

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 5:

vs. 1-12

This section of verses is also known as the "Beatitudes". This is the start of the Sermon on the Mount which will continue through until the conclusion of chapter 7. The Sermon on the Mount can be defined as the principles and ideals of life. Jesus preached this sermon in Galilee, after choosing the 12. The reason for this sermon was to instruct His disciples in the ways of the Kingdom. The message was about what Jesus wanted to accomplish.

Jesus describes in the Beatitudes; the character, privileges, and the ideals of Kingdom subjects. The characteristics of Christians should be: poor in spirit (humility, not thinking highly of ourselves), mourning (there are appropriate times to mourn; especially to mourn for those lost in sin), meek (gentle and submit themselves to God's service in this case), hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and individuals who may be persecuted because of their faith. Their privileges are that they will be blessed (or made happy) by the promise that they will have a part in the eternal kingdom, will be comforted, shown mercy, see God, called God's children, and have their reward in heaven.

vs. 13-16:

Salt was a valuable commodity in that day. It was used to season food, among other things. We as Christians should be spreading the Gospel and in that way, helping people cope with life, and most importantly, find the way to God. If we have lost our purpose or are not pursuing it, then we are as worthless as salt that is no longer salty.

Christians are to be the light of the world, shining on the wickedness of man and showing the path to salvation. We shine our lights not only by what we say, but by what we do. These good deeds and good words are not to be withheld but to be done that people may praise God for His love, which was shown to them by God's people.

vs. 17-20:

Jesus informs the people that He is going to fulfill the Law and the Prophets. He will live a perfect and holy life as the Law taught and will fulfill the prophecies concerning the coming Messiah. He is the total fulfillment.

Jesus informs the people that their righteousness is to exceed the Pharisees. The Pharisees were well known for their strict adherence to the Law in their effort to be righteous. Jesus goes on to show that righteousness is not just shown in outside behavior but in the attitude in one's heart. For Christians, we can be made totally righteous through faith in Christ. This is the righteousness which will exceed the Pharisees.

vs. 21-26:

Jesus reminds his hearers concerning the Law about not murdering. He goes on to show that it is just as wrong to be angry, speak with contempt, or accuse a person of having no value. If one should recall, during their offering or worship, an offense or division between them and another they are to go and be reconciled and get the matter taken care of. Jesus warns that if it is let go, you might end

vs. 27-30:
Jesus speaks of the evil of adultery and extends it to even lusting after another individual. He makes the point that if a person can't control themselves, then do away with the eye, or hand; that is how serious it is.

vs. 31-32:
Concerning divorce, Jesus says that if one divorces his wife, he causes his wife to commit adultery when she remarries. Not only is the woman committing adultery (caused by her husband), but so is the person that she is married to. The only way that a husband can prevent his wife from causing adultery, is if she had already committed it, and that was the reason for the divorce.

vs. 33-37:
Jesus speaks here on the value of a man's word. We should be so honest that we don't need to make oath or swear by anything. Those things are wrong. We should simply answer the question or make our statement, and leave it at that.

vs. 38-42:
Jesus now speaks about letting bygones be bygones. We are not to go out and get revenge, but rather settle the matter quickly; even by letting the other person take advantage of us. We are to be generous to them. Remember: Vengeance is mine sayeth the Lord, I will repay; and that the Lord seeth what is done and will reward us.

vs. 43-48:
Jesus challenges us to love our enemies and to pray for them. We are not to hate anyone, but love them, just as God does.
In conclusion, we are to be just as righteous and merciful to others, as God has been with us!

STUDY GUIDE

MATTHEW 5:

1. To whom is the kingdom of heaven promised? (see vs 3)
2. Who will inherit the earth?
3. Who is blessed according to verse 11?
4. Why are we to let our light shine before men?
5. What had Jesus come to do to the Law and Prophets?
6. Who will be subject to judgement?
7. What are you to do quickly with your adversary?
8. What is it better to lose, than for you whole body to go to Hell?
9. What does Jesus tell people not to do at all?
10. What should we not do to an evil person?
11. What are we to do to our enemies and those who persecute us?
12. How are we to be perfect?

BONUS:

1. Are the characteristics in the Beattitudes to be found in every Christians life, or just some of these traits? Explain.
2. What does it mean to you, that you are the light of the world?
3. How is Jesus' teachings on our treatment of enemies, different from the worlds teaching?