means no rebels will gain entry. To do God's will is to obey God. To obey God is to turn from a life of rebellion and turn to a life of obedience. Doing the will of the Father means the true disciple has repented of their sin and is trusting in Jesus alone for the forgiveness of sin and the righteousness of God. If you have never dealt with the sin in your life. If you have never repented of your sin and turned to Christ for the forgiveness of your sin, then there is no amount of good works possible to inherit eternal life in heaven. The false disciple has believed the lie of the false prophet who says that we can keep our sin, add the name of Jesus as an endorsement to our life of sin, and expect to gain eternal life in heaven.

Many are professing Jesus as Lord and many are doing what they believe are righteous works. Yet, many will be rejected by Christ in the end because Jesus never knew them and because they did not do the will of the Father. Do not place your trust for eternity in a counterfeit, and do not believe that God will overlook your sin. Today is the day to repent of your sin and trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sin and eternal life in heaven.



# ***Building Your Life on the Rock of Christ***

## **Matthew 7:24-29**



**Matthew 7:24-29**

*"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and does them, may be compared to a wise man who built his*

*house on the rock. 25 "And the rain descended, and the rivers came, and the winds blew and fell against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "And everyone hearing these words of Mine and not doing them, may be compared to a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell - and great was its fall." 28 Now it happened that when Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were astonished at His teaching; 29 for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.*

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Jesus is describing two men with two totally different fates in life. Two men that share the same start and the same objective, but achieved completely opposite results. And between these two men there is one key distinction that made all the difference in the end: how they responded to the word of Christ.

**1) Hearing The Word of Christ Demands a Response** Both men start at the same place: they heard the words of Jesus.

Hearing the word's of Jesus is the key turning point for every person everywhere. It can be the greatest blessing of your life, or the greatest mistake of your eternity, it all depends on what you do with the Word.

**2) Everyone is Searching for Purpose** Both men shared the same start, hearing the word's of Jesus, but also both men shared the same objective: they were seeking the best way to build their life. Right now everyone is building a life. And like a house, the key element to building a life that will last, endure, and hold up in the storm is to build upon the right foundation. Jesus is the Rock of Salvation. A life built of Jesus is the bedrock of eternity.

**3) Rejoice in Your Future Hope** Jesus has a special message for His church this morning: rejoice and be glad, for you have chosen wisely. You have been saved from the coming storm, you have been saved from the day of destruction, you have been delivered from calamity, because you have built your life on Jesus Christ the Rock of Salvation. A life built on Jesus Christ has meaning, has purpose, and will endure forever. Nothing can come against the one who builds their life on Christ.

For those who build their life on fame, fortune, pleasure, self, or anything other than Christ is like a person who builds a house on sand. A foundation of sand will not endure in the end. Any foundation for life other than Christ will end in a great and mighty fall. But, for the Church, there is nothing that is coming your way in Christ that He is not prepared for, that He cannot withstand, and that He will not deliver you from.