

Sermon On the Mount

12 Lessons

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PREFACE

The Gospel of Matthew is known for its grouping of the teachings of Jesus, such as: (1) The Beatitudes; (2) The Sermon on the Mount; (3) The Parables; and (4) Jesus' teachings during His last week on earth.

In this series of lessons we will be looking at “The Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5, 6, 7). We are not positive that Matthew grouped Jesus' teachings by taking them from various places that Jesus taught or whether he is actually recording a teaching situation where Jesus taught all of these things at one time. I am not sure that it really makes any difference in regards to how we would approach the study. This “Sermon” contains things New and Old. He did emphasize to people at different times the importance of keeping God's Law, as He does in these three chapters. But He also had to straighten out their wrong understandings of the Law. Then, He also would point out what had formerly been taught, but now He is giving some new teachings that will be followed by His new people (the church or kingdom of God). Making these distinctions are important to a proper understanding of the Word of God.

One thing to keep in mind—Jesus was born and lived under the Law of Moses. He kept it perfectly. He also encouraged people to keep it as best as they could. He stated clearly that He did not come to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them. Then, and only then, would His New Law (and Covenant) go into force (Hebrews 9:16). But all men (both Jew and Gentile) have been under Law to God (that is what makes them sinners in need of redemption). If men cannot be forgiven of these sins, they will suffer the eternal consequences of their sins (Romans 6:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:9). Jesus came not only to make a New Covenant with all mankind, but to offer redemption for fallen man.

We know that you will be profited by a study of these teachings by Jesus as you apply them to your life.

Paul E. Cantrell
2006

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Lesson One

“True Happiness Comes from Within”

(Matthew 5:1-16)

INTRODUCTION

1. The teachings in Matt. 5:1-12 are referred to as the Beatitudes!
 - a) Short for, “Beautiful attitudes.”
 - b) They deal with the state of one’s heart.
 - c) Man puts much emphasis on the outward, Jesus on the inward.
 - d) Man thinks happiness can come from that which is outward.
 - e) Jesus makes it clear; it comes from that which is inward.
 - f) And those who will develop these dispositions of the heart are blessed!
 - Not will be, but are.
 - They enjoy a state of blessedness.
2. But they in turn will also be a blessing to others (5:13-16).
3. Concerning the term, “Blessed”:
 - a) Various translations use:
 - 1—Happy, Fortunate, Spiritually Prosperous, To be Envied.
 - 2—A state of blessedness.
 - 3—A state of well-being.
 - b) It is deeper than happy....It is inward & abiding condition of heart & life.
 - c) Outward prosperity cannot give it.
 - d) Adversity cannot take it away.
4. The way to true happiness has been man’s search from the beginning.
5. Jesus gives in a few, concise words, the elements of a blessed or happy life.

DISCUSSION

I. THE BEAUTIFUL ATTITUDES POSSESSED BY GOD’S PEOPLE.

A. Blessed are the poor in spirit.

- 1) Poor implies that one is destitute of spirit.
 - a) Man must recognize his insufficiency—as opposed to self-sufficiency.
 - b) A feeling of smallness & sinfulness in God’s holy presence.
 - c) James 4:8-10
- 2) Man can make no spiritual progress without poverty of spirit.
- 3) It denotes an absence of pride and a presence of humility.

B. Blessed are those who mourn.

- 1) Mankind mourns over many things.
- 2) But here, it refers to moral mourning over sinfulness before God.
- 3) It comes from:
 - a) Fear of punishment
 - b) A godly Sorrow for our rebellion to a loving God (2 Cor. 7:9-11).
 - c) A penitent sorrow that brings about a change in our lives.
- 4) A sorrow that gains the approval of God, and His forgiveness also.

C. Blessed are the meek.

- 1) This is power blended with gentleness, boldness with humility.
- 2) “Wise as serpent, harmless as a dove.” (Mt. 10:16)
- 3) A soul in majestic self-possession (control).
- 4) Prov. 16:32—**“He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.”**
- 5) A character that is strong & energetic, but disciplined by gentleness & patience.
- 6) Takes insults calmly, not given to retaliation.
- 7) Gentle in dealing with others.
- 8) Examples: Jesus & Moses.

D. Blessed are those who hunger & thirst after righteousness.

- 1) Hunger causes us to seek to be satisfied with food.
- 2) Spiritual hunger is satisfied by spiritual food for the soul.
 - a) He is a seeker after the greatest thing!
 - b) Parable of Pearl of great price—not satisfied—sought the greatest.
- 3) Righteousness—a right relationship with God—is the greatest!
 - a) It is to have holy aspirations.
 - b) He wants to be right with God and his fellowman.
 - c) He is open to learning.
- 4) Matt. 6:33

E. Blessed are the merciful.

- 1) A compassion for the sick, suffering, and the lost.
- 2) The opposite of hardness, unloving, uncaring, ungrateful.
- 3) Mercy is shown in the benevolent spirit.
- 4) It is active kindness to the destitute or those in trouble.
- 5) Matt. 25:34-40

F. Blessed are the pure in heart.

- 1) Jas 4:8 talks about the need of clean hands and a clean heart.
- 2) Jesus talks about what defiles the heart, and what comes out of it: evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, and blasphemy.
- 3) The heart must be kept with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.
- 4) A pure heart is:
 - a) One cleansed of the sensual, false, and impure.
 - b) One characterized by Sincerity, Guilelessness, Honesty, True.
- 5) Moral holiness begins in the heart.
- 6) Matt. 23:27-28

G. Blessed are the peacemakers.

- 1) Those who help bring about reconciliation of the estranged.
- 2) Jesus was the great peacemaker between estranged man and God.
- 3) The peacemaker is then acting like the Prince of Peace.
- 4) Those who are at peace themselves, are the best peacemakers.
- 5) His Characteristics:
 - a) Self-controlled.
 - b) Sympathetic with the conflicting parties.
 - c) Shows understanding and wisdom.
 - d) Loves his fellow-man.

H. Blessed are those who endure persecution for Righteousness.

- 1) Two important concepts emphasized:
 - a) Not all who suffer & are persecuted are blessed!
 - b) But the blessed are those who suffer such:
 - Undeserved. (Not for his own wrong deeds)
 - And for righteousness sake. (Serves God correctly).
- 2) 1 Peter 2:19-20

II. WHY ARE THESE ATTITUDES SUCH A BLESSING?

A. They are possessors of the kingdom of Heaven.

- 1) They are in that domain of the rule of King Jesus.
- 2) And with all that goes with this great concept.

B. They have the assurance of Comfort from their mourning.

- 1) The true mourner is one that gets himself right with God.
- 2) He enjoys that forgiveness that is so desperately needed by all.
- 3) But penitent sorrow must precede human blessedness.

C. They will inherit the earth!

- 1) The earth and all its bounties belong to God.
- 2) But we are His children.....so it is ours as well.
- 3) It is at our disposal as God sees fit!
- 4) Matt. 6:33

D. Seekers will find that righteousness that comes from God.

- 1) That comes through our submission to His Son.
- 2) He will find that healing of the soul that the great Physician can give.

E. The merciful will obtain mercy.

- 1) To whom we show mercy....we shall receive mercy.
- 2) God states it clearly....God forgives us, if we forgive others.

F. Only the pure in heart shall see God.

- 1) God cannot be seen with the physical eye.
- 2) He can only be seen by those whose spiritual eyes are open.
- 3) Jesus told his apostles, ***“Have I been so long with you and you do not know me. If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.”***
- 4) ***“Without holiness, no man will see God.”***

G. Peacemakers are called the children of God!

- 1) Because they act so much like God.
- 2) Like Father, like Son; like Mother, like daughter!
- 3) Those born of God, act like God!

H. The persecuted are told to rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven!

- 1) If you follow the example of Jesus in the face of persecution, your reward is going to be great after this life is over.
- 2) The Reward will make all the suffering worthwhile.

III. THE POWERFUL INFLUENCE OF SUCH A CHRISTIAN!

A. The True Child of God preserves the good in our world!

- 1) They literally preserve the world from destruction!
- 2) This is done by the person described in 5:1-12.
- 3) ***“that they may see your good works”***
 - a) That habitual lifestyle directed by the will of God. (Mt. 7:21)
 - b) The development of the beautiful attitudes.
 - c) A life that wins the natural admiration of men.
- 4) I Pet. 2:12---***“Having your behavior (manner of life) honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”***
- 5) He preserves the good because he is a doer of good....**THAT IMPACTS OTHERS.**

B. But, the hypocritical Christian life has no preserving power!

- 1) ***“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.”***
- 2) This is yielding to evil influences, rather than counteracting them.
- 3) There is nothing more unsightly than:
 - a) A professed Christian who does nothing to counteract corrupting influences upon society;
 - b) And, really, at the same time adds to its corrupting influence.
- 4) Such is fit only to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.
- 5) The Jewish Nation illustrates this fact!
 - a) They had the Law, the Covenants, and the Promises.
 - b) They had every advantage over the Gentiles to impact the world for good.
 - c) Instead, they became a nation of religious hypocrites.
 - d) They then were only fit to be destroyed by the Roman army.
- 6) Forms, words, outward show cannot get the job done.
- 7) It must be done by a committed life to God.

C. Why the challenge is so great!

- 1) Humanity’s tendencies are towards degeneration.
- 2) While the human soul:
 - a) Has instinctive powers to rise above the evil around him;
 - b) And has been designed by God to ever move upward;
- 3) Unfortunately,
 - a) There are strong influences bearing upon humanity to go downward, to degenerate.
 - b) We can see it all about us in our society.
 - c) The world lies in the “Power of Darkness”.
- 4) If just 10 righteous people could have been found in Sodom:
 - a) They could have been preserved.
 - b) But not even 10 could be found!

D. The counteractive force to all of this is the “Life of Christ” in man!

- 1) Jesus is the light of the world.
- 2) If we have been transformed by him, we reflect this light to the world.
- 3) Such a life can cause the corrupt heart to see its corruptness.

- 4) Light makes known man's sinfulness.
- 5) Real holiness will make itself felt.
- 6) His conversation, conduct, spirit...his whole life reveals the good before the eyes of the corrupt.
- 7) The Christian is designed to illuminate the world by being set on a hill, rather than to be hid under a bushel.
 - a) In order to impact the world, good must be seen!
 - b) *"A good tree brings forth good fruit."*

E. To have this impact, his motives must be right!

- 1) He is not just putting on a show of righteousness to be praised of men.
- 2) Neither does he withdraw into a dark corner to hide.
- 3) His motive is pure!
 - a) Not for his own glory;
 - b) But, for the glory of God!

CONCLUSION

1. We must face up to an important fact of life:
 - a) Error, evil, wrong is not only in the world,
 - b) But, it is embodied in the lives of mankind.
 - c) Infidelity, paganism, irreligiousness, wrong religions are all embodied in the lives of mankind.
 - d) They are realities in every facet of life.
2. If truth is to prevail over these corrupting influences:
 - a) Truth, also, must be embodied, lived before others.
 - b) We must fill our lives with the good, so we can impact our world.
 - c) The Christian life must not only be a blessing to us, but to the world about us as well.
3. Is your life blessed and happy?

Lesson Two

“Jesus’ Relationship to the Law and Prophets”

(Matthew 5:17-20)

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus has now set Himself up to be a teacher in opposition to the Scribes & Pharisees.
2. In doing so.....He put himself in a position to be accused of desiring to do away with the teachings of the Law & Prophets.
3. So, He begins verse 17 with the thought: **“Think not”**
 - a) In order to correct any wrong conclusion, either:
 - 1—On what He had said already;
 - 2—Or, what He will say in the future.
 - b) In regards to his relationship to the Law & the Prophets.
4. In these & following verses:
 - a) He makes clear how He looked upon them;
 - b) And how His disciples who follow Him should look upon them.

DISCUSSION

I. JESUS DID NOT COME TO DESTROY THE LAW & THE PROPHETS.

A. 1st, Let’s see the Role of Law among men:

- 1) The Gentile world was under Law to God.
 - a) There is no indication that God gave them a Law like He did to Israel.
 - b) Romans 2:14-15
 - c) Romans 5:12-13
 - d) They were not ignorant of their responsibility to obey God’s Law.
- 2) The Jewish Nation had a written law given through Moses.
 - a) Romans 7:12
 - b) It gave detail instructions on how to live, act, and speak correctly before God & man.
- 3) Law is a necessity for man!
 - a) In society in general:
 - It was needed to govern (has to be by law).
 - It was needed to regulate man’s actions towards one another.
 - b) In man’s relationship to God:
 - It was needed to govern (has to be by law).
 - It was needed to regulate man’s actions towards God & man!
- 4) Kinds of Laws God has given:
 - a) Moral, Ceremonial, and Judicial.
 - b) Moral Law has remained basically the same from beginning.
 - c) Ceremonial has changed, depending upon how God is dealing with man at that time.
 - d) Judicial would also change for same reason.
 - e) These laws adjust to the time they are given!

B. 2nd, The Role of the Prophets.

- 1) Law...1st 5 books.
- 2) Prophets.....the remainder of Old Testament given through them.
- 3) The Prophets:
 - a) Taught the Law of God correctly.
 - b) They showed how men had broken it.
 - c) They called men back to obedience to it.
 - d) And, it needed to be from the heart.
- 4) Jesus said the Law & the Prophets could be summed up in two commands: Love of God; Love of Neighbor.
- 5) The Prophets also foretold of the coming Messiah & Kingdom.

C. 3rd, Jesus' Role among men was not to be a destructive one, but a constructive one.

- 1) **"I came not to destroy"**
- 2) He did not come to:
 - a) Belittle the Law of God, nor the work of the Prophets.
 - b) Not to take away from their importance in the eyes of men.
 - c) Not to invalidate or ignore.
- 3) He showed proper respect for them & wanted others too also.
- 4) He did not deny their divine authority, nor set men free from an obligation to obey God's law.

II. HIS PURPOSE WAS TO FULFIL THEM. (5:17b-18)**A. How did Jesus fulfill the Law?**

- 1) A person could be righteous before God in the strict sense by perfect law keeping.
 - a) The penalty for breaking God's law was & is death!
 - b) Rom. 6:23; 3:19-20; James 2:10
 - c) It is obvious that man could not do it! (Rom. 3:23)
- 2) Jesus came as man's Redeemer.
 - a) In order to do so, he could not be guilty of breaking God's law in even one place!
 - b) If He did, He would only die for Himself.
 - c) But because He was without sin (Heb. 4:15), He could be a sacrifice in our stead for our sins.
- 3) So, in this sense, Jesus fulfilled the Law.....LIVED IT PERFECTLY.
 - a) He fulfilled the demands of the Law, so God's law could be upheld.
 - b) Also, so all men would know they needed to respect God's law.

B. How did Jesus fulfill the prophets?

- 1) In the sense of keeping the teachings of the Prophets.
- 2) But also, in the sense of fulfilling every prophesy spoken of Him.

C. Jesus' reassurance about the Law and the Prophets.

- 1) Not a jot or tittle will pass from the Law till all is fulfilled.
- 2) When Jesus fulfilled it.....the Law of Moses was then taken away and replaced by the Law of Christ.
- 3) Whatever was appropriate to be brought over into the New Covenant is recorded for us today.

III. THE NECESSITY TO RESPECT THE LAW OF GOD. (5:19-20)

A. Because Law comes from God!

- 1) Man needs Law for his own good.
- 2) II Timothy 3:16-17

B. Warnings to those who do not respect it:

- 1) Two classes dealt with:
 - a) Those in the kingdom;
 - b) Those out of the kingdom.
- 2) Concerning those in the kingdom:
 - a) How God's Law is treated!
 - Some treat it lightly.
 - They break God's law and teach others to do the same.
 - They ignore, disregard, refuse to submit to it.
 - b) Such is unacceptable.
 - c) Such will be called "Least" in the kingdom!
 - d) But those who keep it & teach others to keep it are called "Great" in the kingdom!
- 3) Concerning those who are excluded from the kingdom:
 - a) Names an example... "Scribes & Pharisees".
 - Their righteousness was only outward... hollow!
 - They would not become Jesus' disciples.
 - Their hearts were not in their religious activities.
 - Matt. 15:7-9
 - b) Those who know God's Law, but will not keep it from the heart.
- 4) Your righteousness must exceed that of these people!
 - a) If you want to enter the kingdom, you will have to submit to God's righteousness.
 - b) Romans 10:1-3

CONCLUSION

1. The Law of God is to be respected by men.
2. Jesus stated His intentions and fulfilled those intentions!
3. Law-keeping as a means of Justification is impossible, because we sin.
4. But, no man can enter the kingdom who does not show respect to God's Law.
5. And that respect is shown by submission to its demands!
6. Mart 16:15-16

Lesson Three

“You Shall Not Murder!”

(Matthew 5:21-26)

INTRODUCTION

1. Our last lesson dealt with Christ’s statement about the Law of Moses:
 - a) Do not think that I have come to destroy it.
 - b) In reality, I have come to fulfill it.
 - He lived it perfectly.
 - Fulfilled all the prophecies about Himself.
2. But there is another aspect of Jesus’ work in relation to the Law!
 - a) He came to show that outward righteousness is not acceptable to God.
 - b) And if one would enter the New Kingdom of God, his righteousness must be more than an outward righteousness like the scribes & Pharisees.
 - c) Our righteousness must be from the heart, the inner man!
3. Jesus now begins to show the spiritual side of the Law.
4. He deals with 5 separate items to illustrate his point. (Matt. 5:21-48)
 - a) Anger (Murder)
 - b) Adultery
 - c) Divorce
 - d) Oaths
 - e) Enemies
5. Each of these sections begins with the expression:
 - a) “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old”
 - b) or, “Ye have heard that it hath been said”
6. This lesson will deal with the first of these five.
 - a) 5:21-26---Anger (Murder)
 - b) Takes the 6th commandment & expands upon it.

DISCUSSION**I. THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT. (5:21)****A. “You shall not kill”**

- 1) Kill, Murder, the malicious intent to take an innocent life.
- 2) This concept began back with Cain.
 - a) He killed his brother, Abel.
 - b) God’s punishment was hard upon Cain.
- 3) Concept repeated again in time of Noah. (Gen. 9:5-6)
- 4) It was repeated again to the Israelites in giving the Law of Moses.
- 5) It is still in force for us today!

B. “Whoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.”

- 1) Sin will bring its retribution.
- 2) Lev. 24:21---“**he that kills a man shall be put to death**”
- 3) This required the Jews to devise a court system:
 - a) To try a person;
 - b) Then, to carry out the sentence of death.

- 4) A murderer was in danger of receiving the judgment for his crime.

II. THE SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS OF THE 6TH COMMANDMENT. (5:22-26)

A. *The root problem of murder is anger!*

- 1) 5:22
- 2) The problem is in the heart of the man.
- 3) The correction must begin in the heart.
- 4) I John 3:15---***“Whoso hates his brother is a murderer: and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”***
- 5) All outward deeds of sin come from a corrupt heart.
- 6) We need to do more than bring into check the outward actions.
- 7) We need to deal with the heart.
 - a) It is here that we can strike at the root of evil.
 - b) It is here that we can crush sin in its beginning stages.
 - c) This is true righteousness!

B. *Jesus illustrates His point with the stages of anger, before murder.*

- 1) 5:22
- 2) ***“Whosoever shall say to his brother, “Raca”***
 - a) The problem is not the evil thoughts that come, but the evil thoughts cherished in the heart.
 - b) Not dealing with it in the heart! (Eph. 4:26-27)
 - c) Thus, the danger of expressing that anger in words of contempt for a brother.
 - Usually, with regard to his empty-headedness.
 - Expressing contempt for his stupidity.
- 3) ***“Whosoever shall say, “Thou Fool,”***
 - a) It can go even further....express contempt for the man himself.
 - b) Express the thought of his wickedness, or worthlessness.
- 4) These reflect that murder in the heart towards someone.
- 5) He shows the danger of these by the punishment that is threatened.
 - a) Angry without a cause.....in danger of judgment of court.
 - b) Say, Raca,.....in danger of the council. (Sanhedrin)
 - c) Say, Thou Fool.....in danger of the fire of Gehenna.
- 6) Jesus seems to be using the progressiveness of the harsher punishment given by the Jewish courts to stress the dangers of anger.

C. *What can be done with anger? (5:23-26)*

- 1) ***“Be reconciled to thy brother”***
 - a) Matt. 5:23-24
 - b) Put an end to the enmity (settle the difficulty).
 - c) Do it before coming before God to offer your worship.
 - If you come with your sacrifice to be offered;
 - Leave it at the altar, and go find your brother first!
 - d) If we are not right with our brother, we are not right with God!
 - A loving God will not accept worship.....
 - From a heart that harbors wrath & anger.
 - Anger robs the gift of its value.

- Even the costliest gift becomes a mockery!
 - e) Do it before anger develops further in your heart.
 - f) It is obvious:
 - That a man can conform to the external command not to murder;
 - But have a heart full of anger, hate, and contempt.
 - g) Don't wait for offended brother to come to you, you go to him.....seek reconciliation.
 - h) God does not extend mercy to the unmerciful!
- 2) ***“Agree with your adversary quickly”***
- a) Matt. 5:25-26
 - b) Don't wait until it comes before the judge!
 - The offended man may extend mercy to you before.
 - But, if it comes before the judge....justice!
 - c) Agree, work out an agreement, find common ground.
 - d) Don't wait, settle it right away.
 - e) Life is short, death is sure!
 - f) Do it quickly:
 - While there is an possibility of mercy;
 - While there is a willingness to listen & forgive.
 - g) Delay can bring greater consequences.
 - h) If it comes before the Judge,
 - And you are found guilty;
 - You will be turned over to those who carry out the punishment.
 - And you will stay there till you pay all.

CONCLUSION

1. A most significant statement:
 - a) A man can conform to the outward demands of Law;
 - b) And at the same time have a heart full of anger, hatred, and contempt.
2. Jesus is helping us to see True Righteousness involves the heart as well.
3. Christian, what kind of condition is our heart in?
4. Sinner friend, have you obeyed the gospel from your heart?

Lesson Four

“You Shall Not Commit Adultery!”

(Matthew 5:27-32)

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus is helping to show up the outward righteousness of the religious leaders, and their need of that inward righteousness!
 - a) ***“Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”***
 - b) They appeared righteous outwardly, but inside they were as black as sin!
2. Jesus illustrated his point with the 6th commandment.
 - a) Murder is wrong & sinful.
 - b) But murder in the heart is also wrong & sinful.
3. He now adds another illustration (really two in one).
 - a) He used Adultery & Divorce and expands upon each concept.
 - b) He shows that the true spirit of the Law involved the heart as well as the outward conformity.

DISCUSSION**I. WHAT HAS BEEN SAID BY THEM OF OLD TIME? (5:27)****A. *“You shall not commit adultery.”*** (Exodus 20:14)

- 1) This statement deals with an external act....forbids it!
- 2) To be guilty of this external act brings the judgment of God (understood).
- 3) How the Jews looked upon this command:
 - a) Quote from Josephus, Jewish historian about the time of Christ.
 - b) *“The purposing to do a thing, without actually doing it, is not worthy of punishment.”*

B. *Adultery defined:*

- 1) *“One who has unlawful intercourse with the spouse of another.”* (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words)
- 2) *“Sexual intercourse of a man, whether married or unmarried, with a married woman.”* (ISBE)
- 3) This concept is spelled out in:
 - a) Lev. 18:20---***“Moreover you shall not lie carnally with your neighbor’s wife, to defile yourself with her.”***
 - b) Lev. 20:10---***“And the man that commits adultery with another man’s wife, even he that commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.”***
- 4) This definition seems to be consistent with the use in the Old Testament.
 - a) Not only from a literal use of word,
 - b) But a figurative or spiritual use of word. (Ezek. 16:15; 23:43; Jas. 4:4)
 - c) Note in Deut. 24:1-2
 - We are not sure what the uncleanness is.....
 - It states she can be another man’s wife after being given a writing of divorcement.

- It does not call either of them, man or woman, adulterers.
 - Both were free to be married to another, and did not commit adultery.
 - Jesus said this was granted because of the hardness of their hearts, but was not God's original intent.(Matt. 19:8)
- d) Note in Ezra 10:10-12
- Called strange wives (foreign wives---not of Israel)
 - Called upon to separate from them.
 - But nothing further defined out.
 - Not called Adultery!
- 5) Jesus' use of term:
- a) Matt. 5:28
- This use of term is consistent with the above definition
 - Defines the concept of adultery as sexual immorality in the Heart with "a" woman! (Not necessarily with someone else's wife.)
 - But, in the context....may be understood with another man's wife.
- b) Matt. 5:32
- Jesus goes a step further it seems here.
 - To have sexual relations with another man's wife, even when legally married is called adultery.
- c) One sexual act with another man's wife is called adultery.
- d) Continuous sexual acts with another man's wife is also called adultery.
- Even under the guise of divorce & remarriage.
 - Not so under Law of Moses....Changed by Christ!

II. JESUS' EXPANSION OF THE 7TH COMMANDMENT. (5:28)

A. *"But I say unto you"*

- 1) Christ now shows that this command involves more than just an outward act.
 - a) The command only statedly deals with the outward act.
 - b) But the command actually involves more....the heart.
- 2) Even reason would show this.
 - a) An act apart from the will is mechanical.
 - b) It then, can be neither moral, nor immoral....no Will involved.
 - c) But it is obvious, man's will is involved....THE HEART.
 - d) For behind every act there is thought, dwelt upon, and motive to act.
 - Mark 7:20-23
- 3) The O.T. showed this.
 - a) Ps. 51:10—***"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."***
 - b) Even the 10th command deals with the heart! (Covet)

B. *"Whoever looks on a woman to lust after her..."*

- 1) "Look in order to lust after"
- 2) "Unlawful desire, consented to, and kept before the mind."
- 3) "Men lust in the look where further satisfaction cannot be attained."
- 4) Pornography illustrates so well.

- a) I remember conversation with a man who pointed this out.
- b) It becomes addictive....partial satisfying of lust.
- 5) Jesus strikes at the beginning of sin...the thought dwelt in and indulged in for satisfaction of passion.

C. *"Hath committed adultery already in his heart."*

- 1) He obviously is not married to her, but wants her sexually.
- 2) It is sexual immorality, not the actual act, but acted out in the mind. (Called Adultery)

III. JESUS TELLS US HOW TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM, BOTH MENTALLY & ACTUAL. (5:29-30)

A. *The Jews used parts of the body to represent feelings or passions.*

- 1) Bowels---compassion.
- 2) Heart---affections, feelings.
- 3) Reins---understanding, secret purposes.
- 4) Evil Eye---envy or evil passions, lust.

B. *The eye & hand are used possibly because:*

- 1) They are the most used by us;
- 2) They represent the most receptive & active parts of man's body.
- 3) II Pet. 2:14---"*Having eyes full of adultery, that cannot cease from sin.*"
- 4) James 4:8---"*Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*"
- 5) Job 31:1---"*I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"*

C. *The right eye & right hand:*

- 1) The preciousness of these two members.
- 2) And, it would seem, what applies to these also applies to the other senses, etc.
- 3) Are unclean discourses, dirty stories, also adultery?

D. *If these offend:*

- 1) That which causes to stumble, fall from God's grace, fall into sin.

E. *Pluck it out, cut it off!*

- 1) Adultery in the heart is obviously not destroyed by plucking out the right eye. (Besides, you have the left one also).
- 2) The eye or hand is neutral....they act upon our Will!
- 3) The real problem is in the heart.
- 4) The unclean heart must be purified....PLUCK OUT, CUT OFF.
- 5) Drastic measures must be taken to clean the heart up.
- 6) No matter how pleasurable & desirable....must be cut off.
- 7) Will power, self-denial, self-discipline must be practiced.
- 8) I Cor. 9:27---"*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*"

F. *The motivation to do so:*

- 1) It is better to deny these temporary sinful things now.....
- 2) Rather than suffer eternally in punishment for them.

IV. LOOK AT SPECIAL PROBLEM ABOUT ADULTERY. (5:32)**A. Things to note:**

- 1) Up to this point, Adultery has only been defined as immoral sexual relations with a married person.
- 2) Jesus goes a step further:
 - a) If you put away your wife, you cause her to commit adultery.
 - b) Marriage is not mentioned....commit adultery though.
 - c) But, even if you married one that is divorced, you still commit adultery.
 - Marrying her does not keep it from being adultery.
 - But under the Law of Moses, it did keep him from being an adulterer.
 - Jesus evidently changes things here.
 - Marrying a divorced woman does not keep either party from being an adulterer.

B. Problems that we are often called upon to deal with.

- 1) A person is in an adulterous situation.
- 2) But, now they want to become a Christian....WHAT MUST THEY DO?
 - a) Will God forgive them of this adulterous situation?
 - b) Yes, provided they meet the conditions He lays down.
 - c) What are they? Faith, Repentance, Baptism.
 - d) The key word here is Repentance!
 - e) What does Repentance required of these two people?
 - f) Does it require that they quit the adulterous situation?
 - g) Or, can they remain in that situation because God has forgiven them?
- 3) But a step further:
 - a) What if a couple feels that they should quit the adulterous situation?
 - b) They must stop doing what is sinful.
 - c) All agree that sexual immorality is involved in Adultery.
 - d) If this is stopped, is this sufficient to meet the requirements of repentance?
 - e) Or, is there more required of them?
 - f) If more is required, can we show where God's Word states such?
 - g) If not, then are we trying to bind our opinion on others as Law?
 - h) If so, then we are in the same boat as the Pharisees & Scribes that Jesus condemned so severely.

CONCLUSION

1. Isn't it interesting that Jesus did not spell out what all should be done in such situations as this?
 - a) If He didn't....should we?
 - b) Shouldn't we allow each individual in such cases to make their own decisions.
 - c) They are the ones to answer to God for their condition, not us.
2. What we need to be more concerned about in our own life....is what Jesus was trying to show here.
 - a) Outward Christianity is not worth much, without a converted heart.
 - b) If we don't get our hearts clean, outward conformity is worthless!
 - c) Sin begins in the heart....it must be dealt with there.

3. How well are we doing?
 - a) He that is without sin, let him cast the first stone.....may be applicable here.
 - b) Let's be open to all of what God teaches, not just the part we want to believe.
4. The Lord used extreme measures to illustrate His point.
 - a) Forego some wrong pleasures here.....for the greater end...ETERNAL LIFE.
 - b) If we insist on indulging in wrong pleasures here, the consequences are horrible to contemplate!
 - c) Let's not allow anything to block our way to Eternal Life!

Lesson Five

“Do Not Swear at All”

(Matthew 5:33-37)

INTRODUCTION

1. The topic Jesus is here discussing can relate to the 3rd & 9th command.
 - a) Exo. 20:7—***“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain.”***
 - b) Exo. 20:16—***“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”***
 - c) Swearing involved the name of God among the Jews.
 - d) A false witness is one who purports to tell the truth under oath, but is lying.
2. The Old Testament has a lot to say about swearing, both before the Law of Moses was given and in the Law of Moses.
3. Jesus is here correcting the misapplication of the Jews in regards to Oaths, but calling for a higher moral responsibility among His followers.

DISCUSSION**I. WHAT WAS TAUGHT BY THEM OF OLD TIME? (5:33)*****A. You shall not forswear yourself.***

- 1) Lev. 19:12---***“And you shall not swear by My name falsely, neither shall you profane the name of your God: I am the Lord.”***
- 2) They were not to break an oath, lie in their oath, perjure themselves.
- 3) Zech. 8:17—***“And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says the Lord.”***

B. “But shall perform unto the Lord your oaths”

- 1) Num. 30:2—***“If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”***
- 2) Just as God, Himself, keeps his oaths.
 - a) He had promised Abraham several things.
 - b) He repeats them to Issac. (Gen. 26:1-5)
 - c) God made many oaths with man & kept them all.
 - d) Acts 2:30—***“Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne...”***

C. What is an Oath, what is it to swear?

- 1) “That which restrains a person”.
- 2) “Compact between two parties to guarantee the discharge of their promises.”
- 3) “In disputes, an oath is final for confirmation.”
- 4) The idea is that giving an Oath is to swear by someone greater.
 - a) Heb. 6:16—***“For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife.”***
 - b) An oath is a solemn affirmation or declaration, not to be made lightly.
 - c) It is made with an appeal to God for the truth of what was affirmed.

- d) Understood...invoking his vengeance and renouncing his favor if what is affirmed is false.
- e) This is the reason why it is such a serious matter.

D. What had the religious leaders done with this command?

- 1) They divided oaths into two categories: Lighter & Weightier.
 - a) They admitted that the Weightier should be carried out.
 - b) These were the ones with the name of God attached.
 - c) But, the lighter did not have the name of God attached.
 - d) Therefore, they could be broken with impunity.
 - e) Such became prevalent in their everyday conversation.
- 2) They were wrong in such actions!
 - a) Their word became worthless.
 - b) It caused a deeper distrust among themselves.
- 3) They should not make Oaths lightly, but seriously.
- 4) When made, they should have been honored, fulfilled, as a debt to the Lord.

II. JESUS' EXPANDS ON THIS CONCEPT. (5:34-37)

A. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all!*

- 1) Do not make an oath or swear an oath, using the name of God.
- 2) Not at all!
- 3) Yet, God Himself has sworn many times an oath in connection with his promises.
- 4) Is Jesus forbidding all kinds of swearing, or certain kinds?

B. *One thing for sure.....He is condemning forswearing.*

- 1) The Law itself taught this...common knowledge.
- 2) But the Jewish people had ignored this prohibition and came under the wrath of God.
- 3) Mal. 3:5—“*And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, says the Lord of hosts.*”
- 4) Swearing in everyday conversations, with no feeling of need to carry them out or to tell the truth...CONDEMNED!
- 5) He illustrates this concept clearly in the continuing verses.
 - a) Don't swear by:
 - Heaven, for it is the throne of God.
 - Earth, for it is His footstool.
 - Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.
 - Your head, for you have no power to make your hair white or black.
 - b) All of these are connected with God & involve Him.
 - c) Such must be taken seriously, therefore.

B. *Is Jesus condemning solemn oaths taken seriously?*

- 1) He seems to have taken such in Matt. 26:63-64
 - a) He was adjured by the living God to tell the truth.
 - b) Jesus' answer...you have said correctly.

- 2) Paul seems to have used it by inspiration several times in his letters.
 - a) Rom. 1:9—“*For God is my witness...*”
 - b) Rom. 9:1—“*I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost.*”
 - c) 2 Cor. 1:23—“*Moreover I call God for a record upon my soul...*”
 - d) 2 Cor. 11:31—“*The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knows that I lie not.*”
 - e) Gal. 1:20—“*Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not.*”
 - f) Phil. 1:8—“*For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*”
- 3) Whatever we understand that Jesus was forbidding, has to take the above things into consideration.

C. Let your communication be, Yea, Yea; Nay, Nay...

- 1) Let your conversation among yourselves be free of these irreverent oaths or swearing.
- 2) Merely affirm such to be true or false.
- 3) Yes for Yes.
- 4) No for No.
- 5) This is all that is necessary to affirm something.
 - a) Our word should be our bond.
 - b) Simplicity in language is nearer to the truth.
 - c) A true man loves truth for its own sake.

D. Whatever is more comes of evil.

- 1) Proceeds from some evil disposition or purpose.
- 2) Profane swearing comes from a sinful heart.
- 3) To trifle with the name of God or His creation shows irreverence.
- 4) If a person swears lightly, you cannot trust him anyway.
- 5) Profane swearers are seldom believed.
- 6) They incur the wrath of God.
- 7) The fact that God does not strike such people down is a sign of his great longsuffering & patience with His creatures.
- 8) The one believed is the one whose character is beyond suspicion, who obeys the Law of God.
- 9) There is no point, nor purpose, generally for an oath or swearing.
- 10) **NOTE:** The time may come when we will be asked to swear an Oath of our truthfulness.
 - a) Then, we have to make a decision...should I or not?
 - b) It would seem from what Paul did by inspiration that such may be acceptable for us also.
 - c) Every time you sign your tax return, such could be considered a form of swearing that what you have presented is the truth.

CONCLUSION

1. Paul's statement in Eph. 4:25 is straight to the point: ***"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another."***
2. James follows up on what Jesus said in Ch. 5:12: ***"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."***
3. ***"Swear not at all"*** is certainly the wisest course of action.
 - a) That way, we will be in no danger of falling into a state of condemnation.
 - b) It is the greater moral way to live.
4. God has spoken truth to us, when he says:
 - a) We are all sinners, and under condemnation of death;
 - b) That Jesus died that we might be saved from the penalty of our sins;
 - c) That faith, repentance, and baptism are necessary to our forgiveness;
 - d) And the need to remain faithful to him until death.
5. Will you accept this truth, by being obedient to the gospel!
 - a) Did God lie?
 - b) If not, then, we must obey to be saved!

Lesson Six

“Justice, Revenge, and Love”

(Matthew 5:38-48)

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus is illustrating the spiritual application underlying the Law of God.
 - a) Murder & anger in the heart;
 - b) Adultery & lust in the heart;
 - c) Forswearing & avoiding swearing at all.
2. Now, He gives 2 more illustrations:
 - a) Justice & Revenge (How to receive injuries);
 - b) Hate versus Love for enemies (How to treat those who harm us).
3. Jesus continues to deal with the higher concept of righteousness over that of the Scribes & Pharisees.

DISCUSSION**I. 1ST, HOW DO CHRISTIANS DEAL WITH EVIL TREATMENT. (5:38-42)*****A. What the Jews had been taught.***

- 1) What you have heard from your teachers!
- 2) “*An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.*” (Just retribution).
- 3) Exo. 21:23-25
- 4) The injured person should obtain exact compensation from those who did him wrong.
 - a) Did the Law teach that the injured person could take his revenge on those who did him harm?
 - b) It is believed that the Teachers of the Law had turned individuals loose to take their own revenge.
 - c) This often ended in being over-done, rather than justice done.
- 5) The Law of Moses was both civil as well as religious in nature.
 - a) They had court systems to mete out justice.
 - To defend the innocent.
 - Punish the guilty.
 - b) Warning—give justice to poor...don’t favor the strong over the weak.
 - c) Guard against giving too stern a judgment, or too light a judgment.
 - d) To be fair & just in your decisions
- 6) Emphasis upon Justice, not revenge of the individual.

B. But what did Jesus have to say about the matter?

- 1) “*That you resist not evil*”
 - a) In the sense of taking vengeance! (at least)
 - Revenge is an all-consuming fire in the soul.
 - It has caused much evil in the world.
 - It burns up all feelings of kindness.
 - A vengeful person can truly say, “*The pains of hell (Hades) have got hold of me.*”

- b) Is this forbidding the defending of ourselves & our families?
- Some feel that it does!
 - Others do not!
 - They feel that the principle of self-defense is an innate principle that is God-given.
 - But, such should never be done in spirit of revenge.
- 2) The How?
- a) **“Turn the other cheek”** (Be willing to suffer bodily harm).
- Do not take revenge, suffer it.
 - Rom. 12:19—**“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says the Lord.”**
 - But do more...turn the other cheek also.
 - Overcome evil with good. (Rom. 12:17, 21).
 - Rom. 12:18—**“If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all men.”**
- b) **“Let him have your cloak also”**
- If he threatens to sue you & take your shirt, give him your coat also.
 - I Cor. 6:7-8
 - Overcome evil with good!!
- c) **“Go two miles.”**
- 1—Oppressive Roman soldiers often commandeered Jews to carry baggage for a mile (allowed).
 - 2—Not only have a yielding spirit to do it willingly, but offer to carry it two miles.
 - 3—Overcome evil with good!
- d) **“Give to those who ask”**
- 1—Give to the one who begs of you, who cannot repay you.
 - 2—Even lend to those who ask to borrow.
 - 3—Within the frame work of other teachings of Bible.
 - 4—II Thess. 3:7-10
 - 5—Show a loving, charitable spirit towards all.
- e) **Comments:**
- These are often referred to as the “2nd Mile Religion”.
 - Do more than expected!
 - Show a greater spirit than that of the world!

II. 2ND, HOW TO TREAT OUR ENEMIES. (5:43-44)

A. *They had been taught, “Love your neighbor, hate your enemy”*

- 1) Lev. 19:18—**“You shall not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.”**
- 2) The Leaders evidently took it...only Jews were to love Jews and hate all others.
 - a) Thus, the enmity between Jews & Gentiles.

- b) The Parable of the Good Samaritan was given to help them to see that even the despised Samaritan acted better than the Jewish leaders.

B. But what does Jesus say about the matter?

- 1) **“Love your enemies”**
 - a) Desire his well-being.
 - b) Show a genuine concern for him.
 - c) Jesus now gives the ways to do this.
- 2) **“Bless them that curse you”**
 - a) Show positive kindness in your speech towards them.
 - b) They curse, you bless.
 - c) Rom. 12:14—**“Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not.”**
 - d) I Cor. 4:12—**“Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it”**
 - e) **“Overcome evil with good”** (Rom. 12:21)
- 3) **“Do good to them that hate you.”**
 - a) Not ignore, avoid, but do good to them.
 - b) Show a greater spirit than they do.
- 4) **Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you”**
 - a) Show a merciful, forgiving spirit in your asking God for their welfare.
 - b) Seems to be unnatural & unreasonable.
 - c) But Jesus has good grounds for what He is teaching.

III. WHY SHOULD ALL OF THIS BE DONE? (5:45-48)

A. “That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.”

- 1) Great motivation....to act like our Father....follow in his steps.
- 2) How does He act?
 - a) He sends the Sun on the evil and good.
 - b) He sends the rain on the just and unjust.
 - c) He is impartial in His kindness to his creatures.
 - d) He is a merciful God to all.
 - e) Mere justice does not preside over our world.
 - f) Otherwise, the good would be blessed, the evil destroyed.
 - g) **“The Sunshine and the rain preaches Love for all.”**
- 3) How should we act?
 - a) If we only show love to those who show it to us:
 - We are not showing mercy like God.
 - Loving those who love us is not going the 2nd mile.
 - b) If we greet only those who greet us:
 - We are not showing mercy like God.
 - We show a low stage of spiritual development.
 - We are no different than the IRRELIGIOUS or the RELIGIOUS HYPOCRITES.

B. To be perfect as our Father is perfect!

- 1) Lk. 6:36—**“Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”**
- 2) How different is God’s Character from most earthly fathers.
- 3) We are to be like our Heavenly Father.

CONCLUSION

1. Jesus is dealing with the evils that not only:
 - a) Wreck our societies, and our lives;
 - b) But, also destroy our souls.
2. The real problem lies in the heart.
 - a) The heart contains far more wickedness that our bodies are able to do.
 - b) Where the heart is able to express itself in actions, we have seen great evils in our world.
 - c) To correct evils in the world, must begin in the heart...TRANSFORMED.
 - d) The gospel is that power to Transformed.
3. Jesus exposes the evil in the world that begins in our hearts.
4. Then, gives us the hope of redemption from such thru His gospel.
5. We need to learn to:
 - a) Forgive injuries
 - b) Resist not evil
 - c) Freely give
 - d) Love our enemy to "death".
6. Have you recognized the evil in your heart?
7. Would you let Jesus take it away through believing & obeying His Gospel?

Lesson Seven

“Alms, Prayers, and Fasting”

(Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18)

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus continues to draw a contrast between the:
 - a) Seeming & the real;
 - b) Pretenders & the genuine;
 - c) Hypocrites & the sincere.
2. He is saying:
 - a) Aim at perfection, but beware of it being a mere show.
 - b) Your righteousness must be real, not just a show for men to see.
3. Jesus shows that the three acts of Giving, Praying, Fasting:
 - a) All can be done to be seen of men;
 - b) But the difference is internal....the motivations of the heart.

DISCUSSION

I. GIVING ALMS. (Acts of Kindness to poor). (6:1-4)

A. How not to give alms:

- 1) Not to be seen of men.
 - a) This person wants men to see and praise him for his goodness.
 - b) His motivation for giving comes from men, not God.
 - c) If no human eyes are there to witness the gift.....
 - d) If no human tongue to praise his gift....HE WOULD NOT GIVE.
 - e) Harmonize....Matt. 5:16.
 - f) To the person who wants to do good:
 - It matters little if he gives in public or private.
 - It matters little whether many know or none know.
 - g) The only value in being seen is for God to be glorified!
- 2) Not to sound a trumpet before you.
 - a) Could be figurative....make a big to do over giving to be seen of men.
 - b) Any means of attracting attention to your righteousness so men will praise you.
 - c) This is acting hypocritical!
 - Stage-players....play acting....acting a part out.
 - Putting on appearance of religiousness.
 - d) “His love of men’s applause is stronger than his love of money.”
 - He gives to the poor!
 - But not out of pity, or mercy, or concern.
 - But to be seen of men! (His one desire).
 - He thinks only of the many eyes that see his outward act.....
 - But does not think of the ONE who sees his heart and knows the truth about him.

- 3) His reward....To be seen of men!
 - a) Why to be seen of men....to get their praise, applause, approval.
 - b) He is more concerned about what men think than what God thinks. (John 12:42-43)
 - c) He gains a reputation of being a charitable person.
 - d) He generally will get the reward he sought....even though it may be fleeting.
 - Today....Hosanna to God in the highest.
 - Tomorrow....Crucify Him, Crucify Him.
 - e) But no reward from God....for they sought it not!
 - f) He has forgotten the One Being whom it is his supreme duty to please!

B. The proper way to give!

- 1) Let not your left hand know what your right hand does.
 - a) Proverbial saying....not a public show! Personal, Private!
 - b) He does not require his name to be called before others.
 - c) He shrinks from display.
- 2) Alms to be in secret.
 - a) His motive for giving is pure & sincere.
 - b) His motive for giving is to please God, not man.
 - c) He gives out of love for God & Men, not the glory or praise of men.
 - d) It is vain to act the part before God!
 - He sees, even the secret things.
 - The hypocrite's mask will not hide his littleness of soul.
- 3) His reward will be open.
 - a) Prov. 19:17—***“He that has pity upon the poor lends unto the Lord; and that which he has given will he pay him again.”***
 - b) Reward....here and/or hereafter!

II. PRAYING. (6:5-8)

A. How not to pray.

- 1) Don't be as the hypocrites!
 - a) Don't put on an act.
 - b) Don't be artificial, but be real.
 - c) Don't appear to be religious when not devoted to God.
 - d) Be natural....be sincere.
- 2) To be seen of men!
 - a) Don't seek large audiences where people are, to impress them with your prayers.
 - b) Such people derive their motives for praying from men.
 - c) Men hear, but not God, their prayers.
 - d) Such people have an unusual desire to be praised of men.
 - e) They seek not to be heard of God, but of men!
 - f) Men become their idol, their god.
- 3) Not to use vain repetition.
 - a) Jews quoted as saying:
 - “Every one that multiplies prayers shall be heard.”

- “The prayer which is long shall not return empty.”
- b) Too much emphasis upon wordiness!
- c) He is not condemning repetition, but vain repetition.
 - Jesus prayed same prayer 3 times before His death.
 - Short, straight to point, seen only of God.
- d) Vain repetition---words without meaning or value.
- e) Is Jesus condemning long prayers?
 - Not necessarily, unless contain senseless repetition.
 - Jesus prayed all night....but mostly short prayers at other times.
 - Dangers also....to be seen & praised of men!

B. How to pray?

- 1) Enter into your closet.
 - a) Closet...inner chamber...secret place...private place.
 - b) Place to be alone with God.
 - c) Jesus went into a solitary place to pray. (Mk. 1:35)
 - d) So won't be tempted to seek to be heard of men.
- 2) Pray in secret.
 - a) When we ask help from others, we use words for 2 reasons:
 - To inform them of our needs & reasons for help.
 - To induce them to answer our appeal for help.
 - b) Words have neither of these functions in prayer to God.
 - God already knows our needs before we ask.
 - He is always wanting to help us in our lives.
 - c) So why pray?
 - Prayer is for our benefit, not God's.
 - It helps us to see our need of God's help.
 - It causes us to put our trust in God.
 - We look to God to receive the help needed.
 - It helps to show the real design & desire of our hearts
- 3) The reward of sincere prayer.
 - a) Such will be heard & answered by God.
 - b) We have truly sought the listening ear of God...and found it.
 - c) Our reward will also be open.

III. FASTING. (6:16-18)

A. Fasting not commanded, but regulated.

- 1) “When you fast”
- 2) Fasting should be the natural inclination of the human heart.
- 3) Regulations:
 - a) Not how many times or when.
 - b) But when you do fast.
 - c) He gives general admonitions upon the right observance of it.
- 4) Why fast?
 - a) To search out & reckon with trials, temptations, tendencies in our lives
 - b) To help us fulfill our responsibilities well to God.

B. How not to fast!

- 1) Not as the hypocrites.
 - a) Pharisee & Publican went into temple to pray.
 - 1—Pharisee."I fast twice a week"
 - 2—Why? A show or real?
 - b) Was it....see my righteousness....I want your praise!
- 2) Not with sad countenance or disfigured faces.
 - a) Doleful look, "pity me" look, gloomy look.
 - b) Unnatural, putting on a front.
 - c) There is nothing wrong with a sad countenance....when it is real.
 - d) Luke 24:17—"**What manner of communications are these that you have one to another, as you walk, and are sad?**"
 - e) Not to proclaim your fast with word or a sign.
 - By a strange, unpleasant appearance.
 - Ashes on face, unwashed face.
 - Hair disheveled (1 Kgs. 20:38).
- 3) To be seen of men.
 - a) You cannot tell if a man is fasting by sight, UNLESS:
 - You do something conspicuous.
 - Have external signs that call attention to you.
 - b) Don't fast to be seen & praised of men.

C. How to fast.

- 1) Anoint your head, wash your face.
 - a) Make no external sign of fasting.
 - b) Appear as usual.
 - c) Let it be one of joy & gladness.
- 2) Fast unto God.
 - a) Fast for God to see, not man.
 - b) When done in this manner...only God will know.
 - c) Realize that He knows our hearts.....so it must be real.
- 3) God will reward us openly.
 - a) What men think is of little importance.....
 - b) In comparison to what God thinks of us.

CONCLUSION

1. Summed up....Above all, BE REAL!
2. Remember...."**All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.**"
3. Avoid ostentation....trying to secure the admiration of men.....or to gain a reputation of being generous, religious, or self-sacrificing.
4. Men can be fooled, because they cannot know the heart.
5. But God knows the heart.....be sure you please Him. Rom. 6:16-18

Lesson Eight

“Teach us to Pray”

(Matthew 6:9-15)

INTRODUCTION

1. Luke’s account of this “model prayer” is very similar, but has a different reason for it being given.
 - a) Luke 11:1—**“And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples....”**
 - b) And Jesus gave them a model to help them understand how to pray.
2. As you briefly view this “model prayer,” you are impressed with:
 - a) Its reverence for God and His Will;
 - b) Its covering of man’s basic needs;
 - c) Its simplicity;
 - d) Its brevity, but reality;
 - e) Its contrast to the vain repetitions of men;
 - f) Its illustrativeness, not its exact form.
3. Jesus said, **“After this manner therefore pray ye.”**
 - a) Design to emphasize the manner, not the precise words or format.
 - b) Not something to be memorized & repeated without understanding and sincerity.
 - c) There is no magic or blessedness in just repeating these words!
 - d) The fact that Luke’s account varies in words would indicate this fact.
 - e) It was never intended to be a form, but an illustration.
 - f) It was given to help man avoid vain repetition, not encourage such.

DISCUSSION**I. PRAYER IS TO BE ADDRESSED TO GOD (DEITY). (6:9a)****A. “Our father which is in heaven.”**

- 1) In what sense is God, Father?
 - a) He is the creator and great parent of all mankind.
 - b) He is the preserver & provider for the human family.
 - c) But in a special sense:
 - He is the Father of those He has adopted into His Redeemed family (the church).
 - Those who have committed their WILL to God’s WILL.
- 2) Christians have that right to address Him as our Father.
 - a) Gal. 3:26-27
 - b) This is a N.T. emphasis of God’s special relationship with His creatures.

B. But He is our heavenly Father!

- 1) In contrast to our earthly fathers.
- 2) We are fortunate to have had a good, righteous, and godly earthly father.
- 3) But, we are many times more blessed having a heavenly Father.

II. PETITIONS WITH REFERENCE TO GOD. (6:9b-10)**A. *"Hallowed be your name."***

- 1) Proper prayer lifts us out of self and puts our emphasis upon God.
- 2) Our desire is that God's name may be held in great reverence & esteem by mankind.
- 3) Our approach to God is:
 - a) Not one of flippancy or light familiarity;
 - b) But one of veneration & godly fear. (Heb. 12:28)
- 4) It should be our desire that God's name:
 - a) Would never be taken in vain or used lightly;
 - b) But would be pronounced with respect & reverence;
 - c) Be looked upon as holy and free from defilement.

B. *"Your kingdom come"*

- 1) The Old Testament had foretold of a coming kingdom in which the Messiah would reign as king. (Dan. 2:44; Dan. 7:13-14)
 - a) Both John and Jesus said that kingdom was at hand and ready to be set up among men.
 - b) Natural for them to pray that this kingdom would come.
- 2) Involved in this concept:
 - a) That Jesus' or God's reign over the world would be recognized and accepted.
 - b) Their laws obeyed.
 - c) The gospel preached and accepted by all nations.

C. *"Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."*

- 1) God's Will is that His Law be obeyed and men be holy & blessed.
- 2) To obey God's will is to be saved & happy.
- 3) To disobey is to be lost.
- 4) God's will is perfectly obeyed in heaven.
- 5) It is our desire that God's Will be perfectly obeyed here on earth as well.
- 6) That mankind's rebellious will can be subdued and brought into conformity to God's will.

D. *Note:*

- 1) Our concern for God is placed as our first emphasis!
- 2) He is 1st in our hearts & petitions.

III. PERSONAL PETITIONS. (6:11-13a, 14-15)**A. *"Give us this day our daily bread."***

- 1) Bread...represents everything that sustains life on earth.
- 2) If we are to serve God here...we must survive, live.
- 3) Our physical bodies have to have things to survive on earth.
- 4) We have daily needs that must be taken care of.
- 5) We show our faith & trust in God to provide these things.
- 6) We also show our dependency upon God for these things.

B. *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."*

- 1) A debt is an unfulfilled obligation.
 - a) We have sinned against God. (Luke's account)

- b) The penalty we must pay is eternal punishment.
- c) We want that debt canceled, forgiven, taken away.
- 2) And only God can do that.
- 3) And he has promised He will forgive, when we repent, confess, and pray.
 - a) Acts 8:22
 - b) I John 1:9
- 4) But the Lord added another condition here.... ***”As we forgive those who sin against us.”***
 - a) God forgives those who have learned to be forgiving as God has forgiven them.
 - b) Christians cannot harbor dark & revengeful thoughts and expect God’s forgiveness.
 - c) God will not show mercy to the unmerciful.
 - d) The warning is crystal clear!
- 5) Forgiveness is conditional, but not merited!
- 6) Our forgiving others does not merit God’s forgiveness, but makes our forgiveness possible from God.

C. Note:

- 1) Mankind has both physical & spiritual needs.
- 2) Both are covered here in an illustrative form.

D. “Lead us not into temptation”

- 1) God tempts no man. (Jas. 1:13)
- 2) But God does allow us to be led into temptation to test us.
- 3) Yet, God is still in control of the Great Tempter who would destroy us, to save us from His evil.
- 4) He will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear.
- 5) 1 Cor. 10:13—***“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”***
- 6) Such a prayer shows:
 - a) We mistrust ourselves when we are exposed to the Devil’s power;
 - b) We recognize our weaknesses against Satan when tempted.
 - c) That God is in control and should be appealed to not to lead us into temptation.
 - d) That He may not always feel it best to keep us from temptation.
 - e) But we pray to that end!

E. “But Deliver us from evil.”

- 1) If we are tempted, then we pray for deliverance from the temptation.
- 2) Deliver us from the clutches or hold of evil.
 - a) At one time, evil had its hold on us.
 - b) But, we no longer want it to be that way.
 - c) We want to be delivered from the various evils & trials which beset us.
- 3) Again, emphasizing a need of dependency upon God.
 - a) The world lies in wickedness.
 - b) We need a power greater than our own to deal with evil.

- c) We need God's grace, love, & forgiveness to help us.
- d) We are to turn to God for deliverance from evil.
- 4) At the same time.....
 - a) We should not unnecessarily expose ourselves to evil and its dangers.
 - b) Nor to temptations either!

IV. THE NEED TO EXPRESS UNBOUNDED PRAISE TO GOD. (6:13b)

A. "For yours is the kingdom."

- 1) Yours is the reign, the dominion,
- 2) Showing our willingness for God to reign over our lives.

B. "For yours is the power."

- 1) That God has the power to answer our petitions.
- 2) We are weak in contrast, but God is almighty.
- 3) All things are possible with God.

C. "For yours is the glory."

- 1) You are deserving of all the glory & Praise that your creatures can give.
- 2) You deserve all honor & praise from your redeemed people.
- 3) AND.....the reign, the power, and the glory of God will be shown in his answering of our petitions.

CONCLUSION

- 1. Attitudes shown:
 - a) Respect, Reverence, Praise for God, His Name.
 - b) Loyalty to the Father's purposes, His will.
 - c) Attitude of dependence upon God.
 - d) Attitude of confidence in the Father.
- 2. When we approach God with proper attitudes:
 - a) Our prayers will be heard.
 - b) His answer will be given if:
 - It is His Will
 - And brings His glory & our Salvation.
- 3. Prayer is a privilege of God's children!
- 4. Wouldn't you like to have this privilege?
 - a) Then become His child.
 - b) Obey His gospel.
 - c) So He will adopt you as His child.

Lesson Nine

“Identifying Where the Heart Is”

(Matthew 6:19-24)

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus has been dealing with the need of the heart being won to God.
 - a) Even right “outward actions” are unacceptable without the heart.
 - b) “Wrong outward actions” come from an evil heart.
 - c) Thus, the heart is the thing to watch, be concerned about!
 - d) Prov. 4:23—**“Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”**
2. Jesus now provides a testing so that we can see where our heart’s emphasis is located.

DISCUSSION**I. THERE ARE TWO PRIMARY TREASURES IN THIS WORLD (6:19-21)*****A. Treasures on earth.***

- 1) Worldly, earthly, material possessions.
- 2) That which enriches one in this life.
- 3) Jesus used clothes & coins....primary possessions in the East.
 - a) Many change of expensive garments....rich.
 - b) Have precious metals, gems, wine, land, oil, etc., involved.
- 4) Called Mammon in verse 24.
 - a) Mammon was an idol god of riches.
 - b) Earthly treasures.

B. Treasures in Heaven.

- 1) The spiritual values as opposed to the material values.
- 2) That which enriches one in the life to come....in heaven.
- 3) Luke 16:9-13
- 4) Luke 18:22—**“Sell all you have, and distribute unto the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven...”**

C. The problem, the danger.

- 1) Mankind has generally had a greater interest in the “earthly” than in the “heavenly”.
- 2) Worldly wealth has been, with few exceptions, the ultimate goal of mankind.
- 3) People will sell the most sacred things for money.
- 4) Thus, it is not surprising that Jesus would deal with this grave danger.
 - a) That he would raise his voice to warn of its outcome.
 - b) To try to stem the tide of mankind flowing to destruction.
 - c) To try to turn the world and its energies into a better, greater direction that deals with the soul of man.

II. 1ST, LET SEE THE SIMILARITIES OF THESE TWO TREASURES.***A. Both treasures can be accumulated.***

- 1) Early treasures can be laid up, stored up.
 - a) Such are needed for our existence upon earth.

- b) We work most of our lives to get them for our survival.
 - c) We work to save up for our old age.
 - d) Is this wrong, is Jesus condemning this?
 - e) Don't believe so.
 - f) Dealing with the emphasis of the heart!
 - 2) Spiritual treasures can be laid up, stored up.
 - a) But not here on earth, but in heaven...to await our coming.
 - b) Luke 16:9—***“Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when you fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation.”***
 - c) I Tim. 6:17-19
 - d) These treasures can be accumulated all our lives!
- B. Both may be attractive to the heart.**
- 1) V. 21—***“Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”***
 - 2) Our heart points to our treasure like the needle of a compass to the North Pole.
 - 3) Our affections flow after that which we hold dear.
 - 4) Where the heart is, there the man is.
 - 5) Our heart is fixed on our treasure...that which we hold dear!
 - 6) It is obvious that man's heart can be drawn to either one.
- C. Both can be a dominant forced in one's life.**
- 1) V. 24—***“No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”***
 - 2) When mammon gets the heart, it has the man.
 - a) Man becomes its servant.
 - b) Whatever we love most is our Master.
 - c) It governs our thoughts, feelings, and purposes.
 - d) Thus, if we love earthly wealth, mammon is our Master.
 - 3) But, when spiritual wealth gets our heart, we become its servant.
 - a) Rom. 6:16—***“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”***
 - b) Whichever we love is our Master.
 - 4) We cannot serve both as Masters.
 - a) It is an impossibility.
 - b) Supreme affections can be on only one object...God or Mammon.
 - c) A choice has to be made.
 - d) One or the other will be dominant.
 - e) Cannot serve God acceptably and be covetous, greedy, seeking earthly treasures as one's supreme goal in life.

III. DISSIMILARITIES OF THE TWO TREASURES.

A. One is earthly, the other heavenly.

- 1) The earthly:
 - a) Its value is only on earth.
 - b) It cannot be carried with us at death.

- 2) The heavenly:
 - a) Its value is here on earth and in the future world, also.
 - b) Thus, its value is unlimited.
 - c) 2 Tim. 4:7-8

B. One's future existence is uncertain, while the other is certain.

- 1) Earthly:
 - a) Moth & Rust consume.
 - b) Thieves can break in and steal them away.
 - c) Rich fool. (Luke 12:20-21)
 - d) Herod... Today, applauded by men.
 - Before day over, eaten of worms....
 - LIFE IS UNCERTAIN.
- 2) Heavenly:
 - a) These are imperishable...do not end.
 - b) Cannot be stolen or taken from us.
 - c) II Peter 1:10-11
 - d) I Pet. 1:4

C. One is able to make us see clearly, the other blinds us.

- 1) V. 22-23
- 2) Man has a physical eye to see with.
- 3) He also has another eye to see with...His Conscience!
 - a) That which God built into man.
 - b) Ability to see justice, moral truth, God, duty, respect, etc.
- 4) This eye can become so diseased that it is blinded.
 - a) Sees nothing clearly, gropes in the darkness.
 - b) It then causes the whole body to be full of darkness.
 - c) And how great is that darkness!
 - d) Paul said the Jews were blinded so they could not see the true riches. (II Cor. 3:14)
 - e) This blindness caused them to crucify Jesus, the Christ!
 - f) When the conscience is seared, a man is blinded. (1 Tim. 4:2)
- 5) Loving this world makes it impossible to see the Real thing.
 - a) A worldly disposition darkens the soul so that we cannot see or understand God's truth.
 - b) I Cor. 2:14—***“But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”***
 - c) Speak truths of God to them and their reply is, **We cannot see that!**
- 6) But, a spiritual disposition enlightens the soul to see the true thing, the reality, and becomes full of light.
 - a) To see clearly the truth, the real...our eye must be single!
 - b) That is, directed to one object...the Heavenly!
 - c) The eye of faith must be fixed on heaven.
 - d) ***“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”***

CONCLUSION

1. Where is your treasure? The earthly or the heavenly?
2. Where do you place your emphasis? Which is your great love?
 - a) Mankind's tendency is on the earthly.
 - b) Jesus is calling for all of us to place our emphasis upon the heavenly.
 - c) To make the heavenly our chief concern!
3. Will you not make that decision today?

Lesson Ten

“Reasons for Faith”

(Matthew 6:25-34)

INTRODUCTION

1. In our last lesson:
 - a) We looked at the similarities of two ultimate treasures:
 - Both treasures may be stored up;
 - Both treasures may be attractive to the heart;
 - Either one may be dominant forces in one’s life.
 - b) Then, we looked at the dissimilarities of the two treasures.
 - One is earthly, the other is heavenly;
 - The future of one is uncertain, the other is certain.
 - One brings darkness to the soul, the other enlightenment.
2. The conclusion was:
 - a) Our supreme quest in life should be the spiritual, the heavenly, the kingdom of God and His righteousness!
 - b) But, if we put our emphasis upon laying up treasures in heaven:
 - What about our earthly existence?
 - Will it suffer?
 - Will such emphasis bring us to poverty & want?
 - Will our physical needs be supplied?
 - c) These next verses (6:25-34) give answers to these questions!

DISCUSSION

I. TAKE NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW (v. 34)

A. What did Jesus mean?

- 1) Questions:
 - a) Are we not to be concerned about the future?
 - b) We, who have the promise of eternal life, are we to take no onward look?
- 2) It seems that we are made as humans to look forward.
 - a) We make our decisions to travel a certain road because of the future destination.
 - b) So much of our lives are tied to tomorrow.
 - c) Heaven is tomorrow!
- 3) Thus, we do not feel that Jesus is telling us to be indifferent about tomorrow, nor make any plans for tomorrow.
 - a) Nor does it mean we must not think about temporal supplies for the future.
 - b) Self-preservation forces us to do such, both materially and spiritually.

B. Jesus is saying....Don’t worry about tomorrow!

- 1) The Greek word translated “thought” (Merimnao) means to be anxious.
- 2) Take no anxious thought about tomorrow.
- 3) Do not distress yourself over these temporal things.

- a) Thought about the future is right.
- b) Worry, anxiety over the future is wrong.
- c) Phil. 4:6—***“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”***

C. Jesus now does something different here.

- 1) He gives reasons for this statement, “Take no thought about tomorrow.”
- 2) He usually authoritatively states His Will, not give reasons!
- 3) But here he gives possibly 5 facts upon which we can have strong assurance.

II. 1ST, MAN’S EXISTENCE IS SUPERIOR TO ALL MATERIAL THINGS HE NEEDS. (6:25)

A. *“Is not the life more than meat (food), and the body than raiment?”*

- 1) Man’s body:
 - a) It is fearfully & wonderfully made.
 - b) A world of wonder in itself.
- 2) The life:
 - a) The principle that animates the body.
 - b) The Pseuche....the spirit within man.
- 3) These 2 terms describes man’s being!
- 4) This “being” is greater than any of the material things that he needs to survive on.
 - a) Man is more precious than all of God’s creation.
 - b) He is the highest manifestation of God’s creation.
 - c) All earthly things have been given into his trust, to his stewardship.
 - d) Man will survive the dissolution of all of God’s created things.

B. Therefore:

- 1) Will not God supply man with the necessary things for his survival?
- 2) He, who gave the greatest gift of man’s existence, will surely bestow the minor gifts needed for that existence.

III. 2ND, ANXIETY OVER THE FUTURE IS UTTERLY INEFFECTIVE. (6:27)

A. *“Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?”*

- 1) By worry, can we add anything to our stature (or age) or time on earth?
- 2) We grow to manhood independent of any effort or actions from ourselves.
 - a) We are carried to maturity by a power we cannot resist.
 - b) Man may, by heaven’s permission, do many great things...
 - c) But, to hold back or hasten his growth process, he is helpless, powerless.

B. Therefore:

- 1) If with all our anxious care, we cannot add one cubit to our stature,
- 2) Then, why are we so concerned about the temporal things of life.
- 3) Why don’t we trust in Him who has made us to provide for our needs?

IV. 3RD, THAT DIVINE ATTENTION IS EXERCISED OVER THE INFERIOR ORDERS OF EXISTENCE. (6:26, 28, 30)

A. God's providing agency is over every part of creation.

- 1) As to food, look at the birds in the air:
 - a) See how happy & contented they are.
 - b) "They sow not, neither do they reap."
 - c) Yet, they are fed by God's providence.
- 2) As to raiment, look at the lilies of the field:
 - a) See how beautiful, fragrant, lovely their attire.
 - b) But Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

B. But God's interest in His creation is proportionate to the greatness of their nature.

- 1) "**Are you not much better than they?**"
- 2) Man should understand that he is the crowning of God's creation.
- 3) If he will so supply the inferior creation with the means of survival:
 - a) Will he not do so with man?
 - b) Will he let the superior creature suffer want?

C. Man is greater than any temporal creation.

- 1) Man will survive on after this life is over.
- 2) But not so with the inferior creation.
 - a) Today, the field is covered with grass.
 - b) Tomorrow, it is cast into the oven.
 - c) The beauty of lilies is for a short time.
 - d) Tomorrow, they are gone.
- 3) Man is not that way!
 - a) He is superior.
 - b) He is made to exist on somewhere forever.
- 4) "**Will he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?**"
- 5) If God clothes his physical world with beauty that is short-lived,
- 6) How much more will he clothe his greatest creation?

V. 4TH, SUCH ANXIETY OVER THESE THINGS IS CHARACTERISTIC OF UNBELIEVERS. (6:31-32)

A. "For after all these things do the Gentiles seek."

- 1) Term, Gentile, represents unbelievers (to the Jewish mind).
- 2) Their emphasis is upon this world, this life, and this life only.

B. But believers are superior to unbelievers!

- 1) Should believers be like Gentiles in their pagan ways & outlook?
- 2) They dwell upon the material, Should we?
- 3) Don't believers dwell upon higher things?
 - a) An enlightened mind.
 - b) A pure heart.
 - c) An approving conscience.
 - d) Fellowship with God.
 - e) They look for a heavenly home.
- 4) So, don't be like them in being anxious about the provisions of life, they will be supplied!

VI. 5TH, SUCH ANXIETY OVER TEMPORAL SUPPLIES IS UNNECESSARY. (6:32-34)**A. “For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things.”**

- 1) He is a loving Father who cares.
- 2) **“Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him.”**
- 3) He knows what we need before we ask Him.

B. “All these things shall be added unto you.”

- 1) God has promised, and He cannot lie!
- 2) The conditions are.....Seek 1st the Kingdom & His righteousness.
- 3) Not in a miraculous way, but a natural way.
- 4) If he has promised, why worry?

C. Realize the value of being a Christian:

- 1) Such delivers us from:
 - a) Indolence or laziness;
 - b) Extravagance;
 - c) Intemperance;
- 2) All of which lead to poverty and destitution.
- 3) **“Godliness is profitable unto all things.”** (1 Tim. 4:8)
- 4) **“Godliness with contentment is great gain.”**(1 Tim. 6:6)
- 5) David said, **“I have been old and young, and I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.”**

D. Worry over the future is harmful!

- 1) **“Tomorrow shall take thought for the things of itself.”**
 - a) Tomorrow will bring its blessings!
 - b) The sun, rain, air, produce of the field, etc., will all be there tomorrow.
 - c) All to supply the wants of man and beast.
 - d) God’s liberal hand will still be open.
- 2) **“Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”**
 - a) Trials as well as blessings will come.
 - b) Afflictions, pains, sorrows, vexations, disappointments...
 - c) All will come in the morrow.
 - d) Just the evils of each day are sufficient for us to be concerned with, not tomorrow’s too.
 - Besides, what we fear.....may not come at all.
 - If they do, they are usually not as bad as expected.
 - Imagination tends to exaggerate things.
 - e) Imaginary trials add to the present trials.
 - We don’t need more than a day at a time.
 - By our worry, we combine them.
 - And impose a greater burden on today.

CONCLUSION

1. Let’s walk the pathway of life:

- a) Putting emphasis upon the right things: Spiritual, Heavenly, Kingdom of God.
- b) Putting our complete trust in a loving heavenly Father:
 - Who knows our needs & conditions;
 - Who loves his children;

- Who has promised to care for his children.
 - c) By putting our emphasis upon handling a day at a time: Prayerfully, Carefully, and Faithfully.
 - d) And looking to that ultimate reward someday!
2. Isn't it great to be a Christian!
 3. Are you a child of God?
 4. If not, God's invitation is extended to you now to become one.

Lesson Eleven

“Judging Others”

(Matthew 7:1-6)

INTRODUCTION

1. Making judgments upon others is a common thing among mankind!
 - a) Involved in this process are evils that need to be dealt with.
 - b) Imputing unworthy motives to others.
 - c) Exaggerating faults.
 - d) Taking pleasure in condemning others.
2. Such actions implies self-righteousness, pride, hypocrisy.
3. But it also has other evils:
 - a) Such are usurping God’s place as judge.
 - b) Such do not love their neighbor as themselves.
 - c) Such identify with Satan who is an accuser of the brethren.
4. Thus, Men should FEAR rather than RUSH into the seat of Judgment.

DISCUSSION**I. THE ADMONITION ABOUT JUDGING. (7:1)****A. 1st, let’s emphasize what this does not mean!**

- 1) It does not mean that we are not to judge ourselves!
 - a) Self-judgment is a duty we owe to self, society, and God!
 - b) Need to accurately, but kindly judge ourselves.
 - c) Judge our intents of heart.
 - d) Judge our pureness of heart.
 - e) Judge our words and actions.
 - f) We must not excuse our faults....GENERAL TENDENCY.
 - g) Must not look upon our faults as motes, and others as beams.
 - h) 2 Cor. 13:5—**“Examine yourselves, whether you are in the faith; prove your own selves.”**
 - i) Remove all the beams & motes possible!
- 2) It does not mean we are not to form judgments on the characters of others.
 - a) We are so designed by God that we can make good judgments of the actions of others.
 - We can judge the looks and actions of a person.
 - The expression on their faces, the tone of their voice, body actions,
 - etc.
 - b) If we do not form judgments:
 - How do we know upon whom to rely?
 - Or, with whom to associate?
 - We are warned about such! (1 Cor. 15:33)
 - c) Are the moral differences in society to be overlooked?
 - Should we treat the evil and the good alike?
 - Or, should we form judgments of evil conduct?

- How do we obey the command to withdraw from a brother who is walking disorderly, if we cannot make judgments? (2 Thess. 3:10)

B. What kind of judgment is involved? (What are we to avoid?)

- 1) Rash, Hasty, Unloving, Harsh, Unkind, Censorious judgment.
- 2) Luke 6:37—***“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.”***
- 3) Usually, those who judge others severely are very indulgent of themselves.
- 4) The censorious man sees even the smallest fault of another.
- 5) Because such judgment does so much harm, Jesus is warning his followers against such actions!
- 6) It seems strange...inconsistent...that a censorious, fault-finding person should try to rid men of their faults!
- 7) It must make such a person feel superior.

II. 4 LESSONS FOR THE CENSORIOUS PERSON. (7:2-6)

A. He will meet with due retribution!

- 1) V. 2—***“For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged: and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.”***
- 2) This statement was like a proverb among the Jews.
 - a) Jesus used it because it was familiar.
 - b) The concept had been tested, tried, and its wisdom obvious.
- 3) By being censorious in judgment, we court such back upon ourselves.
 - a) Man will get back what he gives....good or bad.
 - b) Jas. 2:13—***“For he shall have judgment without mercy, that has showed no mercy”***
 - c) Be judged by same rule we apply to others.
 - “Like begets like”
 - “Kindness begets kindness”
 - “Cruelty begets cruelty”
 - “Censor begets censor”
 - “Suspicion begets suspicion”
- 4) But we also will face a greater judgment than man’s judgment!
- 5) Man’s judgment is but a shadow of the greater judgment of God.

B. Rash judgment upon others indicate a greater evil in ourselves!

- 1) Vs. 3-4—***“And why behold thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but consider not the bean that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?”***
- 2) The proud Pharisee that went into the temple to pray:
 - a) He passed censorious judgment upon the Publican, a sinner.
 - b) But who was the greater sinner?
 - c) And who went to his house justified?
- 3) The Scribes & Pharisees passed unjust judgment upon the sinless Son of God:
 - a) They falsely accused him of a terrible crime.
 - b) But who was the greater sinner?
- 4) Why can’t the censorious person see his great fault?

- a) Sin is self-blinding.
 - The greater the sinner, the more oblivious to his sins.
 - He becomes unconscious of the “beam” in his own eye.
 - He refuses to see his own censoriousness.
 - Like Laodecians ... ***”Knewest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”***
 - “There is nothing so blinding than finding fault with others.”
 - b) Sin has a self-hardening influence.
 - The more we sin, the less we care about others.
 - He respects neither man’s nor God’s judgment of his actions.
 - He does not care about the feelings nor reputation of others.
 - Fault-finding and slander becomes his more desirable activity.
 - c) Sin causes a dissatisfaction with self.
 - Sin makes the soul restless.
 - He then envies the happiness of others.
 - And often seeks to destroy their happiness, if possible
- 5) Censoriousness grows with sin.
- a) When we pass rash judgment.....
 - b) It indicates a need to look within for a greater evil.
- C. Only those who sternly deal with self are competent to help others.**
- 1) V. 5—***“Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye.”***
 - 2) A hypocrite does not have the right nor the capacity to judge others correctly.
 - a) His is the greater sin!
 - b) Rom. 2:1-3
 - 3) 3 facts seen here:
 - a) That man can be voluntarily oblivious of his great sinfulness.
 - b) That he can be very much aware of even little sins in others.
 - This shows that he can still see sin.
 - But he doesn’t want to see it in himself.
 - c) To help others, we must help ourselves first!
 - If blinded to our own sin, how can we help others?
 - Clean up the beam in our own eye first.
 - Then, we can see clearly to help others.
 - Ps. 51:12-14; Rom. 2:21-22
 - It is a difficult & delicate task to help others.
 - Gal. 6:1—***“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”***
- D. Even the best judgment of the most qualified needs to be cautiously expressed.**
- 1) V. 6—***“Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.”***

- 2) Trying to show the cautious, but proper way to reprove or correct a person to help them.
- 3) Proper words from a proper life have a good influence upon those willing to hear.
 - a) Prov. 25:11—***“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”***
 - b) They are like precious pearls!
- 4) But even this cannot be forced upon those who do not want to hear.
 - a) If you try to force it upon him, he will turn against you.
 - b) Prov. 15:10—***“Correction is grievous unto him that forsakes the way: and he that hates reproof shall die.”***

CONCLUSION

1. “Judge not” does not forbid all judgment.
2. Jesus, Himself, authorized “righteous judgment”. (John 7:24)
3. There is a sphere in which it is right to judge.
4. But, we must not judge rashly, harshly, nor censoriously....or we will receive the same kind of judgment.

Lesson Twelve

“Challenging Responsibilities”

(Matthew 7:7-29)

INTRODUCTION

1. Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount with some great and challenging responsibilities.
2. Man is made in the image of God!
 - a) This places him on a higher plan than the animal world.
 - b) God will not do for man what man is capable of and responsible for.
3. Man has been given:
 - a) Intelligence,
 - b) The power to evaluate,
 - c) The ability to make righteous judgments,
 - d) As well as the power to choose wisely.
4. But of course, with choice, comes grave responsibilities.
5. In these verses, Jesus is giving some of the most basic and challenging statements for those who wish to become His follower.

DISCUSSION

I. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SEEKING (7:7-11)

A. We are expected to Ask!

- 1) For what are we to ask?
 - a) Obviously for our daily food (Matt. 6:11).
 - We need daily provisions to survive.
 - Even though God knows what we need, He wants us still to ask Him for them.
 - b) Obviously for God’s help, His guidance, and His care over our lives and over those we are concerned with (Phil. 4:6-8).
 - c) God is the giver of all good gifts (James 1:17).
- 2) But asking does not take away our responsibilities that are involved..
 - a) Asking is no substitute for obedience on our part (Lk. 6:46).
 - b) Asking is no substitute for being faithful unto death (Rev. 2:10).
 - c) Asking is no substitute for our working out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:13-14).
 - d) Asking is no substitute for reading, studying, and striving to understand and apply God’s Word in our lives (Eph. 3:3-5; 2 Tim. 2:150).

B. We are expected to Seek!

- 1) To Seek:
 - a) God (Heb. 11:6).
 - b) The Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt. 6:33).
 - c) The way to Eternal life (Lk. 18:18; Acts 2:37-38)
 - d) To find what is important like the Pearl of Great Price (Matt. 13:45-46).
- 2) To seek infers perseverance, carefulness, and watchful efforts.

C. We are expected to Knock!

- 1) For What?
 - a) For entrance into that great kingdom of heaven and eternal life.
- 2) Jesus is pictured in Revelation 3:20 as knocking on the door of **our** hearts wanting entrance!
 - a) If we open...there is many blessings to be received from Him.
 - b) But are we knocking on Jesus' door wanting to get into a relationship with Him?

D. The Reward for seeking, asking, knowing!

- 1) Earthly fathers are concerned and provide for their offspring.
- 2) How much more will our heavenly father provide for His children.
- 3) That will not give something harmful, but desirable.

II. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DOING GOOD TO OTHERS (7:12)**A. There are what can be labeled "summary statements!"**

- 1) This is one of them....and is referred to as "The Golden Rule."
- 2) The Apostle Paul gave by inspiration a long list of sins and then concluding by saying "And such like things." (Gal. 5:19-21).
 - a) In other words, this list is not all the wrong things to do.
 - b) There are many more, but the list does illustrate the concept.

B. But there is also "summary statements" that sum up a general responsibility.

- 1) Jesus said the two commands sums up the Law and the Prophets—To love God and to Love our neighbor. (Matt. 22:36-40).
- 2) The Apostle Paul stated one when he said Love sums up all the commandments toward our neighbor (Rom. 13:9).
- 3) The same can be said of the Golden Rule—it is the fulfilling of all of our responsibilities towards our fellowman.

III. THE RESPONSIBILITY TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT WAY (7:13-14)**A. Jesus states that there are two ways to travel in this life:**

- 1) The way that is strait and narrow which leads to eternal life.
 - a) Narrow gate through which to enter—limited access.
 - b) Strait road—not one that wanders all over everywhere.
 - c) It has a very desired destination and people don't fool around to get there.
 - d) It is however a difficult way.
 - e) And unfortunately, only few people travel that way.
- 2) The way that is broad that leads to destruction.
 - a) This is the easy way, the drifting way, the way that wanders whichever direction.
 - b) And, as you would guess, the majority go this way.

B. God has given us the responsibility to recognize these two ways.

- 1) The two ways are plain to see if we are seeking to know.
- 2) The choice becomes ours to make as to which road we will travel.
- 3) We are thus warned—choose the right road! (Josh. 24:15)

IV. THE RESPONSIBILITY TO BE WATCHFUL (7:15-20)

A. The reason for watchfulness.

- 1) There will be false teachers desiring to lead man astray from God.
- 2) Both Old and New Testaments constantly warn of this grave danger; and yet, man seems to think there are no such “persons!”
- 3) But they are there and in abundance!

B. Their deceptiveness is emphasized.

- 1) They come under false pretense and deceptive clothing (2 Cor. 11:13-15).
- 2) They pose as those who speak truth, but they are liars (1 Tim. 4:2).
- 3) They are not concerned for the souls of people to be saved, but only for their own selfish indulgence (Rom. 16:17-18).
- 4) They claim to offer liberty, but they are in the deepest bondage to sin (2 Pet. 2:19).

C. Identifying false teachers.

- 1) We can obviously compare what they teach with the Word of God (Acts 17:11).
- 2) But they can also be identified by the fruit they produce.
- 3) James gives a good example of such fruit (James 3:13-16).

D. We must be watchful at all times!

V. THE RESPONSIBILITY TO BE WISE (7:21-29)

A. Jesus compares two persons: The wise and the Foolish!

- 1) The Wise is the person who hears the Word of God and does it.
 - a) He does not allow a false teacher to lead him away from obedience to God like Satan did to our original parents (Gen. 3)
 - b) He seeks after God, to know God, and to know His Will.
 - c) He diligently seeks to be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only (James 1:22).
 - d) Blessings await such a person.
- 2) The Foolish is the person who hears, but does not do!
 - a) One who is a hearer only—and pacifies himself with that alone.
 - b) He cries “Lord, Lord” and thinks this is sufficient.
 - c) He may even claim to do great things in Jesus’ Name, but they are just claims.
 - d) All that this person can look forward to is destruction.

B. The false teachers proclaim—“All you have to do is just believe!”

- 1) You don’t have to do anything—just believe and you can be saved.
- 2) And many love to hear such words.
- 3) They rest their salvation on sifting sand....and are lost forever.

C. But the wise person bases his salvation from God upon an obedient faith.

- 1) A faith that truly trust in the promises of God like Abraham (James 2:21-24).
- 2) He is wise because he knows that a dead faith is worthless (James 2:17).
- 3) He knows that he cannot earn or merit his salvation, but realizes that God’s grace and mercy comes to those who fear God and work his righteousness (Acts 10:34-35).

CONCLUSION

1. One person has observed that the Sermon on the Mount is “*The greatest piece of sermonic material ever spoken and penned.*”
2. The instructions are clearly given that challenges man to his greatest heights.
3. Endless sermons have been preached from these three chapters (5,6,7) of Matthew.
4. What a challenge for each of God’s sons and daughters to reach up unto.

Lesson Thirteen

"Conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount"

Introduction

1. Our society has evolved from the concept of:
 - a) Living by eternal principles of justice, right and wrong.....
 - b) To....a society governed by----expedience rather than principle.
2. We are a society that has lost its mooring:
 - a) Turned from right and wrong concepts.....
 - b) To....a phisosophy—***"Everything is relative!"***
3. We need to stress getting back to the basics that helps a society to endure.
4. We want to briefly survey the principles that Jesus enunciated in Matt. 5-7.
5. Let's get an over-view of one of the greatest, yet simplest, of teachings by Jesus.

Discussion

1. Attitudes:
 - a) Beatitudes....Blessed Attitudes that lead to a happy and blessed life.
 - b) Poor in spirit, mourn over wrongs, meek toward all men, hungering desire for righteousness, a merciful person, pure in heart, peacemaker, and willing to endure persecution for righteousness' sake.
2. Respect for God's Law by Jesus:
 - a) He did not come to do away with God's Law.
 - b) Men need to be governed by Law....gives order, justice, fairness.
 - c) Jesus came for a higher purpose—to redeem those who have broken Law.
3. Respect for Human Life:
 - a) Do not kill (murder).
 - b) Jew—Combined civil & religious Law.
 - c) Christian—Separate civil government—Religious Laws.
 - d) God ordained civil governments:
 - 1—Must be respected, obeyed.
 - 2—Protect...army...The civil cannot endure without the military to sustain it.
4. Respect for Marriage:
 - a) God ordained marriage and gave some things to regulate such.

- b) Such intended for man's good.
 - c) But also for the continuation of the human race.
 - d) Any society that will not respect this relationship is doomed for decline & destruction.
5. Respect for Truth:
- a) Do not bear false witness—10 commandments.
 - b) Emphasis upon speaking truth throughout Bible.
 - c) Nothing will succeed very long without truth.
6. Importance of Love:
- a) For God & Neighbor—fulfill the Law & Prophets requirements.
 - b) A great deal more is given in the NT.
 - c) But Jesus caught their attention....Love your enemies—do him good.
7. Importance of Sincerity in Religion
- a) Don't do to be seen & praised of men.
 - b) Do to be seen and praised by God.
8. Importance of praying correctly:
- a) The apostles realized their inaptitude in praying.
 - b) Jesus gave them a bare outline to follow.
 - c) But stressed something special—forgiveness...it's necessity!
9. Importance of what we set our hearts on:
- a) What we set our hearts on is what we value.
 - b) But....you cannot set it on two opposites!
 - c) Must make a choice.
 - d) Rich Young Ruler illustrates.
10. Importance of Trusting in God's Care.
- a) At one time or another....we all turn to God for help—even the "atheist!"
 - b) The more we trust in God....the less we need to worry.
11. True Concern for our Fellow-man.
- a) Don't condemn him, help him.
 - b) Be sincerely concern for his welfare.
 - c) But realize that we first need to clean up our own house.

12. Challenging Responsibilities:

- a) Things that I need to do—not just wishful thinking—Ask, Knock, Seek.
- b) Golden Rule—Do unto others.....
- c) Making the right choice—the narrow gate and way!
- d) Need to bear good fruit in our lives or else!
- e) Put into practice what you have heard from Jesus.
 - 1—It is not the hearer, but the doer that is acceptable.
 - 2—We are wise or foolish—according to our choices.

