

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5-7

Introduction

Who are the great preachers? At the present time there are quite a few men that are on the radio, TV or the internet that are well known such as John MacArthur, Al Mohler, Paul Washer, John Piper and Charles Stanely. Not long ago it was men such as James Boice, Chuck Swindoll, Lloyd Ogilvie and James Vernon McGee were the prominent preachers on the radio. In previous generations men such as D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, D.L. Moody, Billy Sunday and of course, Charles Spurgeon set the standards of good preaching in their generations. As you go back in history there is a pantheon of men that were great in proclaiming God's word - Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, John Calvin, Martin Luther, Jon Hus. Or perhaps go all the way back to the Old Testament prophets such as Zechariah, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Moses. As great as any of these men may have been in preaching or in explaining God to the people, all of them pale in comparison with the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

This morning we begin an examination of Jesus' greatest sermon on the condition of man and his need for God's grace. This sermon is concise, yet it fully exposes the heart of man much like a small scalpel can do in the hands of a skilled surgeon. It covers a variety of topics, yet weaves them all intricately together as a weaver does in making a tapestry by blending threads of different colors together into one theme. It begins with promises of God's blessing and then exposes all that is in man that keeps him from those blessings. It concludes with a call to secure those blessings by following God and a warning about living life based in man's wisdom.

Over the years the Sermon on the Mount has received much mistreatment from one extreme to another. Some view it as the New Testament equivalent to the Old Testament's Ten Commandments. Others go the opposite direction and completely ignore it saying it has no value for Christians in this age. We desire to avoid such abuse and misuse, and so we must be careful to set this sermon in its proper context by asking some basic questions. To whom did Jesus preach this Sermon? What was His purpose in preaching it? How did He expect those who heard it to apply it? What is its relevance today and to us?

To answer those questions we must approach the Sermon on the Mount as we would any other passage of Scripture. We must let the sermon speak for itself without our own preconceived ideas placed upon it. We examine the text and the context. We must inspect the grammar and the words themselves to understand their meaning and usage in that time period. This requires us to also look into the historical and cultural setting because we want to understand how those to whom it was originally spoken to by Jesus and written down for by Matthew would have understood it. We then examine other Scriptures that speak on the same topics within the sermon to find the harmony between them. We interpret Scripture by Scripture instead of our own philosophies and desires. This wonderful sermon has been too often misinterpreted and twisted because the reader comes to the text with preconceived ideas and theories and then forces them onto the text instead of letting the Biblical text be interpreted by its proper historical and grammatical context and change the reader them along with his ideas, theories and philosophies.

Interpretive Approaches

I am going to begin by briefly presenting and refuting the three major ways in which this sermon has been wrongly interpreted followed by explaining the proper way to approach this sermon. I will conclude by explaining the relevance of this sermon to us.

1. The Social Gospel View. This was a popular view in the late 1800's and the first part of the 1900's. In essence, this view believes that if the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount were followed, then man could thereby produce the kingdom of God on earth. Wars will cease and man will live in peace. In other words, man can and will usher in the Kingdom of God by his own efforts by living according to all the injunctions given in the sermon. The first and second world wars in the twentieth century removed most of the credibility of this theory, yet it is still advocated by Post-millennialists and the newer "Restoration" or "Dominion" theology.

The major Biblical criticism of this view arises from within the text itself in that section we often call *The Beatitudes*. As we shall see in the coming weeks, the Beatitudes are not commands that a man can keep. They are statements of fact about the character of those that have true righteousness. To face the truth of the Beatitudes is to face the reality that no one meets the standards of the Sermon on the Mount without the aide of God. No one can be poor in spirit and thereby enter the kingdom of heaven by their own effort. And since no human except Jesus has ever truly been pure in heart, how then could man see God by his own efforts to keep God's commandments? His very efforts to do so will reveal his failure to qualify.

2. The Mosaic Law View. This view does correctly understand that in this sermon Jesus corrects the misinterpretations of the Mosaic Law by the Scribes and Pharisees. It also correctly understands that those to whom Jesus spoke were still under the covenant of the Mosaic Law and so it had direct application to them. However, this view incorrectly understands this sermon to be an extension of the Mosaic Law in which Jesus gives deeper and higher meanings of the Mosaic Law. This leads to two extreme applications of it.

The first are those groups that stress keeping the Mosaic Law including such things as Sabbath and dietary commands. They believe the sermon just clarifies and adds additional laws to the Mosaic Law. The other extreme are those groups that say that since we are no longer under the Mosaic Law but under the New Covenant and grace, then the Sermon does not have direct application to us.

The problem with this view is twofold. First, like the Social Gospel View, it does not adequately deal with the Beatitudes and the fact that they are not commands nor could any human keep them if they were. Second, while Jesus did correct and clarify the Mosaic Law in the sermon, He also went beyond it in making many statements that universally apply to all men.

3. The Hyper-dispensational view. Let me begin by explaining this third view by defining "dispensation." A dispensation refers to a distinguishable period of time in the revelation of God of His requirements for man. In every dispensation, man approached God by faith, but the particular expression of that faith varies. For example, in the age of the Patriarchs such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Job, man approached God by faith by making sacrifices as best he knew how in anticipation of God's redemption. In the dispensation of Law, man was still to come to God by faith and in anticipation of His ultimate redemption, but Moses wrote out the specific details about how to make the proper sacrifices and how God wanted them to live. In the dispensation of Grace, which is the present dispensation, we also come to God by faith, but we look back on the sacrifice made by Christ as the means of redemption already accomplished by God. In previous generations this was anticipated by faith with the sacrifices being a foreshadowing of what was to come.

The Hyper-dispensational view places a strict determination of the various dispensations and holds that the Sermon on the Mount is to be applied to those living in the Kingdom of heaven. Christ made a real offer of the kingdom, but since it was rejected, the Church age was ushered in instead. The principles of the sermon will be instituted during the Millennial Reign when the Kingdom is on earth which is a different dispensation than the current one. Advocates of this view claim there is no direct application of this sermon at this time. In keeping with this view, they also reject the other teachings of

Christ as having application today. They instead stress the epistles since they record what was specifically written to the church.

First, this distorts the purpose of the gospels which were all written during the church age in order to 1) Teach those in the church the doctrine of Christ, and 2) Tell those outside the church about Jesus and what He had done that they might become part of the church.

Second, this view has a distorted understanding of what the “kingdom of heaven/God” is at the present time. They fail to take into account that while the full manifestation of the kingdom is to come, the kingdom is also currently present spiritually. In John 18:36 Jesus plainly states twice that His kingdom was not of this world. The kingdom was “in their midst” (Luke 17:21). The Apostle Paul said that the kingdom was “*righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*” (Romans 14:17). In Colossians 1:13 Paul further states that Christ has “*delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son.*” Jesus reigns in our hearts as king and so His kingdom is present though not in its future fullness.

In addition, the Great Commission given to us in Matthew 28:19-20 is for us to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, “*teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.*” The commandments and teachings of the Sermon on the Mount are certainly part of this. Would the Hyper-dispensationalist say that this commission was only to be carried out until Pentecost and then be null and void until Christ's bodily return? To say “yes” exposes the folly of their view, to say “no” contradicts the premise of their view.

Finally, what do you do with those things in the sermon that will have no meaning if transferred for application in the dispensation of Christ's earthly rule. For example, the false prophets of 7:15-23 would be in the kingdom according to the hyper-dispensational view and verse 21 plainly states that they will not enter the kingdom. Then there is the on going persecution of the righteous explained in 5:10-12, but such persecution will not occur in the millennial reign!

4. The Present Kingdom view. This view arises from what is taught in the sermon itself, the Gospel of Matthew and the rest of the New Testament. This view recognizes that this sermon was given at a period of time when a literal offer of the kingdom was being presented to the Jewish people. Eventually, that offer was rejected and the fullness of the kingdom of heaven is yet to come. However, this view also recognizes that the kingdom is present in part within the church. According to John 18:36 and Romans 14:17, the kingdom at this time is spiritual, and according to Colossians 1:13, 2 Peter 1:11 and 1 Thessalonians 2:12, we are in it. Therefore, this sermon not only had a definite application to those that first heard it, but it also has definite application to us in this dispensation or age as well. It is incumbent upon us to study what our Lord has said in this sermon carefully, understand it, and then apply it in our own lives.

A large part of the confusion over this sermon is the fact that so often the teachings Christ makes within it are either ripped from their context or made into additional laws by which to earn righteousness. Those who do this lose sight of the general because of their focus on the particulars. In a sense, the forest is no longer seen because of all the trees. This is wrong. The context of a passage is to always govern the interpretation, and the general is to always guide the understanding of the specifics. All of this sermon must be interpreted according to its context which includes the purpose of the sermon to those to whom it was originally given.

Historical Context

We have already seen in our study of the life of Christ that many important events had already occurred before Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount. Some of these events set the undercurrents that you will see within the sermon. After His baptism and testing in the wilderness in Judea (Matthew 3 & 4), Jesus called His first disciples (John 1:35-51) and performed His first miracle of turning the water in

to wine at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-11). Jesus had already cleansed the Temple during Passover which greatly irritated the Scribes, Pharisees and chief priests (John 2-13-22). Jesus was an outsider who did not follow their traditions, was upsetting their system, and they thought Him to be a threat to their political and financial future.

Jesus had already talked with Nicodemus explaining that a man must be born again if he is to see the kingdom of heaven (John 3:1-21). Jesus had been in the lower Jordan valley baptizing those that repented, but after the religious leaders became aware that Jesus was baptizing more people than John the Baptist and John was put into prison, Jesus headed back to Galilee (Matthew 4:12). Along the way He went through Samaria and conversed with the woman at the well in Sychar resulting in many of the Samaritans there believing that Jesus was the Messiah (John 4:5-42). He went up to Nazareth where He was rejected (Luke 4:16-31), after which He settled in Capernaum (Matthew 4:13).

With Capernaum as a home base, Jesus went about preaching His message of repentance (Matthew 4:17). During this time He also performed many miracles and called Peter, Andrew, James and John to be His disciples and become fishers of men (Matthew 4:18-22). Jesus had authenticated His teaching in Capernaum by healing a demoniac (Luke 4:31-37), Peter's mother-in-law (Luke 4:38-41) and cleansing a leper (Luke 5:12-13) resulting in much publicity about Him (Luke 5:14-15). Jesus also demonstrated that He had the power to forgive sins when He healed the paralytic (Luke 5:17-26). Soon after this, Jesus called Matthew to follow Him, and then the banquet Matthew held so his friends could meet Jesus sparked the Pharisees to question Him (Luke 5:27-39).

Jesus went back up to Jerusalem during a feast during which He healed a lame man on the Sabbath which made certain Jews angry and they began to persecute Him. When Jesus gave His discourse about being equal with God the Father, they became so incensed that they began to seek to kill Him (John 5:1-47). A conflict with the Pharisees began when Jesus' disciples were picking and eating grain on a Sabbath and then escalated when Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Lord of the Sabbath and then healed a man with a withered hand (Luke 6:1-11). Jesus then retreated to the Sea of Galilee followed by a great multitude. After a night of secluded prayer, Jesus appointed the twelve, and then gave the Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6).

Scriptural Context

Before I look at the context of this sermon in Matthew 5, I want to quickly point out that while there are many parallels between what Luke 6:20-49 records and Matthew 5-7, there are also enough differences that I believe that these are two similar, but separate sermons given to very similar multitudes. In Matthew 5:1-2, Jesus sees the crowds, goes up on the mountain, sits down, and begins teaching after His disciples come to Him. In Luke 6:17-19, Jesus is already on the mountain with the Twelve and comes down to a level place where there was a large crowd of disciples waiting to hear Him and be healed. In addition, Luke states the crowd includes people from the coastal regions of Tyre and Sidon while not mentioning those from Decapolis and beyond the Jordan as is recorded in Matthew. Frankly, it boggles my mind that theologians and commentators tend to insist they are the same sermon. As a pastor, I know from first hand experience that preachers, especially itinerant ones like Jesus, often give similar sermons for similar purposes to similar but different audiences even in close time periods.

The passage in Matthew (4:23-25) which leads up to this sermon simply describes Jesus as already having a far reaching ministry in the region of Galilee of preaching, healing and casting out demons. That ministry had attracted large crowds to Him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan. It is important to note here that only Jerusalem and Judea were predominately Jewish. The other areas had Jewish communities, but the regions were actually dominated by Gentiles. There is no statement in either Matthew or Luke that only Jewish people were in the crowds. There may have been many Gentiles among the crowds of Jews for they would have been just as curious, and any sick among them would also have wanted to be healed of their diseases like anyone else.

Jesus' preaching of "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*" accompanied but such miracles resulted in the great question among the Jews in the crowds being, "*Could this be the Messiah? And if so, when will His kingdom begin?*" Though Matthew has not yet mentioned the conflicts that had already risen between Jesus and the religious leaders, the historical context is clear that it existed, and it would have only heightened the wonder of the crowds about Jesus. Any Gentiles present would have been curious and perplexed by Jesus. If they were familiar with Jewish history and prophecy, their questions may have been the same, but if not, they would have wondered what manner of man Jesus could be? Could he be a god who had come down to dwell among them? If so, for what reason? What is his purpose and message?

It is to this crowd of followers from both near and far that Jesus presents His kingdom manifesto. In this sermon Jesus will answer the questions that would have been on the minds of the multitudes.

Who are you? I am the one that has come to fulfill the Law (5:17) and show you the way to life and the kingdom of heaven (5:3, 10, 20; 7:13-14). I speak on my own authority (5:22, 26, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44; 6:2, 5, 16, 25, 29; Note 7:28,29).

Who will be in your kingdom? They will be characterized by being poor in spirit, mourning, meek, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers and being persecuted for the sake of righteousness (5:3-10). Their righteousness will surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees (5:20) They will be wise and heed My words (7:24).

But the Scribes teach us and the Pharisees demonstrate righteousness, how can we surpass that? The Scribes teach you false righteousness (5:21-48). The Pharisees demonstrate false righteousness (6:1-19). Do not be like them (6:19-7:5).

How will we enter the kingdom? You must be poor in spirit (5:3). You are to seek, knock and ask and then enter by the narrow gate (7:7-12). Beware of false prophets who sound good but will lead you astray (7:15-23). Follow me and your foundation will be solid and you will not fall (7:24-27).

The Sermon's Purpose

Jesus' purpose was to explain to the multitudes the nature of kingdom of heaven (literally, "the kingdom of the heavens"). Jesus made a literal offer of the kingdom, but the kingdom described did not seem to match what the people were looking for. Most of them were seeking a material kingdom that would throw off the yoke of Rome and restore Israel to prominence like it had under King David. For that reason, they could only conceive of a political and military kingdom like of their ancient kings. Jesus' compassion and miracles attracted them to Him, but the kingdom Jesus was talking about would have been confusing to them. How could meekness, mercy and loving your enemies get rid of Rome? The required characteristics of righteousness of refraining from hatred and revenge even to the point of not calling anyone a disparaging name would be seen as unrealistic even it did sound so nice. And could men really restrain themselves from lustful thoughts? The Pharisees were not loved because of their pride and arrogance, but the people commonly considered them the standard of righteous living. Could they really be that far off in their practices of giving alms, prayer and fasting? The final straw for many would have been Jesus' prohibition on laying up treasures on earth for their hearts were set on the here and now, not heaven. The vast majority of them were happy to serve mammon instead of God. When Jesus finished the sermon, they were astonished at His teaching because He taught with authority and they, like those in Nazareth, may have been wondering at the gracious words from His lips (Luke 4:22), but only a few would actually be wise and take the sermon to heart.

None of this would have discouraged Jesus, because like what had occurred at an earlier time in Jerusalem when many became excited by Jesus' miracles and teaching, as John 2:24 states, "*Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men.*" Jesus knew that most of the people would drift back to their normal daily life over time. The miracles would become less and less exciting to them, and once they had been healed or delivered from a demon, then it was time for them to resume

the pursuit of what was important to them without those hindrances bothering them. Perhaps very grateful, but still self-centered.

Jesus did not give this sermon to rally the multitudes into becoming His committed followers. It was not a persuasive speech meant to sway the uncertain into believing in Him. Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount to set out His kingdom program and make a divide between those who would be part of it and those who would not. In the gospel of Matthew, we find that Jesus continued to present the Kingdom program up to chapter 12 where it is utterly rejected by the religious leaders. From that point on, Jesus changed His teaching about the kingdom. In Matthew 13 there is parable after parable talking about the mystery nature of the kingdom, and then in Matthew 16 Jesus abandons the religious leaders (16:4) and starts presenting to His disciples the plan for the Church to come (16:18).

It is in this mystery of the kingdom, the church which is currently the kingdom of heaven spiritually, in which we find ourselves today. Jesus' purpose for this sermon when He first preached it coincides with its continued purpose for everyone who has ever read it since Matthew wrote it down. Its theme still makes a division between those who will be part of Jesus' kingdom and those who will not.

The Sermon's Theme

The sermon's theme is found in 5:17-20. Jesus did not come to end or to abolish the law. He came to fulfill it and establish true righteousness. The system of the scribes and Pharisees promoted a legalistic self-righteousness, but those who would enter the kingdom of heaven must have a righteousness that exceeds that. They tried to gain it by an outward bending to man made rules and regulations, but true righteousness is a matter of a changed inner life which cannot be lived out on human abilities alone. This is demonstrated by the character qualities Jesus describes that develop in those who are truly righteousness - Being poor in spirit, mourning, meekness, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, mercy, purity of heart, being a peacemaker and rejoicing in the midst of unjust persecution (5:3-12). A person who is righteous is salt and light to the world. The unrighteous have contrasting characteristics of being proud, celebrating, assertive, hungering and thirsting after mammon, vengeful, cunning, agitating and persecuting.

True righteousness will also demonstrate itself is striving to live to a higher internal standard and not just an outward legal one. This includes refraining from verbal expressions of hatred - not just murder (5:21-26). Refraining from lust - not just adultery (5:27-30). Refraining from divorce itself, not just making sure the paper work was done properly (5:31-32). Being true to one's word and keeping every vow, not just certain ones (5:33-37). Not seeking revenge at all instead of seeking it to the law's limits (5:38-42). Loving your enemy as well as your neighbor (5:43-48). Doing all acts of righteousness such as alms (6:1-4), prayer (6:5-15) and fasting (6:16-18) to please God - not man. Laying up treasure in heaven, not on earth and having no worry because you trust God for the future (6:19-34). Critical Self-examination before criticizing another (7:1-6). Treating that which is holy properly (7:6). Seeking from God and treating others graciously (7:7-12). Entering by the narrow gate and being so discerning that you can recognize the false prophet even when they sound so good (7:13-23). And following the teachings of Christ (7:24-27).

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones explains well the application of the Sermon to us. It *"is a description of character and not a code of ethics or of morals."* It is *"something meant for all Christian people. It is a perfect picture of the life of the kingdom of God."* He continued, *"we are not told in the Sermon on the Mount, 'Live like this and you will become Christian'; rather we are told, 'Because you are a Christian live like this.' This is how Christians ought to live; this is how Christians are meant to live."*

Conclusions

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount exposes self-righteousness and makes a clear division between it and the true righteousness needed to enter the kingdom of heaven. Righteousness cannot be earned based on

what you do and what you refrain from doing, for man absolutely cannot meet God's standards on his own. He must become a humble follower of Jesus Christ who places his trust in God, not himself. This is the result of the new birth that Jesus' talked to Nicodemus about. True righteousness comes from the heart and out of love for God seeks to do whatever pleases Him.

This sermon also reveals that man can live a blessed life only when his character is changed and he lives according to God's design. The life lived in obedience to God is the life that is pleasing to God.

I pray that this morning and in the months to come that each of us will ever more clearly turn from any self-righteousness we may have and seek after the true righteousness which only God can work in the heart.

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount - December 15, 2013
Matthew 5-7

Introduction

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' greatest sermon on the _____ of man and his need for God's grace
This sermon has often been mistreated and _____ to opposite extremes
Proper interpretation is dependent on the text and _____ and then compared with other Scriptures

The Social Gospel View

The sermon charts the way by which _____ can bring about the kingdom of God on earth
It incorrectly views the Beatitudes as _____ that can be kept by human effort

The Mosaic Law View

It correctly understands that Jesus is _____ and explaining the Mosaic Law to people under that Law
It incorrectly believes this Sermon is an _____ of the Mosaic Law
One extreme adds the precepts of the Sermon to its efforts to follow the _____
The other extreme rejects any direct _____ of the sermon because Christians are under grace, not law
These views also incorrectly take the _____ to be commands to be kept
These views fail to recognize that Jesus goes beyond Moses in making universal declarations for _____

The Hyper-dispensational view

A dispensation is a distinguishable period of time in the revelation of _____ of His requirements for man
Hyper-dispensationalism has strict boundaries and applies the Sermon on the Mount _____ to the Kingdom age
This view distorts the _____ of the Gospels which were all written in the church age
This view fails to recognize that the kingdom of heaven is _____ in part (Lk. 17:21; Rom. 14:17; Col. 1:13)
This view _____ the plain meaning of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20)
This view makes elements in the sermon to be _____ - 5:10-12; 7:15-23

The Present Kingdom View

The sermon had application to both those to whom it was first given and to those in _____
Confusion arises because of taking elements of the sermon _____ of context or applying it as law

Historical Context

Jesus did not follow the _____ of the religious leaders & was a threat to their political & financial future
Jesus had already done much _____
Jesus had performed many _____, healed people of their diseases and cast out demons
The _____ between Jesus and the Pharisees had escalated so that they were seeking to kill Him
After a night of prayer, Jesus chose the _____, then spoke to the multitudes that had gathered

Scriptural Context

Matthew 5-7 is similar to, but also significantly different from Luke 6:17-49 - a record of _____ sermons
Itinerant preachers often give similar sermons for similar purposes to similar, but _____ audiences
Jesus has attracted people even from areas that were predominately _____
Jesus' preaching and miracles had attracted both the _____ and those wondering if He was the Messiah
Jesus answers the _____ that were on the minds of the multitudes

The Sermon's Purpose

Jesus explained the _____ of the kingdom of heaven - but that did not match what they were looking for
Jesus knew that most of the crowd would drift back to their _____ ways of life - John 2:24
The sermon makes a _____ between those who would be part of His kingdom and those that would not
The rejection of Jesus' offer of the kingdom resulted in the mystery of the _____ - a spiritual kingdom

The Sermon's Theme

Your righteousness must _____ that of the Scribes and Pharisees in order to enter the kingdom
True righteousness is a matter of a changed inner life resulting in a change of _____ - the Beatitudes
True righteousness results in living by a higher, _____ standard - Jesus' moral & religious teachings

Conclusions

Jesus _____ self-righteousness and distinguishes it from the true righteousness need to enter the kingdom
Man cannot earn righteousness, it comes from being a _____ follower of Jesus Christ - born again
Man can only live the blessed life when He is changed by God and lives according to His _____

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch.
Older Children - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up. 2) Count how many times the word "righteousness" is said. Talk with your parents about how you can be righteous and live in righteousness.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. How must the Sermon on the Mount (or any Biblical text) be approached in order to properly interpret it? Explain. What is the Social Gospel view and why is it wrong? What is the Mosaic Law view and why is it wrong? What is the hyper-dispensational view and why is it wrong? What is the Present Kingdom view and why is it correct? What causes confusion in interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount? What is the historical context of this sermon according to Luke's chronology? What is the scriptural context according to Matthew? What are the differences and similarities between Matthew 5-7 and Luke 6:20-49? Are these the same sermon or similar sermons to two different groups? Explain. What questions on the minds of the multitudes does the sermon answer? What was the expectation of most people in the crowd concerning the nature of God's coming kingdom? Why did the sermon disappoint them? What did Jesus expect from the multitudes? What was the purpose of this sermon? What did the rejection of Jesus' offer of the kingdom bring about? Why is that important to us and the application of this sermon in the present time? What is the theme of the sermon? What does the sermon explain about the nature of true righteousness? Do you possess the righteousness that allows you enter God's kingdom? If not, what is preventing that?

Outline of The Sermon on the Mount (5-7)

The Beatitudes: The Character of a Kingdom Citizen 5:3-20

Jesus Corrects Six Moral Teachings: Murder, Adultery, Divorce, Oaths, Revenge, Enemies 5:21 - 48

Jesus Corrects Three Religious Practices: Alms, Prayer, Fasting 6:1-18

Jesus Gives Three Prohibitions Concerning: Riches, Judging, Holy things 6:19-7:6

Prayer for strength 7:7-11

Entering the Kingdom 7:12-27