

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

I believe that the most powerful sermon recorded in the scriptures is found in the gospel of Matthew and was spoken by Jesus Himself.

If you take this sermon just as Jesus preached it, you will find that it is most controversial and important. Why? The sermon on the mount completely contradicts everything man has taught, and still teaches in many churches today. Many people try and tone down this sermon, but I believe He meant it just the way He spoke it.

For the purpose of this study I have divided The Sermon into 27 points. We will look at it point by point. It is found in Matthew chapters 5 through 7. I am quoting from the New American Standard Bible (NASB). As we take a close examination of this we will realize that it certainly does not follow after the normal preaching of the day. It was straight forward, powerful, and destructive to the thoughts of man!

To begin:

5:1 And when He saw the multitudes, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

5:2 And opening his mouth He began to teach them, saying,

Point 1:

5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

We find that this is the first time that anyone has taught that the poor are blessed. This totally runs against all the teaching of the world. They have sought after money as if it was a god, spending much of their time at this endeavour.

The church has also followed after this in many cases. Seeking finances for grandiose building projects before they seek after the things of God. It makes you wonder about all those expensive churches, whether they really can believe this point from the Lord!

I have also noticed that those who are the most receptive to the gospel are those that have little in this world. It seems that riches cloud our spiritual judgment!

In order to be "poor in spirit" one cannot be in love with money, that is, seeking it much of the time. We have to seek the Lord first, and after this we allow Him to show us His way to meet our needs in this earth.

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

Point 2:

5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Quoted often at funerals, this comment looks at the eternity of time. We have a habit in this fleshly life to see only what is around us. But the fact remains that we are only here temporarily; and permanently (as children of God) we live with Jesus. When we only see with our natural eyes, we have lost focus of what is the true situation in this earth.

Point 3:

5:5 Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

We do not find this quoted enough! Many times christians who are wronged for one reason or another try to take revenge. It is the first thing that comes to mind, the first natural reaction in the flesh. But this is not the teaching of Jesus. His teaching is be gentle! And inherit the earth!

Point 4:

5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

A promise for those who are seeking the ways of God: they shall find and be filled. If you seek you shall find!

Point 5:

5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Are we merciful to those who treat us badly? This will determine whether we receive mercy! We should note that it does not say to be merciful to those who are kind to us. We need to show mercy to all no matter how they may treat us. For this reason many christians do not receive mercy.

Point 6:

5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Purity in our hearts is the way to see God. This purity comes from the Blood of Jesus that He shed on the cross. Keep your heart in tune with the things of the Lord!

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

Point 7:

5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

There is no room for fighting and grudges here! When someone speaks badly about us, do we react with peace or revenge? We are to be peacemakers all the time!

Point 8:

5:10 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Are we willing to be persecuted? There is a blessing for those who are. Why is it we shun persecution when we will receive a blessing for it? It is time we realized that this is the norm in the christian walk--the world will persecute us as we make an unconditional stand for Him.

Point 9:

5:11 Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.

5:12 Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

5:13 You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how will it be made salty again? It is good for nothing anymore, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

5:14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

5:15 Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peckmeasure, but on a lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house.

5:16 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.

Do we really think we are blessed when we are insulted for Jesus' sake? It clearly says that we are! Our first reaction to persecution, gossip, etc., should be to rejoice! This is not the first reaction that comes to mind, but as the Holy Spirit renews our mind it should become our natural reaction.

If we are not willing to take a stand in front of the world for His sake, including a stand to rejoice in persecution, how can they learn about Him? We are the light. Without our stand they will see nothing about the life of Jesus. They are not going to study the Bible. We will be a walking Bible unto them!

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

Point 10:

5:17 Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

5:18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.

5:19 Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

5:20 For I say unto you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

So if the commandments of the law are still in effect, what did Jesus come to fulfill?

He came as the ultimate sacrifice for sin, which He fulfilled on the cross; and therefore there is no more sacrifice necessary, for it is fully accomplished! He fulfilled the Law!

Point 11:

5:21 You have heard that the ancients were told, “You shall not commit murder” and “Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.”

5:22 But I say to you everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever shall say to his brother “Raca,” shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, “You fool,” shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.

5:23 If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

5:24 leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

5:25 Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, in order that your opponent may not deliver you to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.

5:26 Truly I say to you, you shall not come out of there, until you have paid up the last cent.

This certainly flies in the face of what the world teaches, or even what we in the church tend to do!

An important point is verse 23. It does not say if you have something against your brother (this would be worse!), but if he has something against you! You are responsible to try and reconcile with your brother or at least let him know that you don't hold anything against him. That's how important it is not to fight with one another!

This entire passage is against all court battles, name calling, and bad feelings between the brethren. These things have no place at all!

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

Point 12:

5:27 You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery;”

5:28 but I say unto you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.

We are responsible for what we think, not just for our actions. What we allow ourselves to think will eventually turn up in our actions!

Point 13:

5:29 And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

5:30 And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you; for it is better that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to go into hell.

At first glance this may seem strange, but think about it. Whatever causes us to stumble and turn against God must be thrown away. If we have something in our life that conflicts with God’s will it must go! Nothing is more important than the Lord God and His ways. Our spiritual life is far more important than anything else in this life!

Point 14:

5:31 And it was said, “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal;”

5:32 but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

So much for the acceptance of divorce and remarriage in the churches! Obviously this is sin in God’s eyes. Since it is so plain here, why do so many churches allow this? Why are so many christians guilty of it? Clearly the world’s view has become more important than God’s view in many so-called places of worship.

Point 15:

5:33 Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, “You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.”

5:34 But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,

5:35 or by earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the City of the Great King.

5:36 Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.

5:37 But let your statement be, “Yes, yes” or “No, no;” and anything beyond these is of evil.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

This is one statement of Jesus that many try to avoid. But it is here, and we must believe and obey it. Whenever I have run into this, lawyers and commissioner of oaths have always changed "swearing an oath" to "declaring the truth." Most christians don't even realize this is in the Bible.

Point 16:

- 5:38 You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth."
- 5:39 But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.
- 5:40 And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.
- 5:41 And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two.
- 5:42 Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

This is exactly what Jesus said. It has got to be the hardest thing for us to obey. But here it is and we must obey it! Our entire attitude in the helping of others is to be of the greatest help that we can.

When someone is angry we must not retaliate. The Lord will judge in the end. It is not up to us to defend ourselves. We are to allow wrong to be done to us, for nothing in this life counts for anything at all, except what we do for Jesus! Protecting our bodies and our goods is not important! Service to Him is the only thing that matters!

Point 17:

- 5:43 You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.
- 5:44 But I say unto you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you
- 5:45 in order 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.
- 5:46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same?
- 5:47 And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even Gentiles do the same?
- 5:48 Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Here love is really explained! Love those who despise and hate you! It is easily said, but it takes the Spirit of God to become committed to fulfilling these things!

Point 18:

- 6:1 Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

We find that our righteous actions must be done in secret. If we show our actions to the world we lose any reward we could have. Jesus looks at this in three parts: giving, praying, and fasting. I have labelled them a through c. We will look at them one at a time.

Point 18a:

6:2 When therefore you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6:3 But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing

6:4 that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Generally, giving within most churches is done in secret. But I have seen this command blatantly disobeyed.

I actually knew a church which had a fund that was behind in the needed money. They used time within the Sunday service so that people could be asked to stand up in the congregation and pledge an amount to this fund. The whole purpose was to get the highest amount in a pledge. It was like an auction! While this is certainly not the common practise in most churches, it is important that we do avoid this error!

It is also important that we keep our giving secret. Any attempt to brag about, or even to show unto others what we give is clearly in violation of Christ's command here.

Point 18b:

6:5 And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6:6 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 in secret will repay you.

6:7 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.

6:8 Therefore do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him.

6:9 Pray, then, in this way: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name.

6:10 Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

6:11 Give us this day our daily bread.

6:12 And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

6:13 And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

6:14 For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

6:15 But if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

Praying in secret is not something that is taught in most churches I have attended. But it is a command, and we should obey it.

Verse 7 states not to use meaningless repetition. So what is the "Lord's Prayer" if it is not for repetition? If it is not for repetition it can only be a guide, or an outline, as to what type of prayer we should have--an example if you will. Yet this repetition is what we have been taught! We have gone from a command to not use such repetition to the point where it has become commonplace.

Therefore, as we pray, we should pray to the Father, not to Jesus; we should pray for His Kingdom to come; we should pray for our daily needs; we should pray for our forgiveness as we forgive others; and we should pray for us not to be led into temptation. This is the type of content our prayers should have!

The last point Jesus makes is most important: if we do not forgive, we will not be forgiven for our transgressions. This is most serious! Our attitude must be one of forgiveness to others.

Point 18c:

6:16 And whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance in order to be seen fasting by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

6:17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face

6:18 so that you may not be seen fasting by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

So how many of us fast? This must be our first question. If we make a study of Jesus' life we will find that He fasted often. If Jesus, the Son of God, needed to fast why do so many of us not do so? It is clear from scripture that fasting is needed to build spiritual strength. This is one of the reasons why our churches have little or no power in them!!

Not only must we fast, but we must do so in secret. Fasting is done between the Father and ourselves. It is not to be bragged about or even mentioned. Keep it between the Father and you, and you will be rewarded by Him.

Point 19:

6:19 Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;

6:21 for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

6:22 The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.

6:23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

6:24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

(Mammon simply means things of this world, especially riches.)

What we serve is where we put our trust and our heart. There is no getting around this. Those who are constantly serving mammon are always trying to get the latest car, the biggest house, the best of this world—and they are spending their time working to earn it, and spending time to enjoy it; but not spending time with the Lord! They have laid up treasures in this earth, and they can't take it with them!

We must spend time with the Lord, and in witnessing for the Lord, and all manner of work for the Lord—this is laying up treasure in heaven.

What we spend our time looking upon is what will fill our heart. We must look upon the things of the Lord and be filled with the those things of heaven. We cannot look upon both evil and good and expect that we will be filled with good.

Point 20:

6:25 For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?

6:26 Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they?

6:27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single cubit to his life's span?

6:28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin,

6:29 yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these.

6:30 But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith?

6:31 Do not be anxious then, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “With what shall we clothe ourselves?”

6:32 For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

6:33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.

6:34 Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

In verse 30 Jesus clearly makes the comment that those of us who are trusting in this world to meet our worldly needs are “men of little faith.” We are to put our thoughts, energies, and time into doing what is right, and the Lord will see that our needs will be met.

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

This does not mean that we sit around and do nothing! But it does mean that we are to trust God to provide a way to meet our needs. We need to trust Him to show us the job or work that we should be doing. We need to trust His direction in our lives at all times.

Remember, worry has never accomplished anything. As verse 34 states, “each day has enough trouble of its own.” If we are worrying about tomorrow then we have added that days problems to the problems of today. And it will mount until the stress will give us extreme trouble.

Point 21:

7:1 Do not judge lest you be judged.

7:2 For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

7:3 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?

7:4 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?

7:5 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.

We have a fleshly tendency to judge others; and by our own understanding! But we shall be judged by God according to our standard. If we have shown mercy to others, so it will be with us; but if we have not, then mercy will not be shown to us either. It pays to show mercy upon all who we come in contact with!

If we will let the Lord take the worldliness that we see around us and remove it from out of our eyes, than we can truly show the mercy and truth of God in our actions! If we have a log of the world in our eyes so that we cannot see clearly, we cannot truly show mercy unto others, and will be judged accordingly.

Point 22:

7:6 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.

The things of God, which are holy, are not to be given unto the ways of satan. One way we do this is when we defend the things of satan.

An example of this would be when we defend the right to our freedom of religion along with the “right” of others to commit murder of the unborn, divorce and remarry, and so on. In our world of democracy it has become so easy for us to abuse our freedom and combine the defense of ourselves with the defense of sinners.

A Study on "The Sermon on the Mount"

We must make it clear that we are not standing up for freedom to do as we wish, but we are defending the Word of God. It is God's ways that are important. We need to stand *against* sin while *defending* the Word!

Point 23:

7:7 Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.

7:8 For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.

7:9 Or what man is there among you, when his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone?

7:10 Or if he shall ask for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he?

7:11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

7:12 Therefore, however you want people to treat you, so treat them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

As we ask and seek from the Father we will receive from Him. If we are not receiving, we have asked for something that we should not receive, at least not at this time. Verses 9 through 11 state positively that God will give unto us what is best for us. Remember that a father may discipline his son and keep something back from him that he should not have, or is not ready for; and it is the same with the Lord.

The last verse is most interesting. As God gives unto us what is best for us, we should also be treating others as we would wish to be treated. Indeed, it would appear from this verse that if we do not treat them properly we may not receive what we seek from the Lord!

Point 24:

7:13 Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.

7:14 For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

It is very easy to be influenced by the world and its ways. We must be constantly vigilant in keeping ourselves away from the sins that are all around us.

Point 25:

7:15 Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

7:16 You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they?

7:17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

7:18 A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

7:19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

7:20 So then, you will know them by their fruits.

False prophets are a problem within the church. Many times throughout the New Testament Epistles we are warned against false prophets as well as other false ministries. These can be identified by their fruits.

Some examples of bad fruits are: the love of money--always pushing for greater financial gifts (I Timothy 6:10); the selling of gospel material (Matthew 10:8); creating divisions within the Body of Christ--including denominations (I Corinthians 1:10-17).

These are only three examples of bad fruits that we may see in a false prophet. As we follow a prophet's ministry we will be able to readily see if they are a true prophet or not.

Point 26:

7:21 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.

7:22 Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons and in Your name perform many miracles?

7:23 And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.

In this passage Jesus delivers the truth about false miracles and false prophecies in the church. There will be true justice against the false. When we stand in front of the Lord on that judgment day, He will right all wrongs and separate as only He can do: the right from the wrong. Those who have so cleverly deceived will not be able to have an acceptable defense in that day.

It is important to remember that although people use the Name of the Lord Jesus, many of them will be showing “window dressing,” and within their heart's they will be serving self or satan. There is an evil power (satan) that seeks to deceive and will perform many miracles in front of our eyes. It is always the Word of God that we must use as our guide throughout this life. **If anyone differs from that Word (the Bible) than they are wrong;** or possible worse, they are filled with deceiving evil spirits seeking to deceive even the church.

Point 27:

7:24 Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine, and acts upon them, may be compared to a wise man, who built his house upon the rock.

7:25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.

7:26 And everyone who hears these words of Mine, and does not act upon them, will be

A Study on “The Sermon on the Mount”

like a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand,
7:27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and burst against
that house; and it fell, and great was its fall.

If we build on the Rock (Christ Jesus and His Word [The Bible]), we shall stand in the day of trouble. If we stand on the world and its ways we will fall a great fall when the day of trouble comes. We must make sure that we stand on the Word of God and not on man's ideas of religion!

Conclusion

In order to build of the Rock Christ Jesus we must obey and follow all the words which He has spoken in this great sermon. As we follow the direction of Christ we will have built on the solid Rock.

Articles, books, prophecies, and other materials are available from the web site, The Prophetic Word: prophetic-word.org

To contact Thomas S. Gibson: <tsgibson@telusplanet.net>, 1125 - 6 Ave, Wainwright, AB T9W 1G2, Canada

copyright © 2002 by Thomas S. Gibson. The contents of this document is absolutely copyrighted against any altering! You are encouraged print, copy, or republish this document in whole or in part.