

## “The Sermon on the Mount”

Lanier Life Group

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We have been called to be disciples, and as disciples, we have the enormous privilege of promulgating the central message of our great teacher, Jesus, in His physical absence. This message of Jesus about the Kingdom of Heaven intersecting with fallen creation was most famously established in His “Sermon on the Mount,” found in the gospel of Matthew, chapters 5-7. In this manifesto of sorts, Jesus lays out His ideology of a transformed people set apart to proclaim the hope that has come, both presently and for the future, as a result of their new King establishing His new Kingdom.

The ethical or pragmatic focus of the sermon suggests that this proclamation, as exemplified by Christ Himself, was not meant to be in word only but also in deed. Our actions matter and, further, the motivation for those actions matter. No longer is obedience for the sake of obedience enough; our heart’s desire must change as our heart’s allegiance has changed from glorifying the self to glorifying Christ.

The Sermon on the Mount is an ideal, yes, and perhaps an unattainable one for those of us who are not both deity and human. Yet, the challenge still stands, enabled by the grace provided to us by Christ in the gospel and the empowerment that comes when the Holy Spirit takes up residence in us. We are called to be “perfect, as (our) heavenly Father is perfect” and justified in our imperfection by the unparalleled work of Christ (Matt 15:48 ESV). We are called to emulate that which we preach, suggesting to those who are still unconvinced of Christ’s teaching that His work is more satisfying than anything this world can offer, and that is why we, as His disciples, will reject the temporary pleasures of this earth for the eternal ones awaiting us hereafter.

Will we choose to build our spiritual houses on the firm foundation of Christ? Will we be salt and light to a world that needs some flavor? Will we reject the typical pursuits of man for the glorious ones of God? His Kingdom is coming on earth as it is in heaven. The question for us is whether or not we will help to usher it in.

## LISTENING GUIDE

We are called to be DISCIPLES.

The central message of Jesus is found in the Sermon on the Mount.

In this sermon, Jesus delivers an ethic that should be characteristic of His disciples.

The question for us today:

Will we help build the Kingdom of Heaven or sit by and watch as it is built around us?

How can I help to usher in the Kingdom of Heaven?

Today, let's look at three overarching principles from the Sermon on the Mount that help us to build the Kingdom of Heaven.

1) We help to usher in the Kingdom of God by proclaiming the fully satisfying nature of Christ.

2) We help to usher in the Kingdom of God by considering others to be greater than ourselves.

3) We help to usher in the Kingdom of God by trusting fully in the sovereignty of God.

There are only two choices here: rock or sand.

"If you have a mild response to Jesus Christ, you have no intellectual integrity." -Tim Keller

Our response:

Will you be fully satisfied by Christ and proclaim it?

Will you sacrifice self for others?

Will you fully trust in the sovereignty of God?

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Books more academic in nature:

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