

## Matthew Chapter 5

Verses 1-2: The opening verses of the Sermon on the Mount indicate that this message deals with the inner state of mind and heart that is the indispensable absolute of true Christian discipleship. It delineates the outward manifestations of character and conduct of true believers and genuine disciples. Thus, the life of the believer, described by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, is a life of grace and glory, which comes from God alone.

To make this quality of life the product of man's human efforts (as does the liberal), is the height of overestimation of man's ability and underestimation of his depravity. To relegate this entire message, Jesus' longest recorded sermon, to a Jewish-only life-style, as do some dispensationalists, is to rob the church of her greatest statement of true Christian living.

The Sermon on the Mount introduces a series of 5 important discourses recorded in Matthew. This sermon is a masterful exposition of the law and a potent assault on Pharisaic legalism, closing with a call to true faith and salvation (7:13-29).

Christ expounded the full meaning of the law, showing that its demands were humanly impossible (5:48). This is the proper use of the law with respect to salvation. It closes off every possible avenue of human merit and leaves sinners dependent on nothing but divine grace for salvation (Rom. 3:19-20; Gal. 3:23-24).

Christ plumbed the depth of the law, showing that its true demands went far beyond the surface meaning of the words (5:28, 39, 44), and set a standard that is higher than the most diligent students of the law had heretofore realized (5:20).

**Matthew 5:1-2 "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:" "And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,"**

"He was set": This was the normal posture for rabbis while teaching, sitting.

Let me set the scene for you before we begin. This mountain, spoken of here, was, probably, actually a high area next to the Sea of Galilee. By land, it would, probably, be between Tiberias and Capernaum.

Jesus was thronged by a multitude. Many followed Him, because of the miracles. He really did not exclude these people from the teaching. He just drew aside to an area where the disciples could sit closer up for His teaching (whether 12 or more, we do not know; it was probably many more).

The multitude could listen and glean from His words, if they were to the point where they could understand this deep teaching. In most instances, these people were familiar with the law.

The statement "when he was set", just means that He sat down in the midst of them to teach. They were eager to hear His teachings. This was more teaching than preaching. The statement

"he opened his mouth", means that this was not for casual conversation, but rather, deliberate teaching on Jesus' part.

The location is now called the Mount of Beatitudes. A church has been erected to mark the place believed to be where this message came from.

The Sermon on the Mount is the greatest teaching of all time. If we could truly understand in depth what Jesus is saying, we would be able to discern the entire Bible from this. Let's remember that all of the Scriptures in this lesson, beginning with (Matthew 5:3), are printed in red in the Bible. They are the spoken Word of Jesus Christ Himself.

**Matthew 5:3 "Blessed [are] the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

"Blessed" means "happy, fortunate, blissful" and here it speaks of more than a surface emotion. Jesus was describing the divinely-bestowed well-being that belongs only to the faithful. This is a basic description of the believers' inner condition as a result of the work of God.

The Beatitudes demonstrate that the way to heavenly blessedness is antithetical to the worldly path normally followed in pursuit of happiness. The Beatitudes give Jesus' description of the character of true faith.

These Beatitudes, like Psalm 1, do not show a man how to be saved, but rather describe the characteristics of one who has been saved. The "poor in spirit" are the opposite of the proud or haughty in spirit. The opposite of self-sufficiency, and speaks of the deep humility of recognizing one's utter spiritual bankruptcy apart from God.

It describes those who are acutely conscious of their own lostness and hopelessness apart from divine grace.

They have been humbled by the grace of God and have acknowledged their sin and therefore their dependence upon God to save them. They will inherit the "kingdom of heaven." Kingdom of heaven is a general designation of the dwelling place of the saved.

First let us look at the BE Attitude. What would we be? Jesus is saying in this very first verse of the Sermon on the Mount, can't you understand that you are not self-sufficient? Your spirit is unlearned and dependent on the Spirit of God. You are poor in spirit compared to the wealth of God's Spirit. Depend on God, and not on self.

This was in direct opposition to the Jewish leaders, who thought they knew it all, because they had the law. The one thing we want to receive in this is: our wealth of spiritual knowledge is totally dependent on our faith in God's Spirit.

"Theirs is the kingdom of heaven": Notice that the truth of salvation by grace is clearly presupposed in this opening verse of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was teaching that the kingdom is a gracious gift to those who sense their own poverty of spirit.

**Matthew 5:4 "Blessed [are] they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."**

This speaks of mourning over sin, the godly sorrow that produces repentance leading to salvation without regret (2 Cor. 7:10). The "comfort" is the comfort of forgiveness and salvation.

Those that "mourn ... shall be comforted." The depth of the promise of these statements is almost inexhaustible. Those who mourn for sin shall be comforted in confession. Those who mourn for the human anguish of the lost shall be comforted by the compassion of God.

There are two ways to look at this statement. In the physical, we mourn for our dead; and truly, we will be comforted on that great day when we meet Jesus and our loved ones in the sky. Our mourning will be turned into joy.

There is another way to look at this, as well. When we think of our sins, we are grieved, and we mourn. Our comfort comes in knowing we are forgiven.

We mourn for those out of fellowship with God. Those, whether relatives or friends, who have not made peace with God. Our praying for them do not go unnoticed. Our comfort will come, even in this life, as they come into the Church of Jesus Christ. No one likes the idea, of mourning, but when it brings us into salvation, how glorious it is!

**Matthew 5:5 Blessed [are] the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."**

"The meek ... shall inherit the earth", refers again to those who have been humbled before God and will not only inherit the blessedness of heaven, but also will ultimately share in the kingdom of God on earth. Here, in the opening statements of the Sermon on the Mount, is the balance between the physical and spiritual promise of the kingdom. The kingdom of which Jesus preached is both "in you" and is yet "to come."

This word "meek" has been misunderstood by so many. It really means humble, or mild-mannered. This is the opposite of being out of control. It is not weakness, but supreme self-control empowered by the Spirit (Gal. 5:23). This is an attitude of the soul toward God and man, being willing to be instructed by God and willing to receive chastisement when necessary.

This has nothing to do with going around with your head hanging down, or even allowing people to push you around. This is a humble heart, quick to understand, forgive, and obey God. We see here, a blessing connected with it.

"Inherit the earth": Christians will reign with Jesus as His subordinates here on the earth the 1,000 year reign of Christ, and we truly shall inherit the earth. This is just another attribute of the Christian's humble heart.

**Matthew 5:6 "Blessed [are] they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."**

These future possessors of the earth are its presently installed rightful heirs, and even now they “hunger and thirst after righteousness.” This is the opposite of the self-righteousness of the Pharisees. It speaks of those who seek God’s righteousness rather than attempting to establish a righteousness of their own (Rom 10:3; Phil. 3:9).

What they seek will fill them, i.e., it will satisfy their hunger and thirst for a right relationship with God. They experience a deep desire for personal righteousness, which in itself is a proof of their spiritual rebirth.

Those who are poor and empty in their own spiritual poverty recognize the depth of their need, and they hunger and thirst for that which only God can give them. “They shall be filled” (Greek *chortazo*) refers to a complete satisfaction. The psalmist proclaimed: “He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness” (Psalm 107:9).

This verse really needs very little explanation. Those who are trying to be in right standing with God (righteousness), spend a lot of time in the study of God's Word. The more we seek, the more we consume of the Word, the more we are filled. The only way we can be blessed is to know that these blessings are available, and to know how to act upon them. God's Word reveals the blessings.

**Matthew 5:7 "Blessed [re] the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."**

Those who are “merciful ... shall obtain mercy” has reference to those who have been born again by the mercy of God. Because divine love has been extended to them, they have the work of the Holy Spirit in them producing a mercy that defies explanation by unregenerate men.

Jesus Himself became the ultimate example of this when He cried from the cross, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34).

We reap what we sow. The Lord tells us that He will forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us (Mark 11:25-26). My cry is not for a just God, but for a merciful God. Our just reward is death, but through the mercy of God, we are saved by His grace.

**Matthew 5:8 "Blessed [are] the pure in heart: for they shall see God."**

“See God”: Not only with the perception of faith, but in the glory of heaven (Heb. 12:14; Rev. 22:3-4).

I am so happy that this Scripture does not say pure in deeds. The Lord will judge our hearts on judgment day. I have said so many times, if we are truly saved, we no longer have the desire in our hearts to sin. Old things and desires have passed away, behold all things become new.

It is our heart that has been made new. The Bible says, For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. There is a spiritual seeing of God for the present when our hearts are pure, and there will be a physical seeing of God when we join Him in heaven.

Those who are not pure in heart will spend an eternity in hell and will not be with God as the Christians will be.

**Matthew 5:9 "Blessed [are] the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."**

The next description deals with the "peacemakers." They are at peace with God and desire to live in peace with all men (Rom. 5:1). Their peace with Christ enables them to be ambassadors of God's message to a troubled world. Hence, they shall be called "the children of God."

Throughout the Beatitudes Jesus clearly underscores that only those who have the qualities of a changed life, herein described, are citizens of His kingdom.

Jesus is the King of Peace. The only true peace comes from Him. There will never be peace on the earth, until the King of Peace comes and brings His peace to the earth. If we are His children, we pattern our lives by His; and we too, bring peace around us as He has given us His peace within. Truly, we are His children (followers), in His peace.

**Matthew 5:10 "Blessed [are] they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

As Jesus develops His message, He clearly teaches that such a life causes His people to be in direct contrast to the world in which they live. Therefore, He reminds us, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." The plural use of "ye" (in verse 11), indicates that He foresaw this persecution as touching all His followers.

Notice 2 Timothy 3:12, "Yea, and all that will love godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

To be persecuted for something we have done wrong is one thing, but to be persecuted because we are, to the best of our ability, serving God is something else. Paul said, to count it all joy when we are persecuted for Jesus. The disciples and Paul thought it a great honor to be persecuted for preaching about Jesus.

Most ministers today are not under persecution. Many are preaching what their congregation wants to hear. They are careful not to stir up the regular members by preaching against adultery, homosexuality, stealing, lying, coveting, and all the other sins of our day.

If you start preaching hard against pornography, rock music, drugs, alcohol, X-rated and PG-rated television and movies, and a total lapse of fellowship with God, you will see persecution. People do not want to be preached to about their sins. It is okay to preach about sins they are not committing. Just don't preach on "their" sins.

Many of the early Christians were martyred for the name of Jesus Christ. Are we that committed today, that we would proclaim Jesus even to the death?

With God's help, I will go on preaching what I hear in my spirit for the church. We must repent and renew our lives with the Lord Jesus Christ. Heaven is our home. We are just here temporarily.

The Scripture says when we see great troubles coming upon the earth to look up and rejoice (Luke 21:28), "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draws near.

**Matthew 5:11-12 "Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great [is] your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."**

"Rejoice" is the command that grows out of the blessedness of the believer. The phrase "Rejoice", and "be exceeding glad" means even more, exult! "Great is your reward in heaven" focuses attention on the eternal destiny of all things.

If God is as real as He claims, if the Bible is true, if heaven is to be gained, then no temporary earthly trouble or persecution can dispossess the child of God of joy in the prospect of the eternal glory that lies ahead.

They persecuted Jesus, because He didn't fit into their pattern. They will persecute the followers of Jesus for the same reason. If you are not under persecution, better take your spiritual pulse, something is probably wrong.

There is a great shaking in the true church today, only those who are truly sold out to Jesus will stand.

**Matthew 5:13 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."**

The Beatitudes are followed by a summary statement of the basic character of the Christian's life as salt and light. "Ye are the salt of the earth:" Again the phrase "ye are" indicates that only the genuinely born-again person is salt and can help meet the needs of the world.

Salt adds flavoring, acts as a preservative, melts coldness, and heals wounds. Thus it is a very appropriate description of the believer in his relationship to the world in which he lives.

Salt is a preservative. Christians are a preservative. This earth would already have been destroyed, if it were not for the few Christians here. If the Christians fall away, what will happen to the earth? That is just exactly what is happening today. Watered down Christianity is taking over. If the Christians do not rise up a standard, then all is lost.

Lukewarm Christians will not make the final cut. God will spew lukewarm Christians out like lukewarm water. We need to live by the standards raised in the Bible. Sold out to God Christians are the salt of the earth. We must preserve the Bible and its standards, until Jesus returns. We must not compromise with the world.

## Matthew Chapter 5 Questions

1. What sea is this mountain near?
2. What 2 cities was it located between?
3. Many followed Jesus, because of what?
4. In most instances, these people were familiar with what?
5. What is this area now called?
6. What is the greatest teaching of all time?
7. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be what?
8. What 2 ways can we look at this?
9. What shall the meek inherit?
10. What are 2 different meanings of meek?
11. What blessing is associated with meekness?
12. What will happen to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness?
13. For us to be forgiven, what must we do?
14. What does righteousness mean?
15. My cry is not for a just God, but for what kind?
16. What is our just reward?
17. In verse 8, who shall see God?
18. From what, does the mouth speaketh?
19. What shall the peacemakers be called?
20. Jesus was called the King of what?
21. Paul said count it \_\_\_\_\_ to be persecuted for Jesus?
22. Where is a Christian's home?

23. Why did the religious people persecute Jesus?
24. In verse 13, we are called what?
25. What is it?
26. If the Christians do not raise a standard, what will happen?
27. What kind of Christians will not make the final cut?
28. How long must the Christians be the preservative?