

## Prophets Which Were Before You

### Matthew 5:1-5

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~ Our so-called Spiritual Safari brings us to the so-called Sermon on the Mount in this report; which is a river running through chapters five, six and seven; and from which we will find excerpts of in the other Gospels. This sermon, given by Christ Himself, was likely given many, many times. Here, we have myriad combinations of truth being taught in different ways from differing perspectives. As we move through Matthew with Christ and consider the words He gave us in this account we are going to see Him repeat Himself a whole bunch of times! We're going to attempt to view each of those occurrences from different angles. Luke says Jesus gave this sermon 'down on the plains;' but, here, we go up into the mountains to hear it. I sure hope you have your hiking boots on because we're going WAY, way up in these next several reports. The next three chapters we are going to examine are only a partial record of this account, also. Each Gospel version of this event has different applications of truth and knowledge for different people at different times and in different places living in different ways. There was, actually, a whole lot more to this sermon, but this is the portion that was given for our consideration for the purpose of a correct and proper beginning of wisdom in our lives.

The left and the right – liberal and conservative - is not only a generalization for a set of people in relation to politics, but theology has a left and a right, too. Within both are the far left and the far right. Their views on any particular matter can vary widely; but they are all referred to as liberal or conservatives. The position of ones theology is exposed very definitely by ones interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount. The liberal theologian representing the left presents this sermon as the Gospel. They'll never admit it, but they cannot get out of this section of Scripture. The liberal feels like this sermon – and they may include the entire Book of Matthew - is the only important part of the entirety of Scripture. That presents as a profoundly lopsided theology which quickly becomes hypocritical and spiritually deadly.

Some who feel that all they need is the Sermon on the Mount typically have no compunction about going as far as to say that this is, actually, their entire religion! An entire religion is based entirely on this isolated and eschatological section. Some say all they need is the golden rule from chapter seven at verse twelve. All of those are stating the same erroneous position. Don't get me wrong: it sounds very good at face value; but it is very pious drivel to say those things. If you want to make this your religion you had better ask yourself if you're LIVING it out, friends. That's what's important and we're going to say more about it later. We're witnessing an extreme viewpoint in the modern church that happens to be, unfortunately, held by a very large segment of what is called Christianity today. Most so-called Christianity is really just uber liberalism disguised as something credible because they have "Jesus-Jesus-Jesus." Of course, they don't mean the Jesus of the Word of God. They mean something else. This is all very confusing. I recognize that; so, I need you dear readers to read very carefully now:

The CONTENT of the Christian Gospel is not found in this Sermon on the Mount. We know this because there is NO mention by Jesus of His death, burial and resurrection. That is something given privately to the disciples by Jesus. When Paul said to the Corinthians that he declared unto them the Gospel, he then proceeded to declare to them the death, burial and resurrection of Christ – not this sermon. Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture; he was buried in the tomb of Joseph of Aramethea and was resurrected on the third day - and was seen by His disciples. THAT is the ONLY Gospel the Bible teaches, my beloved. You're going to have to get that straight in your thinking or you are going nowhere in the Bible.

No component of the Gospel is seen here at all - and that's why people like to make it their religion. It is pious garbage to say this is your religion or that this is your Gospel and its perfect nonsense to believe this section of the Bible is more important than any other part. Once you begin picking and choosing texts for doctrine - it never ends. Your pickings become slimmer as your lie increases until your whole philosophy collapses. For a man to stand up and say they live by this passage is to stand up and declare you are a rank, Biblically illiterate hypocrite. That type of preaching has

filled our graveyards with more hell-bound lost religious people than a man could count.

Any person who is sincere in his heart can see that God's standard of holiness is impossible to attain. You come short of it – and so do I. That's not debatable; so, the real question is: do you have the Savior Who can extend mercy to you? Does your Savior reach down and hold you in His Sabbath rest in grace every second of every minute of every hour of every day of every week of every month of the year? Is it by faith because we, apparently, don't measure up? Too many people just hold this out blindly before them; not even dimly aware of the things of Christ. It ministers well to their hypocrisy. To confine the overall Christian message found in the Word of God to the Sermon on the Mount is to reduce Christ so that we may increase. Naturally, that's backwards; WE must decrease so that Christ might INCREASE! These people holding this diluted and perverted doctrine seek only to make merchandise of the Lord Jesus Christ, of course. They are known as the extreme liberal left.

Okay, let's take a wild swing to the other side of the pendulum – the extreme right of fundamental conservative theology. This group handles the Sermon on the Mount as if it were anthrax. They place it in a vial and don't want anyone to have it because of the harm they might do with it. They give the impression there is an ethical dichotomy with what Christ says; so, therefore, there must be something wrong with it. That is their erroneous conclusion. That group is your hyper-dispensationalist, too, by the way. We are dispensationalists in our safari expedition - but we consider Holy Writ completely, correctly and properly; therefore, we cannot ignore the Sermon on the Mount. We must teach it with respect.

I once spoke to a man who told me, "...the Lord's Prayer has no meaning for us today." This was a man that was making videos and writing books about a theory he had dreamed up about the Bible. As it turns out, the Lord's Prayer was about three times removed from the point of the presentation. It's another subject we're going to come to that has tremendous meaning; but we ought not to quote it every Sunday morning at church. We can't just rule it all out, either, though. We have to deal with it systematically, in an educated manner – being competently led and

taught by the Holy Spirit as we seek the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ today in our safari search for Christ. We're looking for Him on every page of Scripture, you may recall?

Many Bible teachers would prefer to simply rule the Sermon on the Mount out and pass over these chapters; and others abuse them into abject meaninglessness. It always seems to be one or the other. See, the Sermon on the Mount is law enforcement to the nth degree. The Sermon on the Mount IS FOR us today – but - it is NOT TO us in the present moment. Man could not keep the law in the Old Testament so how in the world are we going to keep these laws today that are a thousand times higher than Moses ever got in his own strength? Moreover, it's a tragedy to give this as a standard of conduct so that a new convert can go forth and fail. This theology supplies the entire ethic but none of the dynamic. Living by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit is simply NOT one of the truths taught here in the Sermon on the Mount.

Paul said, "...God has sent the Holy Spirit into the world and the Spirit is able to produce fruit in the life of the believer." We aren't seeing the leading of the Holy Spirit here in any form because we are seeing the high standards of ethical practice that are absolutely unattainable by mankind of his own device. The ethics, however, are NOT contrary to contemporary Christian living. Today, we sit with Christ, and He expresses His mind to us – from His Word. Is His Mind in you? Principles are set before us now that are profitable for our learning that can NEVER be attained to in our own strength, my friends. The power is going to have to come from somewhere other than YOU. What we have is a metaphorical light bulb, but we have nowhere to plug it in to get the light. Our bulb is useless without that power. The light is all important. What are we going to do?

What are we even talking about anymore? We are talking about the law of the future coming Millennial Kingdom taught by the King, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. The King has come to present you to Himself right NOW and He is giving the law that shall be in His Kingdom of Heaven. This is the manifesto of the King and it's the platform on which He rules; this is the basis of God's government – the Constitution of the Kingdom of Heaven. It will be the law of this world in the future during the millennium - and that is

when it finds its full fruition. Christ will reign in Person to enforce every Word of His. The Sermon on the Mount will prevail as law when He Whose right it is to rule shall appear IN THAT DAY.

It should be quite inconceivable and contrary to our thinking for a person to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and, yet, despise this document - or turn away from it's harsh and stark teaching. The Christian who calls Jesus "Lord" will seek to do the things that He commands. Who are they? Paul says, "...none seek after God; all have gone astray." Your obedience is directly correlated to the power of the Holy Spirit working through you. Many organizations try to force religion on a gain-saying world and they are, generally, successful in pigeon holing people for Jesus in pious condescension; but only the Gospel of God can make men obedient unto Him, friends! This is brought to us to bring us unto obedience unto God.

Conversely, the Sermon on the Mount must be taught with authority to bring conviction to the hearts of men. This is the only way mankind can know that he falls short of the glory of God. When you do profess to trust Christ then you'll desire to be in His direct will for your life. If you ever get into His direct will for your life you'll quickly discover it consists of extreme suffering. This collection of chapters will let us KNOW – very definitely – that we have sinned without remark and without regard. It reveals none are righteous and that all have come short of the glory of God.

All Scripture must be accounted for in order for total light to break forth in our understanding. Likewise, all Scripture must be accounted for before we can even think about being in His direct will. We are seeking a full-orbed viewpoint into the Mind of Christ in this safari so we MUST consider these things. Christ will give His viewpoint on adultery and murder in the Sermon on the Mount - and nowhere else. Put these principals down on someone's life today and you'll witness startling reactions. I used to be much more blunt than I am now – if you can believe that. See, the liberal will cover up fast when you confront them with this passage and properly present your thinking on it. They will expect you to congratulate them for their service to mankind before you're done speaking. They will lay out a wonderful sounding religion; but the rub is they'll tell you they can only TRY to live up to these standards. Well, the Lord didn't say to try, friends, the Lord said,

“blessed are ye if ye DO these things.” The Kingdom laws aren’t going to be up for a vote and Christ isn’t going to run for office. The Lord Jesus is going to be an Autocratic Dictator, Authoritarian and Monarchy all rolled into One!

Still, some people just aren’t too sure about my teaching. The Lord Jesus says that if we look upon a woman to lust after her we have already committed adultery with her. How many people have you slept with this week? That is punishable by stoning in this economy, friends! The Lord Jesus says if we are angry with our brother without cause we are guilty of murder! How many murders have you committed today? Murderers die according to capital punishment in this Kingdom, friends. We could continue to nail that coffin shut very easily - but since mine is already airtight – let’s move on! Let’s also change our religion and get something that actually works. If we’re honest, this will bring us to acknowledge we desperately need a Savior that can have mercy and grace on us and bring peace to our lives. These great principals reveal how far we’ve come in our learning; and how far we have to go - because we just got started in our Spiritual Safari again. The supernatural abounds at every turn from here, friends. Yet, this collection of chapters is only an excerpt.

Our written expedition doesn’t get too technical or theological, if we can help it; and we don’t look at the things of Christ through doctrine, in general, if it can be avoided. What we are after is REAL life wording that is not available otherwise. This is an exclusive club you have joined. It will lead to an extraordinary place. There are many other fine expositions and writings; drink where you may but you will drink somewhere, my Christian friends. Some of the rivers are deathly polluted today. That should give us a crystal-clear picture of the river you’re following now; albeit just an idea of the left and the right we’re going to have follow us and we’re going to talk about throughout the Scriptures.

Moving forward, the Sermon on the Mount opens with the beatitudes - not the “do” attitudes. We’ve all likely heard the word beatitude - but let’s be abundantly clear about our meaning. A beatitude states to subjects what it is and how it is to become becoming for this type of a person to incorporate it into their thinking and actions in the Kingdom age. Let’s sit down with

Jesus because Jesus doesn't give the Sermon on the Mount to the multitudes. No, Jesus went up into the mountain and the disciples came and sat down with Him – away from the crowd. The multitudes are actually turning and retreating at this point. This is private and it's just for YOU, oh, disciple of Christ – whoever you are – whom the Lord loveth. The Lord gives this to you privately because Jesus sees the need of the multitudes. The multitudes can only receive this indirectly, friends – from YOU. Christ is calling you to come to Him; if you already have, then come to Him again right now. He can give us seed to sow in this world – that's what we're doing right now.

In chapter five, we're not told HOW to be poor in spirit; we're just told to be poor in spirit. Matthew says nine times here "blessed" – which is the same word that will open our Psalms – Blessed is the Man. The contrast here to the Mosaic Law must not be overlooked. Curses in Deuteronomy bring blessing in the Sermon on the Mount. Christ alone can bring blessings from a curse, my friends. Only a saved sinner can know and recognize his spiritual impoverishment. Blessed are the poor in spirit. You're not going to boast of your religion if you're still reading this report. If you are – you're just a hypocrite. Only the Spirit of God can reveal these truths of spiritual impoverishment to you as He has. This is for the citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, but it doesn't tell you how to do it – you need to already know – properly, completely and correctly. Being poor – you make many rich; spiritually rich, naturally. That is a message from Paul the apostle....

***1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:***

***2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,***

***3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

***4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.***

***5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.***

~ Our Spiritual Safari ends this leg of our expedition through the entire Word of God by quoting other Scripture in Scripture - such as Zephaniah and Micah and Psalms. THIS says the meek shall inherit the earth - but that's not happening today. The meek happen to be the ones that are NOT inheriting the earth right this moment as I type. Apparently, the Sermon on the Mount is not in effect as a law for us. How do we get meekness? We cannot muster up meekness in and of ourselves. If we could make ourselves meek we would be proud of that and the meekness would be right out the window – it just doesn't work that way. God humbles us. How wonderful are the Words of Christ when properly and accurately interpreted. When Christ reigns, we will reign with Him and the meek will inherit the earth. Not today. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, loving kindness, gentleness, meekness, faithfulness ~

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