

# Spiritual Formation

Growing Into the Image of Christ



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## Session 3: The Flourishing Person

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## Main Idea

- **The Sermon on the Mount is Christ's manifesto for faithful Christian living. The man or woman of God must be mastered by what Christ teaches here.**

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## The Man/Woman of God & The Sermon on the Mount

- **The Sermon on the Mount is a combination of Jewish Wisdom Theology and Apocalyptic Theology.**



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# Jewish Wisdom & Apocalyptic Theology

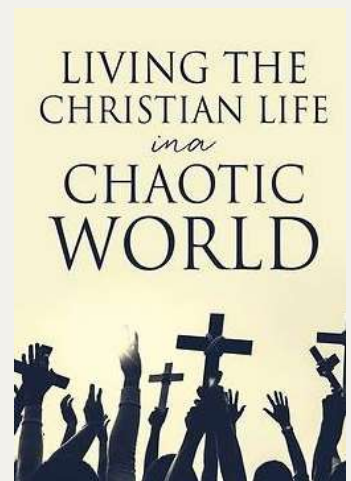
- **Jewish Wisdom Theology**
  - Teaching and thinking of the Wisdom parts of the OT (Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes)
  - How does one live wisely?
  - Law of cause and effect
  - Takes into account the Fall
  
- **Apocalyptic Theology**
  - A type of writing and a system of beliefs about the present and future (Revelation is a good example)
  - Olam Ha Ze vs. Olam Ha Ba
  - There is more to this world than what you can see with your eyes



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## Putting the Two Together

- Tension of living in this present world without making it our home
- Living wisely and faithfully right now
- Holding out for a better age to come
- We living knowing we have to give an account to God
  
- This is what it means to be a Christian



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# Sermon on the Mount

- **Two More Things To Keep In Mind**
- **First, it's about Greater Righteousness.**
  - With regard to the Law of Moses
  - With regard to personal piety
  - With regard to material goods
  - With regard to people
- **Matthew 5:20—For I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.**
- **Second, He tells us how to think and live with 8 Beatitudes**



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# The Beatitudes

- **Blessed is not the best translation**
  - Μακάριος vs. Εὐλογητός
  - אֲשֶׁרִי vs. בְּרוּךְ
- **Read Matthew 5:3-12**
  - As a group, tell me what each of them mean? Five Minutes



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# Beatitudes

<sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.  
<sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. <sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. <sup>11</sup>“You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup> Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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# Beatitudes

- **Poor in spirit = those who are downtrodden and wait upon the Lord**
  - They will rule with Jesus
- **Those who mourn = those who see the present evil age for what it is**
  - Their tears will be wiped away
- **Those who are humble = those with quiet strength**
  - They inherit the world
- **Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness = their highest desire is the things that please God**
  - They will be filled with it
- **The merciful = those who help those that need help**
  - God will give them mercy
- **The peacemakers = evangelists and reconcilers of men**
  - They are God’s sons forever
- **Persecuted = those that live like this**
  - The kingdom is theirs



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## Greater Righteousness—The Law

- Take five minutes to read Matthew 5:17-48 and summarize what Jesus is teaching about each example of the Law
  - There are six examples of the Law Jesus gives to show greater righteousness.
  - Get into groups of two or three and pick just one of those examples.
  - We will talk about it together after five minutes.
- What is the pattern in everything Jesus says about keeping the Law?
- What is He showing us about greater righteousness.



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## Greater Righteousness—Personal Piety

- Charity, prayer, and fasting
  - What does it mean to do this in terms of greater righteousness
- Read Matthew 6:1-18
  - There are three examples of personal piety here
  - Each group pick one.
  - Be ready to answer the following two questions
- What is the fundamental problem with the Pharisee's personal piety?
- What is God truly after in our personal piety?



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# Greater Righteousness—Possessions

- **Read Matthew 6:19-34**
  - There are two main blocks of instruction here: 6:19-24 and 6:35-34
  - Split into two groups, and each group read and discuss one of these blocks.
  - Be ready to answer this question
  
- **What does greater righteousness look like with regard to possessions?**
  
- **Jesus sums up what He means by greater righteousness in 7:12**
  - Matt 7:12—Therefore, whatever you want others to do for you, do also the same for them, for this is the Law and the Prophets
  
  - Tell me what this means.

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# Sermon Conclusion—The Two Ways

- **Next read 7:13-29. There are multiple pairs of “Two Ways.”**
  - Get in four groups and each group read one of the three examples (7:13-14; 7:15-20; 7:21-23; 7:24-29).
  
- **What is Jesus ultimately saying with these multiple pairs of Two Ways?**



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## Lesson Conclusion

- **Putting it altogether, the flourishing person**
  - Lives according to biblical wisdom in the present with his heart and hope set on our perfect future (a future that we are already said to own)
  - Follows God's Law both on the surface and the heart
  - Does righteous things for righteous reasons
  - Loves God more than money; trusts God more than money
  - There are two ways of being in this world. The flourishing person lives according to the right way of being in this world
    - He walks on the narrow path; he judges fruit according to the Word of God; he is not a talker but a doer of God's Word; he builds his entire life on the foundation of Christ and His teachings
  
- **What is the implied task for you live as this flourishing person?**

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## Personal Application

- **Get with a partner and answer the following questions to each other.**
  
- **How would you use the beatitudes as a tool of discipleship with people in your church?**
  
- **What things can you start doing today to grow in all the ways the Sermon on the Mount calls us to grow?**

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# Group Assignment

**This is a case study that I want us to discuss together**

**One of the deacons of your church is a very judgmental person. He looks down on other people in the church for small things. When you tried to correct him about this, he expressed his frustration by saying how much he does for the church: he tithes, he goes to Bible study, he stays away from sin, and he helps the poor. He thinks no one else has any excuse to not be as pious as he is. Using the Sermon on the Mount, present how you would counsel this deacon. What sins does he need to repent of?**