

MATTHEW

Lesson 4

Matthew 6:19 - 7:29

In our last lesson, we examined the first half of the Sermon on the Mount, Christ's first real teaching to a large group. You will recall that prior to this time, the Jews had become burdened down by tradition and religious practices that ran counter to God's will for them. Christ's first lesson then was to clearly illustrate the differences between the Pharisees' teachings and his. His lesson showed them, as it shows us today, how dramatically different the Christian life is compared to the false religions and wisdom of the world that surrounds us.

We also noted that one of Christ's teaching styles was to contrast what the Pharisees taught with the real truth, as in "you have heard it said..., but I say...". Finally, we considered three primary religious acts of the Pharisees: almsgiving, prayer and fasting. Although the Pharisees performed these acts with great show and fanfare, Christ pointed out that if our motives are pure, these things will be done in secret, or in private, and not for public recognition. His point was that our motivation for doing something is as important as the act itself.

In this lesson, we will conclude our study of the Sermon on the Mount by considering what it means to live a righteous life, i.e., to follow Christ. In Matthew's writings, Christ will again provide us building blocks for building a life with Christ that will withstand the storms of this world and lead us towards living a life that is anxiety-free and fruitful by its very nature.

Let's finish the Sermon on the Mount by reading Matthew 6:19 through the end of Chapter 7; then consider the following:

1. In Matthew 6:19-24, what is the central truth expressed in these verses? How do the verses regarding treasure, your eye, and who you serve all relate to one central truth?
2. Whenever we see the word "therefore", we should immediately figure out what it's "there for". In Matthew 6:25, what exactly is the "therefore" referring to?
3. Read Philippians 4:6 and Matthew 6: 25-32. What do these verses tell us about God?
4. In Matthew 6:33, the passage begins with "But". This tells us that Christ is about to teach us something important? In this verse, what is it?

5. In Matthew 6:34, the "therefore" refers to the entire lesson that Christ just taught regarding God's sovereign care over all His creation and how it is our primary mission in life to seek God's Kingdom first, above all else. What then does this verse teach us about living in the present?

6. Look at Matthew 5:45 again. What does this verse mean to you? What is Christ telling each of us about life as a follower of Christ?

7. In Matthew Chapter 7, Christ begins to teach an important lesson on "judging". The message is often misinterpreted to mean that Christians are not to judge. How can we deduce that this not the correct interpretation? (See Matthew 7:15-20)

8. Can you remember "ASK" and the word Ask? If so, then you can easily remember the teaching of this next passage, Matthew 7:7-12. We are instructed to Ask, Seek and Knock (ASK). Review this passage and fill in the blanks below: (Note that in all cases, action on our part is required before God responds. Also, if you have some extra time to meditate on God's word, consider why there are three commands.)
 - a. If we ask, it will be _____.
 - b. If we seek, we will _____.
 - c. If we knock, it will be _____.

9. Following ASK, Christ cites the well-known "Golden Rule" in Matthew 7:12. He then teaches us something very important again by using contrasts. Mathew 7:13-14, Matthew 7:15-20, Matthew 7:21-23, and Matthew 7:24-27 all have some common elements. You will observe that in each passage is a contrast: the wide and narrow gates, good and bad fruit, saved and lost, wise and foolish builders, etc.. Taken together, these indicated to the Jews then, and us today, the difference between true discipleship and empty religious activity. What do each of the following verses indicate that we should do as followers of Christ?
 - a. Matthew 7:13-14

 - b. Matthew 7:15-20

 - c. Matthew 7:21-23

 - d. Matthew 7:24-27

10. Now look at Matthew 7:21. Who does Christ say will enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

11. Referring again to Matthew 7:21.
 - a. What exactly is God's will that we are to follow in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven? (See also John 3:14-21)

 - b. Is there any other way to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?

Christ closes his Sermon on the Mount by instructing us to build our house on a rock. We all know that Christ is the rock, the Church's only foundation. As such, he says that the person who builds on a solid foundation is one who puts into practice these words of Christ's.

The main elements of this sermon are the building blocks then for building a strong Christian life. Can you summarize in your mind some of those that we have learned? They range from being a humble servant, a witness, and a light in our last less; to depending on God, having Christ as our savior, and following Him as a true disciple in this lesson.

So, if you want to know how to live a Christian life that is pleasing to God, then review this sermon, this lesson that Christ taught on the Mount; and keep His words within your heart.

I pray that our study of Matthew has already produced changes in you that will cause you to grow and mature in your walk with Christ.

May he richly bless you as we work together in His Kingdom, building on the Rock that is Christ.

Have a great week everyone!

In Christ,

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