# “BLOWN AWAY AND (some) BLESSED”: A Glossary for the Sermon on the Mount

Pastor Chris Brauns (1/15) - -Terms to Understand - - Draft #2, #3, #4, #5 (11/15)

See also [Summary of Sermons](SERMON%20SUMMARIES%20FOR%20THE%20SERMON%20ON%20THE%20MOUNT.docx) on the Sermon on the Mount.

*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit. 2 Corinthians 3:17-18*

*[1] See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. [2] Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. [3] And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure. 1 John 3:1-3*

**Antinomianism** (see also **False Assurance** on page 14) - The teaching that one can be a Christian apart from any moral or ethical differences in life. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus bluntly stated that a kind of Christianity that does not reflect Him is not saving faith. He told his disciples that we must enter by the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13). He warned against false prophets who do not bear fruit (7:15-20) and that there are many who think they are Christians who in fact are not (7:21-23).

The warning against antinomianism and false assurance is found throughout the New Testament letters.

* Paul’s exhorted the Corinthians to examine themselves to make sure they were in the faith (2 Cor 13:5).
* James warned that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26).
* Peter his readers to make sure their calling and election were sure by growing as believers (2 Peter 1:3-11).
* John lays out the basis for proper Christian assurance in 1 John (see 1 John 5:13) and he stresses that if we say we are Christians apart from following God’s Word, then we are lying to ourselves (1 John 2:3-4).

Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *The Cost of Discipleship* was his famous exposition of the Sermon on the Mount in which he argued that much of the reason that the Third Reich and Hitler had were able to seize leadership was because the church had taught the notion of “cheap grace.”[[1]](#footnote-1)’

Cheap grace means grace sold on the market like cheapjacks’ wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolations of religion are thrown away at cut prices. Grace is represented as the Church’s inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits . . . [Cheap grace] means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth, the love of God taught as the Christian “conception” of God. An intellectual assent to that idea is held to be of itself sufficient to secure remission of sins.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Surely grace is free! But some think they have received Christ when they have not. In *Unpacking Forgiveness,* I wrote about the proper basis for assurance of salvation. This material is available on my web site.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Authority** (ἐξουσία /exousia) - “The right to control or govern over” (Louw and Nida).[[4]](#footnote-4) Authority is a theme of central importance not only in the SOTM but in all of Matthew.

Matthew concludes the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 7:28-29) by observing that the crowds were astonished at Jesus’s authority. This summary statement demonstrates that a great deal of attention should be given to what is meant by Christ’s authority. Ultimately we will see Jesus’s incredible, yet true, claim that his authority rested in Himself and was not derived like that of the Scribes.

But first, we should consider the reaction to Christ’s authority. Matthew’s gospel says that the on looking crowds were “astonished.” The word translated “astonished” means to be so amazed as to be practically overwhelmed.[[5]](#footnote-5) My paraphrase is that those who heard the Sermon on the Mount were “blown away.” It helps gauge the level of the crowd’s astonishment at Jesus’s authority to observe how the word translated “astonished” in Matthew 7:28 is used by Luke in Acts 13:12. In Acts 13 when a man is struck blind after opposing the early church. Luke gives the following account.

[4] So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. [5] When they arrived at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. And they had John to assist them. [6] When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet named Bar-Jesus. [7] He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. [8] But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) opposed them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. [9] But Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him [10] and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? [11] And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you will be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him, and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. [12] Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was **astonished** at the teaching of the Lord. (Acts 13:4-12 ESV)

Luke uses the same word to describe the astonishment of the on looking Sergius Paulus, “a man of intelligence,” who had summoned Barnabas and Saul to hear the Word of God.

Mark says that the chief priests were afraid of Jesus because the crowds were astonished (same word) at his teaching. In Mark the chief priests and scribes then turn the matter back to the question of authority but Jesus doesn’t take their bait (Mark 11:28-33).

In reading the Gospel of Matthew, we begin to be astonished with Jesus’s authority even in the way that Matthew presents Christ leading up to the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew’s gospel:

* Begins by tracing Jesus’s genealogy demonstrating that he is the culmination of the whole flow of the Old Testament.[[6]](#footnote-6)
* Continues by showing how Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy[[7]](#footnote-7)
* Brings Moses to mind by showing how both Moses and Jesus were threatened as infants (Exodus 2:1-10, Matthew 2:16-18).[[8]](#footnote-8)
* Emphasizes that Jesus comes out of Egypt like Israel
* Leads up to the Sermon on the Mount with Jesus’s victory in the wilderness.

As the Sermon on the Mount begins, Jesus goes up on the mountain. Matthew’s Jewish readers would have seen a parallel between Jesus going up on the mountain and Moses who went up on the mountain to receive the 10 commandments.[[9]](#footnote-9) As noted above, Jesus has already been paralleled with Moses in that both their lives were threatened as infants (Exodus 2:1-10, Matthew 2:16-18).

Further, the idea of Jesus sitting down with people coming to hear him teach also stressed his authority. Jesus opens his mouth – there is a split second of suspenseful silence – and Jesus begins to speak.[[10]](#footnote-10)

In the content of his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus’s authority expressed itself in several ways.

1. Christ spoke as *the authority* rather than appealing to policies. Notice his repeated use of the saying, “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 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.[[11]](#footnote-11) Jesus use of “I” is emphatic - -is arresting and almost defiant.[[12]](#footnote-12) See “hypertheses” below on page 18.
2. Jesus insisted on a radical internalization of biblical principles. Whereas the scribes focused on behaviors, Jesus focused on the heart: (Matthew 12:33-37/Tree and Its Fruit, Overflow of Heart, 19:16-22/Rich Young Ruler, Mark 3:1-6).
3. Jesus applied truth in fresh ways that made sense in contrast with the arbitrary standards of the scribes. One example would be the matter of healing on the Sabbath and the Pharisees failure to give priority to the weightier matter of mercy (Matt 12:1-14). It’s like NFL rules where they are so caught up in defining a “catch” that it no longer describes a catch. Jesus said “I am the rule” - - not the NFL and I tell you the heart of the matter.

The emphasis on Jesus’s authority continues to the end of the Gospel.[[13]](#footnote-13) In Matthew 8 Jesus authority is referenced in both 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.

By Matthew 10:1, Christ begins to share authority with the disciples.

Matthew argues for the authority of Christ by emphasizing the phrase “something greater.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

In Matthew 12:3-4, Matthew implicitly says that Christ is greater than David.

In Matthew 12:5-6, Matthew says that Christ is greater than the Temple.

In Matthew 12:42, Matthew says that something greater than Jonah is here.

In Matthew 12:43, Matthew says that something greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 21:23 demonstrates that the issue of authority continues to be central in the Gospel of Matthew:

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*?’”

Finally, Matthew concludes his gospel with Jesus’s assuring his disciples that all authority has been given to him and that he charges them to go into all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20).

See William Barclay’s chapter on the Authority of Jesus. I have not yet interacted with it extensively.[[15]](#footnote-15) See also Beale and Kim’s reflections on the theme of authority.[[16]](#footnote-16)

One of the challenges of our day is that Christians too easily accept the authoritative presuppositions of the academy without evaluating them. We need to be unapologetic in saying that we accept Christ’s authoritative Word. For more on this subject, see Alvin Plantinga’s essay, Advice to Christian Philosophers.[[17]](#footnote-17) That essay concludes:

Christian philosophers must be wary about assimilating or accepting presently popular philosophical ideas and procedures; for many of these have roots that are deeply anti-Christian. And finally the Christian philosophical community has a right to its own perspectives; it is under no obligation first to show that this perspective is plausible with respect to what is taken for granted by all philosopher, or most philosophers, or the leading philosophers of our day. . . In sum, we who are Christians and propose to be philosophers must not rest content with being philosophers who happen, incidentally, to be Christians; we must strive to be Christian philosophers. We must therefore pursue our projects with integrity, independence, and Christian boldness.[[18]](#footnote-18)

The emphasis on the authority of Jesus is not limited to the Gospel of Matthew. This stress is found throughout the gospels. Jesus is the one who forgives sins and healed a lame man so that people would know that he has authority on earth (Mark 2:5-10). Luke records that the crowds were astonished at Christ’s authoritative teaching when he healed a demon possessed man (Luke 4:31-37). Indeed, Jesus’s authoritative teaching came with power.

**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.[[19]](#footnote-19) See Beatitude Study Notes on page 9.

The Greek word translated blessed (μακάριος, makarios)is sometimes translated “happy” but the word “happy” does not go far enough in communicating a deeply abiding joy in knowing Christ.[[20]](#footnote-20) Carson comments:

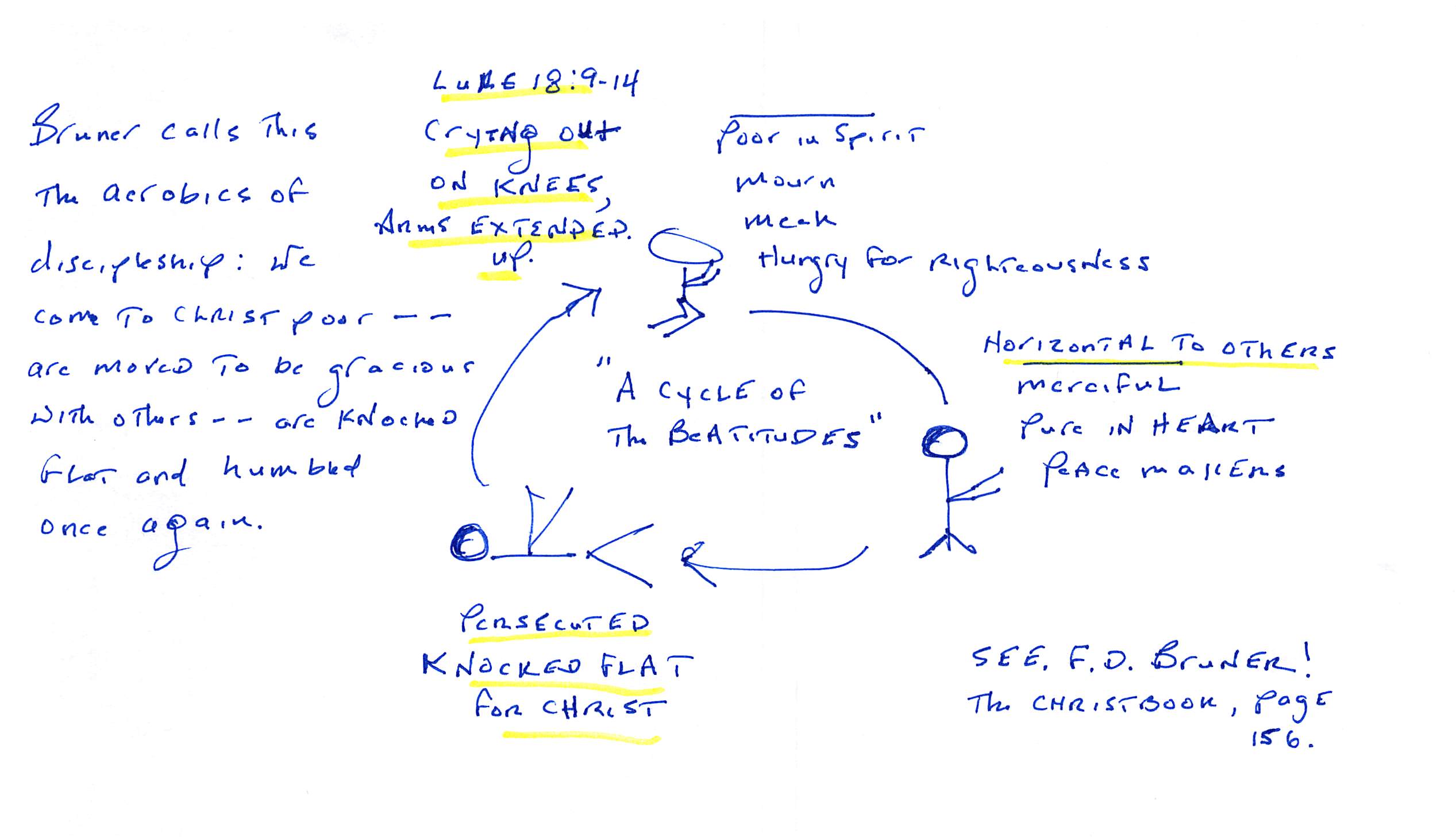
Although some modern translations prefer “happy” to “blessed,” it is a poor exchange. Those who are blessed will generally be profoundly happy; but blessedness cannot be reduced to happiness. In the Scriptures, man can bless God and God can bless man. This duality gives us a clue just what is meant. 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 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.[[21]](#footnote-21) ‘’

The beatitudes were stunningly new and fresh teaching, yet as we see below, they flowed out of the Old Testament.

“Jesus calls his disciples blessed in the hearing of the crowd, and the crowd is called upon as a startled witness.” Bonhoeffer[[22]](#footnote-22)

“This discourse of Christ on the Mount seems principally leveled against the false notions and carnal prejudices that were at that day embraced by the nation of Jews; and those benedictions which we have in the beginning of His sermon were sayings that were mere paradoxes to them, wholly contrary to the notions which they had received.” Jonathan Edwards[[23]](#footnote-23)

The teaching of the beatitudes reminds us that while Christ’s calls us to a global mission the purpose is never to conquer the down and out - - which much of our modern age does by making slaves out of child labor in some other part of the world where children make our goods - - but rather through witnessing to the Christian message.[[24]](#footnote-24) “In view of the child slave labour that produces in some Asian countries the cheap goods wanted by wealthy consumers of the west, the same comment on the contemporary globalized economy would surely be appropriate”[[25]](#footnote-25)

Nearly everyone notices the sequence of the beatitudes (Lloyd-Jones, Keller, Bruner for example). But Bruner helpfully sees not only a sequence but also a cycle. A Christian begins empty (poor in spirit, mourning, meek, hungry for righteousness). He or she is then graciously blessed by God and extends mercy, is pure in heart, and makes peace. Suffering, however, is inevitable for the Christian and soon enough the believer is knocked flat. Amazingly, persecution brings us back to the place of being on our knees and empty: crying out to God.

“Jesus beatifies mourning, not moping.” F.D. Bruner[[26]](#footnote-26)

Bruner calls this cycle “the aerobics of discipleship.” He says that when he teaches the beatitudes:

I first draw a little stick figure *on its knees and with its hands reaching up to heaven* to represent the blessed poor; then a little stick figure *standing up with its hands reaching out to the world* to represent the blessed helpers; and finally a little stick figure *flat on its back, with its hands reaching back up to heaven again* to represent the blessed persecuted.[[27]](#footnote-27)

He continues:

Altogether, I see in the sequence of Blessings the grace of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who picks up all who are down and sends them out in the world to pick others up, knowing this lead these very helpers, mysteriously, to be thrown back down in persecution and, so into need; from whence they will rise again from their knees to their feet, where they will again be knocked down and so on the rest of their lives - - the aerobics of discipleship.[[28]](#footnote-28)

Regarding Matthew 5:4, Luther explains:

So also a man is said to mourn and not be sorrowful — not if his head is always drooping and his face is always sour and never smiling; but if he does not depend on having a good time and living it up, the way the world does, which yearns for nothing but having sheer joy and fun here, revels in it, and neither thinks nor cares about the state of God or men . . . Therefore, simply begin to be a Christian, and you will soon find out what it means to mourn and be sorrowful . . . Outwardly, too, refresh yourself and be as cheerful as possible. Those who mourn this way are entitled to have fun and take it wherever they can so they do not completely collapse for sorrow (Luther, *SM,* 19-21, Quoted by Bruner, *The Christbook*, 164).[[29]](#footnote-29)

See *Jesus’s Sermon the Mount vs Trump’s Sermon in the Media*[[30]](#footnote-30)which includes Yancey’s explanation of the advantage of being poor.[[31]](#footnote-31)

# STUDY NOTES ON THE BEATITUDES

See also “Beatitude” on page 6.

| **\***[[32]](#footnote-32) | **Beatitude: “Blessed Are . . .”** | **Definition / Thoughts** | **Other References** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How to Come to Christ! / (Passive/ Be a Person in Need!)** | πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. **/ the poor in spirit** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven | “It’s beyond me!”  “personal acknowledgement of spiritual bankruptcy”[[33]](#footnote-33) “But many who are first will be last, and the last first (Matthew 19:30). | Isa 57:15, 66:2  See also Prov 30:1-3 |
| πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται./ **those who mourn** for they shall be comforted | “The problem is sin”  “the emotional counterpart to poverty of spirit . . . personal grief over personal sin . . . but also a mourning over broader considerations”[[34]](#footnote-34)  Let us pray, “Oh that salvation would come out of Israel (Psalm 14:7)  See Luther [quote](http://chrisbrauns.com/2015/02/luther-on-blessed-are-those-who-mourn/) | Psalm 126 – Bringing in the Sheaves |
| πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν. /**meek** for they shall inherit the earth | “Indeed, ‘I’ am the problem.”  “a controlled desire to see the other’s interests advance ahead of one’s own”[[35]](#footnote-35)  The opposite of interpersonal meekness is ‘anger’ - - combative.  There are some who appear meek but it is merely flabbiness. Lloyd-Jones | Ps 37:11 |
| 6μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες  τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται. / those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness** for they shall be satisfied | “Oh, that God would set things right.”  We should long for God to put things right!  To hunger and thirst for “conformity to God’s will”[[36]](#footnote-36) | Ps 25:14 The friendship of the LORD is for those who fear him, and he makes known to them his covenant. |

Beatitudes Part II

|  | **Beatitude: “Blessed Are . . .”** | | **Definition / Thoughts** | **Other References** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How a Christian is Different / (Active: Be a Person in Service!) | Internal Mindset | 7ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται. / merciful for they shall receive mercy | “a loving response prompted by misery and helplessness of the one on whom the love is to be showered” when harm and evil is done[[37]](#footnote-37) |  |
| 8καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται. / pure in heart for they shall see God | Who we are at the center of our being, what we think about when our mind slips into neutral[[38]](#footnote-38)  See notes on hypocrisy and passages such as Matthew 22:18 when the Pharisees try and trick Jesus regarding taxes but Jesus was “aware of their motives (Matthew 22:18).  See Edwards sermon (pure in heart) in Zotero. | Ps 15, 1 John 3:2 |
| Behavior With Others | 9εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται. / peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God | Hapax / Gospel proc but also interpersonal peacemaking  This begins with gospel proclamation but includes interpersonal peacemaking. |  |
| 10δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. / persecuted for righteousness’ sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven | One of the most searching b/c if we aren’t persecuted, that could signal a problem![[39]](#footnote-39) An ongoing theme that we will be persecuted for our faith.  Jesus warns his disciples to expect persecution but be confident that God will help them know what to say (Matt 10:16 ff) | 1 Pt 3:17, 4:12 |

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/15/us-mideast-crisis-libya-egypt-idUSKBN0LJ10D20150215>

<http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2015/02/16/tom-schreiner-a-biblical-meditation-on-the-isis-execution-of-21-christians/>

The above sources on the murder of Christians

*Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:4*

Table. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones On What The One Who Mourns is Like

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **He is . . .** | **But He Isn’t . ..** |
| He is a sorrowful man | but he is not morose. |
| He is a sorrowful man, | but he is not a miserable man. |
| He is a serious man, | but he is not a solemn man. |
| He is a sober-minded man, | but he is not a sullen man. |
| He is a grave man, | but he is never cold or prohibitive. |
| There is with his gravity a warmth and attraction. This man, in other words, is always serious; but he does not have to affect the seriousness. | The true Christian is never a man who has to put on an appearance of either sadness or joviality. |

Lloyd-Jones continues:

No, no; he is a man who looks at life seriously; he contemplates it spiritually, and he sees in it sin and its effects.

He is a serious, sober-minded man. His outlook is always serious, but because of these views which he has, and his understanding of truth, he also has `a joy unspeakable able and full of glory'. So he is like the apostle Paul, `groaning within himself', and yet happy because of his experience of Christ and the glory that is to come.

**Context** – Context is critical in Bible study. It is certainly true where the Sermon on the Mount is concerned.

To consider the Sermon on the Mount, we begin with the broadest biblical context. All Scripture must be seen in terms of the metanarrative of the whole Bible with the outline of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation. God created everything and appointed Adam and Eve as his special vice-regents. They rebelled and when they did so they represented all of humanity. God began unfolding his plan of redemption through the second Adam who succeeded where the first failed. He will rule over the Kingdom of Heaven with all its promise.

The larger context of the Bible in mind, the gospel accounts with the introduction of Christ and his life, death, burial, and resurrection are the spectacular hinge point of all of human history.

Aimed at an audience with a strong Jewish component, 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)[[40]](#footnote-40)

The first four chapters of the Gospel of Matthew 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.[[41]](#footnote-41)

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. We would expect this featured sermon to show us what to expect from the new King. It certainly does.

The reader of Matthew’s gospel waits to see if Jesus’s called disciples will buy into his teaching, and if others will join, or if he will be rejected.[[42]](#footnote-42)

Pastor [Bob Burris](http://taftavenue.org/staff-leadership) (an Evangelical Free church pastor in Orange, CA. M.Div. Talbot, D.Min. Westminster) proposed in personal correspondence that he sees Matthew 4:31 as a possible controlling verse. There is much about this proposal that is attractive!

I spent most of my sabbatical time on the sermon and Matthew. I've decided 4:19 may be the key verse in Matthew, with emphasis on the fishers of men. I know many have struggled with Matthew's focus and I've never been entirely happy with what others have suggested. Was wondering what you thought of 4:19? This results in Matthew being a primer so that followers of Christ will be fishers of men. It also is the controlling theme for the Sermon on the Mount. Thoughts? Anyway. Thanks much for the book. excellent!

**Disciples/Disciple** (μαθητής/mathētēs**)** – A follower. In the Gospel accounts, this term refers at times broadly to all followers of Jesus and on other occasions it refers 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. Having said that, Bonhoeffer notices that the crowds were very aware that Jesus had specifically called out twelve from their midst.

The *people* see Jesus with his disciples, who have gathered around him. Until quite recently these men had been completely identified with the multitude, they were just like the rest. Then came the call of Jesus, and at once they left all and followed him. Since then they have belonged to him, body and soul. Now they go with him, live with him, and follow him wherever he leads them. Something unique had occurred to them. That disconcerting and offensive fact stares the people in the face.[[43]](#footnote-43)

So Bonhoeffer shows that there are three basic groups present for the Sermon on the Mount: (1) The people - - the larger group who followed Jesus onto the mountain. (2) The twelve. (3) Jesus.

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

**Enemies –** The Sermon on the Mount famously commands followers of Christ to love their enemies. It is interesting to notice this sort of emphasis in the Old Testament too.

[4] “If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him. [5] If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him. (Exodus 23:4-5 ESV)

**False Assurance** (See also Antinomianism on page 1)– The horrible reality that some who think they are Christians are not. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned that this group will one day hear, “away from me, I never knew you.”

The proper basis for assurance of salvation is three-fold: (1) Present faith in Christ for salvation. (2) The testimony of God’s Spirit with our spirits that we are God’s children. (3) The evidence of a changed life.[[44]](#footnote-44)

**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 to fast when we consider that Jesus said, “when” you fast rather than “if” you fast. We will be motivated to fast when we consider that Jesus promised that our father who sees in secret will reward you. See [Fasting Notes](Matthew%20sermon%20on%20the%20mount%20notes%20misc/Fasting%20Notes%20Relative%20to%20Sermon%20on%20the%20Mount.docx). See also the sermon summary, “Focus on Fasting.”[[45]](#footnote-45)

Table. Select Biblical Occasions for Fasting[[46]](#footnote-46)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Occasion** | **Reference(s)** |
| In conjunction with conversing with God: Moses receiving the Law; Daniel when repenting for Israel and praying to God | Exodus 34:28; Deut 9:9; Dan 9:3 |
| For the Day of Atonement | Lev 6:29-30; 23:27-32; Acts 27:9 |
| Individual oppressed by great cares: David in grief over the death of his infant son; Ahab fasting in repentance; | 2 Sam 12:16-23; 1 Kings 21:27; Ps 35:13, 69:10 |
| By the nation of Israel in danger of war and destruction: Jehosophat regarding Moabites; Esther regarding Haman’s plot | 2 Chr 20:3; Esther 4:16; Jonah 3:4-10; Joel 1,2 |
| For safety in returning from the Exile: “The hand of our God is good on all who seek him, and the power of his wrath is against all who forsake him.” | Ezra 8:21-23 |
| In setting Israel apart for holiness and praying to the LORD regarding Israel’s captivity. | Nehemiah 9:1-5 |
| Nehemiah fasted with a broken heart and prayed for God to do something about the situation of Jerusalem. | Nehemiah 1:4 |
| When David led in mourning the deaths of Saul and Jonathan | 2 Sam 1:12 |
| To remember Jerusalem: interesting that the 8:19 passage describes mandated fastings as “seasons” of joy. | Zech 7:3-5, 8:19 |
| Anna, a widow, who prayed with great faithfulness for the redemption of Israel. | Luke 2:37 |
| Jesus fasted in the desert after his baptism | Matt 4:2 |
| Jesus’s instruction on fasting in the Sermon on the Mount | Matt 6:17-18 |
| Regarding the fasting of John the Baptist and his disciples | Mark 2:18-20; Luke 5:33-35 |
| As the way by which a Pharisee felt good about himself | Luke 18:12 |
| When appointing and commissioning leaders / elders: in setting apart Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for gospel ministry and in appointing elders. | Acts 13:2-3, 14:23 |

**Fulfill** (πληρόω/plēroō) – “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).

[21] She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” [22] All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: [23] “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). (Matthew 1:21-23 ESV)

[15] and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.” (Matthew 2:15 ESV)

[23] And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene. (Matthew 2:23 ESV)

[13] Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. [14] John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” [15] But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. (Matthew 3:13-15 ESV)

[12] Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. [13] And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, [14] so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: [15] “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— [16] the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” [17] From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:10-17 ESV)

The emphasis on fulfillment is also found 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). ”[[47]](#footnote-47)

Sixteen of the 86 New Testament uses of this word (πληρόω/plēroō) are found in Matthew. France identifies 11 occurrences of what he calls the “fulfillment formula” with a possible eleventh: 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 27:9 and possibly 2:5.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Five of the eleven generally recognized formula-quotations occur within the short section 1:18-2:23, where, together with the genealogy of 1:1-17, they form a concentrated “manifesto” setting out how Jesus the Messiah fulfills the hopes of OT Israel. Indeed, I shall argue that the whole narrative structure of 1:18-23 is designed to provide the basis for this scriptural argument, each successive scene of the story building up to the quotation of the text which it “fulfills” and its wording designed to highlight that fulfillment.[[49]](#footnote-49)

France believes the theme of fulfillment is far wider than just the uses of πληρόω/plēroō. Those instances are merely the most visible manifestation of Matthew’s concern with that theme.[[50]](#footnote-50)

Overall, the New Testament quotes the Old Testament time and time again. One scholar estimates that there are at least 1,600 quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament.[[51]](#footnote-51)

For more on the word fulfill, especially with reference to Matt 5:17-20, see Grier[[52]](#footnote-52) and Moo.[[53]](#footnote-53)

**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. This is not to say the Old Testament is not a missions oriented book. From the beginning, Scripture tells us that all people will be blessed through Christ (Genesis 12:1-3).

**The Golden Rule** (or Ethic of Reciprocity) – Christ’s admonition that 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*.[[54]](#footnote-54)

The influential philosopher, Immanuel Kant’s, “categorical imperative,” has similarities with the Golden Rule. Kant said: “Act only as that maxim whereby thou canst at the same time will that it should become a universal law.”[[55]](#footnote-55) Kant, however, severed ethics from any transcendent standard by centering it completely in human rationality rather than in God. Kant was counting on the fact that there is something similar between all humans that will result in a consistent ethic. [[56]](#footnote-56)

When people in our culture cite the Golden Rule, they usually have a Kantian view in mind rather than Christ. That is, people believe in morality that flows out of human intent and subjectivity rather than anchored in God and His Word.

**Heart -** "Scripture presents the heart as the seat of our emotion, motivation, will, thought, and desire. What this means is that when you encounter the word 'heart' in your Bible, you should have the following definition in your brain. The heart is the *causal center of your personhood*." Paul Tripp, *Sex and Money*, 47. Review copy. Crossway.

**Hell** (**γέεννα/geenna) –** The word translated “hell” appears 12 times in the Greek New Testament: Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; Mark 9:43, 45, 47; Luke 12:5; James 3:6.[[57]](#footnote-57) Jesus warnings of “hell” are jolting because of the severity of consequences for standards that are very difficult to achieve.[[58]](#footnote-58)

See my, [A Soft View of Hell Makes Hard People](http://chrisbrauns.com/2011/03/a-soft-view-of-hell-makes-hard-people/).[[59]](#footnote-59)

**Hypertheses –** Some have called Jesus’s comments on the Law “antitheses” but that label puts Christ’s teaching at odds with the Law which Christ stressed was not his agenda (Matthew 5:17-21). It is more accurate to say that Christ gives “hypertheses”

The commentaries discuss whether Jesus is contrasting his authority with that of Moses or of first century traditions surrounding Moses. The latter is most probable. “In other words, the dialogue partner is not the OT law as such but the OT law as currently (and sometimes misleadingly) understood and applied.”[[60]](#footnote-60) The point is not that Christ is giving antitheses to the law, but rather “hypertheses.”[[61]](#footnote-61) Jesus himself was speaking with authority that transcends that of the previous divine revelation through Moses.”[[62]](#footnote-62) See Bruner’s caution to not be too hard on first century Judaism.[[63]](#footnote-63)

**Hypocrites** (ὑποκριτής/hypokritēs) – Acting morally without really meaning it or living it consistently. 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.”[[64]](#footnote-64)

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. Tim Keller[[65]](#footnote-65)

**Inclusio** / **Inclusion** – This term references the bracketing of a passage in the Bible by similar phrases. Identifying literary features such as inclusios helps us both better appreciate the literary beauty of God’s inspired Word and identify important themes.

Two important examples of inclusios in the Gospel of Matthew show us that the Sermon on the Mount focuses on the importance of the Kingdom of Heaven. Notice the inclusio with the beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-10:

[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.”[[66]](#footnote-66)

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, 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.

On Matthew’s use of inclusio or bracketing, Piper writes:

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.[[67]](#footnote-67)

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

Pastor [Timothy G. Smith](http://cbcofbloom.com/about-cbc/) (Calvary Baptist Church, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania) adds these thoughts on bracketing in the Sermon on the Mount:

Also, the "bracket" of "kingdom" also is filled with the inner bracket[s] of "Righteousness".   
  
The 4th and 8th beatitude end the 2 parts with an emphasis on Righteousness (First Four:- hungering for righteousness in inner life Second Four: standing strong in righteousness toward others)  
  
The outworking of the righteousness of the beatitudes in detail throughout the rest of the sermon starts with a summary of the importance of righteousness in 5:11-20  
  
5:20 "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.  
  
There is an "inner bracket" of kingdom righteousness at the end of Matthew 5:  
  
5:48 "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.  
  
There is another "inner bracket" of kingdom righteousness that summarizes Matthew 6  
  
6:33 "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.  
  
And the sermon ends with the (dreadful) call for self-examination prior to the final test of righteousness in Matthew 7:  
  
7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.... 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'  
  
Obviously this isn't "news" since a view of a Kingdom and a view of righteousness must go hand in hand.

**Isaiah 61 –** The Beatitudes echo the themes of Isaiah 61. This is important because it shows that Jesus fulfills 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 . . .

Christ fulfills Isaiah’s prophecies on a number of occasions. For instance, see Isaiah 42 (Matthew 12:15-21) and the servant song.

**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 on page 15.

**Kingdom of Heaven / Kingdom of God** – The "Kingdom of God" references the sovereign rule of Christ the King with his people and a redeemed/new earth. Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God during his first advent and it will one day be fully manifest when Jesus returns for the consummation of his kingdom.

Contra the expectation of nearly everyone, in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus established that his Kingdom would be first about internal transformation and morality rather than about politics and power.[[68]](#footnote-68)

The Sermon on the Mount, particularly the beatitudes, describes what is necessary for Kingdom qualification. Elsewhere, we see those qualities that either disqualify one from the Kingdom (see Pharisees) or make it very difficult to enter the Kingdom (Matthew 19:16-26).

\* \* \* \* \*

*Jesus’s message in the Sermon on the Mount, “Happy are the hurting,” is* [*the opposite of Trump’s stump speech*](http://chrisbrauns.com/2015/09/jesuss-sermon-on-the-mount-vs-trumps-sermon-in-the-media/)*. Christ is, of course, eternally right.*[[69]](#footnote-69)

Donald Trump is having the time of his life proclaiming the gospel of this world: “Blessed are the rich, strong, and beautiful because they don’t make stupid deals.” If Trump’s sole goal in life was to write the antitheses of the Sermon on the Mount, he could do no better.

Of course, Trump is not alone in his opinion that “rich and beautiful are better.” His polling numbers demonstrate that many are making a deal with Trump according to the details in his “Sermon Through the Media.”

It is worth considering the differences between Christ’s beatitudes and Trump’s beatitudes. Who is it that is blessed? Contrast the gospel of a “would be king” with that of the only true King and see why it is the Trumps of the world who are really hurting. In his book, [The Jesus I Never Knew](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/031021923X/ref=as_li_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=031021923X&linkCode=as2&tag=abriintheva0e-20&linkId=6OPPQZBE4LJFULLC)http://ir-na.amazon-adsystem.com/e/ir?t=abriintheva0e-20&l=as2&o=1&a=031021923X, Philip Yancey interacts with Monika Hellwig who lists the following advantages to being poor.

1. They poor know they are in urgent need of redemption.
2. The poor know not only their dependence on God and on powerful people but also their interdependence with one another.
3. The poor rest their security not on things but on people.
4. The poor have no exaggerated sense of their own importance, and no exaggerated need of privacy.
5. The poor expect little form competition and much from cooperation.
6. The poor can distinguish between necessities and luxuries.
7. The poor can wait, because they have acquired a kind of dogged patience born of acknowledged dependence.
8. The fears of the poor are more realistic and less exaggerated, because they already know that one can survive great suffering and want.
9. Then the poor have the Gospel preached to them, it sounds like good news and not like a threat or a scolding.
10. The poor can respond to the call of the Gospel with a certain abandonment and uncomplicated totality because they have so little to lose and are ready for anything.

Yancey continues:

In summary, through no choice of their own–they may urgently wish otherwise–poor people find themselves that befits the grace of God. In their state of neediness, dependence, and dissatisfaction with life, they may welcome God’s free gift of love.

See also:

[Who Gets Helped By Jesus](http://chrisbrauns.com/2014/03/gets-helped-jesus/)[[70]](#footnote-70)

\* \* \* \* \*

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 have citizenship in the Kingdom of Heaven (John 3:3, 5).[[71]](#footnote-71) Jesus begins the Beatitudes with the promise that those who see their spiritual poverty and come to Him will be received as Kingdom citizens (Matthew 5:3).

Jesus stressed that he inaugurated the Kingdom of God during his earthly ministry (Matthew 16:28).

[20] Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he answered them, “The kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, [21] nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There!’ for behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you.” Luke 17:20-21

Or consider Matthew 12:28:

[28] But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Matthew 12:28

So the Kingdom of God has been inaugurated. Never the less, Revelation 20 references the Millennial (or alternatively Messianic) Kingdom and shows us that the Kingdom of God will not be fully established until Christ returns:

[1] Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. [2] And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and **bound him for a thousand years**, [3] and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

[4] Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. **They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.** [5] The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. [6] Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

[7] And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison [8] and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. [9] And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, [10] and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[11] Then I saw **a** great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. [12] And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. [13] And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. [14] Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. [15] And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:1-15)

In order to reflect that the Kingdom has been inaugurated even though it has not yet been fully established, and following the lead of Gerhardus Vos, George Ladd, and others[[72]](#footnote-72) theologians often reference the timing of the Kingdom of God using the phrase “already (Matthew 12:28, Luke 17:20-21)/not yet (Isaiah 65:17, 66:2; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21:1).”[[73]](#footnote-73)

In the New Testament, the idea that the Kingdom has begun, but is not yet fully established, is referenced as the “mystery of the kingdom” (μυστήρια τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν) John Piper summarizes:[[74]](#footnote-74)

So the kingdom has come according to [Matthew 12:28](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2012.28) and [Luke 17:21](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2017.21); and the coming of the kingdom is still future according to [Luke 19:11–12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2019.11%E2%80%9312) and many other texts. This is puzzling. It threw the Pharisees into confusion. It took John the Baptist off guard ([Matthew 11:2–6](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matthew%2011.2%E2%80%936)). It caused one crowd to want to throw Jesus off a cliff ([Luke 4:29](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%204.29)) and another want to make him king ([John 6:15](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%206.15)). It baffled Pilate when Jesus was on trial ([John 18:36–37](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%2018.36%E2%80%9337)). It left the apostles confused and hopeless between Good Friday and Easter ([Luke 24:21](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2024.21)).

Behind this confusion was what Jesus called the "mystery [or secret] of the kingdom." Let's turn to Matthew 13 and see how the parables of the kingdom unfold the mystery of the kingdom for us. What is mysterious about the kingdom is that it has come partly but not fully. There are hints about this in the Old Testament (e.g., Isaiah 53—the suffering servant). But by and large the Old Testament does not clearly separate the two comings of Christ. It sees one great day of the Lord coming when God would deal finally with sin and defeat his enemies and gather his people into a kingdom of peace and righteousness and joy and make the earth and the heavens new and glorious with the Messiah ruling forever and ever. But it didn't make clear that this day of the Lord—the coming of the kingdom—would happen in two stages: first, with Jesus coming as a suffering servant to atone for sin, and second, with Jesus coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

This is the mystery (the secret) of the kingdom—the arrival of the kingdom in a preliminary, small way in advance of the final consummation when all the enemies would be defeated and all sin and satanic power and sickness and suffering would be gone forever. The mystery, as George Ladd puts it, is "fulfillment without consummation." Fulfillment of the kingdom is here; but consummation of the kingdom is not. Many kingdom blessings can be experienced today; many are reserved for the consummation and the coming of Jesus.

Schreiner writes:

The surprising element in Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom is its ambiguous character. The kingdom can be explained in terms of the already-not yet. The kingdom was inaugurated in Jesus’ ministry but not yet consummated. It had arrived, but the full salvation and judgment promised had not yet come to pass.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Carl F.H. Henry:

No study of the kingdom teaching of Jesus is adequate unless it recognizes His implication both that the kingdom is here, and that it is not here. This does not imply an ultimate paradox, but rather stresses that the kingdom exists in incomplete realization. The task of the Bible student is to discover (1) In what sense it is here; (2) in what sense it is to be further realized before the advent of Christ; and (3) in what sense it will be fully realized at the advent of Christ.[[76]](#footnote-76)

See Henry’s summary of Paul’s emphasis on the present aspects of the kingdom.[[77]](#footnote-77)

The inauguration of the Kingdom of God by Jesus should be see within the framework of biblical theology or God’s unfolding plan for redemption. The below table is *adapted* from Graeme Goldsworthy’s summary of how the Kingdom of God unfolds:[[78]](#footnote-78)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Kingdom-Pattern  **Established** | **-----EDEN** |
| **THE FALL** | |
| Protevangelium Redemption **Announced**- | **Seed of the Woman** |
| Judgment / Grace **Previewed** | Redemptive Act:  **Noah** |
| The Kingdom **Promised**-- | **Abraham**  Redemptive Act:  Exodus |
| The Kingdom ---------------**Foreshadowed** | **David-Solomon**  Redemptive Act:  Prophetic Promise of Salvation |
| The Kingdom **at Hand**----- | **Jesus Christ**  Redemptive Act:  His life, death, and resurrection |
| The Kingdom **Consummated**------------- | **Return of Christ** |

There are three major views regarding the timing and nature of the consummation of the Kingdom of God. The *premillennial* view holds that Christ will return prior to establishing his 1,000- year reign on earth. The *amillennial* holds that there is no future millennium but rather than the Millennium is taking place now in heaven. When Christ returns, the eternal state follows. The *post-millenial* view is that the Millennium is now and that history will progressively improve. Post-millennialism was popular during the 17th-18th centuries but is relatively uncommon now.

The below descriptions are from the [Desiring God web site](http://www.desiringgod.org/conference-messages/an-evening-of-eschatology).[[79]](#footnote-79)

*Premillennialism* (represented by Jim Hamilton): The return of Christ happens before (pre-) the thousand-year reign of Christ, which is a reign of the risen Christ on the earth.

*Amillennialism* (represented by Sam Storms): The return of Christ happens after the thousand-year reign, a reign that occurs in heaven, in the intermediate state, and not upon the earth. Those who have died in faith and entered into the presence of Christ share his rule and reign during the current church age in which we now live.[[80]](#footnote-80)

*Postmillennialism* (represented by Doug Wilson): The return of Christ happens after (post-) the thousand-year reign, which corresponds to the Christian age, and the reign of Christ from heaven leads the church to triumph by and through the gospel to such an extent that the Great Commission will be successfully fulfilled, and the Christian faith will pervade all the cultures of all the nations of men. All Christ’s enemies will be subdued in this way, with the exception of death, which he will destroy by his coming.

Without thoroughly evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each view, the pre-millennial position is the one held by our church. High level, here are the basic reasons we hold to the pre-millennial position:

* Revelation 20:4 is a very difficult verse for the amillennial position to interpret.
* A number of Old Testament passages describe a time that does not seem to correspond with either the present age or the eternal state (Isaiah 65:20, Isaiah 11:6-9, Isaiah 11:10-11, Psalm 72:8-14).[[81]](#footnote-81)
* Other passages besides Revelation 20:4 in the New Testament predict a distinct millennial age: Revelation 2:26-27, 12:5-6.[[82]](#footnote-82)

Each of the major views of the millennium is prone to certain errors. Given the belief that history will trend in a negative direction until Christ returns, at times a weakness of the pre-millennial view has been an overly negative view of the short-term trajectory of history. Premillennialists have also erred at times in trying to interpret the relationship of current events to Scripture.[[83]](#footnote-83)

It is important to see the theological purpose for the Millennium. The Millennial or Messianic Kingdom is when Christ will have victory in this space and history. While Jesus came humbly and gently in his first advent, when he returns he will come in all his glory and power and everyone will know that He is God.[[84]](#footnote-84) It will be the time when Christ fully establishes his Kingdom and accomplishes what is necessary so that the Kingdom can be handed over to the Father. If justice is to be served, this must happen in this space and history.[[85]](#footnote-85) Turner summarizes:

This Millennium is an intermediate transitional stage of God’s kingdom that further extends his rule over the entire earth, not just the colonies of the redeemed. However, because of the continuing presence of sinners, there are still difficulties and problems that finally erupt in the rebellion of Revelation 20:7-9. The ultimate extension of Christ’s rule involves the exclusion of all sinners from the renewed heavens and earth (Rev. 20:10-12; 21:8, 27; 22:15, 19).[[86]](#footnote-86)

Some (especially Premillennialists?) have held that the Sermon on the Mount does not have immediate application for the age of the church. MacArthur counters:

Because of its seemingly impossible demands, many evangelicals maintain that the Sermon on the Mount pertains only to the kingdom age, the Millennium. Otherwise, they argue, how could Jesus command us to be perfect, just as our “heavenly Father is perfect” (Matt. 5:48)? For several reasons, however, that interpretation cannot be correct. First of all, the text does not indicate or imply that these teachings are for another age. Second, Jesus demanded them of people who were not living in the Millennium. Third, many of the teachings themselves become meaningless if they are applied to the Millennium. For example, there will be no persecution of believers (see 5:10–12, 44) during the kingdom age. Fourth, every principle taught in the Sermon on the Mount is also taught elsewhere in the New Testament in contexts that clearly apply to believers of our present age. Fifth, there are many New Testament passages that command equally impossible standards, which unglorified human strength cannot continually achieve (see Rom. 13:14; 2 Cor. 7:1; Phil. 1:9–10; Col. 3:1–2; Heb. 12:14; 1 Pet. 1:15–16).[[87]](#footnote-87)

Keller’s explains that the inauguration of the Kingdom of God should be understood as the establishment of a new regime.

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.[[88]](#footnote-88)

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

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).[[89]](#footnote-89)

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.[[90]](#footnote-90)

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

In so for 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 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.[[91]](#footnote-91)

“What Jesus projects is a countermetanarrative, an alternative to Rome’s, a narrative not of coercive power but of witness. Already by Acts 17:7, his disciples are being accused of turning the whole world . . . upside down . . . So to witness the kingdom of God as far as the edges of the earth, as Jesus commissioned his disciples to do, was to expose Rome’s aspiration to limitless domination, as blasphemous.” Richard Bauckham.[[92]](#footnote-92)

See Carl F.H. Henry’s chapter, “The Apprehension Over Kingdom Preaching.”[[93]](#footnote-93)

“No subject was more frequently on Jesus’ lips than the kingdom.” Carl F.H. Henry[[94]](#footnote-94)

It is interesting that in Matthew 24:13 Jesus the phrase “the gospel of the Kingdom.”

**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 included 613 commandments (248 positive and 365 negative).[[95]](#footnote-95) 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, see Exodus 20:3-17). 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. All the Law and the Prophets are summed up in the admonition to love God wholeheartedly and to love neighbor as self (Matt 22:37-40).

The Pharisees notoriously made a big deal out of small details of the law (such as tithing on spices) and yet neglected weightier mattes of the Law. “The Pharisees looked for strict legal correctness but Jesus looked for love.”[[96]](#footnote-96)

[23] “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. [24] You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

[25] “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. [26] You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

[27] “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. [28] So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. Matthew 23:23-28

Jesus fulfilled the Law such that attention turned from the Law, which was only a shadow of what was to come, to the reality Himself - - Christ.[[97]](#footnote-97)

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.

Justin Taylor has summarized what looks to be a helpful article on the Law.[[98]](#footnote-98)

Kevin DeYoung reflects on how we should view the Law and Jesus’s fulfillment of it.

No disciple of Jesus should start with the presumption that the Mosaic commands are largely irrelevant. Jesus himself insisted that he did not come to abolish the tiniest speck from the Law (Matt. 5:17–18). Jesus spoke of fulfilling the Old Testament Scripture but never of casually dispensing with it. To be sure, discipleship under the new covenant is different from life under the old. All foods have been declared clean (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:8–11:18); holy days have been rendered optional (Rom. 14:5–6); the entire sacrificial system of temple, priest, and sacrifice has been superseded (Heb. 7:1–10:18). Jesus brings the Scripture to completion, to its climax, to its intended goal. This is far different, however, from assuming that unfamiliar sections in Leviticus should be automatically set aside. In the truest sense, nothing in the Old Testament should be set aside. All Scripture has been breathed out by God and is profitable for the Christian (2 Tim. 3:16–17). Even the obsolete sacrificial system still teaches us about the nature of spiritual worship and true discipleship (Rom. 12:1–2). Every law in the Old Testament reveals something about God’s character and the nature of our obedience. If the underlying principle from Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 is something other than “God does not approve of homosexual behavior,” then that needs to be proven from Scripture, not simply asserted based on a casual dismissal of Old Testament instruction.[[99]](#footnote-99)

Turner/DeYoung on how Jesus fulfills the Law[[100]](#footnote-100)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Extreme (Continuity)** |  | **Balance** |  | **Extreme (Discontinuity)** |
|  |  | “Jesus has come to show forth the true transcendent meaning of the law by reaffirming it without merely repeating it.”[[101]](#footnote-101) |  |  |
| “Jesus simply came to carry out what Moses said.” (Continuity overstated and the six contrasts of 5:21-48 are superfluous).[[102]](#footnote-102) |  |  |  | “Jesus completes the law.” (This merely abolishes the law)[[103]](#footnote-103) |
|  |  | “All foods have been declared clean (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:8–11:18); holy days have been rendered optional (Rom. 14:5–6); the entire sacrificial system of temple, priest, and sacrifice has been superseded (Heb. 7:1–10:18). Jesus brings the Scripture to completion, to its climax, to its intended goal.” Kevin DeYoung[[104]](#footnote-104)  Further, the United States is not a Theocracy and certainly there is not the expectation that the death penalty for the law would be imposed on law breakers. |  |  |
|  |  | Yet, the following 6 examples show that Christ raises the stakes so that the law applies all the more. |  |  |

When Jesus was crucified, the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom symbolizing the end of the Old Covenant.

[51] And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split. [52] The tombs also were opened. And many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, [53] and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many. [54] When the centurion and those who were with him, keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and what took place, they were filled with awe and said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” Matthew 27:51-54.

Important to interact with Hebrews 10 that shows us:

1. The law was only a shadow of what was to come
2. Christ sat down 10:11 after completing the work
3. 10:16 – now the New Covenant is in effect

See [Moo’s article on the Law and Matthew](https://www.evernote.com/shard/s207/nl/25588679/113c5b96-7cad-42e6-93eb-112dea238ca9/).[[105]](#footnote-105)

Blomberg:[[106]](#footnote-106)

[**5:17**](logosref:Bible.Mt5.17) Now Christ makes clear that he is not contradicting the law, but neither is he preserving it unchanged. He comes “to fulfill” it, i.e., he will bring the law to its intended goal. This is what the Pharisees and scribes have missed, who therefore need a greater conformity to God’s standards (v. [20](logosref:Bible.Mt5.20)). Both the Law and the Prophets together (v. [17](logosref:Bible.Mt5.17)) and the Law by itself (v. [18](logosref:Bible.Mt5.18)) were standard Jewish ways of referring to the entire Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament).

Fulfillment of Scripture, as throughout chaps. [1–4](logosref:Bible.Mt1-4), refers to the bringing to fruition of its complete meaning. Here Jesus views his role as that of fulfilling all of the Old Testament. This claim has massive hermeneutical implications and challenges both classic Reformed and Dispensationalist perspectives. It is inadequate to say either that none of the Old Testament applies unless it is explicitly reaffirmed in the New or that all of the Old Testament applies unless it is explicitly revoked in the New. Rather, all of the Old Testament remains normative and relevant for Jesus’ followers ([2 Tim 3:16](logosref:Bible.2Ti3.16)), but none of it can rightly be interpreted until one understands how it has been fulfilled in Christ. Every Old Testament text must be viewed in light of Jesus’ person and ministry and the changes introduced by the new covenant he inaugurated. Nor is there any evidence here for the common Christian division of the law into moral, civil, and ceremonial categories or for elevating the Ten Commandments above others. This is not to say that the law cannot or should not be subdivided, but valid divisions will probably require greater thematic nuance and sophistication.

[**5:18**](logosref:Bible.Mt5.18) Verse [18](logosref:Bible.Mt5.18) reaffirms the absolute authority of all of the Scriptures down to the smallest components of individual words. They will endure for all time but with the important qualification “until everything is accomplished.” With the coming of Christ, many aspects of the law are brought to complete fruition (e.g., the need for sacrifices, on which see Hebrews). In other instances certain requirements of the law endure until Christ’s coming again (e.g., classically, love of neighbor and God). In short, Christian application of the Old Testament must always take into account both the continuities and the discontinuities with the New Testament. Given this hermeneutic, correct teaching and practice of all “these commandments” (v. [19](logosref:Bible.Mt5.19), almost certainly referring back to the Old Testament law just mentioned) are crucial. Jesus will give six illustrations of such correct interpretation shortly (vv. [21–48](logosref:Bible.Mt5.21-48)).

**Legalism** – The teaching that a relationship with God depends on adherence to a set of rules or standards. The Pharisees (see “Pharisees” on page 36) specialized in legalism and so Jesus condemned their hypocrisy (see “Hypocrites” on page 18).

**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.”[[107]](#footnote-107) See the post, “[Light: A Most Important Assertion About God.](http://chrisbrauns.com/2011/08/light-a-most-import-statement-about-god/)”

**The Lord’s Prayer –** The model prayer Jesus gives in Matthew 6:9-13. Compare “daily bread” and Proverbs 30:9.

**Macarism** (μακάριος, makarios)– A synonym for a beatitude (see “beatitude” on page 6) which comes from the Greek word translated “blessed” in Matthew 5:3-12.

**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. We believe that the author is Matthew who does not hesitate to note that he is a “tax collector” (Matthew 10:3) - - thank God for humble leaders.

**Midrash** – References the exegetical techniques of rabbis at the time the gospels were written. This term is relevant to a study of the gospels because at times they employ “midrashic” techniques in interpreting and commenting on Old Testament techniques.[[108]](#footnote-108)

Several times during the lecture Wiesel used the word *midrash*: “If we are realistic persons, honest persons, alert persons, then *midrash* will enter our lives.” The word means “seeking out.” *Midrash* is the activity of a person who *seeks* the meaning of the word of God. *Midrash* comprises the stories told and comments made by persons who *seek* God’s truth in Scripture. Eugene Peterson, emphasis his.[[109]](#footnote-109)

**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** (ὀμνύω/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*.[[110]](#footnote-110)

**Pharisees** – A group of specially observant and influential Jews, mainly in Palestine, from the second century BC to the first century AD.[[111]](#footnote-111) While we expect hypocrisy from the Pharisees, it was shocking in the first century to hear Jesus call out the Pharisees for hypocrisy. The Pharisees were the beloved religious leaders. Some like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimethea came to Jesus’s defense.[[112]](#footnote-112)

In the Gospels the Pharisees often opposed Jesus. They were known for their strict zeal for the Law.[[113]](#footnote-113) Jesus rebuked them for being more concerned with external appearances than the condition of their hearts (Matthew 23:1-38). So Mark records:

[6] And he said to them, “Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written,

“‘This people honors me with their lips,

but their heart is far from me;

[7] in vain do they worship me,

teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.’

(Mark 7:6-7 ESV)

In her recommended, *The Jesus Storybook Bible*, Sally Lloyd-Jones describes the Pharisees in this way:

In those days there were some Extra-Super-Holy People (or at least that’s what they thought), and they were called Pharisees. Every day, they would stand out there in the middle of the street and pray out loud in big Extra-Super-Holy voices. They really weren’t praying so much as just showing off. They used a lot of special words that were so clever, no one understood what they meant.[[114]](#footnote-114)

**Prayer** - In our series, one of our central emphases has been to *pray rather than chant* the Lord’s Prayer. It is of no value to mindlessly recite the Lord’s prayer. Rather, praying the Lord’s Prayer means understanding what each phrase means and how it should guide our prayers.

Think of the Lord’s Prayer as “hand rails” we hold onto as we pray. But we must walk through the prayer in our minds as we engage with God.

If you are unsure what each phrase of the Lord’s Prayer means, then follow this link ([Westminster Confessions and Heidelberg Catechism on the Lord’s Prayer](http://chrisbrauns.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Westminster-Confessions-and-Heidelberg-Catechism-on-the-Lords-Prayer1.pdf)) to a document I created which brings together the explanations given by the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms as well as the Heidelberg Catechism. These catechisms give beautiful and elegant explanations of the Lord’s Prayer.

See also: John R.W. Stott: Prayer Ditches Jesus Taught Us to Avoid:[[115]](#footnote-115)

JOHN R.W. STOTT: PRAYER DITCHES JESUS TAUGHT US TO DODGE

From [*The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*](http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B004U6YOG6?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creativeASIN=B004U6YOG6&linkCode=xm2&tag=abriintheva0e-20), pages 142-152[[116]](#footnote-116)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Extremes to Avoid | | What Jesus Encouraged | | Stott’s Comment – “Thus Christian prayer is seen in contrast to its non-Christian alternatives. |
| Hypocrisy | *“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 6 But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.* | God- Centered: “My” not “Thy” | *Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.* | “It is *God-centered* (concerned for God’s glory) in contrast to the self-centredness of the Pharisees (preoccupied with their own glory).”  Stott summarizes that we do not come to God “hypocritically like play actors seeking the applause of men.” |
| Babbling | *[7] “And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. [8] Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.* | Intelligent and Thoughtful: To a personal God | *Give us this day our daily bread,*  *and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.* | “And it is *intelligent* (expressive of thoughtful dependence) in contrast to the mechanical incantations of the heathen.”  Stott summarizes that we do not come to God “mechanically like pagan babblers, whose mind is not in their mutterings.” |

“The only person who dares wake up a king at 3:00 AM for a glass of water is a child. We have that kind of access.” Tim Keller[[117]](#footnote-117)

Notice how much [Jesus prays in the Gospel of Luke](http://chrisbrauns.com/2012/12/jesuss-example-of-prayer-in-the-gospel-of-luke/).[[118]](#footnote-118)

See my compilation of the catechisms available via my post, “Pray the Lord’s Prayer, Don’t Chant It.”[[119]](#footnote-119)

See [Luther’s direction to his barber regarding prayer](https://www.evernote.com/shard/s207/nl/25588679/7ae87a1f-0c92-469a-8397-6390989147c3/).

**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 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.[[120]](#footnote-120)

**Purpose** - The Sermon on the Mount shows us the heart of what Jesus Kingdom will be all about. In doing so, it 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.[[121]](#footnote-121)

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

“The Sermon on the Mount introduced a new moon in the moral universe that has exerted its own force of gravity ever since.” Philip Yancey[[122]](#footnote-122)

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.[[123]](#footnote-123) What a King we have!

France suggests that we call this, “the discourse on discipleship,” rather than the “sermon on the mount.”[[124]](#footnote-124)

“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 Bruner[[125]](#footnote-125)

**Reward / μισθός –** Within the SOTM Jesus references rewards several times. All told this word appears translated “reward” appears 29 times in 28 verses in the Greek New Testament.

Louw and Nida:

**38.14** **μισθός**b, **οῦ** *m*: a recompense based upon what a person has earned and thus deserves, the nature of the recompense being either positive or negative—‘reward, recompense.’ δοῦναι τὸν μισθὸν τοῖς δούλοις σου τοῖς προφήταις ‘to give a reward to your servants the prophets’ Re 11:18; ὅτι ὁ μισθὸς ὑμῶν πολὺς ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς ‘because your reward in heaven is great’ Mt 5:12; ἕκαστος δὲ τὸν ἴδιον μισθὸν λήμψεται κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον ‘and each one will receive his own reward in accordance with how he himself has labored’ 1 Cor 3:8; ἰδοὺ ἔρχομαι ταχύ, καὶ ὁ μισθός μου μετ̓ ε’μοῦ ‘behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me’ Re 22:12. In the context of Re 22:12, μισθός may be understood as either a positive or negative reward.[[126]](#footnote-126)

Occurrences in the SOTM are as follows:

Rejoice and be glad, for your **reward** is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matt 5:12

For if you love those who love you, what **reward** do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? Matt 5:46

“Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no **reward** from your Father who is in heaven. Matt 6:1

“Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their **reward**. Matt 6:2

“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their **reward**. Matt 6:5

“And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their **reward**. Matt 6:16

Craig Blomberg submits there is no biblical warrant for degrees of reward in heaven and warns that to believe there so is a damaging view. See also Craig L. Blomberg, “Degrees of Reward in the Kingdom of Heaven,” JETS 35/2 (June 1992) 159-172.[[127]](#footnote-127)

In contrast, Piper, following Edwards, argues that some will have a greater capacity to enjoy the glory of God in heaven. He summarizes:

The point I am stressing here is that there are differences in the fullness of delight that each of us enjoys in heaven. Each will be full in heaven, for there are no frustrations there. But the fullness of each will not be the same since the measure that we used to bless others on earth, and that God will use to bless us in heaven, are different for different people. Therefore I say again, the more sacrificially generous we are on earth, the greater will be our enjoyment of heaven. John Piper[[128]](#footnote-128)

Piper, is influenced by what Jonathan Edwards preached:

There are different degrees of happiness and glory in heaven. As there are degrees among the angels, *viz.* thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers; so there are degrees among the saints. In heaven are many mansions, and of different degrees of dignity. The glory of the saints above will be in some proportion to their eminency in holiness and good works here. Christ will reward all according to their works. He that gained ten pounds was made ruler over ten cities, and he that gained five pounds over five cities. [Luke xix. 17.](http://www.ccel.org/study/Luke_19:17) [2 Cor. ix. 6.](http://www.ccel.org/study/2_Corinthians%209:6) “He that soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” And the apostle Paul tells us that, as one star differs from another star in glory, so also it shall be in the resurrection of the dead. [1 Cor. xv. 41.](http://www.ccel.org/study/1_Corinthians%2015:41) Christ tells us that he who gives a cup of cold water unto a disciple in the name of a disciple, shall in no wise lose his reward. But this could not be true, if a person should have no greater reward for doing many good works than if he did but few. It will be no damp to the happiness of those who have lower degrees of happiness and glory, that there are others advanced in glory above them: for all shall be perfectly happy, every one shall be perfectly satisfied. Every vessel that is cast into this ocean of happiness is full, though there are some vessels far larger than others; and there shall be no such thing as envy in heaven, but perfect love shall reign through the whole society. Those who are not so high in glory as others, will not envy those that are higher, but they will have so great, and strong, and pure love to them, that they will rejoice in their superior happiness; their love to them will be such that they will rejoice that they are happier than themselves; so that instead of having a damp to their own happiness, it will add to it. They will see it to be fit that they that have been most eminent in works of righteousness should be most highly exalted in glory; and they will rejoice in having that done, that is fittest to be done. There will be a perfect harmony in that society; those that are most happy will also be most holy, and all will be both perfectly holy and perfectly happy. But yet there will be different degrees of both holiness and happiness according to the measure of each one’s capacity, and therefore those that are lowest in glory will have the greatest love to those that are highest in happiness, because they will see most of the image of God in them; and having the greatest love to them, they will rejoice to see them the most happy and the highest in glory. And so, on the other hand, those that are highest in glory, as they will be the most lovely, so they will be fullest of love: as they will excel in happiness, they will proportionally excel in divine benevolence and love to others, and will have more love to God and to the saints than those that are lower in holiness and happiness. And besides, those that will excel in glory will also excel in humility. Here in this world, those that are above others are the objects of envy, because that others conceive of them as being lifted up with it; but in heaven it will not be so, but those saints in heaven who excel in happiness will also in holiness, and consequently in humility. The saints in heaven are more humble than the saints on earth, and still the higher we go among them the greater humility there is; the highest orders of saints, who know most of God, see most of the distinction between God and them, and consequently are comparatively least in their own eyes, and so are most humble. The exaltation of some in heaven above the rest will be so far from diminishing the perfect happiness and joy of the rest who are inferior, that they will be the happier for it; such will be the union in their society that they will be partakers of each other’s happiness. Then will be fulfilled in its perfection that which is declared in [1 Cor. xii. 22.](http://www.ccel.org/study/1_Corinthians%2012:22) “If one of the members be honoured all the members rejoice with it.” Jonathan Edwards[[129]](#footnote-129)

Grudem, likewise, believes that there are degrees of reward in eternity.[[130]](#footnote-130) He bases his position on the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:9-10) and also cites Rom 2:6-11; Rev 20:12, 15.

In the end, John Starke’s summary is helpful:[[131]](#footnote-131)

In its most general sense, “reward” (Greek, *misthos*) is the appropriate consequence or consummation of a course of action. Sometimes it is rendered as “wages” ([Matt. 20:8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%2020.8); [Luke 10:7](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2010.7); [John 4:36](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/John%204.36)). Negatively, Judas’s blood money is called “the reward of his wickedness” ([Acts 1:18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Acts%201.18)).

Positively, “reward” (which is always in the singular in the NT) refers to entering eternal life. And the greatest joy of heaven will be seeing God face to face ([Rev. 22:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rev.%2022.4)). Every believer longs for the day when “we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is” ([1 John 3:2](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20John%203.2)), when we shall “enter into the joy of [our] master” ([Matt. 25:21](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%2025.21), [23](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2025.23)). “They shall see God” ([Matt. 5:8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%205.8)) and “your reward is great in heaven” ([Matt. 5:12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%205.12)) are ultimately referring to the same thing. Jesus frequently appeals to reward as a motivator for righteousness—whether he is talking about persecution ([Matt. 5:12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%205.12)) or love ([Matt. 5:46](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%205.46)) or giving ([Matt. 6:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%206.4)) or prayer ([Matt. 6:6](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%206.6)) or fasting ([Matt. 6:18](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt.%206.18)).

Five key passages reference believers receiving a “crown” ([1 Cor. 9:25](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor.%209.25); [1 Thess. 2:19](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Thess.%202.19); [2 Tim. 4:8](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%20Tim.%204.8); [James 1:12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%201.12); [1 Pet. 5:4](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Pet.%205.4)). Though it is popular to see these as different types of reward (crown of righteousness, crown of gold, crown of life, etc.) a majority of commentators believe these are different ways of referring to the one reward of eternal life. Space does not permit a detailed examination of these and related passages, but I would commend the [careful analysis of Craig Blomberg](http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/35/35-2/JETS_35-2_159-172_Blomberg.pdf).

While professor Blomberg is largely convincing with regard to the *exegetical* issues, I think he takes a misstep in his *theological* objections to varying degrees of reward. Even though I don’t think any passages explicitly teach this idea, it is not inconceivable, not is it incompatible with any teaching in the NT. If there are degrees of reward, they would likely revolve around increased *capacities* and *responsibilities*.

Jonathan Edwards explains the former: “Every vessel that is cast into this ocean of happiness is full, though there are some vessels far larger than others; and there shall be no such thing as envy in heaven, but perfect love shall reign throughout the whole society.” Could the parable of the ten minas ([Luke 19:11-27](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Luke%2019.11-27)) imply that some believers will rule over more cites in the new heavens and earth? If so, this would mean that under our “great reward” (enjoying God himself) there are various roles and responsibilities. I am not certain this will be the case, but I see nothing inherently problematic in holding to this as a possibility.

In summary, all true believers will receive the great reward of seeing God face to face, and this should motivate all of our actions. The NT nowhere clearly and explicitly teaches varying degrees of reward, though this may indeed be true. If so, some may have greater capacities as well as greater responsibilities, but all of us will experience “fullness of joy” and “pleasures forevermore” at God’s right hand ([Ps. 16:11](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Ps.%2016.11)). Maranatha—come quickly, Lord Jesus!

Randy Alcorn energetically takes on the idea that it is wrong to be motivated by rewards.[[132]](#footnote-132) See [The Law of Rewards](../../../Topical%20Series/Envision%20Rewards/The%20Law%20of%20Rewards.doc) and [Envision Rewards](../../../Topical%20Series/Envision%20Rewards/Envision%20Rewards%20Overview.doc). See also Sam Storms in his devotionals on 2 Corinthians who does a good job explaining degrees of reward and assuring people that that they won’t resent someone else’s reward.[[133]](#footnote-133)

Where Rewards are concerned, 2 Ditches should be avoided

The rewards of following Christ in this life are incredible:

**The Left Road Ditch**

**Prosperity Gospel**: We give as a technique to *get* in this life - - “me” centered rather than God-centered.

**The Right Road Ditch**

**No Rewards**: Because all Christians are justified, their eternal standing is all exactly the same and the motivation of rewards is irrelevant to this life.

* No guilt
* No fear in death
* Our destiny belongs to Christ
* Our heart is in heaven (where you have set it Matt 6:19-21) and you can be sure it is there.
* Called together with people who love us and care about us

Ralph Martin regarding 2 Corinthians 5:9-10:

Paul is suggesting that those who do well will receive good. This is consistent with his picture in 1 Cor 3:10-15. The Christians whose work turns out to be gold, silver, and costly stones, will receive their reward (1 Cor 3:14; cf. Matt 16:27). If, however, they build their Christian life with only wood, hay, and straw, though they escape with their life, they suffer loss (1 Cor 3:15). Since Paul urged his readers to please the Lord, there must be a “positive reinforcement” for just such actions. The Christian is not excused from doing good, and is liable for his or her actions (Eph 6:8; Col 3:25).[[134]](#footnote-134)

This can be said with certainty. Scripture motivates people through the idea of rewards - - regardless of whether or not there are differing degrees, both in this life and the life to come. Moses was looking ahead to his reward (Hebrews 11:24-28). We are promised an eternal weight of glory that will never fade away:

* *Relationships* – We will have earned friends who we will know are there because God used us in some way (Luke 16:8-9).

[1] See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. [2] Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. [3] And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

“I bowed on my knees and cried holy.” “We shall behold him.” “I shall know him”

I dreamed of a city called Glory,  
So bright and so fair.  
When I entered the gates I cried, "Holy"  
The angels all met me there:  
They carried me from mansion to mansion,  
And oh the sights I saw,  
But I said, "I want to see Jesus,  
The One who died for all."

**Chorus**  
Then I bowed on my knees and cried,  
"Holy, Holy, Holy."  
I clapped my hands and sang, "Glory,  
Glory to the Son of God."  
I bowed on my knees and cried,  
"Holy, Holy, Holy."  
Then I clapped my hands and sang, "Glory,  
Glory to the Son of God."  
  
As I entered the gates of that city,  
My loved ones all knew me well.  
They took me down the streets of Heaven;  
Such scenes were too many to tell;  
I saw Abraham, Jacob and Isaac   
Talked with Mark, and Timothy  
But I said, "I want to see Jesus,  
'Cause He's the One who died for me."  
  
Chorus  
Then I bowed on my knees and cried,  
"Holy, Holy, Holy."  
I clapped my hands and sang, "Glory,  
Glory, Glory."  
I clapped my hands and sang, "Glory"  
I clapped my hands and sang, "Glory"  
I clapped my hands and sang, "Glory"  
"Glory to the Son of God"  
I sang, "Glory to the Son of God."

I Shall Know Him By Fanny Crosby

When my lifework is ended, and I cross the swelling tide,  
When the bright and glorious morning I shall see;  
I shall know my Redeemer when I reach the other side,  
And His smile will be the first to welcome me.

Refrain:  
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,  
And redeemed by His side I shall stand,  
I shall know Him, I shall know Him,  
By the print of the nails in His hand.

Oh, the soul-thrilling rapture when I view His blessed face,  
And the luster of His kindly beaming eye;  
How my full heart will praise Him for the mercy, love and grace,  
That prepare for me a mansion in the sky.

Oh, the dear ones in glory, how they beckon me to come,  
And our parting at the river I recall;  
To the sweet vales of Eden they will sing my welcome home;  
But I long to meet my Savior first of all.

Through the gates to the city in a robe of spotless white,  
He will lead me where no tears will ever fall;  
In the glad song of ages I shall mingle with delight;  
But I long to meet my Savior first of all.

We Shall Behold Him

The sky shall unfold  
Preparing His entrance  
The stars shall applaud Him  
With thunders of praise  
  
The sweet light in His eyes, shall enhance those awaiting  
And we shall behold Him, then face to face  
  
O we shall behold Him, we shall behold Him  
Face to face in all of His glory  
O we shall behold Him, yes we shall behold Him  
Face to face, our Savior and Lord  
  
The angel will sound, the shout of His coming  
And the sleeping shall rise, from there slumbering place  
And those remaining, shall be changed in a moment  
And we shall behold him, then face to face  
  
We shall behold Him, o yes we shall behold Him  
Face to face in all of His glory  
We shall behold Him, face to face  
Our Savior and Lord  
We shall behold Him, our Savior and Lord  
Savior and Lord!

* *Responsibility* – I will put you in charge of many things
* *Riches* – John Piper: “I can wait” We can store up treasure in heaven and our investment will be multiplied many times. Abraham looking to a city (Hebrews 11:8-10):

**26** But Jesus looked at them and said, With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.” **27** Then Peter said in reply, “ See, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?” **28** Jesus said to them, “ Truly, I say to you, in the new world, the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **29** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name’s sake, will receive a hundredfoldand will inherit eternal life. **30** But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

* *Renown* – crowns, the applause of heaven. We are promised to be part of the great team of people including the prophets - - great cloud of witnesses - -
* A *renewed* earth, A place of complete and total beauty
* *Eternal* – they never fade away. Our inheritance cannot be destroyed (1 Peter 1:3-9, Matthew 6:19-21).

See Challies post, [Looking Forward to Reward](http://www.challies.com/christian-living/looking-forward-to-the-reward).[[135]](#footnote-135)

**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.”[[136]](#footnote-136) Having said that, in Matthew 8:18 a scribe shows great interest in following Jesus. See above, “Pharisees,” on page 6.

**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.”[[137]](#footnote-137)

**Salt & Light** – “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).”[[138]](#footnote-138)

The ancients used salt in myriad ways: (1) seasoning for food. (2) added to sacrifices (3) connected to purity (4) a sign of a barren wasteland (5) a sign of loyalty (6) used in fertilizer (7) cleaning infants. It was also associated with wisdom. Turner believes the obvious usage is in view.[[139]](#footnote-139)

“Perhaps the dual images of salt and light are intended to portray two aspects of witness that are not easy to balance: engagement and distinctiveness. As salt, Jesus’ disciples must engage the world, but as light, they must never allow their engagement to lead to the compromise of kingdom values and their assimilation to the world. Jesus perfectly and harmoniously models both images.” David Turner[[140]](#footnote-140)

Salt is subtly pervasive. No one says, “Hey, where do you buy your salt.” The point is not to notice salt. Rather, it is to preserve and season the community. We should Smile in the grocery store, Open doors, Be known as the best tippers, Be patient, Show “sweet reasonableness” (Philippians 4:5)

In contrast, light is boldly visible. If you have ever driven to see a fire at night, then you know that light shines so brilliantly, that it’s often much farther away than it seems. So, we’re watching lightning from Mt. Carroll. Be distinct from the world. We are distinct without apology. Christ is the way. He is King. We make no apology for standing for the truth where the sanctity of life is concerned or any other social issue that runs counter to who God is.

See my post on “[Light: A Most Important Statement](http://chrisbrauns.com/2011/08/light-a-most-import-statement-about-god/).”[[141]](#footnote-141)

**Self-Referential Absurdity** – When the application of a claim to itself refutes what is being claimed, it demonstrates “self-referential absurdity.”

The most obvious example of “self-referential absurdity” is the claim that there are no absolutes. Such a claim contradicts itself by saying *absolutely* that there are no absolutes.

Likewise, people who insist that it is wrong to make moral judgments of any sort, are themselves making moral judgments, and hence demonstrate “self-referential absurdity.”

When Jesus gave the Golden Rule in [Matthew 7:12](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%207.12), he made sure to anchor His ethic in the “law and the prophets.” So what Jesus taught is in sharp contrast with the view many hold today that ethics are strictly a matter of the views of people.

See Frame’s discussion of “positivism.”[[142]](#footnote-142)

**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)

# Outline of the Sermon on the Mount[[143]](#footnote-143)

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)
   1. General Principles (5:17-20)
   2. Six Examples
      1. Anger (5:21-26)
      2. Lust (5:27-30)
      3. Divorce (5:31-32)
      4. Oaths (5:33-37)
      5. Retaliation (5:38-42)
      6. Love your enemies (5:43-47)
   3. 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)
    1. The Broad and Narrow Roads (7:13-14)
    2. False Prophets: Good and Bad Fruit (7:15-20)
    3. Insiders and Outsiders: Things May Not Be as They Seem (7:21-23)
    4. Two House Builders: Hearing and Doing (7:24-27)
12. Jesus’s Authority Recognized (7:28-29)

# Noteworthy Quotes

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.[[144]](#footnote-144)

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).

"In fact, one could almost subtitle the Sermon on the Mount not 'survival of the fittest,' but 'triumph of the victims (Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew*, 114)."

“But don’t be thinking this is the last of it because this old red river don’t end here. This old red suffering stream goes on, you people, slow to the Kingdom of Christ.”[[145]](#footnote-145) Flannery O’Connor

“Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them.” Abraham Lincoln (Great Quotes from Great Leaders).

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1. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, ed. Irmgard Booth (New York: Macmillan, 1963). I engaged the idea of “cheap grace” in Chris Brauns, *Unpacking Forgiveness: Biblical Answers for Complex Questions and Deep Wounds* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 45. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Chris Brauns, “How Can a Person Be Sure of His or Her Salvation?,” *A Brick in the Valley: The Web Site of Pastor and Author Chris Brauns*, September 11, 2009, http://chrisbrauns.com/2009/09/how-can-a-person-be-sure-of-his-or-her-salvation/; Brauns, *Unpacking Forgiveness*, Appendix. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. A common word, “ἐξουσία/authority” is found 102 times in the Greek New Testament. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 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). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. R.T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. See “Fulfill” on page 5. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, 187. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Ibid., 18; 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), 23–93. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Regarding the beginning of the sermon, Bonhoeffer made an incredible observation in a footnote – that the warrant for his exposition is the phrase, “he opened his mouth.” Bonhoeffer wrote, “Even in the early Church this point was emphasized. Before Jesus speaks there is a pause - - all is silent for a moment or two.” Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 118, fn 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Frederick Dale Bruner, *The Christbook: Matthew 1-12*, Revised & Expanded (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 208. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Occurrences of ἐξουσία/exousia in Matthew are found in 7:28, 8:9, 9:6, 9:8, 10:1, 21:23, 21:24, 21:27, 28:18. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, 189. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. William Barclay, *By What Authority?* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1974), 78–110. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. G.K. Beale and Mitchell Kim, *God Dwells Among Us: Expanding Eden to the Ends of the Earth* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2014), 163. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Alvin Plantinga, “Advice to Christian Philosophers (With a Special Preface for Christian Thinkers From Different Disciplines),” n.d., https://www.calvin.edu/academic/philosophy/virtual\_library/articles/plantinga\_alvin/advice\_to\_christian\_philosophers.pdf. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. David L. Turner, *Matthew*, ed. Robert Yarbrough and Robert H. Stein, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Ibid., 146; D.A. Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978), 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Jonathan Edwards, “The Pure in Heart Blessed,” in *Altogether Lovely: Jonathan Edwards on the Glory and Excellency of Jesus Christ (August, 1736)*, ed. Don Kistler (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 1997), 140–141. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Richard Bauckham, *The Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 94. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Ibid., 108. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Bruner, *The Christbook: Matthew 1-12*, 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Bruner, *The Christbook: Matthew 1-12*, 156. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Ibid., 164. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Chris Brauns, “Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount vs Trump’s Sermon in the Media,” *A Brick in the Valley: The Web Site of Pastor and Author Chris Brauns*, September 10, 2015, http://chrisbrauns.com/2015/09/jesuss-sermon-on-the-mount-vs-trumps-sermon-in-the-media/. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Philip Yancey, *The Jesus I Never Knew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 115. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. My exposition and the organization of the Beatitudes into two groups was influenced by Timothy J. Keller, “Coming to Christ: Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount” (Redeemer Presbyterian Church, New York, 1990). My thinking, in general, on the beatitudes was influenced by Keller. It is Bruner that calls group 1 “people in need” while he calls group 2 “people in service.” Bruner, *The Christbook: Matthew 1-12*, 155. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 17. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Ibid., 18–19. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Ibid., 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Ibid., 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Ibid., 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ibid., 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Ibid., 27–28. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. I need to compare with notes from seminary on the structure of Matthew’s gospel. What is important to see for our purposes in studying the Sermon on the Mount is that chapters 1-4 identify Christ as the 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew: In Three Volumes*, 426. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, 120. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Ibid., 117. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. See Chris Brauns, “What Scares Me Most as a Pastor - A Brick in the Valley,” *A Brick in the Valley: The Web Site of Pastor and Author Chris Brauns*, accessed January 12, 2015, http://chrisbrauns.com/2011/05/what-scares-me-most-as-a-pastor-2/; Brauns, *Unpacking Forgiveness*; Brauns, “How Can a Person Be Sure of His or Her Salvation?” [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Chris Brauns, “Focus on Fasting,” *A Brick in the Valley*, September 28, 2015, http://chrisbrauns.com/2015/09/focus-on-fasting/. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Based in part on F.S. Rothenberg, “Fast,” in *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (A-F)*, ed. Colin Brown, vol. 1, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 611–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. France arguments that “fulfillment” is the central theme of Matthew. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 10–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Ibid., 11. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Ibid., 13–14. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*, 167. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom* (London: Paternoster Press, 1981), 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. James M. Grier, “The Relationship of the Law to Christ in Matthew 5:17-20 and Its Implications for Moral Theology,” in *New Testament Essays in Honor of Homer A. Kent, Jr.*, ed. Gary T. Meadors, n.d., 165–77. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Douglas J. Moo, “Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 20 (1984): 3–49. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Dutton, 2008), 60–61. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Samuel Enoch Stumpf, *Socrates to Sartre: A History of Philosophy*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 317. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Peter Kreeft, “The Pillars of Unbelief—Kant by Peter Kreeft,” *Peter Kreeft*, 1988, http://www.peterkreeft.com/topics-more/pillars\_kant.htm; Peter Kreeft, *Ethics: A History of Moral Thought*, The Modern Scholar: Great Professors Teaching You, 2008; Justin Taylor, “A Crash Course on Influencers of Unbelief: Immanuel Kant,” *The Gospel Coalition*, February 26, 2015, http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2015/02/26/a-crash-course-on-influencers-of-unbelief-immanuel-kant/. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. See my paper, Chris Brauns, “An Answer to a Question: Does the NIV Avoid Use of the Word ‘Hell’?” (Spring Creek Church, February 9, 1995), https://www.evernote.com/shard/s207/nl/25588679/955134f0-bb19-4134-be9a-90fbbc4fbf3a/. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. R.T. France, *Matthew*, ed. Leon Morris, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 201. For more on “hell” in the Sermon on the Mount, see France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 202. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Chris Brauns, “A Soft View of Hell Makes Hard People,” *A Brick in the Valley: The Web Site of Pastor and Author Chris Brauns*, March 18, 2011, http://chrisbrauns.com/2011/03/a-soft-view-of-hell-makes-hard-people/. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. France, *Matthew*, 196. Cf. Turner, *Matthew*, 166. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. Turner, *Matthew*, 165. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. Ibid., 165–166. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Bruner, *The Christbook: Matthew 1-12*, 207. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 137. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Keller, “Coming to Christ: Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount,” 58. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. “The thrust of the Sermon on the Mount is that the message and work of the King are first and most importantly internal and not external, and spiritual and moral rather than physical and political. Here we find no politics or social reform. His concern is for what men are, because what they are determines what they do.” John MacArthur, *Matthew* (Chicago: Moody, 1985), 133. For a summary on the centrality of the Kingdom of God in the Synoptic Gospels, see Thomas R. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 41–79. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Brauns, “Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount vs Trump’s Sermon in the Media.” [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Chris Brauns, “Who Gets Helped by Jesus?,” *A Brick in the Valley: The Web Site of Pastor and Author Chris Brauns*, March 19, 2014, http://chrisbrauns.com/2014/03/gets-helped-jesus/. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Carson, *The Sermon the Mount: An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*, 11–13. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. George Eldon Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974). [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Piper, “Is the Kingdom Present or Future?” For more on the “mustard seed” beginnings of the Kingdom including an exposition of Mark 4:35, see my sermon on that passage, [“Storms.”](https://www.evernote.com/shard/s207/nl/25588679/fd8f5647-0403-45c9-9cd7-d4e63733f91b/) [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Schreiner, *New Testament Theology: Magnifying God in Christ*, 79. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Carl F.H. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), 48. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Ibid., 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Goldsworthy, *Gospel and Kingdom*, 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. “An Evening of Eschatology Moderated by John Piper with James Hamilton, Sam Storms and Doug Wilson,” *Desiring God*, September 27, 2009, http://www.desiringgod.org/conference-messages/an-evening-of-eschatology. See also Andy Naselli, “Should Churches Require All Members to Affirm Pretrib and Premil Views?,” *Andy Naselli: Thoughts on Theology*, April 30, 2013, http://andynaselli.com/should-churches-require-all-members-to-affirm-pretrib-and-premil-views. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Wood summarizes that some amillennialists believe that the Kingdom of Heaven is taking place now in heaven while others hold that it is the age of the church here on earth. Leon J. Wood, *The Bible and Future Events* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 27–29. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 1127–1131. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. See Hal Lindsey, *The Late Great Planet Earth*, or *Eight-Eight Reasons Christ Will Return in 1988, Oil, Armageddon and the Middle East Crisis, The Beginning of the End* etc. See Henry’s warnings in his chapter on the kingdom. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Chris Brauns, “A Position on the Doctrine of Eschatology,” 1992, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Ibid., 36. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. David L. Turner, “The New Jerusalem in Revelation 22:1-22:5,” in *Dispensationalism, Israel, and the Church: The Search for Definition*, ed. Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 291. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. MacArthur, *Matthew*, 138. See also Harry A. Sturz, “The Sermon on the Mount and Its Application to the Present Age,” *Grace Theological Journal* 4, no. 3 (Fall 63). [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Keller, “Coming to Christ: Sermons on the Sermon on the Mount.” [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Robert H. Stein, “The Kingdom of God,” in *The Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984). [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Turner, *Matthew*. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Davies and Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Saint Matthew: In Three Volumes*, 467. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Bauckham, *The Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World*, 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Henry, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, 41–54. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Ibid., 46. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 107. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Ibid., 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Ibid., 108. See also Moo, “Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law.” [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Justin Taylor, “The Law of Moses and the Christian: A Compromise | TGC,” *The Gospel Coalition*, January 2, 2015, http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2015/01/02/the-law-of-moses-and-the-christian-a-compromise/. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Kevin DeYoung, *What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2015), 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Turner, *Matthew*, 157–164. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Ibid., 158. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Ibid., 157. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. DeYoung, *What Does the Bible Really Teach About Homosexuality*, 43. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Moo, “Jesus and the Authority of the Mosaic Law.” [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, ed. David S. Dockery, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 1992). [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Chris Brauns, “Light: A Most Import 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-import-statement-about-god/. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. C.A. Evans, “Midrash,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, ed. Joel B. Green and Scot McKnight (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1992), 544–48. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. Eugene Peterson, *The Jesus Way: A Conversation on the Ways That Jesus Is the Way* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 159. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. 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). [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Paul J. Achtemeier, *Harpers Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985). [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. Craig Blomberg emphasized this in lectures on the parables at Lake Geneva (2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Sally Lloyd-Jones, *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Chris Brauns, “John R.W. Stott: Prayer Ditches Jesus Taught Us to Dodge,” *A Brick in the Valley*, August 13, 2015, http://chrisbrauns.com/2015/08/john-r-w-stott-prayer-ditches-jesus-taught-us-to-dodge/. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
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