



SERMON ON THE MOUNT PART 1

MATTHEW 5:1-48 | LUKE 6:12-26

Jesus goes up on a mountain and delivers the most comprehensive teaching on Kingdom living ever spoken. The Beatitudes redefine greatness. Salt and light redefine mission. And then Jesus takes the Law they thought they knew and shows them how deep it was always meant to go.



JESUS CHOOSES THE TWELVE

Jesus Chooses the Twelve Disciples

Key Points:

- Before delivering the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spends the night in prayer on a mountain.
- At daybreak He calls His disciples to Him and chooses twelve — appointing them as apostles.
- This act of deliberate, prayerful selection precedes His greatest public teaching.
- Key Insight: Jesus prays all night before making His most important decisions. The sermon begins before a word is spoken — in the prayer that precedes it.

Synoptic References: Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16

THE BEATITUDES: WHO IS TRULY BLESSED?

Jesus Gives the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12; Luke 6:17-26)

Key Points:

- Jesus sees the crowds, goes up on a mountain, sits down, and begins to teach. The posture of sitting signals authoritative rabbinic teaching.
- The Beatitudes are not a to-do list — they are a description of the person whose life is oriented around the Kingdom of God.
- Each beatitude begins with 'Blessed' — a word meaning deep inner joy and divine favour that circumstances cannot touch.

Synoptic References: Luke 6:17-26 (Luke includes corresponding 'woes')

- Blessed are the poor in spirit (Matthew 5:3): the kingdom of heaven is theirs

Spiritual poverty — recognising our total dependence on God. This is the entry point to the Kingdom.

- Blessed are those who mourn (Matthew 5:4): they shall be comforted

Those who grieve over sin — their own and the world's — will receive the comfort only God can give.

- Blessed are the meek (Matthew 5:5): they shall inherit the earth





Meekness is not weakness — it is strength under God's control. The meek do not grasp for what God has promised to give.

- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matthew 5:6): they shall be filled

A deep, consuming longing for God's righteousness — personally and in the world — will always be satisfied.

- Blessed are the merciful (Matthew 5:7): they shall obtain mercy

Those who extend mercy reflect the character of God and receive mercy in return.

- Blessed are the pure in heart (Matthew 5:8): they shall see God

Purity of heart — undivided devotion to God, with no hidden agenda — leads to the ultimate reward: seeing God.

- Blessed are the peacemakers (Matthew 5:9): they shall be called sons of God

Those who actively work to reconcile people to God and to one another bear the family resemblance of the Father.

- Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake (Matthew 5:10-12): theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Persecution for faithfulness is not a sign of failure — it is a sign of belonging to the Kingdom. Jesus calls His followers to rejoice.

THINK ABOUT

- The Beatitudes describe a person who is 'blessed' by Kingdom standards — not the world's. Which beatitude challenges your understanding of what it means to be truly blessed the most?

- Jesus pairs each condition with a promise. Which promise speaks most directly to where you are right now, and why?

- Luke's version includes 'woes' alongside the blessings — warnings to those who find their security in wealth, comfort, and reputation. How do the woes reshape how you read the blessings?

SALT AND LIGHT: THE MISSION OF THE KINGDOM

Jesus Teaches About Salt and Light (Matthew 5:13-16)

Key Points:

- Immediately after describing who His followers are (Beatitudes), Jesus describes what they are for: salt and light.

- Salt in the ancient world was used to preserve and flavour. Jesus says His followers preserve the goodness of the world and give it flavour.

- A city on a hill cannot be hidden. A lamp is not lit to be placed under a bowl. Kingdom people are meant to be visible.

- Key Insight: Jesus does not say 'become salt and light.' He says 'you are salt and light.' The mission flows from the identity.

Synoptic References: Unique to Matthew's Gospel in this form





- Verse: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16, NKJV)

THINK ABOUT

- Salt loses its saltiness when it becomes contaminated by the world around it. In what areas of your life is there a risk of that happening?
- Jesus says people should see your good works and glorify your Father — not you. What is the difference between living to be seen and living to point others to God?
- What does it look like practically to be 'a city on a hill' in your workplace, neighbourhood, or family?

THE LAW FULFILLED, NOT ABOLISHED

Jesus Teaches About the Law (Matthew 5:17-20)

Key Points:

- Jesus makes a stunning declaration: He has not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets but to fulfil them.
- Not one jot or tittle — the smallest marks in the Hebrew script — will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.
- He raises the standard: the righteousness of His followers must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees.
- Key Insight: The Pharisees obeyed the Law externally. Jesus calls His followers to obedience from the heart — the Law's original intent.

Synoptic References: Unique to Matthew's Gospel

YOU HAVE HEARD... BUT I SAY: THE SIX ANTITHESES

Jesus uses a repeated pattern — 'You have heard that it was said... But I say to you' — to show that He is not cancelling the Law but revealing its deeper, original meaning. He moves the standard from external behaviour to internal transformation.

On Anger (Matthew 5:21-26)

Synoptic References: Matt 5:21-26 | Synoptic ref. Luke 12:57-59

- The Law said: Do not murder. Jesus says: Do not even harbour anger against your brother.
- Calling someone 'Raca' (empty-headed) or 'fool' carries serious spiritual consequences.
- Reconciliation with a brother takes priority even over worship — leave your gift at the altar and go make it right first.
- Key Insight: Unresolved anger is murder in the heart. Jesus traces the crime back to its root.
- Verse: "'But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.'" (Matthew 5:22, NKJV)"



**On Lust (Matthew 5:27-30)**

Synoptic References: Matt 5:27-30 | Synoptic ref: Unique to Matthew

- The Law said: Do not commit adultery. Jesus says: Do not even look with lustful intent.
- He uses radical language — gouge out the eye, cut off the hand — to make a point about the seriousness of unchecked desire.
- Key Insight: Jesus is not prescribing self-mutilation. He is declaring that sin must be dealt with radically at its source, not managed on the surface.
- Verse: ""Whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:28, NKJV)"

On Divorce (Matthew 5:31-32)

Synoptic References: Matt 5:31-32 | Synoptic ref: Matthew 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18

- The Law permitted a certificate of divorce. Jesus tightens the standard — divorce, except on grounds of sexual immorality, causes the other person to commit adultery.
- Key Insight: Jesus is upholding the sanctity and permanence of the marriage covenant, which the religious leaders had been treating as a legal convenience.

On Oaths (Matthew 5:33-37)

Synoptic References: Matt 5:33-37 | Synoptic ref: James 5:12

- The Law regulated oaths. Jesus abolishes the need for them: let your yes be yes and your no be no.
- Adding oaths to your words implies that your ordinary speech is not trustworthy.
- Key Insight: Kingdom people are people of such consistent integrity that no oath is needed.
- Verse: ""Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one." (Matthew 5:37, NKJV)"

On Retaliation (Matthew 5:38-42)

Synoptic References: Matt 5:38-42 | Synoptic ref: Luke 6:29-30

- The Law established proportional justice: an eye for an eye. Jesus calls His followers beyond justice to voluntary suffering.
- Turn the other cheek. Give your cloak also. Go the second mile. Give to the one who asks.
- Key Insight: Jesus is not teaching passivity — He is teaching the refusal to be controlled by the impulse to retaliate. This is active, courageous non-retaliation.

On Loving Enemies (Matthew 5:43-48)

Synoptic References: Matt 5:43-48 | Synoptic ref: Luke 6:27-36

- The Law said: Love your neighbour. The tradition added: hate your enemy. Jesus overturns the addition entirely.
- Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you. God sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous alike.





- The standard: 'Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.' (Matthew 5:48, NKJV)
- Key Insight: The love Jesus calls for is not based on the worthiness of its object — it is based on the character of God. We love because He first loved us.
- Verse: "'Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you.' (Matthew 5:44, NKJV)"

THINK ABOUT

- Jesus says that anger at a brother is in the same category as murder. How does this reframe the way you think about what it means to 'keep the commandments'?
- The antithesis on retaliation calls us to go beyond what is required — the second mile, the extra cloak. Where in your life is Jesus calling you to go further than the minimum?
- 'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.' Jesus sets the standard as God Himself. Is this an impossible demand or an invitation? How do you hold both the call and the grace?

LIFE APPLICATION

- Pray before you decide: Jesus spent the night in prayer before choosing the Twelve. This week, before your next significant decision — pause. Pray first. Platform third.
- Identify your beatitude: Read through the Beatitudes slowly. Ask God to show you which one He is developing in you right now. Lean into it rather than resisting it.
- Let your light shine with purpose: This week do one visible act of goodness that points clearly to God — not to you. Let someone see the Father through you.
- Deal with it at the root: Is there anger, lust, bitterness, or retaliation living in your heart? Don't manage it on the surface. Bring it to Jesus at the root — that is what the Sermon on the Mount is asking.
- Go the second mile: Identify one relationship or responsibility where God may be calling you to do more than the minimum. Go the extra mile this week — not to be seen, but because that is the Kingdom way.

CONCLUSION

The Sermon on the Mount is not a higher law to replace the old one — it is the original intent of God's heart finally spoken plainly. Jesus does not raise the bar to condemn us. He reveals how deep the Law always went — past the hands and into the heart. Blessed are the poor in spirit. You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world. Love your enemies. Be perfect as your Father is perfect. These are not the words of a harsh judge — they are the words of the one who came to live this perfectly on our behalf and then invite us into the same life by His Spirit. The Kingdom Jesus describes here is not a distant ideal. It is the life He makes possible from the inside out.

