

MATTHEW

Lesson 4 w/Answers

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?
 - a. ANSWER: Putting our faith in money, wealth, and worldly possessions is short-sighted and fruitless. Anything we can "possess" in this world can be stolen or rot away, and in fact none of it goes with us to heaven, nor will any of it save us. Putting our faith in things made with man's hands is a putting our faith in a false hope. Instead Jesus teaches us to put our focus on treasure in heaven, to keep our eyes clean—look only the holy things and not the unholy, being careful not to allow the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life to lead us astray. We are to be good stewards of the money and possessions the Lord provides us, we are not to serve it. Be careful that greed or a love of money doesn't blind you to the truth of Christ.
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?
 - a. ANSWER: Jesus is referring to back his teaching about serving two masters, being focused on money and worldly possessions rather than building up treasures in heaven. He now shows us that it's pointless to worry about such thing.
3. Read Philippians 4:6 and Matthew 6: 25-32. What do these verses tell us about God?
 - a. ANSWER: It teaches us that He personally knows about your every need and will not allow his followers to go without what they need. This doesn't mean that he will give us all of our wants, but he will make sure we have what we need, and when we need it. God knows us and loves us, and he understands the ways of the world. The pagans hold these up as important in their lives; they stress over them, worry, cajole, wrangle, argue and struggle to achieve wealth, possessions, fine clothing and so on. God does not want us to be like the pagans, but understands our need for food, shelter, and clothing. Knowing this then we should not worry about such things but trust in God that he will provide them.
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?
 - a. ANSWER: It teaches us that our priorities need to be different than those of the world around us. Rather than beginning each day trying to accumulate more, or worrying about where the next meal will come from, we are to seek His kingdom first and His righteousness; then all of the things we need each day will be provided by Him.
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?

- a. ANSWER: It teaches us to focus on the day at hand—to continually seek God’s will all during the day; and not to be in fear, stress, or worry about things that may or may not happen at some point in the near or distant future. There is literally nothing we can worry about that through our stress and worry can be changed as a result of it. It wastes time, is bad for our health, and takes our eyes off of the work that needs to be done in God’s kingdom. We need to learn to live in the present and to trust God with everything.
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?
- a. ANSWER: It tells us that while living in this fallen world, we are not exempt from the consequences of original sin. We will not be without pain and suffering. Additional, the evil may seem to prosper despite their sin. As children of God, we are promised that all will be rectified in then end.
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)
- a. ANSWER: Clearly we are taught to be on the watch, to learn how to discern bad or evil people and intentions from righteous ones. We are to make judgments in this life if we are to be good stewards of the work and resources the Lord gives us for His kingdom. However, when we judge we need to do so from an honest and true heart, through the eyes of Christ and not ourselves.
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 given to you.
- b. If we seek, we will find.
- c. If we knock, it will be opened.
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
- i. ANSWER: Enter in at the straight gate, stay on the narrow road.
- b. Matthew 7:15-20
- i. ANSWER: Be on alert for false prophets who look genuine.
- c. Matthew 7:21-23
- i. ANSWER: Do the will of God; don’t become a false prophet.
- d. Matthew 7:24-27
- i. ANSWER: Build your house on the rock of Christ, not man.
10. Now look at Matthew 7:21. Who does Christ say will enter the Kingdom of Heaven?
- a. ANSWER: Those who do the will of God who is in 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)
- i. ANSWER: We are to believe in Jesus, the only son of God, and to live our lives by the truth in the sight of God, the truth of God found in His Holy Word.
- b. Is there any other way to enter the Kingdom of Heaven?
- i. ANSWER: No. See John 14:6: "Jesus answered, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

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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