

**Bible Study Class**  
**Clayton Presbyterian Church**  
**Lesson 7 Jesus**  
**The Sermon on the Mount**

Opening prayer: Lord, we ask your presence among us today as we open our hearts to hear instructions given by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. In His name, Amen.

**Beatitudes: Promises to Messiah's subjects**

**Read Matthew 5:3-12**

**Read Luke 6:20-26**

He sat as was the custom of Jewish teachers of his time. He is teaching his Disciples about the kingdom of God and contrasting it with popular expectation; The Mosaic system and Pharisaic hypocrisy.

1. What does it mean to be "blessed?" They are called beatitudes from the word "beati which means blessed.
2. After pronouncing blessings upon those certain trying conditions, upon what classes of people did Jesus pronounce woes? The rich who trust in their riches. Those who are conceited and satisfy themselves with worldly things will feel empty. Those who are approved by the world, should be aware that their conduct may not be following Christ.

Why? The world or humanity is always against God.

3. Define each beatitude and list the reward for each one.
  - a. Poor in spirit are those who feel a deep sense of spiritual destitution and comprehend their nothingness before God. The kingdom of heaven is theirs, because they seek it, and therefore find it. This is in contrast to the Pharisee who thanks God that he isn't like other men. Poverty of spirit precedes riches and grace in the kingdom of God.
  - b. The blessing is not upon all that mourn; but upon those who mourn in reference to sin. They shall be comforted by the discovery and granting of God's pardon. Those to whom Christ spoke the beatitude bore a double sorrow. Not only did their own sins afflict their consciences, but the hatred and opposition of other sinners added many additional concerns.
  - c. The meek shall inherit it in two ways:
    1. They shall enjoy it more fully while in it.
    2. They shall finally, as part of the triumphant church, possess and enjoy it. His hearers were full

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of hopes that, as Messiah, he would glut their martial spirit, and lead them to world-wide conquest.

- d. Our Lord here declares that those who feel a most intense desire for righteousness shall obtain it. No other religion has such a promise. Under Christianity the promise is clear and definite.
- e. The meek bear, and the merciful forbear, and they shall obtain mercy both from God and man. This beatitude, like the rest, has a subordinate, temporal application; for God rules the world in spite of its sin. This beatitude has primary reference to the forgiveness of offences. The forgiving are forgiven.
- f. Pure in heart are those who are free from evil desires and purposes. They have that similarity of life to the divine life which excludes all uncleanness, and which enables them to comprehend as much as a human can, the motives and actions of God.
- g. The term peacemakers includes all who make peace between men, whether as individuals or as communities. It includes even those who worthily endeavor to make peace, though they fail. They shall be called God's children, because he is the God of peace.
- h. "Persecuted for righteousness' sake" Those who suffer because of their loyalty to the kingdom of heaven are blessed by being bound more closely to that kingdom for which they suffer.

**Influence and Duties of Messiah's Subjects**

**Read Matthew 5:13-16**

- 4. What is the "salt of the earth"? The salt of Palestine gathered from the marshes is not pure. Because of the foreign substances in it, it loses its savor and becomes useless, when exposed to the sun and air, or when permitted for any considerable time to come in contact with the ground; but pure salt does not lose its savor. The verse teaches that God's people keep the world from decay and corruption

Who is the "salt of the earth"? The followers of Jesus.

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What is the value of salt that has lost its savor? It is worthless.

5. Who is the "light of the world"? The Christian, by his teaching and example, removes ignorance and prejudice, and discloses the way of life.

What is their reason for letting their light shine before men? The church, when it reflects the light of Christ is a conspicuous body. It shines in a dark world so that mankind will glorify God.

**Relation of Messiah's Teaching to the Old Testament and Traditional Teaching**  
**Read Matthew 5:17-20**

6. What was Jesus' purpose in regard to the "Law and the Prophets?"

Instead of coming to destroy either the law or the prophets, Jesus came to fulfill all the types of law and all the unfulfilled predictions of the prophets. He fulfills them partly in his own person, and partly by his administration of the affairs of his kingdom. The latter part of the process is still going on, and will be until the end of the world. The law was to remain in full force until fulfilled, but it shows the precise accuracy with which the law was given by God.

7. How can one's righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees? A large portion of the sermon from this point on is a development of the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven in contrast with old dispensation righteousness and Pharisaic interpretation of it. The laws of Moses regulated civil conduct, and being state laws, they could only have regard to overt acts. But the laws of the kingdom of Christ are given to the individual, and regulate his inner spiritual condition, and the very initial motives of conduct; in it the spirit-feelings are all acts.

**Read Matthew 5:21-26**

8. What was one to do when he was angry with his brother? We have here three degrees of criminality or offence as to the sin of anger: 1. Silent rage; 2. Railing speech; 3. Bitter reproach. Each city had seven local judges. The local judges of a city would decide cases of manslaughter. They might try a person locally, confine him to a city of refuge or stone him. They also could refer the case to the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem and most people were in awe of this tribunal. The Supreme Court of its day. The third punishment goes beyond humans, to hell

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which was derived from the valley where children were sacrificed to the pagan god Moloch.

What application does that have today? Jesus prescribes a course of reconciliation which is what we should strive for today. Be reconciled with all who bear grudges against us, and says nothing as to whether their reasons are sufficient or insufficient, just or unjust.

Why is one who looks on a woman and lusts after her guilty of adultery in his heart? Jesus legislates against the thought which lies back of the act. He cuts off sin at its lowest root. Intention is the essence of all vice. Those who indulge in unchaste imaginations, desires and intentions are guilty before God.

**Read** Matthew 5:27-32

9. What is the marriage law of God? That marriage was for life.

What is the one exception to it? Unfaithfulness.

**Read** Matthew 5:33-37

10. Summarize and explain the prohibition against swearing.

But Jesus showed that all oaths were ultimately referable to God, and that those who made them would be disavowed if they did not keep them. To prevent this evil practice of loose swearing Jesus lays down the prohibition, "Swear not at all;" Judicial oaths, and oaths taken in the name of God on occasions of solemn religious importance, are not included in the prohibition. But as these are the only exceptions found in Scriptures, all other oaths are forbidden.

**Read** Matthew 5:38-48

**Read** Luke 6:27-30

11. List and explain the teaching of Jesus which stand opposed to the following principles.

- a. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This was supposed to make a man stop and think that any injury that he inflicted on another, could be inflicted on him. This was to stop conflicts; however, Christians still have the right of self-preservation. The command, "Go with him two," requires a cheerful compliance with the demands of a tyrannical government—a doubling of the hardship or duty required rather than a resistance to the

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demand. But here again the oppression is not an insupportable one. A man might go two miles and yet not lose his whole day's labor.

- b. Love you neighbor and hate your enemy. One commentator says that we always have the power to pray and our enemy has no power to refuse it. Love has many degrees.

**Read** Luke 6:32-36

**Almsgiving, Prayer and Fasting to be Performed Sincerely**

**Read** Matthew 6:1-4

12. What warnings are given to those who do their charitable deeds, pray, and/or fast before men to be seen of them? Trumpets were used to call attention. This is about self-praise or calling attention to what one has done. Our generosity is to come so spontaneously, and with so little thought, one part of the body can be unaware of what another part does. The Pharisaical habit of standing in a prayerful attitude, to be seen of men, was certainly not prayer.

What is their reward? They have received their reward by being noticed.

Why? He admonishes us to examine our motives and make sure that we are humble in our approach to God.

**Read** Matthew 6:5-15

13. Summarize the model prayer.

Explain each portion of it. The prayer has a beginning invocation and six petitions that give proper priorities for prayer. The first petition is directed toward God's name. The purpose of hallowing God's name is that God is "sanctified," or set apart as holy, among all people and in all actions—that God would be treated with the highest honor. In the second petition, the disciples pray that God's kingdom will come, aligning themselves with God's kingdom movement and seeking God's power in furthering its fulfillment. The third petition speaks of God's will; wherever the kingdom of heaven exerts its presence, God's will is experienced. The fourth petition addresses the disciples' daily bread, which refers to all of a believer's needs, both physical and spiritual. Disciples are to be concerned with one day at a time, relying on God for their daily provision. The fifth petition addresses the disciples' debts of sin. Sin creates a debt to God that cannot be repaid. Jesus' disciples have responded to his charge to repent and have received forgiveness for

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their debts. Those who receive forgiveness are so grateful to God that they in turn eagerly forgive those who sin against them. The final petition addresses the disciples' battle with evil forces. The word "temptation" can be used for either temptation or testing. Disciples should pray either for relief from testing or that their testing would not become an occasion for temptation. The influence of Satan lurks behind attempts to turn a testing into a snare for evil.

The verses 16-18 are Jesus' comments on fasting. He said that a person shouldn't make a show of fasting, rather they should groom themselves as they regularly do so others don't know that they are fasting.

**Security of Heavenly Treasures Contrasted with Earthly Anxieties**

**Read Matthew 6:19-34**

14. Where are we to lay up treasures? In heaven. In order to keep money its possessor frequently buried it, thus subjecting it to rust and corrosion. The havoc caused by moths is very familiar. It forbids us to hoard for selfish purposes, or to look upon our possessions as permanent. The lives of many people today is consumed with gathering an abundance of earthly treasure.

Why? We should place our treasures in heaven, even if the treasures there were no better than the treasures on earth; for it is better that our hearts should abide in the city of God than on this sinful earth.

15. What results when one tries to serve two masters? Mammon was a common Chaldee word used in the East to express material riches. It is here personified as a kind of god of this world. Jesus here assumes that we are framed to serve; and hence that we must choose our master, for it is impossible to serve two masters whose interests are different and conflicting. They conflict here, for it is mammon's interest to be hoarded and loved, but it is God's interest that mammon be distributed to the needy and be lightly esteemed. God claims our supreme love and our undivided service.

What application does Jesus make of this fact? Mammon can only supply food, but God gives the life; mammon can only furnish clothing, but God gives the body. By single-mindedness we can find peace, for God is to be relied upon. By double-

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mindfulness we fall to worrying, for mammon may fail to supply those things which we feel we need.

16. What illustrations does Jesus use to support the principle that one should seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first? The birds do not serve mammon at all, yet God feeds them. Peace and trust characterize the service of God. The rewards of mammon, on the contrary, are won by anxiety. But the rewards of mammon can't lengthen life as can God. Therefore, we should not hesitate to choose God's service.

Why are they such fitting examples? To the Jew Solomon was the highest representative of earthly grandeur, yet he was surpassed by the common lily of the field. The people were accustomed to use the dried grass, mingled with wild flowers and weeds, for fuel. The oven was a large, round pot of earthenware, or other material, two or three feet high, and narrowing toward the top. This was first heated by fire within, after which the fire was raked out, and the dough put inside.

**Law Concerning Judging**

**Read** Luke 6:37-42

17. What type of judging does Jesus forbid? The commandment is leveled at rash, censorious and uncharitable judgments, and the faultfinding spirit or disposition which condemns without examination of the charges, forgetful that we also shall stand in the judgment and shall need mercy.

Why? Our judgment of Christians must be charitable, in remembrance of the fact that they are God's servants; and that he reserves to himself the ultimate right of judging both them and us. The merciful receive mercy, and the censorious receive censure.

18. What happens when the blind leads the blind? Whoso lacks the knowledge of divine truth cannot so lead others that they shall find it. They shall both fall into the pitfalls of moral error and confusion.

What application does Jesus make of this principle? Jesus graphically and grotesquely represents a man with a log, or rafter, in his eye trying to take a chip

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or splinter out of his neighbor's eye. Both parties have the same trouble or fault, but the one having the greater seeks to correct the one having the less. The application is that he who would successfully teach or admonish must first be instructed or admonished himself. In moral movements men cannot be pushed; they must be led. Hence those who would teach must lead the way. Those who have reformed their own faults can "see clearly" how to help others. But so long as we continue in sin, we are blind leaders of the blind. We are here forbidden, then, to use any religious office, work, or ordinance, in such a manner as to degrade or profane it. To give pearls to swine is to press the claims of the gospel upon those who despise it until they persecute you for annoying them with it. When such men are known, they are to be avoided.

**Concerning Prayer and the "Golden Rule"**

**Read Matthew 7:7-12**

19. What example does Jesus use to show that God will supply the needs of His children who ask of Him? Fish and bread were the common food of the peasants of Galilee. A stone might resemble a cake, but if given it would deceive the child. A serpent might resemble an eel or a perch, but if given it would be both deceptive and injurious. We often misunderstand God's answer thus. But our sense of sonship should teach us better. The paternal feeling which prompts us to give good things to our children, is still a higher degree in God with reference to his children; and hence it is argued that he will much more give good things to those who ask him.
20. Explain and apply the principle set forth in Matthew 7:12. We are to practice the Golden Rule because God's divine judgment teaches forbearance, and his goodness teaches kindness. This precept is fitly called the Golden Rule, for it embraces in its few words the underlying and governing principle of all morality.

**The Two Ways and the False Prophets**

**Read Matthew 7: 13-23**

21. According to Jesus, what possible ways can one walk in life? The Master here presents two cities before us.



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How is each way entered? One has a wide gateway opening onto the broad street, and other a narrow gate opening onto a straight street or alley.

Where does each lead? The first city is Destruction, the second is Life.

How many will walk each one? Jesus says the number of false teachers is large. We must not carelessly ignore the assertion of that important fact. We should also note that Christ will not lightly pass over their errors on the judgment day, though they seem to have discovered them for the first time. Such truths should make us extremely cautious both as teachers and learners

22.How can one recognize a false teacher? Prophets are those who lay claim to teach men correctly the Godly life. Teachers are to be judged by their conduct as men, and also by the effect of their teaching. If either be predominantly bad, the man must be avoided. But we must not judge hastily, nor by slight and trivial actions, for some specimens of bad fruit grown on good trees.

23.Who will enter the kingdom of God? The Pharisees were excessively devoted to prayer, and they led the people to believe that every prayerful man would be saved. The Mohammedans and Romanists are subject to the same delusion, as may be seen in their punctilious observance of the forms of prayer, while habitually neglecting many of the common rules of morality. Doing the will of God must be understood, not in the sense of sinless obedience, but as including a compliance with the conditions on which sins are forgiven.

Who will not be allowed to enter it? false teachers filled with a patronizing spirit toward the Lord, and with a sense of power as to his work, will be deceived by a show of success.

Why? A person must have love of God and neighbor reflected in their works. While works don't save, they are the fruit of faith.

**Conclusion and Application: Two Builders**

**Read Luke 6:46-49**

24.Who does Jesus call "wise?" No life can be founded upon Christ's teaching unless it be founded also upon faith and trust in his personality. For this we must dig deep,

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Who does He call "foolish?" The imagery of this passage would be impressive anywhere, but is especially so when used before an audience accustomed to the fierceness of an Eastern tempest. Rains, floods, etc., represent collectively the trials, the temptations and persecutions which come upon us from without. There comes a time to every life when these things throng together and test the resources of our strength. You can't stand without a foundation.

**Read** Matthew 7:28-29

25. How did people react to Jesus' teaching? They were astonished because He taught with authority.

Closing prayer: Lord, may something that we have read or heard today help us to follow You more closely. Amen.

Matthew 5:3-12	Luke 6:20-26	Matthew 6:1-4	Matthew 7:7-12
Matthew 5:13-16	Luke 6:27-31	Matthew 6:5-15	Matthew 7: 13-23
Matthew 5:17-20	Luke 6:32-36	Matthew 6:19-34	Matthew 7:28-29
Matthew 5:21-26	Luke 6:37-42		
Matthew 5:27-32	Luke 6:46-49		
Matthew 5:33-37			
Matthew 5:38-48			