



THE
HEART
OF THE MATTER

A SERMON ON THE MOUNT SERIES



Sermon on the Mount

Part 2: Matthew 6-7

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Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:1-6

Lesson 1: The Strength of Hidden Righteousness

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

In the first section of Jesus's sermon found in Matthew 5, Jesus teaches his disciples how to live in the kingdom and why it is important to live this way. His words point to a deeper obedience that challenges his disciples to look beyond outward actions and appearances to the heart. *The heart of the matter is a matter of the heart.*

In chapter 6, Jesus challenges his disciples to examine their actions—why they do things. He cautions them against showing off their good deeds to others in order to gain praise and recognition.

In Matthew 6:1-6 and 16-18, Jesus uses three well-known and much practiced acts of Jewish piety to make his point: alms giving, praying, and fasting. This lesson will guide us in understanding what it means to give, pray, and fast with our humble hearts intent on glorifying our Father in Heaven, not seeking our own glory and praise of men.

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29.
2. Re-read Matthew 6:1-6.
3. What does Jesus warn his listeners to beware or be careful of in verse 1? Is Jesus saying that his followers are to hide their good deeds? If not, what is he saying?
4. What do we give up when we seek praise from men?
5. In Matthew 6:2, Jesus says, "**When** you give to the needy" not "**If** you give to the needy." What assumption is Jesus making?
6. Write down the definition of **hypocrite**. Strong's #5273.

7. Read Matthew 15:7-9 and Isaiah 29:13. How do Jesus and Isaiah describe hypocrites?
8. The following quote gives more insight into why the word *hypocrite* addressed the heart of the matter in these verses. Read the quote and comment on why Jesus warned against giving in this way.

The word **hypocrites** originally referred to a play-actor who performed on the stage of the Greek or Roman theater. The verbal form of the word was frequently used in Jewish writings in the time between the writing of the OT and the NT to speak of the act of "pretending". Many ancient play-actors aspired to be celebrities adored by the masses. They lived for the thrill of standing ovations and the prizes and awards sometimes presented for excellent dramatic performances. The hypocrites to whom Jesus referred were spiritual play-actors who pretended to have a piety that they did not actually possess in order to inspire the applause of a human audience. (Charles Quarles, *Sermon on the Mount: Restoring Christ's Message to the Modern Church*, p. 113)

9. In Matthew 6:2, Jesus says to sound no trumpet before you. Think of some ways that we "blow our trumpets" today.
10. Write down the words of Matthew 6:3. What do you think Jesus means?
11. Where does our attention need to be when we give? (see verse 4) Why?

12. In Matthew 6:5, how does Jesus describe the prayers of the hypocrites?
13. When Jesus says to not pray like the hypocrites, what does he mean?
14. What is the pattern that Jesus gives for private prayer in verse 6?
15. What is the result of praying this way?
16. What reward do we gain if we live to please God?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 6:1-6
3. What is the heart of what Jesus is teaching about giving, praying, and fasting in Matthew 6:1-8?
4. Describe someone who lives their life to be seen or recognized by others. What do they say? How do they act?
5. In what ways do you call attention to your good gifts?
6. If we live our lives as a performance to gain the praise of men, when do we receive our reward?
7. List some of the distractions that might be present when you pray publicly.
8. When Jesus says to pray and give in secret is he condemning praying and giving in public? Why or why not?

9. How might your prayers move from *being sincere* to becoming *prayers to gain the approval of men?*

Prayer

Read through the Lord's Prayer. Focus on verse 9 of the Lord's Prayer and reflect on what it means to have God as our Father. Write your own prayer using the Lord's Prayer as a template while reflecting on what it means to rest securely in the care of your Heavenly Father.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:5-15

Lesson 2: The Disciples' Prayer Part 1

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29
2. Read Matthew 6:5-15.
3. Summarize what Jesus is saying in verses 5-8.
4. Fill in this chart and contrast Jesus's statements about how the hypocrites give and pray with his statements about how disciples give and pray.

Matthew 6:1-6

| Who | Hypocrites | Disciples |
|--------|------------|-----------|
| Where | | |
| Why | | |
| Result | | |

5. In Matthew 6:7, Jesus warns against praying like the Gentiles, with empty phrases or vain repetition. Read I Kings 18:25-29 to see an example of this type of prayer. Why does Jesus warn against it?
6. What does Matthew 6:8 acknowledge about God?

7. After sharing examples of how not to pray, Jesus instructs his disciples how to pray with the right motives and a sincere heart. This instruction is also found in Luke 11:1-4. There are two main sections to this prayer. In the first section, the prayer focuses on God. In the second section, the requests focus on his disciples and their needs.

Circle all the pronouns you find in Matthew 6:9-15. How does the change in pronouns inform the way we are to pray?

8. To get a solid definition of prayer, look it up. Prayer: Strong's Greek #4336
9. In Matthew 6:9, to whom does Jesus say our prayers are to be addressed?
10. What does verse 9 inform us about God? Look up the word *hallowed*. (Strong's Greek #37) List all the synonyms you can think of for *hallowed*.
11. What does verse 9 inform us about ourselves? Read Galatians 4:5-7 to add to your response.
12. Why is it important to recognize our sonship to God when we pray?
13. Based on your answers to the questions above, why do you think Jesus teaches his disciples to begin their prayers with a focus on *Our Father in Heaven, whose name is holy*?

14. List the two things Jesus says to pray for in verse 10.
15. When Jesus tells his disciples to pray for God's kingdom to come, is he merely telling them to pray for something that will happen in the future? If not, what does he mean?
16. Jesus prays **your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven**. What is Jesus communicating when he follows **your will be done on earth** with **as it is in heaven**? What does he want his disciples to see and understand?
17. Later in his life, Jesus models for his disciples what praying for God's will looks like. Read Matthew 26:38-44. Is the will of God always easy or safe?
18. Read what Paul Tripp says about submitting to the will of God:

You will experience the messiness, discomfort, and difficulty of God's refining grace. It means surrendering the center of your universe to the One who alone deserves to be there. It means loving God above all else and your neighbor as yourself. It means experiencing the freedom that can only be found when God breaks your bondage to you! It means finally living for the one glory that is truly glorious, the glory of God.

You see, the prayer that Christ taught us to pray is the antidote to sin. Since sin starts with the heart, it is only when my heart desires God's will more than it desires my will, that I'll live within the moral, gospel boundaries that God has set for me. And it is only God's grace that can produce this kind of heart.

"Thy kingdom come", words of surrender, words of protection, and words of grace that can be prayed by those who've been delivered by the Redeemer from the kingdom that always leads to destruction and death, the kingdom of self. (Paul Tripp, *Whiter Than Snow*, p. 62.)

How does this make you feel?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 6:5-15
3. In what ways is the Lord's Prayer different from prayers we would pray if left on our own without this model from Jesus?
4. JI Packer in his book, *Praying the Lord's Prayer*, says

*Since God is spirit, "heaven" here cannot signify a place remote from us that he inhabits... Granted, the "heaven" where saints and angels dwell has to be thought of as a sort of locality, because saints and angels, as God's creatures, exist in time and space, but when the Creator is said to be "in heaven", the thought is that he exists on a different **plane** from us, rather than in a different **place**. (p. 36)*

What does God exists on a different **plane** from us mean? How does this add to, change, or challenge your understanding of Jesus's words: *Our Father, who art in heaven?*

5. When you consider God's greatness, what response does this evoke in you?
6. What are some of the obstacles to prayer?

7. Is God's kingdom a place or a relationship?

8. When we pray for God's kingdom to come and will be done, what are some of the implications of this prayer? Are you willing to pray this prayer or do you resist it? Why?

9. When we pray for God's kingdom to come and his will be done, what are some specific things we might pray for.

10. In what ways does what you have learned about prayer challenge you? What delights you?

11. Read Isaiah 40. Why is it important to direct our prayers to the transcendent God who is in heaven? How does your view of God affect your view of prayer and inform the way you pray?

Prayer

Read through the Lord's Prayer. Think about what it means to pray for God's kingdom to come and his will be done. Ask God to show you ways that you are living more for your own kingdom and will than for His. Confess these things to him and rejoice in his forgiveness.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:5-15

Lesson 3: The Disciples' Prayer Part 2

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29 and focus on Matthew 6:5-15.
2. What is the focus of the prayer in Matthew 6:11-13? Make a list of what Jesus tells his disciples to ask for.
3. What does this list tell us about what God is concerned about?
4. Why do we hesitate to bring our desires to God?
5. Read Psalm 104. What are some of the ways God provides for his creation?
6. If God already knows what we need before we ask him, then why do we pray?
7. How does The Lord's Prayer define sin?
8. How often do we need to confess our sin to God? Why?

9. What are some ways that we respond to sin that do not involve repentance?

10. Why is it important for us to forgive those who have sinned against us?

11. What do the following passages tell us about temptation?

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|
| Eve's Temptation | Genesis 3:1-7 | |
| Abraham's Temptation | Genesis 22:1-19 | |
| Jesus's Temptation | Luke 4:1-15 | |

12. What is temptation as defined in the Lord's Prayer?

13. Why should we be asked to be kept from temptation?

14. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus tells us to pray that God would deliver us from evil (or the evil one). What does he mean by this?

15. I Peter 5:8 reminds us that we have an enemy, the evil one, Satan, who is trying his best to discourage, devour, and defeat us. Why do we need to remember this? What is Jesus teaching us to pray in Matthew 6:13.

16. Read and reflect on I Corinthians 10:13. What has God promised us?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 6:5-15
3. Is God concerned about both our spiritual needs and our physical needs? How do you know?
4. Is it easier for you to pray for your spiritual or physical needs? What keeps you from being willing or able to pray for one or the other?
5. Reflect on your answer to question 3 above. (Psalm 104) How has God provided for you in specific ways? Thank him for his provision.
6. When Jesus teaches us to ask for forgiveness of sins, he implies that we sin daily. What are some ways that we respond to our sin?

7. What are some specific ways that the Lord's Prayer might reshape the prayers we pray?

8. Why do we hesitate to bring our desires to God?

9. If God already knows what we need before we ask him, then why do we pray?

Praise God that his grace is greater than all of our sin! God's love for us is not dependent on our performance. He is a forgiving, merciful God.

Prayer

Pray through your prayer requests using the Lord's Prayer as a guide.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:16-18

Lesson 4: Fasting

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29
2. Read Matthew 6:16-18.
3. What is the topic addressed in these verses?
4. Write down the definition of *fast*. Strong's #3522.
5. Why do people fast?
6. Fasting was a common practice for the Jews. The Old Testament prophets had much to say about fasting. Read the following passages and note what you learn.
 - a. Isaiah 58:1-12
 - b. Joel 2:12-17
7. Fasting can be both corporate or individual. How do the following passages support this statement?
 - a. Leviticus 23: 27-32
 - b. Jonah 3:1-10

8. Fasting, by removing ordinary everyday routines, creates space to focus on God. What does Daniel 9:3-4 and Daniel 10 say about this?

9. Read Isaiah 58:1-12 again.

a. Why was God displeased with their fasting? See verse 5.

b. Describe the kind of fast that is pleasing to God. See verses 6-7.

c. List the desired effects of godly fasting. See verses 8-12. Look for the if-then statements.

10. What do the gloomy faces of the hypocritical “fasters” reveal about their hearts?

11. How does Jesus instruct his disciples to fast?

12. Between his baptism and the beginning of Jesus's earthly ministry, he fasted.

Read Matthew 4:1-4.

a. What does this passage say about the source of life and strength in verse 4?

Read Deuteronomy 8:3.

b. How does this passage support Jesus's words in Matthew 4?

13. When Jesus says to "anoint your head and wash your face," he is saying to just act normal when you fast. Why does he tell them this?

14. Does fasting earn a reward or does God grant a reward to those who fast?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?

2. Read Matthew 6:16-18

3. Is fasting widely practiced today? Do you fast? Why or why not?

4. Why does God want us to fast? What are the benefits of fasting?

5. How does Jesus describe people who fast in a public, self-promoting way?

6. In what ways are you motivated by (enslaved to) what others think of you?

7. Read and reflect on this quote from Dallas Willard:

The effect of both action and non-action for human approval is to push the presence of God aside as irrelevant and to subject ourselves to the human kingdom. In both avoiding evil and doing good, our respect should be for God alone. We may think it is ok to avoid evil for fear of being seen, for in any case we do avoid the evil. But that only shows we have no respect for God and would disobey him but for the opinions of others. The basic principle is the same in both cases.

Jesus is here leading us into the discipline of secrecy. We from time to time practice doing things approved of in our religious circles—giving, praying, fasting, attending services of the church and so on—but in such a way that no one knows. Thus our motivation and reward for doing these things cannot come from human beings. (The Divine Conspiracy, p. 221.)

8. What is described in the quote above is living for an “audience of One.”

- a. How much time do you spend thinking about what others think compared with thinking about what God thinks?

- b. In what ways would your thoughts, actions, and conversations change if you truly lived your life for an “audience of One”?

Prayer

What Jesus is teaching us to do in this important passage is to be free of control by the opinions of other . . . The effect of both action and non-action for human approval is to push the presence of God aside as irrelevant and to subject ourselves to the human kingdom. In both avoiding evil and doing good, our respect should be for God alone. We may think it is ok to avoid evil for fear of being seen, for in any case we do avoid the evil. But that only shows we have no respect for God and would disobey him but for the opinions of others. The basic principle is the same in both cases.

The discipline of secrecy will help us break the grip of human opinion over our souls and our actions. A discipline is an activity in our power that will enable us to do what we cannot do by direct effort. Jesus is here leading us into the discipline of secrecy. We from time to time practice doing things approved of in our religious circles -giving, praying, fasting, attending services of the church and so on - but in such a way that no one knows. Thus our motivation and reward for doing these things cannot come from human beings. We are liberated from slavery to eyes, and then it does not matter whether people know or not. (Dallas Willard, The Divine Conspiracy, p. 221)

Ask God to reveal to you ways that you are seeking the approval of men. Ask him to free you from the grip of human opinion over your soul and your actions. Ask him to teach you how to live for an audience of One.

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:19-24

Lesson 5: Treasure Hunt

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29.
2. Read Matthew 6:19-24.
3. Compare earthly and heavenly treasures.

| Earthly Treasures | Heavenly Treasures |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| | |

4. Why does Jesus tell his disciples to store up heavenly treasures rather than earthly treasures?
5. Which type of treasure is it easier for you to pursue? Why?
6. Read Colossians 3:1-2. As followers of Christ, what are we to be seeking?

7. In Matthew 6:19-24, Jesus challenges his disciples to examine their priorities. Jesus tells a story about a rich young man; a story that adds to our understanding of Matthew 6:21.

- Jesus tells a story that explains this in Luke 12:16-21. What is Jesus revealing about the condition of our hearts?

- What do your priorities reveal about your heart?

One of the basic and fundamental truths of the christian faith is that our heart (who we really are on the inside) should belong to God. He created us, and he has redeemed us in Christ. Purchasing us with the precious blood of his son. To love anyone or anything or to treasure anyone or anything more than Jesus is spiritual adultery. It is adultery of the heart. (Daniel Akin, Exalting Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, p. 105)

- Why do we strive so hard to store up earthly treasures? And why is it futile to do so?

8. In Matthew 6:22-23, how do Jesus's images of light and darkness draw attention to what we love or treasure?

What does John 3:19-21 add to your understanding?

9. In scripture, the terms "eye" and "heart" are connected. Where you focus, what you see or set your gaze on, gives your life direction. What are some things that you set your eye on that distract you from focusing on the prize of one treasure, one kingdom, one master?

10. Read Genesis 3:1-6 and underline the verbs in verse 6. Do you think our eyes play any role in the sin we commit? If so, what?
11. According to Jesus's words in Matthew 6:19-24, what are the marks of a disciple?
12. In Matthew 6:24, what decision is each disciple faced with?
13. Why must Jesus's disciples choose between God and money?
14. How do Paul's words in I Timothy 6:17-19 point us to lasting treasure?
15. When Jesus urges his disciples to not find their security in earthly possessions or money, but in God who provides all things, he challenges them to look deeply at their hearts.

Examine your heart:

What are you seeking?

What are you serving?

Where are you looking?

What controls you?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 6:19-24
3. If you asked someone close to you to tell you what you treasure, what would they say?
4. How do we store up treasure in heaven? What is it? Where do we find it?
5. In scripture, the terms “eye” and “heart” are connected. Where you focus, what you see or set your gaze on, gives your life direction.
 - a. What are some things that you set your eye on that distract you from focusing on the prize of one treasure, one kingdom, one master?
 - b. Where do you invest time and energy?
 - c. What are you trying to protect, secure, and keep?
 - d. What does this reveal about what you treasure?

6. How do we take our focus off of the things of this world that distract us and seek to devote ourselves to God?

7. Jesus contrasts God and money as the two masters we serve. Why money and not something else? Why is money a tempting master?

8. "No one can serve two masters. You cannot serve God and money."
 - a. On what master, other than God, have you set your gaze?

 - b. How can our Renew Group help you see God and serve Him rather than pursue things of this world that do not last?

Prayer

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones summarizes Matthew 6:19-24 in a powerful way. Read and reflect on his words. (emphasis mine)

A final word. This wretched man who is ruined by sin not only finds he has nothing, he not only discovers that he has entirely fooled himself and has been misled by his supposed light, he finds himself also to be outside the life of God and under his wrath. 'Ye cannot serve God and mammon.' So if a man has served mammon in this life until he dies, he will find himself beyond death outside God. He has not served God, so there is only one thing to say about him, according to scripture and that is that 'the wrath of God abideth on him' (John 3:36)

All he has loved for has gone; there in eternity he is a naked soul having to face God, the God who is love and who is gracious and kind. The Father, The One who counts the very hairs of the Christian's head, is a stranger to him.

He is without God, and not only without God in the world but without God in eternity, without hope, facing an eternity of wretchedness and remorse, of misery and regrets.

Sin is a total loss.

If you are not living to serve him, then that will be your fate. You will have nothing at all, and you will dwell in that negativity, that hopeless negativity throughout all eternity. God forbid that that should be the fate of anyone within reach of these words.

If you want to avoid it, go to God and confess to Him that you have been serving earthly things, and laying up for yourselves treasures upon earth. Confess it to Him, give yourself to Him, place yourself unreservedly in His hands and above all ask Him to fill you with His Holy Spirit, who alone can enlighten the mind, clear the understanding, make the eye single and enable us to see the truth—the truth about sin and the only way of salvation by the blood of Christ—the Holy Spirit who can show us how to be delivered from the perversion and pollution of sin, and to become new men and women, created after the fashion and pattern of the Son of God himself, loving the things of God and serving Him, and Him alone.

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:25-34

Lesson 6: Sparrows and Lilies

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29.

2. Read Matthew 6:25-34.

3. In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus tells his disciples not to worry, but rather to trust in God. If we are honest with ourselves and each other, we know that we worry. Why do we worry? When do we worry? What do we worry about?

4. List the reasons that Jesus tells them not to worry found in these verses:
 - a. Matthew 6:25b

 - b. Matthew 6: 26

 - c. Matthew 6:27

 - d. Matthew 6: 28-30

 - e. Matthew 6:32

 - f. Matthew 6:33b-34

5. What did Jesus say that is helpful to you?

6. What connection, if any, is there between Jesus's teaching about treasure and masters and his teaching about anxiety and worry?

Said the robin to the sparrow,
"I should really like to know,
Why these anxious human beings
Rush around and worry so."
Said the sparrow to the robin,
"Friend I think that it must be,
That they have no Heavenly Father
Such as cares for you and me."
Overheard in an Orchard, by Elizabeth Cheney

7. Why does Jesus say "O you of little faith"? What is he identifying as the source of their trouble?
8. Read Luke 8:22-25. Were the disciples applying what they knew and claimed to believe about Jesus to the circumstances of their lives during that storm?
9. Read Psalm 46. Write down what the psalmist says about God.
10. Read Hebrews 11. List what you learn about God's people and their life circumstances.
11. How can what you have learned in Psalm 46 and Hebrews 11 help you apply what you know and claim to believe about Jesus to the circumstances in your life today?

12. In Matthew 6:32 what are some things the Gentiles might have been running after? Are you running after any of these things?

13. What does it mean to seek first God's kingdom?

14. What does it mean to seek God's righteousness?

15. If we seek God's kingdom and righteousness, what will He do?

16. This section of the Sermon ends with 'Therefore.' After giving us all the reasons we do not need to worry and why God can be trusted, Jesus tells us again not to be anxious. What exactly does he say and what does he want us to know?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 6:25-34.
3. What reasons does Jesus give for us not to worry?
4. What in your life causes you to worry? Make a list.
 - a. What do those circumstances or items cause you to worry about?
 - b. Which idol does this reveal in your heart?
5. How does 1 Peter 5:6-7 speak into your list of worries? What does Peter want you to know?
6. What else does the gospel say about worry that will help you trust God?
7. What are you seeking?

Prayer

Use the template of the Lord's Prayer to write a prayer concerning your anxiety. Make this prayer personal, listing what you worry about, what this reveals about your heart, and ask for comfort and clarity from the Lord and the truths in which we find eternal hope.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

Matthew 7:1-6

Lesson 7: Lumberjacks

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29
2. Re-read Matthew 7:1-6.
3. Define judge/judgment:
 - a. In your own words
 - b. Look up Strong's #2920
 - c. Look up the dictionary definition
4. What are the reasons Jesus gives to not judge in these verses in this passage:
 - a. Verse 1
 - b. Verse 2
 - c. Verse 3-5
5. Picture someone having a log in their eye. Picture this person telling someone else they have a speck in their eye. What does this illustration tell us about the person that has a plank in their eye?
6. What does it mean for someone to be a hypocrite or to act hypocritically?

7. How can we take the log out of our own eye?

8. How can we help others to take the speck out of their eye?

9. What is the order of eye cleaning? Why is this important?

10. Does Jesus say we cannot judge or evaluate anyone or anything?

11. Read these verses where judgment/discrimmation is appropriate:
 - a. Matthew 7:15
 - b. Matthew 18:15
 - c. 1 John 4:1
 - d. Romans 12:9
 - e. Deuteronomy 13:1-11
 - f. 1 Timothy 1:3-4
 - g. 1 Timothy 6:3-5
 - h. Acts 20: 28-29

12. Who is the one true judge?

13. Read these verses about God as the one true Judge:

- a. Isaiah 33:22
- b. Hebrews 12:23
- c. Romans 2:16
- d. John 5:22
- e. Psalm 50:6
- f. Genesis 18:25

14. What type of people do pigs and dogs represent in verse 6?

15. What do the pearls represent in verse 6?

16. What is the meaning of verse 6? What is Jesus telling us not to do?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29
2. Read Matthew 7:7-12.
3. When should we not judge others?
4. In what ways is it appropriate for us to judge others? What must we do before we judge others?
5. Once humbled by our own sinfulness, how can we help others?
6. How do you respond to others humbly offering you criticism/advice? How should you receive this? What can you do to react more humbly?
7. How did you respond when reading and studying this passage? Did you feel convicted? Did you feel frustrated? Did all the times you have been wrongly judged come to mind? Did all the times you have judged wrongly come to mind?

8. How are we supposed to respond to this passage? What do you need to work on in your own life? What are some practical ways you can do this?
 9. What hope do we have in knowing that God is the one true Judge?

Prayer

Read and reflect on Matthew 6:12,

"and forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Are there people who you have not truly forgiven in your heart? Pray with one another that you will truly forgive others, as our gracious Lord continues to forgive us.

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:7-12

Lesson 8: A Bold Ask

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29

2. Read Matthew 7:7-12.

3. What verbs are used in verse 7?

4. What do these verbs tell us we should do?

5. How should we approach God in doing these things?

6. Does God give us everything we want? Everything we ask, seek, or knock for?
 - a. Why or why not?

 - b. What does he give us?

 - c. Does this comfort you?

7. Are we to ask, seek, and knock once or continually? Are we to approach God once or continually?

8. Read the following verses. What do these verses tell us about prayer?

 - a. **Philippians 4:6-7**
 - b. **1 John 5:14**
 - c. **Mark 11:22-25**
 - d. **Romans 8:26-27**
 - e. **James 5:13-18**
9. How has God provided for you in your life?
10. How did God provide for those in the Bible? What stories come to mind?
11. How have you seen people help you in your life? How have you seen others provide for you or others?
12. If sinful people care for others, how much better will a perfect, loving God provide for you? If God provides for the birds (Matthew 6:26), how much more will he provide for you?

13. We have a God who listens to us and wants to hear from us. He wants us to call upon him. How do you respond to this?

14. What is the 'Law and the prophets' referred to in verse 12?

15. Verse 12 gives us a command that we cannot keep.

a. What hope do we have in knowing we cannot perfectly follow this command?

b. What gives us strength and guides us in how we treat others?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 7:7-12.
3. One way God cares for us is by providing for us. We are to reflect God and care for others. How do you care for others? How can you care for others better?
4. God discerns what is good and gives us what is good when we ask. We also must discern what is good when caring for others. How can you do this in your relationships? As a parent? As a friend? As a member of a church?
5. How are we to respond when God doesn't answer our prayers in the way we want? How do you usually respond?
6. How are we supposed to treat others? What does this mean? How can we do this?

7. What characteristics of God are shown in this passage?
 8. What example do we have in Jesus for the commandment given in verse 12? Knowing that we will fall short of following the Lord's commandments, what hope do we have?

Prayer

Read through the Lord's prayer. Focus on verse 11 of the Lord's Prayer and reflect on what it means to have God as our provider. Write your own prayer using the Lord's prayer as a template while reflecting on the lesson studied on Matthew 7:7-12.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:13-20

Lesson 9: The Road Divided

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29.
2. Read Matthew 7:13-20.
3. What does the wide and easy gate represent?
4. Why is the way to this gate described as wide and easy?
5. What does this gate lead to? What is "destruction" (v.13)?
6. What does the narrow gate represent? What does the gate lead to?
7. Why is the way to the narrow gate hard?
8. What is the "life" in verse 14? Why is life greater than destruction?
9. What tempts you to follow the path to the wide and easy gate?

10. Can we enter the narrow gate on our own? Who do we have to thank for this?
Who helps us on the narrow way to life?

11. How can we help others on the way to the narrow gate?

12. False Prophets:

a. What are some examples of false prophets in the Bible? What made them false prophets?

b. Read the following verses about false prophets:

- Deuteronomy 18:20
- Jeremiah 14:14
- Luke 6:26
- 2 Timothy 4:3-4
- 1 John 4:1-6

c. What characterizes false prophets today?

d. What characterizes true prophets?

13. How do we identify false prophets in our lives and in society?

14. In the context of this passage in Matthew, what are some bad fruits?

15. How can you protect yourself from false prophets and false teachings?

16. What is the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)?

17. What type of fruit do you bear? What fruit do you see in your life?

18. Read John 15:1-11 where Jesus talks about bearing fruit.
 - a. Are you abiding in Christ? How are you doing this?

 - b. Who is glorified from the fruit you produce? You or God?

 - c. Are there any areas of your life that aren't producing fruit? Do you need to cut this part out of your life or change what you are doing so that it will produce fruit?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 5:38-42.
3. Do you find the path to the narrow gate hard? What hope do you have in knowing the path leads to life?
4. Are we to walk on the narrow path alone? Who helps us along the path? How can we help each other?
5. How can you engage with and speak truth into the lives of those who believe false teachings? How can you share the truth with those who are following the wide and easy way to destruction? How is this done best?
6. How do you identify false prophets? How can you guard yourself against false teachings?

7. What are the truths of the gospel? How can you remind yourself of these truths? Are you doing this often?
 8. How are we to reflect the truths of the gospel? We often reflect what we focus on, what we're passionate about, and how we spend our time. How are we to abide in Christ with the result of pouring into others' lives?

Prayer

The Lord's Prayer can be used as a template for prayer. We can also use other passages in Scripture for prayer. Using the Lord's Prayer as a template, write a prayer with John 15:1-11 and use this prayer throughout the week.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil."

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:21-23

Lesson 10: False Identity

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29.
2. Re-read Matthew 7:21-23.
3. In the previous passage, Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus warns people to "be aware of false prophets". In this passage, Jesus is warning believers to not become false prophets. What is a false prophet?
4. Can people know who Jesus is and acknowledge what he did without being a true believer?
5. What does "workers of lawlessness" mean (v. 23)? Who are workers of lawlessness today?
6. Can people obey God without truly knowing him personally?
7. Who enters the kingdom of heaven?
8. What makes someone a true disciple of Jesus? What defines genuine belief in Christ?

9. What assurance does the Lord give us in salvation? Look at the verses below to help answer the question:

- a. 2 Timothy 1:9
- b. Titus 2:11-12
- c. 2 Peter 3:9
- d. Mark 16:16
- e. 1 Corinthians 15:22
- f. Ephesians 2:8-9
- g. Romans 10:10

10. How do you do the will of the Father? Are you doing this?

11. How are you to serve God?

12. Even if Jesus is your Lord and Savior, can you still stray away from doing God's will and work in lawlessness?

13. What should your response be when you act in lawlessness? What is your response?

14. If you are a genuine believer, you are known and loved by God. What hope does this give you?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
2. Read Matthew 7:21-23.
3. What is your initial response in reading this passage? How do you feel? Scared, convicted, hopeful, assured?
4. What defines a genuine belief in Jesus?
5. Even those who call themselves Christians may not know Jesus personally. What are signs of someone not having a personal relationship with Christ? How can we help those around us who may not know Jesus personally?
6. What does it look like to follow the will of the Father? Are you doing this? How can those in your group or in your life help you in following God's will?

Prayer

Read through the Lord's prayer. Focus on verse 10 of the Lord's prayer and reflect on what it means to follow God's will. Write your own prayer using the Lord's prayer as a template while reflecting on the lesson studied on Matthew 7:21-23.

"Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,

¹² and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:24-29

Lesson 11: Foundation of Grace

Living Under the Word

Sermon Notes

Personal Bible Study

1. Read Matthew 5:1-7:29.
2. Re-read Matthew 7:24-29.
3. In verse 24, what does Jesus say about everyone who hears his words and does them?
4. Describe a wise man. Look up Strong's Greek #5429.
5. Why was the man who built his house on the rock considered to be a wise man? Think beyond the obvious answer.
6. In verse 26, what does Jesus say about everyone that hears his words and does not do them?
7. Describe a foolish man. Look up Strong's Greek #3474.
8. Why was the man who built his house on the sand considered to be a foolish man?
9. What are the similarities between the wise man and the foolish man?
10. Read James 1:22-25. How do these verses relate to Matthew 7:24-28?

11. What does a life that is built on the solid foundation of God's Word look like? James 3:13-18 provides a helpful summary of this type of life, reinforcing the words of Jesus. Contrast the two types of wisdom he describes.

| Wisdom from Above | Wisdom from Below |
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12. What are some of the storms of life that threaten to destroy you if your life is built on a shaky foundation?
 13. What is the ultimate, terrible, final storm that will come when life ends? Read Revelation 20:11-15 and 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.

14. Is your foundation built on The Rock? Meditate on the verses below.

- a. Psalm 27:5
- b. Psalm 31:2-3
- c. Psalm 42:9
- d. Psalm 62: 1-7
- e. Psalm 78:35
- f. Psalm 92:15
- g. Psalm 94:22
- h. Matthew 21:42
- i. I Peter 2:7

15. When Jesus finishes preaching his sermon, Matthew records the reaction of the people. He says,

"And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes." (Matthew 7:24-25)

- a. Underline the crowd's response.
 - b. Circle the words that describe how Jesus taught.
16. Jesus's words have divine authority. How does that truth impact how you hear them and what you do with them?

Living Out Our Faith Together

Group Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on the sermon. What resonated with you? What questions or insights do you have?
 2. Read Matthew 7:24-29.
 3. Every human has a worldview that is shaped by some source of authority that helps form the way we think, act, and love. What authority molds and shapes your decision making and the way you live your life?
 4. Jesus chooses to end his sermon with a parable of two builders? Why is this an appropriate conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount?
 5. Jesus says that everyone who hears his words and does them is like a wise man who builds his house on a solid foundation. Think about all you have heard as we have studied the Sermon on the Mount. Write down some of the things that you have heard Jesus say.
 6. The crowds were astonished and amazed at Jesus's teaching, but Jesus requires more from his followers than "amazement." He requires obedience. In what areas of your life (relationships, work, money, trust, etc.) is Jesus calling you to obey? How might you become obedient in those areas?

Prayer

If ever a sermon required a response, surely it is this one. Jesus's listeners did not know how His earthly ministry would end, but we do. If they listened and were amazed, how much more amazed ought we to be, as those who live in light of the finished work of Christ? As you consider what Jesus's words asked of His original hearers, consider what they are asking of you. (Jen Wilkin, *Sermon on the Mount*)

What is your response?

APPENDIX

Matthew 5 English Standard Version

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

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

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

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

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

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

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

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

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

13 "You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. 23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. 26 Truly, I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

31 "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' 32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

33 "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 34 But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36 And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37 Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. 42 Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 6

6 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven.

2 "Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

7 "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. 8 Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

9 Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts,

as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, 15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 "And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light, 23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

24 "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, 29 yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

34 "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 7

"Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. 3 Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

6 "Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

12 "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the

13 "Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

24 "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

28 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, 29 for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

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