

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

SESSION 1

Introduction to Sermon on the Mount: *Participant Guide*

WELCOME

Thank you all for signing up for this CORE Seminar on the Sermon on the Mount. We're excited about spending the next couple of months diving into this sermon! Each week you will have a participant guide – and at the end of each participant guide you will have the Scriptural content for next week's lesson. Please read AND study ahead. This will make our time more interesting as we grow together and learn together.

BACKSTORY

Today, we're diving into something truly special and timeless—the Sermon on the Mount. Now, I know the word "sermon" might make you think of long, Sunday mornings, but that is not what this Sermon is about. This Sermon ranks among the most well-known and beloved passages of Scripture, and portions of its content are famous even outside of the church.

The Sermon features the teaching of Jesus – and is a proclamation that the Messiah has arrived! In this sermon, Jesus reveals Himself as Lord, Savior, Redeemer and Teacher. He speaks on a variety of subjects pertaining to the Christian life, discipleship, and life in the kingdom of God.

The Sermon on the Mount is shared in two different places in the gospels – [Matthew 5–7](#) and [Luke 6:20–49](#). For this study, we will focus primarily on [Matthew 5-7](#) due to the detail that Matthew includes in this sermon. In these verses, Jesus addresses a number of issues, such as:

- *What is Christian character?*
- *What is the place of the law of God [if any] in the Christian's life?*
- *Is church discipline important?*
- *How should we pray?*
- *How can we be free from anxiety in an anxiety-ridden world?*
- *What is so wrong about a judgmental spirit?*
- *Why do we need to have spiritual discernment?*

QUESTION

If you had to summarize the full content of Jesus' teachings, how would you summarize them?

- *"I would summarize Jesus' teachings with the word 'love.' Meaning - Jesus came to share God's love and teach us how we should love each other."*
- *"I would summarize Jesus' teachings with the words 'right living.' Meaning – Jesus taught us to do unto others as we would have them do to us."*
- *"I would say that Jesus came to teach us how to get to heaven. That's pretty self-explanatory – no explanation required."*

SCRIPTURE

Have someone in the group look up and read **Matthew 4:12-17**

KINGDOM OF GOD

Did you see how Matthew summarized Jesus' teachings in **verse 17**? Matthew summarizes Jesus' teachings not with love, morals or a fast pass to heaven. Matthew summarizes Jesus' teachings with, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

AUTHORITY OF THE KING

Have someone in the group look up and read **Matthew 4:23-25**

The Sermon on the Mount, a pivotal teaching in Matthew, gains profound significance when viewed in the context of the preceding chapters, particularly **Matthew 1-4**. From the very outset, Matthew establishes Jesus as the King, underlining this pivotal role through his genealogy, which traces Jesus' lineage back to the great King David. The gospel also echoes prophecies that foretell the arrival of a significant and authoritative King. Authority to heal the sick, cast out demons and to make the lame walk again. Matthew records demonstrations of the Kingdom's power in **verses 23-25**, as Jesus heals the sick and casts out demons, showcasing the authority inherent in the Kingdom of God.

QUESTION

Matthew's gospel begins and ends with the understanding that Jesus is

- *A good teacher*
- *Political Candidate*
- *King of the Kingdom of God*
- *All of the Above*

JESUS AS TEACHER

As you read through Scripture, you can't help but be in awe of the way Jesus taught. Honestly, you can understand why He is considered the greatest teacher who ever walked on the face of the earth. Even the Jewish officers proclaimed that, "No one ever spoke like this man!" [**John 7:46**]. Even some of His enemies said that He spoke as One who has authority, and not like the scribes and the Pharisees. I believe "authority" is the perfect word to describe His teaching.

Now the word "authority" in the Greek is **exousia**. The prefix **ex-** simply means from or out of. The root of this word **-ousia** is the present participle of the Greek verb, to be. So, the literal meaning of **exousia** can literally be translated as "out of substance" or "out of stuff," "out of essence," "out of being." Everything He said had substance to it. Everything He said carried the very weight of His own authority.

QUESTION

Which of the following is *not* a reason for considering Jesus the greatest teacher who lived?

- *He is a master instructor with an extraordinary teaching style.*
- *He taught like everyone else.*
- *He is the incarnation of truth.*
- *His teaching had a divine origin.*

QUESTION

Why was Jesus a great teacher?

- *What characteristics do you think set His teaching apart from that of the other religious leaders in His day?*

CONCLUSION

Although the Sermon on the Mount merits a verse-by-verse consideration, we simply don't have the time in this semester to do that. Because of our time constraints, we'll take a view of the Sermon from 10,000 feet – seeking to get at the heart of Jesus' message.

Outline for how we will study of the Sermon on the Mount:

- **February 25th: [after God @ Work]** Matthew 5:1-12 | *The Beatitudes.*
- **March 3rd:** Matthew 5:13-32
- **March 10th:** Matthew 5:33-48
- **March 17th: Hangout Night**
- **April 7th:** Matthew 6:1-18
- **April 14th:** Matthew 6:19-34
- **April 21st:** Matthew 7:1-12
- **April 28th:** Matthew 7:13-29
- **May 5th: Hangout Night or Content Make-Up**