

# The Sermon on the Mount - Part 2

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon emphasizes the transformative teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, calling believers to a deeper, more authentic Christian life marked by humility, righteousness, and the acceptance of persecution as a blessing.*

**Duration:** 1:04:08

**Topics:** "Christian Discipleship", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, emphasizing foundational truths for beginning the Christian life aright. It covers repentance, faith, baptism, righteousness, discipleship conditions, and the importance of seeking God's kingdom first. The sermon highlights the narrow path of discipleship, the need to avoid seeking honor from others, and the significance of treating people with love and respect. The key message is to seek the power of the Holy Spirit through persistent prayer and to live out the teachings of Jesus in daily life.

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## Transcript

During the last few weeks, we've been trying to establish some foundational truths that can help us to begin our Christian life aright. So, this is the eighth message in this series. So, if you want a copy of it, we're going to put them on two DVDs of four messages each titled Beginning the Christian Life Aright.

We dealt with foundational truths of repentance, faith, water baptism, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and then we looked at justification by faith and the imparted righteousness of Christ, knowing God as a Father. And we've been looking at the conditions of discipleship in Luke 14, and now we've been looking at the Sermon on the Mount. If you remember last time, we looked at the conclusion and the introduction, and now we look at the middle part.

The reason I looked at the conclusion first was so that we could see that at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, this is a narrow way, and there's a very narrow gate that leads into it. So, it's not for those who are trying to live a carefree, easy Christian life without any self-denial. Jesus explained it as a very narrow way, and he also said, very few will find it.

So, please remember, as you hear the Sermon on the Mount, that very few people in these 2,000 years have found it. And if you happen to find it, and I don't mean understand it. I think a lot of people understand.

A lot of people have written books on it. I've seen books written on the Sermon on the Mount. I haven't had time to read any of them, but I know some of the authors who wrote those books.

They didn't find the way, even though they wrote books on it. Finding is not in explaining. There's a difference between explaining and finding.

A lot of people can explain scripture. The devil can explain it better than anybody else, but finding is in our daily life. And you'll never find the Sermon on the Mount if you deny the way of the cross.

That's for sure. So, unless you are gripped by taking up the cross every day, that's the narrow gate and the narrow way, you'll always write off the Sermon on the Mount as impossible. And then you'll walk the broad way that destroys your life.

And then, at the end of that, Jesus said that the people who, there are false prophets who will say, no, no, no, it's not a narrow way. That's the next thing he said, and the conclusion. And then he said, the thing is not to change the outside.

The tree itself must be made good. And then he used the example of the two houses. One was built on obedience and the other was not.

That we looked at last time. And we also looked at the introduction in Matthew chapter five, where the first, those nine blessings that come in verses three to 11. And again, if you really take all these blessings seriously, in the Amplified Bible, it says, the people who have these qualities are the ones to be envied on this earth.

A lot of people envy rich people, great people. But Jesus said, if you really want to envy somebody, it's the people who have these qualities, because these are the ones who are really great in God's eyes. And anyone who cannot keep any of the commandments given in the Sermon on the Mount, he can be absolutely sure that it's because he's not got these qualities mentioned in chapter five, verse three to 11.

He's not poor in spirit. He doesn't have a sense of his own need. He's not mourning for his sin.

He just takes it casually. He's not a meek type of person who's willing to take insults. He wants to hit back.

He's not hungering and thirsting for righteousness. And of course, he's never become righteous. He's not merciful to others.

And so God is not merciful to him. So he never gets power to overcome. He's not seeking purity of heart.

And he's not seeking to live in peace with others. He's a quarrelsome type. There it is.

That's the reason why people can't keep the Sermon on the Mount. If you're that type of person, those are the areas where you need to change first and ask God for the power of his Holy Spirit to change. We can't change ourselves.

And the final thing I want to say is that Jesus said about two blessings, which are related to persecution. Now, most Christians do not believe there's a blessing in persecution. And that's because they haven't understood Christianity.

Jesus was the most blessed man that walked on the earth and no one suffered as much as him. And so remember, there's a blessing in persecution, which many people don't ever think of. Blessed are those who are persecuted.

And that's the only thing that he repeated twice. Remember, again, he said in verse 11, blessed are those who are persecuted. First, those who are persecuted for being righteous in an unrighteous world, for being righteous in a corrupt Christendom.

For standing up for what is right in the midst of compromising Babylonian Christianity. And that persecution may not always be physical. It can be with insults.

And like they call Jesus Prince of Devils, they can call you all types of names. And he said, when people insult you, verse 11, because of me. The first one is because of righteousness, verse 10.

And the second is because we stand up for Jesus Christ. In both cases, there's righteousness. And in both cases, he said, if that happens to you, you should rejoice, not mourn.

A lot of people feel sorry for themselves when they are persecuted. And they have to advertise their persecution to a lot of people. See how people are treating me and I've been so good to them and they've been so bad to me.

You're not obeying God. You're just self-centered, centered in yourself, seeking sympathy and comfort for yourself. Jesus said, when that happens to you, don't do that.

Rejoice. I mean, the same attitude you have, you got a promotion in your job or your salary doubled or something like that. That's what we should do when we are persecuted for Christ's sake.

Then we can say our mind has been aligned to the way God wants us to think. There's no place in the Christian life for feeling sorry for ourselves and getting sympathy from others and get people to weep for you. That's all for worldly people.

And if you're like that, I must tell you, you're a worldly person, whether you know it or not. You need to be converted, become a disciple of Jesus. Disciple of Jesus never feel sorry for himself.

He feels sorry for the guy who was hurting him. I mean, if somebody gets angry with me or somebody insults me or calls me the devil, who is evil? Not me. That poor guy has got spiritual cancer.

How do you look at a man who's got cancer? He's not only got cancer, he's got spiritual leprosy. How do you look at a person when you see a leper? You don't get angry with him. You feel sorry for him.

That's exactly how I feel for people who insult me or get angry or tell lies about me or all kinds of things. I said, poor guy's got cancer, leprosy. I feel sorry for him.

Do you see it like that? Or do you feel sorry for yourself? That's what I mean by you need to be converted. We need to really get through this narrow gate and say, Lord Jesus, I'm going to walk this narrow way. Some people, you know, when they hear a message like this, they say, yeah, I'm going to get through the narrow gate.

And they enter the narrow way and they last there for about one week. And they get tired of it. And many people are just going in and out of the narrow gate all the time.

And that's why you see them years later, they're stuck in the same place. And if you had consistently stayed on that way, do you know where you'd have been today? Ask yourself how long you've been in this church, for example. We preach the Sermon on the Mount from day one, almost 1975.

And frequently thereafter. And if you've been here so many years, you know where you should have been today? You should have been so high up that mountain that you should have been an example to others. You should have been a godly brother.

We should have about 25 brothers here who are ready to be elder brothers in the church. Why don't we have them? Because we have a sluggish, lazy people who just hear and think we have become spiritual because we've heard the truth and we understand it and we belong to CFC. All this is garbage.

The Lord looks at our life. I speak strongly because I want to make sure that you're not ashamed when Christ comes. He's coming back.

So what I want to say is, dear brothers, if you've been lazy and sluggish in the past, let's repent today and say, Lord, I'm going to take my life seriously. I'm ashamed that I've been in this church. I believe some of you should say this.

Lord, I'm absolutely ashamed that I've been in this church so long and hearing these wonderful messages and I'm still doing all the wrong things that the Sermon on the Mount talks about. I'm not saying this to condemn anybody. God never condemns.

He never discourages. You know how God speaks? My son, my daughter, come up higher from where you are. And I want you to hear that voice as we go through the Sermon on the Mount.

Not condemnation, but my son, my daughter, come up higher. It's an invitation to a much higher life above the clouds than we are living right now. So Jesus said, we go to Matthew 5.13, you are the salt of the earth and if the salt has become saltless, how can it be made salty again? There's a lot of salt that can look like salt, but doesn't have the taste of it.

When people encounter you, they get a taste, a spiritual taste from your conduct, from your speech. Colossians 4.6 says, let your speech be with salt, with grace. So their salt is equated with grace in Colossians 4.6. It's by our speech that people get a taste of the type of persons we are.

Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt. So that's what Jesus spoke here about salt. But the salt can lose its taste and it loses its taste because we're careless.

We don't take our Christian life seriously. We don't judge ourselves. We don't seek for the power of the Holy Spirit.

We're busy with so many other things. And if it's lost its taste, it's very difficult for it to be salty again. It can be, but it's very difficult.

And if you remain like that, it becomes good for nothing. That's a very common expression in English, good for nothing. People say that to insult somebody, but here Jesus wasn't insulting.

When we lose our taste, when grace is not in our life, Jesus says you're good for nothing. As far as God's kingdom is concerned, you may make a lot of money in the world and become very famous and great and accomplish great things. And you're probably satisfied with doing something in your secular job.

Comfortable in the fact you got a job, you got a house, you got a family, etc. But Jesus says you're good for nothing if you don't have grace in your life. That poor person who lives in a hut, who doesn't have 10% of what you have, is better off if he's got grace.

We need to have a proper sense of values. If I don't have the grace, salt, grace in my life, as far as God's kingdom is concerned, I am good for nothing, no matter how much Bible knowledge I have. It's good to be thrown out, he says, and trampled underfoot by men.

Another picture he uses is the light of the world. Light cannot be hidden. If you go into a room, you know immediately whether there's light in that room or not.

You don't need to take time to find out that immediately. Oh, there's light here. Or it's dark.

And there's something about a genuine Christian that you encounter him and you see something of the brightness of God in his life. He's not gloomy. He's not sour, complaining, grumbling.

No, that's darkness. Light is visible. Now, I want to challenge you, my dear brothers and sisters, I challenge myself that as people see us, they must encounter something of the brightness of God, the light of the life of Jesus in us.

That's what he said, it shouldn't be hidden. You don't light a lamp and put it under a basket so that everybody in the house can see it. So let your light shine before men, that they may not only see your good words like salt, but your good works as well.

So if salt speaks about good words, then light speaks about good works. Good words and good works is what he began with. And so that people look at your life and glorify your father in heaven.

Then in verse 17, we got to go through this pretty quickly because you can meditate on it later on in your own time, but otherwise we won't finish. Jesus says, I did not come to abolish the law of the prophets, but I came to fulfill it. Now, it's very important to understand that some people take this verse and say, therefore we must pay the tithe and keep the Sabbath.

That's not what he's talking about. Later on, you will see how the law is fulfilled in the rest of chapter five. He says, I came to fulfill the law means fulfill it in its deepest meaning.

That's what he meant by I came to fulfill it, not just fulfill the law on the surface. The 10 commandments are only the surface of the law. Jesus came to fulfill it means he went right down to the depth of it to fulfill it.

And that's what he explains in the Sermon on the Mount. In fact, in the old Testament itself, the whole law was summed up in two commandments. Love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Moses came down with two tablets of stone and one tablet was four commandments, which taught about loving God with all your heart. And the other tablet was six commandments talking about loving your neighbor as yourself.

And these are the two things Jesus said, these are the two commandments, love God, love your neighbor as yourself. And in the Sermon on the Mount, he expands those two. It's really the Sermon on the Mount is really an expansion of the 10 commandments.

He's going down to the depth of the law and explaining what it really meant. It's not really changed. It's not changed at all.

But because the Pharisees just kept it superficially, he says, I've come to fulfill it and I've come to teach you how you can fulfill it. Okay. Then he says, heaven and earth will pass away, but they're not the smallest letter or stroke will pass away from the law until it's all accomplished.

See, typing, for example, it's not fulfilled by giving 10%. The Old Testament in Deuteronomy 14, the living Bible paraphrase it, God, God teaches you to type to teach you to put him first in your life. That's the purpose.

So if you haven't learned to put God first in your life, it's no point giving 10%. And if you give 10%, but don't put God first in your life in every area, the typing is just worthless garbage. How is it paying the type fulfilled by Jesus by putting God first in his life? How is the Sabbath fulfilled in Jesus life by being at rest in God, like Adam on the first Sabbath day in Genesis two walked with God to live like that every single day.

So every day is a Sabbath. That's how the Sabbath is fulfilled in our life. Not by keeping it one day of the week or giving 10% of our income.

Jesus came to fulfill the law and that's what he's explaining here. It's so clear. Those who want to understand.

And so if we cancel these commandments, any, even the least of the commandments and teach others to do so, that means cancel, not the letter. Jesus did cancel the letter and say, obey the spirit of it. That's why he was constantly disobeying the Sabbath according to the Paris Hegel understanding.

And that's not what he was. He never told people to pay the tithe. He told them to give everything they had to God.

And so he says, if you cancel these commandments and teach other people to do it, you'll be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. You may not go to hell, but when you get to heaven, you'll find you're right at the last, which teaches us that in heaven, not all are going to be equal because it says here, some people are going to be the least in the kingdom of heaven. Something like earth, you know, you have, if you look at earthly earth as an example, millions of people live on the earth, but not all live equally comfortably.

Some live as Kings and some live as beggars. It's going to be something like that in heaven, not physically, spiritually. That's clear meaning that some will be least in the kingdom of heaven.

And it says here also, some will be great in the kingdom of heaven, verse 19. So in the kingdom of heaven, just like on earth, there are great and least, there are kings and beggars here, and there are going to be great people in God's kingdom. And there are the least in God's kingdom.

They may all be in heaven. That's like the beggar saying, I'm also living on the same earth as the King. But what a difference.

It's not enough to say I'm living on the same earth as the King. And for a person to say, I'm also in heaven. I think we're going to get some surprises when we get to heaven because we didn't read God's word carefully.

Jesus came from heaven and taught us that in heaven, there will be great people and least people. And the great people are the ones who took God's commandments, every one of them seriously, did not ignore any of them, obeyed the least of these commandments. That's how you heard me say this before.

One of the prayers I prayed to God is, Lord, before I leave this earth, I want to obey every commandment that you have given for New Testament Christians. Not killing lambs and burning incense like in the Old Testament, those are for them, but new covenant commandments, every single one of them, I want to obey before I leave because I won't have an opportunity to obey them when I get to heaven. How will you love your enemies in heaven? If you miss it on earth, you missed it for eternity.

How can you forgive people who hurt you? If you haven't done this on earth, you missed it for eternity. You can spend eternity regretting that you didn't do it on earth, but you can't get the opportunity to do it again. I take that very seriously.

Just like people tell people, you can't be saved after you leave this earth. You can't keep God's commandments after you leave this earth. It's the only opportunity you have to show your love for Jesus.

You know, there are a lot of people who side up with the right political party that won the elections after the elections are over. It's like after the British left India, it's those who stood for the independence of India and suffered and were imprisoned, who got positions of honor in the new government of India because they stood for the country. There were a lot of others who just compromised and sided with the British for popularity and money.

They were ignored. It's a poor illustration, but that's how it is. It's very easy to seek to be popular in the world.

And if it means, I mean, not denying Christ in some way, we're going to face the results of that in heaven. So there is great and least in God's kingdom. And then he says, I say to you, unless your righteousness exceeds and surpasses the scribes and pharisees, you won't enter the kingdom of heaven.

Like I was saying, the scribes and pharisees kept the surface of the law, the Ten Commandments, that this is why they were taken up with little, little things and criticizing, finding fault if others didn't do exactly according to their understanding. And Jesus said, you got to go deeper than that. The law has to be fulfilled.

He came to fulfill it, not just obey it superficially. And it's possible to be a Christian and to take some of these commandments and obey it superficially. We got to follow Jesus' footsteps here.

And then we can say that almost the rest of the Sermon on the Mount, from that point onwards, is explaining, expanding. What does it mean to fulfill the law? What does it mean to obey the least commandments? What does it mean for our righteousness to be beyond the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees? And Jesus says, I'll explain. And he says, the scribes and pharisees speak about murder.

I speak about anger. It's not enough to say I don't murder and come to the place where I don't get angry. It's not enough to say I don't commit adultery and stop lusting with your eyes.

It's not enough to say I speak the truth when I place my hand on a Bible. I speak the truth all the time, even in your heart. It's not enough to love your neighbors and friends.

You must love your enemies. So there he was saying, it's not just obeying superficially. That is where the gate becomes narrow and the way becomes narrow.

The broad way is to say, I keep the Ten Commandments. In fact, you can't really keep the Ten. You can only keep nine because the Tenth Commandment is, don't lust after a woman.

Do you know that's in the Tenth Commandment? Jesus wasn't saying something new. He was just expanding the Tenth Commandment because people are not taking it seriously. No person in history was ever able to keep the Tenth Commandment.

They could keep nine because the nine were external. But the Tenth Commandment was, you shall not lust and desire anything that's your neighbor's, your neighbor's daughter, your neighbor's wife, your neighbor's house, your neighbor's property, your neighbor's gift or ability. If you desire, desire is not something you do.

Desire is, I want that. Lusting after a woman is, I want that. And lusting after money, I want that.

Desire. Why did God place that Tenth Commandment there? When the other nine were all external, you know, don't take the Lord's name in vain, don't worship idols, honor your father and mother, don't steal, don't kill, so on. They're all external.

But the Lord kept that Tenth Commandment there to see how many Israelites will be honest. You remember how people would say, I've kept the whole law? One rich young ruler said, I've kept all the commandments. Really? Jesus did not embarrass him by saying, have you kept the Tenth? No, he knew nobody could keep the Tenth.

So he just repeated five, six, seven, eight, nine and stopped at nine. You read Mark 10, Jesus stopped at number nine. If you read the Bible carefully, you'll notice that there are many things you miss when you don't read the scriptures carefully.

And then he went on to the Tenth, give up all your money. He failed. And there he proved how he lusted and longed.

And he missed out being a disciple. So all the rest of the Sermon on the Mount is expanding that one statement, your righteousness must be greater. That means deeper, must go right down to the bottom.

And Jesus came to take us to the root of the problem. And so this is the narrow gate. It is a narrow gate in a narrow way.

There's no doubt about it. As you look at it, you'll see it's not easy. And then the first two examples that Jesus took, it's interesting, the examples he took, there were about five here.

Actually, if you look through this Sermon on the Mount, there were first these nine right attitudes, blessed, blessed, blessed. And then the rest of the Sermon is about nine wrong attitudes. That's basically the Sermon on the Mount.

And you can work that out for yourself. I just don't want to produce a neat sermon. I want to lead people to the truth.

But that's how you see it. Nine right attitudes and nine wrong attitudes. The first of those wrong attitudes is anger.

And the second one is lusting with the eye, sexual polluted, sexual lust. And the third is telling lies. And the fourth is revenge.

And the fifth is hatred. These are some of the basic things that all human beings have. And Jesus dealt with these nasty sins that he said, if you're my disciple, you've got to take these things seriously and not lightly.

And he put anger right at the top, because that's the sin which afflicts everybody from childhood. A three-year-old is not tempted with sexual lust and love of money and anxiety and all the other things mentioned here. But anger, boy, begins pretty early.

And if it's not controlled, you're going to be 90 years old and be a foul-mouthed, angry person. So he, first of all, deals with anger. You shall not commit murders, what those people said.

But I say to you, everyone who is angry with his brother, verse 22, is guilty before the court. And, you know, it's a very interesting thing in translation. There is, in the King James Version, which translation has been from another text, a later text.

The NASB and all the other translations is from an older text. Just by the way, in case you didn't know, the original manuscripts of the Bible are not found anywhere. Genesis to Revelation, not a single original manuscript is available anywhere.

Everything is a copy. Now there are some original manuscripts of other documents, secular documents from before Christ. There are originals.

So I asked myself, why did God not allow these precious original manuscripts of the Bible to remain? I think partly because some people would worship it. And he didn't want worship of a book or a parchment. But anyway, so there are people who copied it in the old days, in parchment.

And sometimes there could be little mistakes in the copying. And that's why sometimes in the numbers in the Old Testament, slight differences. So there's a copying error.

And it's very interesting. I have a theory. If you read the King James Version, it says, but I say to you, everyone who's angry with his brother without having a reason for it.

That's a little loophole from which I can escape in every anger. And I think this man who was copying, this is my theory. He's probably an angry man himself.

And he's writing. He says, boy, that's tough. I better just little add this.

Nobody will know it without a reason. Now tell me, have you ever met anybody in the world who's angry without a reason? I mean, mad people, perhaps. But other than mad men, I've never met a single human being in the world who gets angry without a reason.

I got angry lots of times in my life, but always with a reason. At least I think there's a reason. You tell me, have you ever got angry in your life without your thinking there's a reason for it? In that moment, if I were to ask you, why are you angry? See, here's the reason.

If you can't give a reason, you're a mad man. But in every other translation, it just says, whoever is angry with his brother. And I believe that is the right thing.

There's no loophole that Jesus. Angry without a reason is a broad way. That's not a narrow way.

Everybody's walking on it. But everyone who's angry with his brother, shall be guilty before the court. And everyone who is says to his brother, you're good for nothing or calls him a fool.

I think this is an attitude of contempt. It's not so much the word, you fool. Because if you read in Matthew 23, Jesus looked at the Pharisees and said, you fools, which is greater, the temple or the gold? You read that in verse 15 or something.

So Jesus himself said it, but he wasn't having contempt for them. He was saying that they were foolish. So in all these things, don't go by the letter.

Because later on, Jesus said, if somebody turns, slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other. But when somebody slapped Jesus on one cheek, he didn't turn the other. He said, why have you slapped me? If I said what is right.

So, you know, you can even take the Sermon on the Mount and go as a legalist according to the letter. I mean, you won't do that when he says, pluck out your right eye and the right hand. We are all very clever when it comes to that.

But we become very legalistic in other things. Everywhere it is the spirit. Particularly when it comes, pull out your eye, cut out your right hand.

It's a spirit. Remember that. It's a spirit.

It's a spirit of contempt for a person. You may not use the word fool or raka or as it is in the Hebrew or some, but it's a contempt for a person because of his community or his intelligence. You know how we look down on people because of their community or their intelligence or their social standing, anything like that.

If you speak something rudely out of contempt, that comes under the same category. You know, Jesus put it as equal to murder. So it's very easy to kill a person's sense of dignity by the way you address him.

You may not kill him physically. Be careful that you don't rob a person of his dignity. Even a beggar has got a dignity.

Your child has got a dignity. Just because you're bigger, you sort of yell at him in a way you rob him of his dignity. But he's a human being.

He wasn't created by you. He was created by God. And even your child is created in God's image.

We must discipline our child, correct them, but not rob them of their dignity. It's very important. So anger.

And I want to say another thing about anger. Anger is something from the heart. It's not in a sudden word that slipped out of our mouth, which you didn't really want to say it when you said it.

It's like a thorn that got into your foot. Pull it out immediately. And you know there'll be no injury in your foot.

Have you noticed that? That a thorn gets into your foot and you pull it out immediately. There's no scar. There's no infection.

It's almost as though you never got a thorn into your foot. I think we've all experienced that. But you leave that thorn there, even for one day.

You can get a splinter into your hand, a splinter of wood, and it begins to pain. It begins to get infected. But anything that you take out immediately, it doesn't harm you.

That's a lesson for our Christian life. If in a moment of weakness, because you haven't yet come to that spiritual life, continuous spiritual life, you slipped up, take it out immediately. And the way to take it out is by apologizing.

Apologize as soon as you're aware of it. Sometimes we do something wrong and we're not aware of it. As soon as you're aware, pull out the thorn.

That's the way of escape. And if you're a disciple of Jesus, you'll do that. So that's just something I want to say to you.

And it says here, make friends with your opponent at law, verse 25. Your opponent at law is not the devil, because it says he will throw you into the prison. The devil can never throw any of us into a prison.

The opponent at law is not God. Who is this opponent at law? That's the law, the law itself. God's law, if you violate it, is your opponent.

It'll be your accuser before the throne of God. God is not an accuser. Jesus is not an accuser.

The devil's an accuser, but he can't stand before God. But the law of God can accuse you. And it says if you don't settle it, you can get into prison.

And that has many applications. You know, a lot of people who don't forgive others get into prisons of sickness, which I believe at least 20% of sicknesses in the world are due to sin. Not all.

80% are because we live in a world under a curse. You don't get the flu because you're sick. But there are sicknesses that come because you've got a bitterness against somebody.

The law of God has thrown you into a prison of sickness because you didn't settle something. And you won't get out, it says, until you paid the last cent, until you go and apologize and set that matter right. You'll stay in that prison and any amount of injections and tablets won't heal you.

So that's one of the meanings there. Then he goes on to the next subject of adultery. These are very common sins among all human beings.

Anger among all men and women. Lusting after the women, that is with men mostly and with every boy onwards. And if a person doesn't fight it and conquer it, he can be an old man, 80 years old and still lusting after women.

You've got to fight it, fight it, fight it, and seek for the power of the Holy Spirit and ask God to give you grace to overcome it. Otherwise, there is no other way out. And I want to say to you, like I have once said before, I wondered why God allows these desires to spring up when you're 13 years old instead of 25.

It came up when you were 25 because you just got married or 27. Wouldn't that have been wonderful if all of us right up to the age of 27 behaved like little innocent two-year-old boys and girls? But it's not like that. By the time you're 13 years old, desires come up in a heart of a boy and a girl towards each other.

And that's not wrong. Why does God allow it to come so soon? Because He wants us to battle it and overcome it and control it before we get married. It's a wonderful thing if you have learned to battle it from a young age.

Everybody has it. You're not abnormal. If you've got strong sexual desire, that doesn't mean you need a physical checkup.

Not at all. In fact, if you're a man or a young teenager and you don't have strong sexual desire, you probably need a physical checkup. That I'll tell you.

Otherwise, it's absolutely normal in everybody. But God allows it there for us to battle it and fight it. And you know, fighting makes us strong.

And when you have something built within you, which you're always being tempted by, what an opportunity to be in the gym from morning till night. And with the corrupt world in which we are living, we've got plenty of opportunity for gymnastic exercises with the movies and television and the billboards and everything else. We're in the gym all the time nowadays.

Those first century Christians were not in the gym all the time. They were there occasionally. But we're in it all the time now in 24 hours.

And take it as a, I'm in the gym now. I'm going to fight. I'm not going to just collapse and give up.

I'm going to fight. I'll tell you this. You start off when you're 13.

By the time you're 30, you're a strong man. But you keep on giving up, giving up, giving up. You know what a temptation it is not to do exercise.

Oh, give up, give up, give up. Then you become fat and flabby and useless. But instead you could be strong.

So God gives us that opportunity. And that's why he makes it very clear that if you lust after your eyes, after a woman, you've committed adultery. In other words, everything is of the heart.

Murder is in the heart. Adultery is in the heart. We've spoken.

That's why we speak. Why do people ask me, why do you, Brother Zach, why do you speak about anger and lusting so often? I'll tell you why. Because in the entire Sermon on the Mount, listen, in the entire Sermon on the Mount, there are only two sins, which he said can take you to hell.

The word hell is mentioned only in relation to two sins out of all the other. There are other seven wrong attitudes, but these two can take you to hell. Notice that.

He says in verse 22, the last part, you'll be guilty enough to go to hell. Anger can lead you to hell. And when it comes to lusting after women, he says the same thing in verse 23, you can go to hell.

And verse 29, last part, you can be thrown into hell. It's only in relation to anger and lusting with the eyes that Jesus used the word hell. I say, I take it seriously.

And since other people don't preach about it, tell me, how many sermons do you hear? All of you who watch Christian TV, you ever hear a TV preacher speaking about anger or lusting with the eyes? I guarantee you never. But those are the ones which lead people to hell. Why is it the preachers who left it out? An enemy has done this by deceiving people.

The way is narrow, but the Holy Spirit can help us to walk it. And what does he mean by pull out your eye? That means the moment you see something that tempts you to lust, like pulling out a thorn. Turn your eye away, be like a blind person.

That's the meaning of it, because you can blind one eye and still lust with your left eye. You need only one eye to lust, you know that. So pulling out the right eye doesn't solve the problem.

It means be like a blind person at that moment. And if you're tempted to commit sexual sin with your hand, immediately imagine that your hand is amputated. You don't have a hand.

That's the meaning of cut out your right hand. Reckon yourself to be amputated and blind. Okay.

Third, telling lies and speaking the truth. Verse 33, you heard the old law that is make vows unto the Lord. That means you make a vow saying, I am now speaking the truth like they do in the court.

They put their hand on the Bible and say, I'm speaking the truth. The Lord says no. All the time, verse 37, your yes must be yes, and your no must be no.

If anything's beyond that, it's evil. If you manipulate and say, but I didn't really mean that. No, no, no.

Yes is yes and no is no. That doesn't mean we have to answer every question. There may be things I don't want to tell people.

I don't have to answer every question people ask me. I'm not their slave. And I can always say, I'm not going to answer that question.

Jesus sometimes said that I'm not going to answer that question. Why can't we follow him? I'm sorry. I don't want to answer that question.

Supposing somebody has told me something in confidence and someone comes and asks me, did somebody tell you something? I say, I'm not going to answer that question. And if by my saying that, he says, ah, now I know he did speak to you. If I suspect that, I will even say what you will technically call a lie.

No. And I believe that'll be the truth. It's not the letter.

It's the spirit. In Holland, there were godly people who used to hide the Jews in the Second World War from being captured by the Nazi soldiers. And they would come and knock at the door and say, have you got any Jews here? And the answer would be no.

Godly people, the most godly people in Holland said no. I would say no. And that would be the truth.

Because I live before God. It's not the spirit. It's not the letter, rather.

It's the spirit behind. Please remember that. And therefore, this is another area.

Anger, sexual lust, truthfulness. It's why very, very important to teach our children. They don't have sexual lust when they are small.

But that angry, rebellious spirit, that's the first thing they've got to deal with in children. The second is lying. Those are the two things I sought to de-work on my children from childhood.

Because of the Sermon on the Mount. That rebellious spirit which manifested in anger. And they're lying.

Never tolerate that in children. I tell you, if you folks are serious about bringing up your children like that, your children will grow up godly. Don't just, you know, if they talk to you in a despising way, that's anger.

Put it down. Then he speaks about revenge. It's another very common thing among human beings.

An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. If you treat me like this, I'll treat you like that. No.

You know how we're supposed to treat others? I'll give you a simple rule. Treat others the way God has treated you. If God's been merciful to you, be merciful to others.

If God's been immensely merciful to you, be immensely merciful to others. If God's forgiven and forgiven and forgiven and forgiven and forgiven, just forgive and forgive and forgive and forgive. And if God says, I will not tell anybody about all the wretched things in your life, you don't tell anybody the wretched things you know about somebody else also.

It's a simple rule. Treat others the way God has treated you. Don't say, if you did this, I'm going to do that.

An eye for an eye. And further, and you can meditate further on that, you know, no revenge. And then he speaks about no hatred.

Verse 43. It's not enough to love your neighbors and your friends. Love your enemies.

Pray for those who persecute you and do good to those who harm you. Because then, then, then, and then only, you will be sons of your father in heaven. I wonder how many people, if somebody were to ask them, how can I be a son of God? Most of us may just say, accept Jesus Christ.

What about telling them, love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you, do good to those who harm you so that you can be a son of God. That's also in the Bible. Why don't we look at these verses? We take the easy way of just believe and confess it.

I'm okay. I'm a son of God. That's the reason, my dear brother and sister, that our Christian life is so shallow.

Because we take one verse and we don't take every other verse. It's like a, that's a correct verse. Absolutely correct.

But that's not all there is in the Bible. On that subject, it's like a jigsaw puzzle. You put 10 pieces there.

You can't see anything. Those 10 pieces are correct, but that means another 10 pieces to complete it. So that's, that's what I say.

How shall I become a son of God? I can quote John 1.12, as many as received him, to them he gave the authority to be children of God. That's fine. But from a children, if you want to be a son, then you're going to love your enemies.

And you're going to do good to those who hate you, pray for those who persecute you. Then you move up from being a child to a son. You know the difference between a one-year-old and a 25-year-old.

And he goes on to say, because your father in heaven, he makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good. And he makes the rain to fall on the righteous and the unrighteous. You know those days people were farmers.

The most important thing farmers need are sun and rain. And God says he gives the sun and the rain to that atheist farmer. And he gives the sun and rain to the God-fearing farmer.

He doesn't sort of make more rain and sun come on this field, because he's good. So when we experience material blessing, he doesn't say anything about ourselves. That's the fault of this 1.12 gospel.

God has blessed me materially. The farmer saying, hey, the sun is shining on my property, and I'm an atheist. And the rain's falling, and I got a good crop.

That proves I'm right. There's no God. No, that proves that in spite of your stupidity, God is a good God.

That's all it proves. And so whenever we are blessed materially, it proves absolutely nothing about your faithfulness. Remember that.

Because I think some people sitting here also have got this idea. When I came to CFC, I was so poor. Now, I'm so rich.

My children are rich. And you've got this crazy idea that you were responsible for that. No.

It's the same goodness of God that has made Bill Gates richer than you, and made the king of Saudi Arabia, who is a Muslim, richer than you. He says, Allah has blessed me. Ambani says, no, it's Lakshmi that has blessed me.

And the Christians say, Jesus has blessed me. But Jesus doesn't seem to have blessed you as much as Lakshmi has blessed Ambani, and Allah has blessed the king of Saudi Arabia. What does that prove? This is a pathetic Jesus that is inferior to Allah and Lakshmi.

Shouldn't that itself show you that is a false gospel? Shouldn't that show you that this health, wealth gospel is fake? It's the clearest proof of it. If Jesus can bless so much and Allah and Lakshmi can bless much more, which is the true God then? It's a fake Jesus. It's another Jesus.

When God blesses anybody, he blesses everybody on the earth, whether they are good or bad, righteous or unrighteous. That's what this verse says. And never forget it.

It's the demolition of this health, wealth gospel. It's all there in the Bible if you want to read it. If you greet only those who greet you, what are you doing more than others? When was the last time you greeted people who didn't greet you? I've seen that sometimes.

Somebody who doesn't like me, they cross the road, they suddenly see something interesting on the other side. You know what I do sometimes? I cross the road. I say hi.

Be good. That's the way to be perfect, my brother. Verse 48.

And then in chapter 6, we don't have time to go into detail, but chapter 6 is dealing with the wrong attitude of seeking honor from others. That's another thing which is very common in people. You know, all these are very common attitudes.

Seeking honor when we give money. Seeking honor when we pray. Seeking honor when we fast.

Almost every Pentecostal who fasts announces it in an indirect way. Last year when I was on a seven-day fast, something happened. What's he trying to tell you? That I fasted for seven days.

What he means is I took soup and juices and I didn't eat meat. It's all deception. When you do something for God, let nobody know about it.

That's why we don't stick an offering bag here in front of anybody. And that's why we don't like in some churches put a box here and make everybody line up and give. Nobody can escape that way.

We say it's the box in the bag. I don't know who puts it in. I tell you in 40 years, I don't know who puts it in.

Don't let other people know what you give to God or to the poor. Don't let other people know how much you pray. Have you heard these stories of people who pray for two hours and four hours? How did people find out? I'd like to know that.

The Bible says pray always. It doesn't say pray for two hours. A lot of things, you know, I find Christendom is so far away from the Bible because they don't read the Bible exactly.

And they get impressed with all these people who tell these stories. When you pray, don't let anybody know. When you fast, don't let anybody know.

In other words, don't seek honor from people for anything that you do. That's another wrong attitude. In other words, try and pretend that you're not fasting.

Anoint your face. I remember when I left the Navy and I had given up all my income and I knew that I had to trust the Lord and I was working among villagers and students and I have very little income. There was a little truth that came to my mind which I stuck on to all these years.

Even when you have nothing, give people the impression that you have plenty. Then nobody will give you charity like a beggar. A lot of people give money to full-time workers like charity to a beggar.

That full-time worker is the most sincere servant of God, is the most dignified person on the face of the earth, more than a king. A king can receive a gift, sure. Solomon received gifts as one of the wealthiest kings from different people.

A servant of God is greater than that. He's welcome to receive gifts but he's not receiving gifts like a beggar. He's receiving it as a king.

There's a dignity about it. He's not looking for it. So, seeking honor.

And then he speaks about our attitude to money in verse 19 to 24. And the danger here is of money becoming a master. In heaven, there is gold in heaven.

Genesis chapter 2 says in Eden, the gold was good. In Revelation, you read about gold in heaven but it is under our feet. The streets are made of gold.

That's the difference between earth and heaven. On earth, they put gold on the head. In heaven, they put it under your feet.

And if you have learned to put gold under your feet, you're ready for heaven. Make it work its way down slowly, right down to under your feet or quickly. Quicker the better.

He speaks about our attitude to money here. It's very important and he says there are only two masters. God and money, verse 24.

God and property. When your property and your possessions and all these things of earth mean so much to you, they sort of have a hold on you. Like I was saying the other day, all our earthly property must not be possessed but had.

This is having property. This is possessing it. It's mine.

I'll never share it with anybody. I'll never give any of it to anyone. If God gives you a house, use it for the glory of God.

If God gives you money to spare, use it for the glory of God. Yeah, that's right. You know, this is part of the Sermon on the Mount because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Wrong attitude to money. That's the other thing we see here. And then he speaks about anxiety.

Another wrong attitude towards our earthly needs. We all have earthly needs, particularly food, clothing and shelter. And it says here, there's an expression here in verse 32 that's helped me.

What are the things that Gentiles eagerly seek? Don't seek for them because your Heavenly Father knows what you need. And I made a list once in my mind of the things that the Gentiles eagerly seek. It's very easy.

Just look around and see what worldly people are seeking. Not just seeking, but eagerly seeking. You all know what worldly people eagerly seek.

Make a list of them and ask yourself, am I also eagerly seeking after all these things? Then perhaps I'm also a worldly person, even though I sit in CFC. No, I must hold them loosely. I must have a testimony at the end of my life, that from the time I got light on the New Covenant, I have never sought eagerly the things the Gentiles seek.

No, I've kept them all under my feet. My house is under my feet. My job is under my feet.

My car is under my feet. People are more important than things. You know, God created the world for us to use things and love people.

The devil has reverted that and we love things and use people. What do I mean by use people? You meet some influential person. Supposing some influential person is in this church.

I must get friendly with him because he can help me. Maybe he's an income tax officer or a police officer. I better get friendly with him.

This is what using people means. That means almighty God can't help you. This peon, this chaprasi, this person who's low down on the earth, he's going to help you.

The master of the universe can't help you. It's an insult to God. It's an insult, sure.

If your dad is the managing director of a factory and you go to the peon in the office for some help, don't you think your dad will feel insulted? Don't use people. Many people use people. I know some influential people.

So what? I know the most influential person in the universe. Dear brothers and sisters, many of us think we have a lot of faith in God. Actually, we have more faith in people.

So don't use people. Use things and love people. Finally, the last wrong attitude is chapter 7, judging others.

That's another thing the Lord said, get rid of it. Get rid of this attitude of judging. In other words, you kept this wonderful sermon on the mountain and then you start looking around and saying, well, that fellow doesn't seem to have kept it.

My wife doesn't seem to have kept it. My husband doesn't seem to have kept it. You spoiled the whole thing.

You made a wonderful curry and then you put a dead lizard inside and spoiled the whole thing. You came to chapter 6, 34 and what a lovely curry it was. And then in chapter 7, verse 1, you went and put a dead lizard inside and spoiled the whole thing.

Jesus warns us when you keep these commandments, don't decide whether other people are keeping it and say, I see a little speck in your eye. This Matthew chapter 6, this one I see you have not obeyed. The Lord says, forget it.

There's a big log in your eye. And what is that log? A wrong judgmental attitude towards your brother that is worse than all the sins listed in Matthew chapter 5 and 6. That's the point. So dear brothers and sisters that seek to be free from anxiety, wondering whether God will provide the things that we need in life, free from the love of money.

And then in conclusion, he says, here's what he says finally you should do. When you find you cannot live this life or you cannot enter through this gate or walk this way, what should you do? Verse 7, chapter 7, 7. Ask. This is the conclusion.

You come to this wonderful sermon in the morning and say, Lord, how in the world will I have these nine right attitudes and get rid of these nine wrong attitudes? And the Lord says, ask. Ask for the Holy Spirit. In Luke 11, it's mentioned as asking for the Holy Spirit.

How much more will your heavenly father give good things? Or in Luke 11, 13, the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. Matthew 7, verse 7 onwards. Here in verse 11, it is good things.

In Luke 11, 13, it's the Holy Spirit. You put the two together at the end of the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord tells us how we can keep this Sermon on the Mount.

Ask. Ask for the Holy Spirit. Seek.

Knock. And keep on asking till you get it. And you will get it.

And then as a closing sentence, he says, verse 12, treat people the way you want them to treat you. So basically two laws. Treat people the way God treated you.

And treat people the way you want them to treat you. Do you want people to go around gossiping about you? Do you like it? Evil things about you? You don't? Then don't do that about others. If somebody saw a fault in you, do you want them to go and tell everybody about it? No.

If you see a fault in somebody else, keep your mouth shut. Treat people the way you want others to treat you. Do you want people to be rude to you and shout at you and yell at you? No.

Then don't do it to others. He says the whole Bible is around this. Treat people the way you want to be treated.

And then we've already looked at the conclusion. Beginning the Christian life aright. We talked about the foundation and the direction in which we are to go.

What you've seen in the Sermon on the Mount is a lifelong path. Jesus said, teach people to do everything I taught you. It's a way that will end when we see Jesus face to face.

So let's seek and ask and knock for the power of his Holy Spirit in our life. We'll never get it any other way. That's why Jesus concluded the Sermon on the Mount with that passage, ask for the Holy Spirit.

And when you're asking, treat other people the way you want them to be treated. Our attitude to others is so important when we seek God in prayer. A wrong attitude to others and we don't get something from God.

I believe there are many things in our life we have missed. One, because we don't ask persistently. And the other, because when we ask, we've got a wrong attitude to somebody else.

When we keep on asking for 20 years, we get nothing. Let me say this again, what I said before. Some of us should have been way up the mountain by now.

We can't do anything about the past, years that are wasted, but we can do something about the future. Let's take the Christian life seriously. Let's bow before God.

Heavenly Father, there is never a command that you ever gave that you will not give us the power of the Holy Spirit to keep. That is our faith and we confess our hope and our faith that what you have commanded, you will definitely give us the power of the Holy Spirit to keep. And if some of us have not had that faith till today, Lord, we want to rise up and have that faith today that everything you have commanded, you will give us the power of the Spirit to keep.

And we fail to ask you, we're going to ask you right now. Give us the mighty fullness of the Holy Spirit to live this life, to glorify you on earth, to be like salt and light on this earth. We ask in Jesus name, Amen.

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