

The Sermon on the Mount

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1 Introduction

The Sermon on the Mount is a pivotal discourse in the New Testament, found in Matthew chapters 5-7. This comprehensive collection of Jesus Christ's teachings covers an array of moral and ethical issues, laying the groundwork for Christian living.

The Sermon starts with the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12), a set of blessings pronounced on those who are poor in spirit, mournful, meek, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and persecuted for righteousness' sake. These attitudes signify a spiritual condition desirable in the kingdom of God.

It proceeds with teachings on being the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-16), indicating that Christians are to exert a positive influence on the world around them.

The Sermon also includes a higher interpretation of the Mosaic law, where Jesus addresses issues like anger (Matthew 5:21-26), adultery (Matthew 5:27-30), divorce (Matthew 5:31-32), oaths (Matthew 5:33-37), retaliation (Matthew 5:38-42), and loving enemies (Matthew 5:43-48).

The Lord's Prayer, a model for Christian prayer, is presented in Matthew 6:9-13. Teachings on giving to the needy without seeking recognition (Matthew 6:1-4), fasting in a way that pleases God (Matthew 6:16-18), and storing treasures in heaven rather than on earth (Matthew 6:19-24) are also part of this sermon.

Lastly, Jesus speaks about not worrying about life's necessities (Matthew 6:25-34), not judging others (Matthew 7:1-6), asking, seeking, and knocking (Matthew 7:7-12), the narrow and wide gates (Matthew 7:13-14), and recognizing false prophets (Matthew 7:15-20), before concluding with the parable of wise and foolish builders (Matthew 7:24-

27).

For Anabaptists, the Sermon on the Mount holds particular importance. Adhering closely to Jesus' teachings in this Sermon, such as loving one's enemies (Matthew 5:44), Anabaptists historically practice pacifism. They also emphasize communal living and mutual aid, aligning with the Sermon's principles.

2 Matthew Chapter 5

And having seen the multitudes, he went up to the mount, and he having sat down, his disciples came to him, 2and having opened his mouth, he was teaching them, saying: 3'Happy the poor in spirit - because theirs is the reign of the heavens. 4'Happy the mourning - because they shall be comforted. 5'Happy the meek - because they shall inherit the land. 6'Happy those hungering and thirsting for righteousness - because they shall be filled. 7'Happy the kind - because they shall find kindness. 8'Happy the clean in heart - because they shall see God. 9'Happy the peacemakers - because they shall be called Sons of God. 10'Happy those persecuted for righteousness' sake -because theirs is the reign of the heavens. 11'Happy are ye whenever they may reproach you, and may persecute, and may say any evil thing against you falsely for my sake - 12rejoice ye and be glad, because your reward [is] great in the heavens, for thus did they persecute the prophets who were before you. 13'Ye are the salt of the land, but if the salt may lose savour, in what shall it be salted? for nothing is it good henceforth, except to be cast without, and to be trodden down by men. 'Ye are the light of the world, a city set upon a mount is not able to be hid; 15nor do they light a

lamp, and put it under the measure, but

on the lamp-stand, and it shineth to all those in the house; so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father who [is] in the heavens. 17'Do not suppose that I came to throw down the law or the prophets – I did not come to throw down, but to fulfill; 18for, verily I say to you, till that the heaven and the earth may pass away, one iota or one tittle may not pass away from the law, till that all may come to pass. 19'Whoever therefore may loose one of these commands – the least – and may teach men so, least he shall be called in the reign of the heavens, but whoever may do and may teach [them], he shall be called great in the reign of the heavens. 20'For I say to you, that if your righteousness may not abound above that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye may not enter to the reign of the heavens. 21'Ye heard that it was said to the ancients: Thou shalt not kill, and whoever may kill shall be in danger of the judgment; 22but I – I say to you, that every one who is angry at his brother without cause, shall be in danger of the judgment, and whoever may say to his brother, 'Empty fellow! shall be in danger of the sanhedrim, and whoever may say, Rebel! shall be in danger of the gehenna of the fire. 23'If, therefore, thou mayest bring thy gift to the altar, and there mayest remember that thy brother hath anything against thee, 24leave there thy gift before the altar, and go – first be reconciled to thy brother, and then having come bring thy gift. 25'Be agreeing with thy opponent quickly, while thou art in the way with him, that the opponent may not deliver thee to the judge, and the judge may deliver thee to the officer, and to prison thou mayest be cast, verily I say to thee, thou mayest not come forth thence till that thou mayest pay the last farthing. 'Ye heard that it was said to the ancients: Thou shalt not commit adultery; 28but I – I say to you, that every one who is looking on a woman to desire her, did already commit adultery with her in his heart. 29'But, if thy right eye doth cause thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast from thee, for it is good to thee that one of thy members may perish, and not thy whole body be cast to gehenna. 'And, if thy right hand doth cause thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast from thee, for it is good to thee that one of thy members may perish, and not thy whole body be cast to gehenna.

31'And it was said, That whoever may put away his wife, let him give to her a writing of divorce; 32but I -I say to you, that whoever may put away his wife, save for the matter of whoredom, doth make her to commit adultery; and whoever may marry her who hath been put away doth commit adultery. 'Again, ye heard that it was said to the ancients: Thou shalt not swear falsely, but thou shalt pay to the Lord thine oaths; 34but I -I say to you, not to swear at all; neither by the heaven, because it is the throne of God, 35nor by the earth, because it is His footstool, nor by Jerusalem, because it is a city of a great king, 36nor by thy head mayest thou swear, because thou art not able one hair to make white or black; 37but let your word be, Yes, Yes, No, No, and that which is more than these is of the evil. 38'Ye heard that it was said: Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth; 39but I – I say to you, not to resist the evil, but whoever shall slap thee on thy right cheek, turn to him also the other; 40and whoever is willing to take thee to law, and thy coat to take – suffer to him also the cloak. 41'And whoever shall impress thee one mile, go with him two, 42to him who is asking of thee be giving, and him who is willing to borrow from thee thou mayest not turn away. 43'Ye heard

that it was said: Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and shalt hate thine enemy; 44but I – I say to you, Love your enemies, bless those cursing you, do good to those hating you, and pray for those accusing you falsely, and persecuting you, 45that ye may be sons of your Father in the heavens, because His sun He doth cause to rise on evil and good, and He doth send rain on righteous and unrighteous. 'For, if ye may love those loving you, what reward have ye? do not also the tax-gatherers the same? 47and if ye may salute your brethren only, what do ye abundant? do not also the tax-gatherers so? 48ye shall therefore be perfect, as your Father who [is] in the heavens is perfect.

3 Matthew Chapter 6

'Take heed your kindness not to do before men, to be seen by them, and if not – reward ye have not from your Father who [is] in the heavens; 2whenver, therefore, thou mayest do kindness, thou mayest not sound

a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory from men; verily I say to you – they have their reward! 3'But thou, doing kindness, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth, 4that thy kindness may be in secret, and thy Father who is seeing in secret Himself shall reward thee manifestly. 5'And when thou mayest pray, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites, because they love in the synagogues, and in the corners of the broad places – standing – to pray, that they may be seen of men; verily I say to you, that they have their reward. 6'But thou, when thou mayest pray, go into thy chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father who [is] in secret, and thy Father who is seeing in secret, shall reward thee manifestly. 7'And – praying – ye may not use vain repetitions like the nations, for they think that in their much speaking they shall be heard, 8be ye not therefore like to them, for your Father doth know those things that ye have need of before your asking him; 9thus therefore pray ye: 'Our Father who [art] in the heavens! hallowed be Thy name. 10'Thy reign come: Thy will come to pass, as in heaven also on the earth. 11'Our appointed bread give us to-day. 'And forgive us our debts, as also we forgive our debtors. 13'And mayest Thou not lead us to temptation, but deliver us from the evil, because Thine is the reign, and the power, and the glory – to the ages. Amen. 14'For, if ye may forgive men their trespasses He also will forgive you -your Father who [is] in the heavens; 15but if ye may not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. 16'And when ye may fast, be ye not as the hypocrites, of sour countenances, for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear to men fasting; verily I say to you, that they have their reward. 17'But thou, fasting, anoint thy head, and wash thy face, 18that thou mayest not appear to men fasting, but to thy Father who [is] in secret, and thy Father, who is seeing in secret, shall reward thee manifestly. 19'Treasure not up to yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust disfigure, and where thieves break through and steal, 20but treasure up to yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth disfigure, and where thieves do not break through nor steal, 21for where your treasure is, there will be also your

heart. 22'The

lamp of the body is the eye, if, therefore, thine eye may be perfect, all thy body shall be enlightened, but if thine eye may be evil, all thy body shall be dark; if, therefore, the light that [is] in thee is darkness – the darkness, how great! 24'None is able to serve two lords, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one, and despise the other; ye are not able to serve God and Mammon. 25'Because of this I say to you, be not anxious for your life, what ye may eat, and what ye may drink, nor for your body, what ye may put on. Is not the life more than the nourishment, and the body than the clothing? 26look to the fowls of the heaven, for they do not sow, nor reap, nor gather into storehouses, and your heavenly Father doth nourish them; are not ye much better than they? 27'And who of you, being anxious, is able to add to his age one cubit? and about clothing why are ye anxious? consider well the lilies of the field; how do they grow? they do not labour, nor do they spin; 29and I say to you, that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. 30'And if the herb of the field, that to-day is, and to-morrow is cast to the furnace, God doth so clothe – not much more you, O ye of little faith? 31therefore ye may not be anxious, saying, What may we eat? or, What may we drink? or, What may we put round? 32for all these do the nations seek for, for your heavenly Father doth know that ye have need of all these; but seek ye first the reign of God and His righteousness, and all these shall be added to you. 34Be not therefore anxious for the morrow, for the morrow shall be anxious for its own things; sufficient for the day [is] the evil of it.

4 Matthew Chapter 7

'Judge not, that ye may not be judged, 2for in what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and in what measure ye measure, it shall be measured to you. 3'And why dost thou behold the mote that [is] in thy brother's eye, and the beam that [is] in thine own eye dost not consider? 4or, how wilt thou say to thy brother, Suffer I may cast out the mote from thine eye, and lo, the beam [is] in thine own eye? 5Hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye,

and then thou shalt see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. 6'Ye may not give that which is [holy] to the dogs, nor cast your pearls before the swine, that they may not trample them among their feet, and having turned – may rend you. 7'Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you; 8for every one who is asking doth receive, and he who is seeking doth find, and to him who is knocking it shall be opened. 9'Or what man is of you, of whom, if his son may ask a loaf – a stone will he present to him? 10and if a fish he may ask – a serpent will he present to him? 11if, therefore, ye being evil, have known good gifts to give to your children, how much more shall your Father who [is] in the heavens give good things to those asking him? 12'All things, therefore, whatever ye may will that men may be doing to you, so also do to them, for this is the law and the prophets. 13'Go ye in through the strait gate, because wide [is] the gate, and broad the way that is leading to the destruction, and many are those going in through it;

how strait [is] the gate, and compressed the way that is leading to the life, and few are those finding it! 15'But, take heed of the false prophets, who come unto you in sheep's clothing, and inwardly are ravening wolves. 16From their fruits ye shall know them; do [men] gather from thorns grapes? or from thistles figs? 17so every good tree doth yield good fruits, but the bad tree doth yield evil fruits. 18A good tree is not able to yield evil fruits, nor a bad tree to yield good fruits. Every tree not yielding good fruit is cut down and is cast to fire: 20therefore from their fruits ye shall know them. 21'Not every one who is saying to me Lord, lord, shall come into the reign of the heavens; but he who is doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens. 22Many will say to me in that day, Lord, lord, have we not in thy name prophesied? and in thy name cast out demons? and in thy name done many mighty things? 23and then I will acknowledge to them, that – I never knew you, depart from me ye who are working lawlessness. 24'Therefore, every one who doth hear of me these words, and doth do them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon the rock; 25and the rain did descend, and the streams came, and the winds blew, and they beat on that house,

and it fell not, for it had been founded on the rock. 26'And every one who is hearing of me these words, and is not doing them, shall be likened to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; 27and the rain did descend, and the streams came, and the winds blew, and they beat on that house, and it fell, and its fall was great.' 28And it came to pass, when Jesus ended these words, the multitudes were astonished at his teaching, 29for he was teaching them as having authority, and not as the scribes.

5 The Great Commandments

Matt 22:36-39 36 'Teacher, which [is] the great command in the Law?' 37 And Jesus said to him, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thine understanding – 38 this is a first and great command; 39 and the second [is] like to it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;

John 13:34-35 34 'A new commandment I give to you, that ye love one another; according as I did love you, that ye also love one another; 35 in this shall all know that ye are my disciples, if ye may have love one to another.'

6 Holy Spirit

John 14:26 and the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and remind you of all things that I said to you.

John 15:26 26 'And when the Comforter may come, whom I will send to you from the Father – the Spirit of truth, who from the Father doth come forth, he will testify of me; 27 and ye also do testify, because from the beginning ye are with me.

7 The Paths

Matthew 25:34-46 34 'Then shall the king say to those on his right hand, Come ye, the blessed of my Father, inherit the reign that hath been prepared for you from the foundation of the world; 40 'And the king answering, shall say to them, Verily I say to you, Inasmuch as ye did [it] to one of these my brethren – the least – to me ye did [it].