

Matthew 5

Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are those who lack spiritual credit, theirs is kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who grieve and are sorry for what they have done wrong, for they shall have someone to stick up for them.

“Blessed are the humble, for they shall inherit the land.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst to do what is right, for they will never lack opportunities.

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

“Blessed are those who have plunged to the depths of their own hearts, for they shall see God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God and daughters of God.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for seeking justice for others, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of nasty things about you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out walked on.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before others, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

“Think not that I have come to diminish the law and the prophets; I have come not to empty them but to fill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not the dot of an “i”, nor the cross of a “t”, will pass from the law until everything has happened. Whoever then overlooks one of these insignificant commandments and teaches others to do so, shall be unknown in the kingdom of heaven; but the one who does them and teaches others to do them shall be known throughout the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your justice is more inclusive than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

“You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother or sister shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his sister or brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be liable to the hell of fire. So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that someone has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your sister or brother, and only then come and offer your gift. Make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; truly, I say to you, you will never get out till you have paid the last penny.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that every man who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with

her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.

“It was also said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I say to you that every man who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to participate in adultery; and the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

“Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not exaggerate when you swear, but shall perform to the Lord all that you have sworn.’ But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is God’s footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair gray or black. Let your word for ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist evil with evil. So if any one strikes you on the right cheek, challenge him to strike you on the left as well; and if any one would sue you and take your coat, immediately take off your coat and your shirt and give them both to her; and if any one forces you to go one mile with him, urge *him* go with *you* a second mile. Give to anyone who asks something from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you.

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and stop whatever you are doing to pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be daughters and sons of your Father who is in heaven; for God makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you earned? Do not even terrorists do that? And if you greet only your friends, what more are you doing than others? Do not even atheists do that? Your love, therefore, must include everyone, as your Heavenly Father’s love is completely inclusive.

Matthew 6

“Beware of practicing your spirituality in front of people in order to be seen by them; for then you will receive nothing from your Father who is in heaven.

“Thus, when you give to someone in need, don't make a lot of noise about it, as the hypocrites do, either as they give or before or after, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I tell you, they have received their spiritual credit. But when you give, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will replenish you.

“And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the church or in public, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I tell you, they have received their spiritual credit. 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 renew you.

“And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the religious people do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask. Pray then like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be glorified on earth. May your kingdom come on earth, may your will be done on earth, and all as it is in heaven. Give us enough food for today; And cancel our debts, as we also have let go of everything that anyone owes to us. Lead us not into cycles of evil; bring us out of those cycles we are already in.

For if you forgive other people for the pain they have caused you, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive you.

“And when you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly, I tell you, they have received their spiritual credit. But when you fast, wash your face and lift up your head, that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will revive you.

“Do not invest in the things of earth, where everything falls apart or goes out of style and where thieves break in and steal, but invest in the things of heaven, where nothing grows old and no beauty fades and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your investments are, there will your heart be also.

“The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is diseased, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how far will that darkness spread!

“No one can serve two masters; either she will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by worrying can *add* one day to his lifespan? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the plants of the field, which today

are alive and tomorrow are thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For those with no faith in God seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first God's kingdom and God's justice, and all these things shall be yours as well.

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry for itself. Let today's own trouble be sufficient for this day.

Matthew 7

“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the eyelash that is stuck in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the wig that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your sister, ‘Let me take that eyelash out of your eye,’ when there is the wig in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the wig out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the eyelash out of your brother’s eye.

“Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you.

“Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For every one who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or who of you, if your daughter asks for a loaf of bread, will give her a stone? Or if your son asks for some fish, will give him a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! So whatever you imagine that others could do that would be good for you, go ahead and do that for them; for this is the law and the prophets.

“Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad, that leads to destruction, and those who find it are many. For the gate is cramped and the way is narrow, that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will know them by their fruits.

“Not every one who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many miraculous works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you who know no law.’

“Every one then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods rose, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it didn’t fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And every one who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and the sound of its crash could be heard for miles.”

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.