

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

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THIS READING PLAN IS FOR YOU

Hey Gospel City, this week we are going to study the Sermon on the Mount. One could argue that this is the most famous and influential sermon that anyone has ever preached! In order to begin to understand its theological significance we will start with the Old Testament backdrop. In Deuteronomy 18, God promises to send a prophet who is even greater than Moses. And Matthew has written to tell us that the new and better Moses has arrived! Behold the incredible parallels: Both Moses and Jesus came up from the land of Egypt (Ex. 12:33-42; Mt. 2:13-23); both passed through water (Ex.14; Mt. 3:13-17); both endured the wilderness (Numbers 14:34; Mt. 4:1-11); and both give the law from a mountain (Ex.20:1-21; Mt. 5-7)! This brings us to the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus reveals that He has not come to abolish the law, but rather He has come to fulfill it. He is the fulfillment of the law because the entire Old Testament is written about Him, He is the only one who has ever obeyed it perfectly, and He is our only hope that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. Therefore, we pray that this sermon will help you marvel at Jesus, who has called you and empowered you to seek first His coming Kingdom, and we pray that He will find you faithful.

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THE FORMAT OF THE READING PLAN WILL BE AS FOLLOWS—

READ—

When we read the Bible, we are not just reading man's thoughts about God. Neither are we merely reading what God said (a few thousand years ago). Rather what we are reading is what God says in the present tense (Hebrews 3:7). For the Word of God is living and active, and when we read it God Himself is speaking to us (Hebrews 4:12). Therefore, read each passage slowly, carefully, and attentively to every word acting as if the most important being in the universe is speaking to you, because He is.

REFLECT—

Simply reading the Word is like briskly walking by a warm fire on a cold night. But meditation is like sitting by the warm fire so that it lights up your face and warms your bones. (Don Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*). Therefore, pick a verse from each section to meditate on. What does it mean? What does it say about God? What does it say about you? You can pick any verse. But we will suggest a verse each time in case you have trouble picking one.

RESPOND—

We do not want to just be passive readers of the Word and allow what God says to go “in one ear and out the other.” Rather we want to be like the blessed man from psalm one who delights in God's word and meditates/chews on/murmurs to himself/thinks over what God has said day and night (Psalm 1:3). These discussion questions are designed to help us think over what the Lord has said, and as we think and discuss the Lord will give us understanding (2 Timothy 2:7).

PRAY—

Pray to your Father that the Holy Spirit would empower the Word of Christ to become true in your hearts, your lives, this church, and this world as it is in heaven. Pray the Word back to God. For he always answers us when we pray according to his will (1 John 5:14). And the best way to pray according to his will is to pray His Word!

DAY 01

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STUDY THROUGH
THE SERMON
ON THE MOUNT

READ—

Exodus 20:1-21 + Matthew 5:17

REFLECT—

“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.”

RESPOND—

At the core of the Old Testament law are the Ten Commandments. In what ways does Jesus fulfill the law? Why is it good news for you that Jesus came to fulfill the law?

PRAY—

Dear Father, thank you for the gracious gift of revelation. Forgive us, for we have certainly fallen short of your glory. Help us to love you with all of our hearts, minds, and souls, so that we may obey the first four commandments. And help us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, that we may obey the last six commandments. And thank you for Jesus, who is the one who wrote the law, the one whom the law is written about, and the one who has perfectly obeyed the law on our behalf, so that we can be counted righteous through faith in Him. Amen.

DAY 02

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STUDY THROUGH
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READ—

Matthew 5:1-12

REFLECT—

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

RESPOND—

What type of people are blessed in the Kingdom of God?
In what ways do the Beatitudes contradict what the world considers “blessed”?

PRAY—

Dear Father, help us to recognize our spiritual bankruptcy, for without you, we can do nothing. Help us to hunger and thirst for kingdom citizens to be conformed more and more into the image of your Son. Help us to live for you and you alone, so that one day we can see you face to face. Help others to recognize that we are your children by the way we love one another. And help us to love your Kingdom more than anything this world can offer. Help us to do these things that we may be blessed, for the sake of your glory and our joy. Amen.

DAY 03

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STUDY THROUGH
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READ—

Matthew 5:13-37

REFLECT—

“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

RESPOND—

In what ways is the Holy Spirit using this passage to convict you? In what ways is it encouraging you to put your hope in Christ’s righteousness?

PRAY—

Dear Father, help the world see the light and the hope and the glory of your Kingdom through the righteousness of your citizens. Forgive us for changing the meaning of your Word in order to convince our flesh that we can obey it apart from you. Cleanse us from a worldly righteousness that merely performs on the outside for selfish gain. Change us from the inside out, that we may have hearts that love your law and lives that demonstrate the fruit of your Holy Spirit within us. Amen.

DAY 04

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STUDY THROUGH
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READ—

Matthew 5:38-6:15

REFLECT—

“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.”

RESPOND—

Kingdom righteousness is not just about what you do; it is about why you do what you do. Consider your prayer life: what are some things you have been praying about lately? What do your prayers reveal about your heart (good and bad)?

PRAY—

Dear Father, demonstrate the greatness of your name in all the earth. Help us to behold that you are holy, and the whole universe is full of your glory. We thank you that your Kingdom is coming and that your will is being accomplished. We pray that you would help us forsake our kingdoms that are perishing and help us live for the Kingdom that cannot be shaken. Nourish our souls through your Word today. Forgive us of our many sins, and help us to forgive those who have sinned against us. And help us to follow you so that we can dwell in your presence forever. Amen.

DAY 05

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STUDY THROUGH
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READ—

Matthew 6:18-34

REFLECT—

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

RESPOND—

How does this passage help you understand what it means to “seek first the Kingdom of God?” What is something you can do today to seek first His Kingdom?

PRAY—

Dear Father, help the goal of our religion to be the praise of your name, and not the praise of men. Help us to search our hearts. Help our hearts to treasure you more than anything this life can give or death can take. Forgive us for our lack of faith; for we so quickly forget about your steadfast love and faithfulness. Help us to trust you today, and give us the faith to believe that your mercies will be new tomorrow. Amen.

DAY 06

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STUDY THROUGH
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READ—

Matthew 7:1-12

REFLECT—

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

RESPOND—

In this section of the sermon, Jesus communicates that Kingdom citizens have a righteousness that impacts the way they interact with other people. How is the Holy Spirit using this passage to convict you about the way you treat others?

PRAY—

Dear Father, help us to hate our own sin more than we hate the sin of others. Help us to marvel at the grace we have been shown, that our hearts may overflow with mercy and patience. Forgive us for our pride, which blinds us from seeing our own sin, yet magnifies the sin of others. We come to you now, asking, seeking, and knocking that you might cleanse us of our hypocritical self-righteousness. Fill our hearts with love, that we may love you, love others, and therefore fulfill the law of love, which is written by the God who is Love. Amen.

DAY 07

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**STUDY THROUGH
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READ—

Matthew 7:13-29

REFLECT—

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

RESPOND—

Jesus concludes His sermon with four warnings that separate the faithful from the phonies and the foes. What are the four different warnings? And how can you be sure that you will be counted among the faithful?

PRAY—

Dear Father, we have heard your Word; now help us to do what it says. Help us to obey. Give us the faith to persevere on the hard and narrow path. Save us from destruction. Produce in us the fruits of righteousness for your name's sake. Help us to confess that Jesus is Lord, both in our lives and in our hearts. Help us to put all of our faith and hope and trust in Christ, who is our Rock. Thank you for your Word. Help us never cease to be astonished at the authority and the wisdom and the glory of Jesus. Amen.