

GLOSSARY FOR THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Pastor Chris Brauns (1/15) - -Terms to Understand - - Draft #2

Authority (ἐξουσία /exousia) - “The right to control or govern over” (Louw and Nida).

Matthew concludes his record of the Sermon on the Mount by noting that Jesus taught as one who had authority. So evident was the authority with which Christ taught that Matthew records that the crowds were astonished.¹

Christ’s authority is further stressed in Matthew 8 in his exchange with the centurion and his rebuke of the storm. Even the wind and the waves obeyed him (Matt 8:27). In Matthew 9:8, the crowds are amazed that such authority was given to men.

Amazingly, by Matthew 10:1, Christ begins to share authority with the disciples. Matthew concludes his gospel with Jesus’s telling his disciples that all authority has been given to him and that he calls on them to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).

Matthew 21:23 is instructive regarding Christ’s authority. “And when he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what *authority* are you doing these things, and who gave you this *authority*?””

A common word, “authority” is found 102 times in the Greek New Testament.

Beatitude – An announcement of blessing often followed by a promise as to why the blessing is appropriate. To be blessed is to be the happy recipient of divine favor or approval.² See “macarism” below.

Context – Context is critical in Bible study.

In terms of the larger context within the flow of the gospel, Matthew’s gospel could be divided into three sections:

1. The Person of Christ (Matthew 1-4:16)
2. The Proclamation of Christ (Matthew 4:17-16:20)
3. The Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ (Matthew 16:21 -28)³

¹ The word for astonished is “ἐκπλήσσομαι/ekplēssōmai”: “to be so amazed as to be practically overwhelmed” (Louw and Nida). It is found thirteen times in the Greek New Testament (Matt 7:28, 13:54, 19:25, 22:33; Mark 1:22, 6:2, 7:37, 10:26, 11:18, Luke 2:48, 4:32, 9:43; Acts 13:12). An interesting use of the word for astonished is found in Acts 13:12 when a man is struck blind after opposing the early church.

² David L. Turner, *Matthew*, ed. Robert Yarbrough and Robert H. Stein, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 146 and Robert H. Stein, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 146. The structure of Matthew’s gospel. What is important to see in order to compare with studies in the Seminary on the structure of Matthew’s gospel. It is important to

The first four chapters argue for the deity and lordship of Christ. Davis and Allison note that:

Before Jesus speaks a word, before he utters his commands the reader has been informed—by OT prophecy, by John the Baptist, by God, and by the devil—who Jesus is: the Messiah, the Son of David, and the Son of God; he is the fulfiller of prophecies, the bearer of the Spirit and the healer *par excellence*. This Jesus, therefore, by virtue of his identity, must speak with authority and make sovereign demands (cf. 7:29). So the obligation to obey the commands of Matt 5-7 is grounded in Christology, in the person of Jesus; and Matthew has set up his gospel so that one may first confess Jesus' unique status and then recognize the obligation of his commandments.⁴

In the immediate context, we see that the sermon follows shortly after the Lord's call to repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand (4:17) and the calling of his disciples.

Disciples/Disciple (μαθητής /mathētēs)– A follower. In the Gospel accounts, this term refers at times broadly to all followers of Jesus and others more narrowly to the twelve apostles. Given the reference to “the crowds” being in audience to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:28), it appears that the word “disciples” in Matthew 5:1 references a broader group.

Seventy-two of the 261 uses of the word in the New Testament are found in Matthew. Interestingly, the Greek word sounds a lot like Matthew's name: “mathētēs” vs “mathaiov.”

Fasting (νηστεύω / nēsteuō)– Giving up food or some other legitimate activity for a time to focus on prayer and spiritual growth. We will be challenged when we consider that Jesus said, “when” you fast rather than “if” you fast.

Fulfill (πληρόω / plērōō) – “to bring to a designed end, *fulfill* a prophecy, an obligation, a promise, a law, a request, a purpose, a desire, a hope, a duty, a fate, a destiny” (BDAG).

The idea of fulfilling the law was important to the original audience of Matthew's gospel that included a large Jewish component. From the beginning we see Matthew's concern with showing that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecy (Matthew 1:22, 2:15, 17, 23, 3:15, 4:14).

Sixteen of the 86 New Testament uses of this word are found in Matthew.

fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and make the reader ready to hear the authoritative teaching of the Messiah. On structure, see a helpful and brief survey in R.T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Gordon D. Fee, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 2–4.

⁴ Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew: In Three Volumes*, 426.

Within the sermon, Jesus assures his audience, “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 (Matthew 5:17).”⁵

Gentiles – Non-Jewish people. The New Testament announces that God’s saving plan is for all people. Indeed, Jesus’s Great Commission charges his followers to go into all the world and make disciples.

The Golden Rule (or Ethic of Reciprocity) – Christ’s admonition that the first the first principle of ethics is to do to others as you would have them do to you:

“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12.

¹²Πάντα οὖν ὅσα ἐὰν θέλητε ἵνα ποιῶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιεῖτε αὐτοῖς· οὗτος γάρ ἐστιν ὁ νόμος καὶ οἱ προφῆται.

When Christ said that this statement is the Law and the Prophets he means that it is the ethical summary of the entire Old Testament.

On the distinction between a shame based ethic and an others based ethic, see Keller, *The Reason for God*, pages 60-61.

Hypocrites (ὑποκριτής/hypokritēs) - Morris writes, “The word was used for actors who, of course, play a part and whose words are spoken for effect and not in order to convey the truth. These hypocrites were people who acted a concern for the poor whereas their real concern was to establish a reputation for piety.”⁶

Thirteen of 17 New Testament uses are found in Matthew with four of them in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:2, 5, 16, 7: 5). Jesus was not a fan of hypocrisy!

Jesus conducts a major critique of religion. His famous Sermon on the Mount . . . does not criticize irreligious people, but rather religious ones. In his famous discourse the people he criticizes pray, give to the poor and seek to live according to the Bible, but they do so in order to get acclaim and power for themselves. They believe that they will get leverage over others and even over God because of their spiritual performance (“They think they will be heard for their many words”— Matt 6:7). This makes them judgmental and condemning, quick to give criticism, and unwilling to take it. They are fanatics.⁷

⁵ France argues that “fulfillment” is the central theme of Matthew. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 10–14.

⁶ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 137.

⁷ Timothy J. Keller, “Coming to Christ: Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount” (presented at the Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, 1990), 58.

Inclusio / Inclusion – References the bracketing of a passage in the Bible by similar phrases. Identifying literary features such as inclusios helps us better appreciate the literary beauty of God’s inspired Word.

Notice, for instance, an inclusio with the Beatitudes:

- [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.**

Regarding this bracketing of the beatitudes with a promise of the Kingdom of Heaven, Carson comments:

We need to notice that two of the beatitudes promise the same reward. The first beatitude reads, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (5:3). The last one says, “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (5:10). To begin and end with the same expression is a stylistic device called an “inclusion.” This means that everything bracketed between the two can really be included under the one theme, in this case, the kingdom of heaven. That is why I have called the beatitudes, collectively, “The Norms of the Kingdom.”⁸

Or, compare Matthew 4:23-25 and Matthew 9:35-38 which brackets the section of Matthew 5-7:

[23] And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. [24] So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. [25] And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. (Matthew 4:23-25)

[35] And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction. [36] When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them,

⁸ D.A. Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), 16.

because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37] Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; [38] therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Matthew 9:35-38 ESV)

The use of inclusios or bracketing serves to highlight the Sermon on the Mount as the heart of what Christ taught as he went throughout all Galilee.

Piper writes:

Then when we look to see what is sandwiched between these two summary descriptions of Jesus' ministry, what we see are two major sections: chapters 5–7 are a collection of Jesus' teaching called the Sermon on the Mount; and chapters 8 and 9 are a collection of stories mainly about his healing ministry. So what it appears we have is a five chapter unit designed by Matthew to present us first with some typical teaching of the Lord concerning the way of the kingdom, and second with some typical healings and miracles to demonstrate the power of the kingdom.

The value of seeing this is that it warns us against treating any little piece of this section in isolation. Matthew is the writer here and he is putting his material together in a particular way. He is the inspired apostle, and we should care about how he chose to put things together. That is the way he gets across his meaning.⁹

After the second inclusio (Matthew (9:35-38) there is a transition to the time when Jesus began to give more responsibility to his disciples.

Isaiah 61 – The Beatitudes echo the themes of Isaiah 61. This is important because it shows Jesus in the role of fulfilling Isaiah's prophecies. Davies writes:

The dependence of 5.2-13 upon Isaiah 61:1-3 . . . implicitly reveals the identity of the one who proclaims the Sermon on the Mount. In the OT text the person who brings good tidings to the poor and comforts those in mourning is an anointed one and bearer of the Spirit. So when Jesus blesses the poor and those in mourning, one cannot resist the conclusion: Jesus is the anointed one upon whom the Spirit of God rests. He is the Messiah. Moreover, he and his ministry are the fulfillment of the OT prophecy. This supplies the Sermon on the Mount with an eschatological framework and makes Jesus an eschatological figure. What follows? First, the words of Jesus are divine commissioning for the purpose of bringing OT promise to fulfillment. This fact sets Jesus apart from all other teachers . . . and makes intelligible the authority with which he speaks . . .

Isaiah's prophecies are so often fulfilled in Christ. For instance, see Isaiah 42 – See Matthew 12:15-21 and the servant song.

⁹ John Piper, “The Beatitudes and the Gospel of the Kingdom,” *Desiring God*, January 26, 1986, <http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/the-beatitudes-and-the-gospel-of-the-kingdom>.

Jews – Descendants of Abraham and part of God’s chosen people. The original recipients of the Gospel of Matthew had a significant Jewish component evidenced by the strong emphasis in Matthew on Jesus fulfilling the Old Testament. See “fulfill” above.

Kingdom of Heaven / Kingdom of God – The “kingdom of God” references the sovereign rule of Christ the King and his reign with his people.

In the first place, the Kingdom of Heaven / Kingdom of God should be distinguished from the universal sovereignty of God. All people are under the sovereign rule of God. But not everyone will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who recognize their spiritual poverty and are born again enter into eternal life (John 3:3, 5).¹⁰ Jesus begins the Beatitudes with the promise that those who see their absolute spiritual poverty and come to Him are Kingdom citizens (Matthew 5:3).

Keller’s explanation for the how we should understand the announcement of the kingdom is helpful.

Now the kingdom of God can best be understood if we think about what happens when anybody comes into power. When a new president or a new king or a new governor or a new mayor or a new CEO ... when anyone comes into power ... that person’s new power is expressed through a new administration. The new administration is a new set of priorities and a new set of policies and a new set of strategies, and if the policies and priorities and strategies are wise, if they meet the needs, what happens is there is (I guess the catchphrase today is) “improved quality of life,” and that’s good!

Jesus Christ, though, is the supernatural and ultimate King; and when he comes into power, his power is expressed through a new administration called *the kingdom*. A new set of priorities, a new set of powers, and a new set of strategies. The effects are far greater than anything we might call “improved quality of life.” The effects are more comprehensive and radical than we can imagine.

When Jesus Christ comes into power over our hearts or over our lives or over our families or over our groups, communities, or institutions, there’s total transformation in every dimension of the life of that entity. Therefore, the Sermon on the Mount is here to show us just how far-reaching that transformation is, and the Beatitudes can only be understood in that context. The Beatitudes we just began to read are very famous. “Blessed are the poor in spirit ... Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth,” and so on.¹¹

Stein points to the central importance of the Kingdom of God in the New Testament:

¹⁰ Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 11–13.

¹¹ Keller, “Coming to Christ: Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount.”

The heart of Jesus' teachings centers around the theme of the kingdom of God. This expression is found in sixty-one separate sayings in the Synoptic Gospels. Counting parallels to these passages, the expression occurs over eighty-five times. It also occurs twice in John (3:3, 5). It is found in such key places as the preaching of John the Baptist, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near" (Matt. 3:2); Jesus' earliest announcement, "The time has come . . . The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:15; cf. Matt. 4:17; Luke 4:42-43); the prayer Jesus taught his disciples, "your kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10); in the Beatitudes, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3, 10); at the Last Supper, "I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God" (Mark 14:25); and in many of Jesus' parables (Matt. 13:24, 44, 45, 47; Mark 4:26, 30; Luke 19:11).¹²

The Kingdom of God will not be fully established until Jesus returns (Revelation 20:4-6). However, Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God during his earthly ministry and the Sermon on the Mount has application for today as well as the future.¹³

Given the emphasis on both the present and the future aspects of the Kingdom, and following the lead of George Ladd,¹⁴ theologians sometimes describe use the phrase "already (Matthew 12:28, Luke 17:20-21)/not yet (Isaiah 65:17, 66:2; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21:1)" in reference to the Kingdom. See John Piper, [Is the Kingdom of God Present or Future?](#)¹⁵

Historically, some theologians argued that there is a distinction between the "Kingdom of God" and the "Kingdom of Heaven." But nearly all theologians now agree that the terms are used synonymously. Matthew favored using "kingdom of heaven" because the Jewish component of his audience was uncomfortable saying "God" directly and preferred a "circumlocution," that is saying the same thing a different way.¹⁶

The phrase kingdom of God holds out a promise for the future. Davies and Allison write:

In so far as the beatitudes bring consolation and comfort to Jesus' heavy-laden followers, they function as a practical theodicy. Although 5:3-12 does not explain evil or human suffering, the verses do by putting into perspective the difficulties of the present lessen pain and anguish and effect encouragement . . . This happens through an exercise of the imagination . . . Eschatological promises for the poor, the meek, and the persecuted reveal that all is not what it seems to be. That is, the

¹² Robert H. Stein, "The Kingdom of God," in *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984).

¹³ Harry A. Sturz, "The Sermon on the Mount and Its Application to the Present Age," *Grace Theological Journal* 4, no. 3 (Fall 63).

¹⁴ George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974).

¹⁵ John Piper, "Is the Kingdom Present or Future?," *Desiring God*, February 4, 1990, <http://www.desiringgod.org/sermons/is-the-kingdom-present-or-future>; Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 14-15.

¹⁶ Turner, *Matthew*.

truth, like the kingdom is hidden (cf. 11:25; 13:33,34). Only the future—with its rewards and punishments—will bring to light the true condition of the world and those in it (cf. 23:31-46). Those who use the eye of the mind in order to foresee and live for the future promised by the beatitudes will, with their faith, possess a secret vision and hope that makes powerlessness and suffering bearable.¹⁷

The Law – God’s Old Testament revelation or message give at the time of the Exodus (when Israel left Egypt) and Moses was leading at Mt. Sinai. The Law was God’s gracious disclosure of himself in order that Israel might have the categories to know him. The heart of the Law was the 10 Commandments (sometimes called the 10 Words or the Decalogue). In the law, God outlined everything from how the tabernacle would be constructed to guidelines for the Levitical priesthood to dietary laws.

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:17 ff), Jesus taught that he had come to fulfill the Law. Christ taught that fulfillment of the law is not essentially a matter of external behavior, but rather of the heart.

Romans 2:12 ff reminds us that all people have an awareness of the Law written on their hearts. And the heart of the Law is to love neighbor as self (Romans 13:8-10). Indeed, Jesus said in Matt 22:37-40 that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord our God and to love our neighbor as ourselves.

Light – In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus encouraged his followers that we are to be those who illuminate the darkness of a fallen world (Matthew 5:14-16). It is worth meditating further on the truth that one of the most important things that can be said of God is that He is “light.”¹⁸ See the post, “[Light: A Most Important Assertion About God.](#)”

Macarism (μακάριος, makarios) – A synonym for a beatitude (see above) which comes from the Greek word translated “blessed” in Matthew 5:3-12. The Greek word is sometimes translated “happy” but the word “happy” does not go far enough in communicating a deeply abiding joy in knowing Christ.¹⁹ Carson comments:

Although some modern translations prefer “happy” to “blessed,” it is a poor exchange. Those who are blessed will generally be profoundly happy; but blessedness cannot be reduced to happiness. In the Scriptures, man can bless God and God can bless man. This duality gives us a clue just what is meant. To be “blessed” means, fundamentally, to be approved, to find approval. When man blesses God, he is approving God. Of course, he is not doing this in some

¹⁷ Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew: In Three Volumes*, 467.

¹⁸ Chris Brauns, “Light: A Most Important Statement About God,” *A Brick in the Valley: The Web Site of Pastor and Author Chris Brauns*, August 2, 2011, <http://chrisbrauns.com/2011/08/light-a-most-important-statement-about-god/>.

¹⁹ Turner, *Matthew*, 146; Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 16.

condescending manner, but rather he is eulogizing God, praising God. When God blesses man, he is approving man; and that is always an act of condescension.²⁰ ”

The beatitudes were stunningly new and fresh teaching, yet as we see in the notes on Isaiah and Psalms, they flowed out of the Old Testament.

Matthew’s Gospel – The first of four gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) that each give unique, yet fully compatible, presentations of Christ. The Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew 5-7. The original audience of Matthew’s gospel included a large Jewish component.

Mountain / Mount – Matthew’s Gospel tells us that Jesus went up on the mountain to teach. This probably accomplished two things. First, it served to distill out of the larger group those who were really serious about learning. Second, it signaled a parallel between Jesus’s ministry and that of Moses’s who went up on Mt. Sinai to receive the Law.

Oath (ὄμνύω/omnuō)– To affirm the truthfulness of a statement by invoking the authority of a divine entity. With oaths, there is the implication that if the statement is not true, then the divine entity invoked will punish the person, e.g. “stick a needle in my eye.”

Righteousness – Doing right and living in accordance with God’s holiness. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus moves the emphasis from external righteousness to the heart, i.e. “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment (Matthew 5:21-22a).”

Paradox – A statement or proposition that seems self-contradictory or absurd but in reality expresses a possible truth. Chesterton famously said that a paradox is a “truth standing on its head to get our attention.” The beatitudes with their “happy are the hurting” message are paradoxical. John N. Day gave his book on the Sermon on the Mount the title, *Truth Standing on Its Head: Insight for an Extraordinary Christian Walk from the Sermon on the Mount*.

Pharisees – A group of specially observant and influential Jews, mainly in Palestine, from the second century BC to the first century AD.²¹ In the Gospels the Pharisees often opposed Jesus. They were known for their strict zeal for the Law.²² Jesus rebuked them for being more concerned with external appearances than the condition of their hearts (Matthew 23:1-38).

Psalm 37 – A beautiful Psalm that encourages us to not fret because of the wicked. Rather, it encourages, *“In just a little while, the wicked will be no more; though you look*

²⁰ Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 16.

²¹ Paul J. Achtemeier, *Harpers Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985).

²² Andreas J. Kostenberger and Justin Taylor, *The Final Days of Jesus: The Most Important Week of the Most Important Person Who Ever Lived*, Kindle Edition (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 520.

carefully at his place, he will not be there. But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace” (Psalm 37:10-11). This text is, doubtless, in the background of Jesus’s encouragement that the meek will inherit the earth.

Along with Isaiah 61, the Psalms in general prepare the background for Jesus’s paradoxical teaching. France writes:

However paradoxical these blessings may seem to those who view things from the world’s point of view, the divine perspective of the kingdom of heaven has been well prepared for already in the psalmists’ accounts of the qualities and experiences of the true people of God.²³

Purpose - The Sermon on the Mount shows us our need for the grace of God and it also describes how those who follow Christ should live.

Tim Keller:

Jesus Christ, though, is the supernatural and ultimate King; and when he comes into power, his power is expressed through a new administration called *the kingdom*. A new set of priorities, a new set of powers, and a new set of strategies. The effects are far greater than anything we might call “improved quality of life.” The effects are more comprehensive and radical than we can imagine.

When Jesus Christ comes into power over our hearts or over our lives or over our families or over our groups, communities, or institutions, there’s total transformation in every dimension of the life of that entity. Therefore, the Sermon on the Mount is here to show us just how far-reaching that transformation is, and the Beatitudes can only be understood in that context. The Beatitudes we just began to read are very famous. “Blessed are the poor in spirit ... Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth,” and so on.²⁴

Jesus teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is not to teach salvation by works. Quite the contrary, Jesus begins by saying it is those who know their spiritual poverty who are welcomed into the kingdom (Matthew 5:3).

Jesus healed *before* the Sermon on the Mount. “Before the crowds hear the Messiah’s word they are the object of his compassion and healing. Having done nothing, nothing at all, they are benefited. So grace comes before task, succor before demand, healing before imperative. The first act of the Messiah is not the imposition of his commandments but the giving of himself. Today’s command presupposes yesterday’s grace.” Davies and Allison

²³ France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 164.

²⁴ Keller, “Coming to Christ: Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount.”

Scribes – “Reference in early OT times to those employed for their ability to transcribe information. After the exile, scribes are a class of scholars who teach, copy, and interpret the Jewish Law for the people. They appear in the Gospels primarily as opponents of Jesus.”²⁵ Having said that, in Matthew 8:18 a scribe shows great interest in following Jesus. See above, “Pharisees.”

Synagogue – The places where dispersed Jewish people met in their local communities to worship. Morris explains, “The synagogue was, of course, a place of worship, but it was also the center of life for the community and functions like the administration of justice were carried on there.”²⁶

Salt – “the most commonly used seasoning in antiquity: ‘Can that which is tasteless be eaten without salt?’ (Job 6:6). Its preservative powers made it an absolute necessity of life and a virtual synonym for essential life-giving forces and, not surprisingly, endowed it with religious significance. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls the people who listen to him the ‘salt of the earth’ (Matt. 5:13).”²⁷

Tax Collectors (KJV “publican”) – Those entrusted by the Romans to collect taxes. The tax system was open to abuse and tax collectors were despised. They were lumped together with “sinners” (Matt 9:10, 11:19) and prostitutes (Matthew 21:31). Hence, Matthew 5:46 was not a compliment to the tax collectors!

Yet, Jesus was a friend of tax collectors and sinners. And Matthew himself was a tax collector.

[9] As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

[10] And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. [11] And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” [12] But when he heard it, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. [13] Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” (Matthew 9:9-13)

“Truly I say to you” (ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν/ amen legō humin) (5:18, 6:2, 5, 16, 25, 29) and **“But I say to you”** (ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν) (5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 42) – Jesus’s use of these two phrases demonstrates how he took a posture of unique and divine authority. The latter phrase, “but I say to you,” appears six times as noted and is used in each case to clarify the meaning of the law and to show how the scribes and Pharisees had missed the heart of

²⁵ W. A. Elwell and B.J. Beitzel, eds., *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 10.

²⁶ Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 137.

²⁷ Achtemeier, *Harpers Bible Dictionary*.

the matter. Recognizing Christ's bold assertion of his authority allows us to dispense with any nonsense that Jesus was merely a great moral teacher.²⁸

DRAFT

²⁸ John R.W. Stott, *The Message on the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7): Christian Counter Culture*, ed. John R.W. Stott, *The Bible Speaks Today* (Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 212–215.

OUTLINE OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT²⁹

Unexpected Teaching from a New King

1. Introduction (5:1-2)
2. Beatitudes (5:3-12)
3. Jesus Followers as Salt and Light (5:13-16)
4. Fulfilling the Law (5:17-48)
 - a. General Principles (5:17-20)
 - b. Six Examples
 - c. Fulfilling the Law Summary (5:48)
5. True and False Piety / Worship / Devotion to God (6:1-18)
6. Treasure in Heaven (6:19-24)
7. Trusting Your Heavenly Father (6:25-34)
8. Judging (7:1-6)
9. Prayer (7:7-11)
10. The Golden Rule (7:12)
11. Response: Four Warnings (7:13-27)
 - a. The Broad and Narrow Roads (7:13-14)
 - b. False Prophets: Good and Bad Fruit (7:15-20)
 - c. Insiders and Outsiders: Things May Not Be as They Seem (7:21-23)
 - d. Two House Builders: Hearing and Doing (7:24-27)
12. Jesus's Authority Recognized (7:28-29)

²⁹ Influenced in beginning by France, *The Gospel of Matthew*.

NOTEWORTHY QUOTES

“Jesus beatifies mourning, not moping.” F.D. Bruner³⁰

“To read the Sermon on the Mount is to discover what it means to be Jesus’s disciples; to read it with faith is to receive power to be Jesus’s disciples.” Frederick Dale Bruner³¹

John N. Day writes:

Whether one is a Christian or not, there is much to be both honored and emulated, for Jesus cuts straight to the heart. He confronts our human tendency toward “image religion” that is based on outward show and selfish attitudes. Jesus crushes our idols, especially those stubborn ones of entitlement and hypocrisy. In doing so, He demonstrates that a genuine relationship with God shows itself in selfless and humble-hearted obedience. It can be a mind-expanding and life-transforming sermon if we will take the time to truly hear.³²

The Sermon on the Mount is concentrated teaching. It is brief. To read it would take only about ten minutes and yet its truth has changed the world. Statements like, “Judge not lest ye be judged,” are quoted by people who do not otherwise believe in the Bible and probably misunderstand what the statement means! The beauty of Christ’s teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is respected by nearly everyone.

Indeed, the message of the Sermon on the Mount runs against the grain of a Machiavellian (cunning and manipulative) world that seeks to elevate self. Christ’s emphasis on the heart rather than on external behaviors was a sharp indictment not only of the Pharisees of his day but against our age as well.

Jesus’s teaching brought the unexpected expected. Though firmly rooted in the Old Testament, Christ’s message was radically new and bound to burst the old wineskins of the Pharisees (Matthew 9:16-17).

We are all the more in awe of the Sermon on the Mount when we remind ourselves that not only did Jesus teach it, he perfectly lived it.³³ What a King we have!

³⁰ Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Christbook: Matthew 1-12*, Revised & Expanded (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 164.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 151.

³² John N. Day, *Truth Standing on Its Head: Insight For An Extraordinary Christian Walk from the Sermon on the Mount* (Ventura, California: Nordskog Publishing, 2009), 1.

³³ W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew: In Three Volumes*, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 467.

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