

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT



CROSSROADS
PRISON MINISTRIES

ANSWER KEY

Cover artwork by Harvey L., former Crossroads student



Copyright © 1997, 2004, 2016 by the Publishing Center at Crossroads Prison Ministries. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

v.0825

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson 1 4

Lesson 2 11

Lesson 3 17

Lesson 4 24

Lesson 5 29

LESSON 1: The Beatitudes

1. **Check required.**
2. The word “blessed” means to have the deep, abiding joy that comes when we live in **harmony** with God and the **principles** of His Kingdom.
3. The Psalms begin with a promise of blessing and a warning to the wicked. Read Psalm 1.
 - a. What does a blessed person delight in?

A blessed person delights in the Law of the Lord.

- b. What will be the future of the wicked?

They will not stand in the judgment, nor in the assembly of the righteous. Their future holds destruction.

4. Christians who are “poor in spirit” have recognized that they are **totally dependent** on God for their own wellbeing. They have recognized the **sin** and **corruption** of their hearts and know that they do not have the resources or abilities to please God. They know they need the **help** of the King.
5. Read 1 Peter 5:5–7 and answer the following questions.
 - a. With what are we to be clothed?

We are to be clothed with humility.

- b. “God **opposes** the proud, but shows **favor (or grace)** to the humble” (1 Peter 5:5).
6. Read Isaiah 6:1–5. Here Isaiah is driven to see that he is poor in spirit. What caused this?

Isaiah saw the awesome majesty, glory, authority, and holiness of God who was worshiped by the angels. In contrast to this, Isaiah realized his own sinful condition and his need for total dependence upon this Holy God.

7. Read Philippians 2:3–5 and fill in the blanks below.

Do nothing out of selfish **ambition** or vain **conceit**. Rather, in **humility** value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests, but each of you to the interests of the **others**. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as **Christ Jesus**.

8. How does God respond to our sin, according to Romans 1:18?

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against our sin.

9. Read Psalm 5:4–6 and fill in the blanks below.

“For you are not a God who is **pleased** with **wickedness (or evil)** ; with you, **evil (or wicked)** people are not welcome. The arrogant cannot **stand** in your presence. You **hate** all who do wrong; you **destroy** those who tell lies. The bloodthirsty and deceitful you, Lord, **detest (or abhor)**.”

10. According to what we learned in this beatitude, what does the Christian mourn over?

Christians mourn over their sin and poverty of spirit, as well as the sin they see all around them.

11. Read 2 Chronicles 7:14.

- a. If we want God to hear us when we talk to Him, what must we do?

We must humble ourselves, pray, seek God’s face, and turn from our wicked ways.

- b. If we do this, what will God do?

Then God will hear, will forgive our sins, and heal our land.

12. Read Isaiah 6:1–8. God met Isaiah in a powerful way. What was Isaiah’s response to God’s majestic holiness?

A student should respond with at least some of the following: Isaiah realized his sinful condition—so much so that as a prophet he pronounced an oracle of woe upon himself! Furthermore, he clearly identified not only his own sin, but also the sin of the world around him. In the midst of this awesome recognition of his sin and the sinful world, we cannot help but think that as the angel approached Isaiah, he was expecting death. However, God in marvelous grace granted Isaiah atonement for his sin and the cleansing he was so in need of. Not only that, Isaiah was prepared for, and responded to, a call for service.

13. How does the definition of biblical meekness described above differ from the idea that meekness is weakness?

We generally think of meek people as weak, soft-spoken people, maybe even with low self-esteem and other social and emotional problems. In contrast to this, we see that a meek person is actually one with great power and abilities in both mind and body, but these qualities are submitted to God and harnessed under His control. It takes strength to be submissive, gentle, and patient when our inclinations are just the opposite.

14. Read Philippians 2:6–11, Hebrews 2:9–18, and 1 Peter 2:21–25 and review the crucifixion story in Matthew 27:27–55. Make a list of some of the ways Christ demonstrated meekness.

Students should respond with at least some of the following:

- **He did not retaliate when they hurled insults at Him.**
- **He made no threats even though He was in great pain and had the power to destroy His accusers; instead He entrusted Himself to God, the Just Judge.**
- **Christ submitted Himself and allowed the soldiers to strip Him of His clothes.**
- **They mocked His authority as King, placing a staff in His hand and kneeling before Him.**
- **Christ was crowned with thorns.**
- **The soldiers mocked and beat Christ.**
- **Jesus allowed the soldiers to nail Him to the cross with criminals even though He had done nothing wrong.**
- **He refused wine and gall to deaden His pain.**
- **Christ could have come down off of the cross but instead He chose the way of submission to His Father's will.**

15. Read Matthew 6:31–33.

a. What must a Christian seek first?

The Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

b. What will then be added to us?

Food, drink, clothing, and everything else we need.

16. Fill in the blanks below based on your reading.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” refers to the **desire** to be free from **all sin** in all forms; it involves a sincere desire to be **holy**.

17. **Check required.**

18. Mercy is compassion in **action**.

19. Read Titus 3:3–6. Circle the right answer below.

a. God saved me because of good and righteous things I have done.

☒ b. God saved me because He is loving, kind, and merciful.

20. Mercy is rooted in the character of God. Read Deuteronomy 4:31, Nehemiah 9:31, and Jeremiah 3:12.

What do all these verses declare about God?

That He is gracious and merciful.

21. As members of the Kingdom of God, we are to reflect the character of God to the world around us. Read Romans 8:5–9 and 1 John 3:16–18. Considering the prevalence of sin in humanity, what enables Christians to show mercy to the world as Christ did, and in what ways can we show mercy?

Christians are able to show mercy because the Spirit of Christ lives in the hearts of Christians. Christians can show mercy through actions, which include peace, love and selflessness, as well as by offering materials to those in need.

22. Fill in the blanks from your reading above.

First of all, to be pure is to be **single** or **unmixed**.

Second, purity refers to being **cleansed** and without dirtiness.

23. Read Psalm 15 and Psalm 24:3–6. How does David describe the person who will be in God’s presence?

Their walk is blameless; they do what is righteous. They have no slander on their tongue and cast no slur on others. They despise vile people but honor

those who fear the Lord; they keep oaths even when it hurts. They lend money without charging interest; they don't accept bribes. They have clean hands and a pure heart, and do not lift up their souls to an idol or swear by what is false. All this is to say that in order to see God and live in His presence, we must have a pure heart.

24. The purity spoken of in this beatitude also reminds us of the life of holiness God calls us to. Read Hebrews 12:14. In order to see God, what must we have?

Holiness, for without this we will not see God.

25. Revelation 22:4 speaks about heaven. What will we be able to see there?

We will see His face.

26. Read Isaiah 9:6–7. These verses are a prophecy about the coming of Jesus Christ to establish His Kingdom, the very Kingdom described in the Sermon on the Mount.

a. What title given to Christ correlates with this beatitude?

Prince of Peace.

b. Fill in the blanks from verse 7.

“Of the greatness of his government and **peace** there will be no **end**.”

27. Read Romans 12:17–21. List three things that we can do to promote peace.

Students should respond with at least three of the following:

- **Do not repay evil for evil.**
- **Do what is right as we live our lives before the world.**
- **Take the lead in living at peace with everyone.**
- **Do not take revenge; leave that to God.**
- **Overcome evil with good.**
- **Care for your enemy.**

28. Read James 3:18. Fill in the blanks below and remember this proverb as a helpful tool in life.

“Peacemakers who sow in **peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”**

29. Read 1 Peter 4:12–16 and answer the following questions.

a. When we suffer for Christ, what rests upon us?

The Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

b. When we suffer, we are not to be ashamed, but we are to do what?

Praise God that you bear that name.

30. Read 1 Peter 2:21–23. Here we learn that we are actually called to suffer. We are to follow the example of Christ. How did Christ respond to His suffering according to these verses?

He committed no sin and no deceit was found in His mouth. When they hurled insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.

31. Read Revelation 2:10 and 12:11. As citizens in God's Kingdom, what must we be prepared to do?

We must be prepared to give open testimony to Christ and His sacrifice for us, and even be willing to die for that testimony.

32. The Law of God shows us how to live before other people. Read Deuteronomy 5:6–21 and Matthew 22:36–40.

a. Describe some ways that you can be salt and light where you are.

The student should include in the response some reference to obeying the Ten Commandments as well as to loving God and our neighbor.

b. Some people have taught that Christians must leave the world altogether, living in total separation from the world. How does Jesus Himself refute this teaching in John 17:14–18?

Rather than separate completely from the world, Jesus prays here that we might:

- **Not be taken out of the world.**
- **Be protected from the Evil One while we are in the world.**
- **Be made more and more holy (sanctified) as we live in the world.**

33. Pick two of the eight beatitudes studied in this lesson which were the most important truths you learned and discuss how you will apply those characteristics to your life as you strive to live as a citizen in God's Kingdom.

Here students will come up with a variety of answers. Be alert to ways that you can encourage them. This may also provide you with some insight into what is happening in their lives. Be sensitive to how you can best minister to them in their present situation.

34. If you belong to Christ and live as a citizen in His Kingdom, pray to your King, asking Him for these characteristics and thanking Him for His blessings. For your next lesson: Read the entire Sermon on the Mount through all at one time—spend some extra time on Matthew 5:17–48, the passages you’ll study next lesson.

Encourage the student to read through the Sermon on the Mount in one sitting. The student will be asked to do this at the end of each lesson.

LESSON 2: The Christian's Relationship to the Old Testament

1. Read Galatians 4:4-5. Here we see that Jesus was born at just the right time, *"born of a woman, born **under** the **law**, to **redeem** those under the **law**, that we might receive adoption to sonship."*
2. At certain times the Father audibly declared from Heaven that the obedient life of His Son was acceptable to Him.

- a. In Mark 1:11, at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, what did the Father declare?

"You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

- b. Mark 9:2-10 records an event called the Transfiguration near the end of Jesus' ministry. Peter refers to this event in 2 Peter 1:17. According to Peter, what did the Father say at the Transfiguration?

"This is my Son whom I love, with him I am well pleased."

3. After Jesus accomplished the work He came to do on earth, He appeared to the disciples.

- a. **Check required.**

- b. Jesus said (verse 44), *"Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the **law** of Moses, the **prophets** and the **psalms**."*

4. Read Romans 10:1-4. What does Paul say about the people who were taught by Pharisees? Fill in the blanks below.

*"Since they did not know the **righteousness** of God and sought to **establish** their **own**, they did not submit to God's righteousness."*

5. Read Jeremiah 31:31-33 (see also Hebrews 8:10 and 10:16). This is speaking of the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the coming of Christ.

- a. Where does God write the Law now?

In our mind or heart.

- b. What does this mean to you?

Students may have various ways of answering this question, but the basic idea is that among God's people the Law of God has become a living instrument that is used and shared by all.

6. When the Apostle Paul speaks against bondage to the law (as in Galatians 3-5), he is referring to the Old Testament Law as it was misinterpreted by the Pharisees; he is speaking against legalism, a purely external righteousness.

- a. Read Galatians 5:13-14. What Law are we to follow?

We are to follow the law of love—love your neighbor as yourself.

- b. Read Galatians 5:18.

Jesus declares in Matthew 22:37-40 that we are to obey the law. Yet Paul says in Galatians 5:18, *"But if you are led by the **Spirit**, you are not **under** the **law**."*

- c. Read Galatians 5:25. Fill in the blanks below.

*"Since we live by the **Spirit**, let us keep in step with the **Spirit**."*

7. Review the Ten Commandments from Deuteronomy 5:6-21. From what you learned in this study, do you believe we have to obey these commandments today? Why or why not?

Hopefully the student will respond with Yes! Why? Because it is the very Law of God that is written upon our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

8. In Ephesians 4:26-32, Paul makes the same point about anger that Jesus does.
- a. What must not happen when we are angry (verse 26)?

In our anger, we must not sin; we must not let the sun go down while we are still angry.

- b. What does anger do (verse 27)?

Unresolved anger gives the devil a foothold into a person's life.

- c. What are we to get rid of (verse 31)?

We are to get rid of bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, as well as malice—all of the emotions behind murder.

d. Why are we to be kind and compassionate (verse 32)?

Because God has forgiven us if we are in Christ.

9. In 1 Samuel 15 Saul is rejected by God as the king of Israel because of his sins. Saul thought that mere sacrifices would cover his sins. But God's prophet Samuel says, "To **obey** is better than **sacrifice**" (verse 22).
10. Psalm 66 is a psalm of praise to God for answered prayer. The psalmist is confident that his prayers would not have been heard if he had "**cherished sin in my heart**" (verse 18).
11. Read Hebrews 12:14-15. If we do not take care of our sin immediately, a "*bitter root*" can grow and cause trouble. What does the writer of Hebrews tell us to "*make every effort*" to do?

Live in peace with all people, and to be holy.

12. Not all hatred and anger is wrong in God's sight. In fact, there are some things that we definitely are to hate! According to Psalm 97:10, what is it that we should hate?

We are to hate evil.

13. **Check required.**

Check required between questions 13 and 14.

14. In Matthew 19:3-9 Jesus takes us back to God's original intent for marriage. Write out the principle in verse 6.

They are no longer two but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.

15. **Check required.**

16. Every family in the Kingdom of God needs to make the commitment of Joshua in Joshua 24:15, "*But as for me and my household, **we will serve the Lord***"
17. We know that God allows (and commands) oath-taking on solemn, important occasions. In each of the passages listed below, who is taking an oath?

- a. Hebrews 6:13 (See also Genesis 22:16-18):

God the Father

- b. Matthew 26:63-64:

Jesus Christ

- c. Romans 1:1 & 9:

The Apostle Paul

18. What does James teach about oath-taking in James 5:12?

Do not swear—by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no.

19. In Ephesians 4:25, Paul says, “*Therefore each of you must put off **falsehood** and speak **truthfully** to your neighbor. . . .*”
20. Read the “Law of Retaliation” in Exodus 21:23-25, Leviticus 24:20, and Deuteronomy 19:21. State the “Law of Retaliation” in your own words.

Students’ answers will vary here; often the slang term “pay-backs” may be used to explain the Law of Retaliation.

21. Christians are not to resist evil in the more trivial offenses of life. However, when it comes to serious injustices and the advancement of the gospel, we are to use our powers to see that justice is done. For example, read Acts 4:1-21. Why did Peter and John “resist” the rulers of the Jewish people?

Peter and John were preaching and teaching the Gospel; they were about the business of advancing the Kingdom of God. In this case they had a “higher” duty to obey God Himself rather than God’s appointed leaders.

22. Matthew 5:41 refers to a common practice in Jesus’ day—a Roman soldier had the power to press anyone or anything into government service. We have an illustration of this in Matthew 27:32. Who was pressed into government service and for what purpose?

Simon, a man from Cyrene was forced to carry Jesus’ cross.

23. In Matthew 5:44 we are commanded by Jesus to pray for our enemies. Luke 6:27-28 is a parallel passage. There Jesus says, "Love your enemies" and then gives specifics on how we are to do this. What three things does Jesus teach us to show our enemies we love them?

- a. "... do **good** to those who **hate** you ..."
- b. "... **bless** those who **curse** you ..."
- c. "... **pray** for those who mistreat you."

24. The Old Testament does not teach us to be hostile toward other races, nations, or our own enemies. Summarize the following Old Testament passages:

- a. Exodus 23:4-5:

If your enemy's animal runs off and you find it, return it to them. If you see your enemy having a hard time carrying things, help them.

- b. Leviticus 19:18, 33-34:

Don't seek revenge against someone who has done wrong to you. Treat people of other races and nations as one of your own kind—even to the point of loving them as you love yourself.

- c. Proverbs 24:17, 29:

Don't be happy over your enemy's troubles or pay them back for the evil they have done to you.

25. While God is loving toward His enemies, He also demonstrates His anger and wrath toward them (Romans 1:18-32). If one remains stubborn and unrepentant, what will God do according to Romans 2:5-9?

God will mete out justice on the unrepentant sinner. There will be God's wrath and anger for those who follow evil.

26. What does it mean to "be perfect"?

To "be perfect" means that we are to live a life that is in complete harmony with the will of God as revealed in the Bible, especially by Jesus' example. No one can ever be perfect because we are all sinful, completely affected by sin in every way, unable to please God on our own. Christ's perfection has been credited to us. Therefore, when God looks on us, He sees Christ's perfect obedience. Christ's perfection has made us perfect in God's eyes.

27. According to Ephesians 5:1-2, we are to, *“Follow **God's example**, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of **love**, just as **Christ loved** us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”*
28. While you are waiting for Lesson 3, meditate and reflect on the entire Sermon in your personal daily devotions and study time—spend extra time on Matthew 6:1-18, the passages you'll be studying in the next lesson.

Encourage the student to read through the Sermon in one sitting. The student will be asked to do this at the end of each lesson.

LESSON 3: Our Acts of Worship

1. What Jesus says in Matthew 6:1 at first glance may seem to be a contradiction. Read Matthew 5:16. The apparent contradiction disappears, however, when we answer the following question of both verses: Who is it that the people of the world are to see and praise as Christians live in this world?

As Christians live their lives in this world, the goal is that others will see God and praise Him.

2. The Pharisees placed great significance on where, when, and how they worshiped—hoping to be praised by others. In contrast to this, how does Jesus tell us to worship in John 4:23?

Jesus tells us that true worshipers will worship God in spirit and in truth.

3. Read Proverbs 19:17. What do you think it means to “lend to the LORD” and how do you think God will “reward” someone who gives to the poor?

This verse is teaching us that when we are kind and compassionate to the poor, demonstrated through our giving or some other means (see Proverbs 22:9; 28:8; 31:9), God views it as a gift to Himself. The Lord rewards our charitable efforts. It is not stated here what the reward will be. We cannot draw from this text that it is teaching that we will get our money back! While we do not know what the reward will be, we can have confidence that God will reward us. God’s rewards can take many forms, both physical and spiritual. Encourage your student to look at all the ways God might reward charity. You might refer your students to other texts such as Proverbs 14:21 and Matthew 19:27-28; 25:31-44.

4. One of Paul’s activities as he traveled from church to church was to take a collection among the Gentile churches for the poor Christians in Jerusalem. Read the background to this in Acts 19:21-22, Romans 15:25-28, and 1 Corinthians 16:1-4. Then read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7.
 - a. What did the members of the Macedonian churches do first that resulted in their becoming generous givers to the needy?

They gave themselves first to the Lord, that is, they devoted themselves to God. It follows, then, that everything the Macedonian believers had they really viewed as the Lord’s.

- b. Why do you think taking this collection among the churches was so important to Paul?

Considering all the activities Paul did engage in on his missionary journeys, it is striking that he gave such time and importance to these collections/offerings. We see that giving to the needy is very important to Paul—especially because this kind of giving is important to God. Furthermore, we know that the unity of the church, bringing the Jew and Gentile together in Christian fellowship, was a very important matter to Paul. The famine in Palestine that caused great economic hardship for the Palestinian Christians at this time was an opportunity for Gentile Christians to show their love for their Jewish brothers.

- 5. Jesus is not condemning public prayer. He is pointing out that prayer is not a forum to exhibit ourselves, but it is communion with our Father in Heaven. Prayer is best practiced in private.
 - a. Read Matthew 14:23, Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16, and Luke 6:12. Where were some of the places Jesus practiced private prayer?

Jesus went to quiet, lonely places of solitude, often on a mountainside.

- b. Where can you practice regular private prayer?

Encourage your student to find a place of privacy for daily prayer. For some students, this may be very difficult. In that case, finding a place for private prayer should be a priority prayer request! Crossroads students that are in prison often find their private prayer place while walking in the yard, psychologically shutting distractions out as they focus on their Father in heaven. Others have benefited by “praying” the Psalms. Possibly you can share how regular, private prayer has helped you.

- 6. We must be careful to see that Jesus is condemning meaningless prayer and a magical approach to prayer, not long prayer or repetition in prayer. In fact, we saw above (Luke 6:12) that Jesus spent whole nights in prayer. Now read Matthew 26:36-44. What was Jesus praying about here, how many times did He pray this prayer, and why did He do so?

Jesus prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26:39). “Cup” here refers to the outpouring of God’s wrath (see Psalm 75:8, Isaiah 51:17,22, Jeremiah 25:15-16). Jesus prayed this prayer three times. Jesus prayed this prayer three times because He was in excruciating anguish over facing death, knowing that God would not be

with Him, but against Him in judgment and wrath. Even in this anguish, our Lord repeats, “Yet not as I will, but as you will.”

7. Read 1 Kings 18:16-39.

- a. In verses 26-28, whom did the people pray to, what did they say, and how long did they do this?

The people prayed to the Canaanite god Baal (and probably his “spouse” Asherah). The people simply prayed, “O Baal, answer us!” They were asking Baal to send down fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice on the altar. They did this from morning (verse 26) until the time for the evening sacrifice—3:00 P.M. (verse 29).

- b. How does Elijah’s prayer differ from that of the Baal-worshippers in verses 36-37?

Elijah prays a simple yet powerful prayer (verse 36). His prayer has these parts:

- **It begins with a statement of historical and covenantal fact—the Lord is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the nation Israel.**
- **It contains a statement of who Elijah was—a servant of God who does His will.**
- **Its focus is on the glory of God before the people, both in the event at the altar and the resultant repentance of the people.**

Elijah’s prayer has God-ordained results—without having to coerce God in any way.

8. Jesus modeled prayer—He was a man of prayer. Read Luke 5:16 and 6:12. Describe what Jesus was doing in these verses.

Jesus went off to quiet places by Himself to pray. He did this often, and many times He did this all night. We see here that for Jesus time alone with His Father was very important and necessary.

9. In the Old Testament, the Tabernacle (and later the Temple) was seen as the place where God “lived” among His people. The specific place of God’s “dwelling” was the Holy of Holies, a part of the Temple which the people might never enter because of their sinfulness. A special curtain separated this part of the Temple from all the rest (Exodus 26:31-32). Now that Christ’s death has reconciled us to God and taken away the sin that separates us from God, the way is open for us to come directly into God’s presence.

- a. What happened to the curtain in the Temple at Christ's death? (See Matthew 27:51.)

At the time of Christ's death, the curtain in the temple was torn in half from top to bottom.

- b. What is the significance of that event for us? (See Hebrews 9:11-12 and Hebrews 10:19-22.)

The curtain symbolized the wall that separated God and humanity because of our sin and God's holiness. Jesus broke down that wall, bridging the separation by His death. We are now free to approach the Father directly; no priest is necessary to do that for us. Jesus, the Great High Priest, has made the ultimate sacrifice for us, thereby giving us free access to God in prayer.

10. Hebrews 10:19-25 discusses the significance of our free access to God. These verses give us five exhortations that begin with "Let us . . ." List these exhortations below:

- a. Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith.**
- b. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we possess.**
- c. Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.**
- d. Let us not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing.**
- e. Let us encourage one another.**

11. To "hallow" God's name we first need to "know" His name—we need to know His nature and character. "LORD" is the covenant name of God revealed to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:15). Exodus 34:6-7 expands on the meaning of that name LORD. What does this name reveal to us about God's character?

The name LORD reveals that God is compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. He is also a just God, punishing the guilty and their offspring.

12. It was Jesus' passion to glorify God and hallow His name on earth. Fill in the blanks from John 17:4.

*"I have brought you **glory on earth** by **finishing (or completing)** the **work** you gave me to do."*

13. The Kingdom of God “comes” every time another human being submits to God and pleases Him. Read Romans 14:17-18 and then circle **A or B** as the best reflection of what is taught in these verses.

- A. Those in the Kingdom of God need to be very concerned with such matters as eating and drinking.
- ☒ B. Those in the Kingdom of God need to be very concerned with righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

14. Read John 6:35-40.

- a. Why did Jesus come from heaven (verse 38)?

Jesus came to do the will of the One who sent Him, namely, God the Father.

- b. What is God's will for you (verse 40)?

God's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life and be raised up by Jesus Christ on the last day. This is to say that God's will for all who believe is that they have a deep abiding fellowship with Him that will result in resurrection unto glorification.

15. Fill in the blanks from 1 John 1:9:

*“If we **confess** our **sins**, he is **faithful** and **just** and will **forgive** us our sins and **purify** us from all unrighteousness.”*

16. Read Matthew 18:23-35. In your own words, what is the point Jesus is making in this parable?

The parable teaches us that those who know God's forgiveness and mercy must themselves operate their lives on the same standard of forgiveness and mercy. If we have an unforgiving heart it is possibly evidence that we ourselves have not received forgiveness from God. A forgiving heart is a sign that we ourselves have new life.

17. Read 1 Peter 5:5-9.

- a. How is the devil described here?

The devil is described as a prowling and roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

- b. Because of the devil's activity, what are we to do?

We are to resist him, being self-controlled and alert. We are also to stand firm in the faith with the rest of those who have suffered for Christ, submit to authority, humble ourselves before God, and cast all our cares upon Him.

18. Read Ephesians 6:10-18. What part should prayer play in our warfare against the devil?

It seems that putting on the entire “armor of God” is undergirded with prayer. We are to pray under the power and guidance of the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. We are also to pray for our Christian brothers and sisters.

19. Read Matthew 9:14-15.

- a. The Pharisees and the disciples of John the Baptist practiced fasting. What charge did they bring against the followers of Jesus?

They demanded to know why Jesus' disciples did not fast.

- b. How did Jesus answer them?

Jesus answers the charge with an illustration from a wedding celebration: Jesus is seen as the “bridegroom” and His disciples as the wedding party (“guests”). It would be ridiculous to fast at a wedding party; it would be just as ridiculous to fast while Jesus was here in physical form on earth. However, Jesus recognizes a time when they will fast—the time between His ascension and second coming. This means that we are living in an era where fasting should be a part of our discipleship.

20. A good time to practice fasting is when we are facing crucial decisions and commitments.

- a. What were the Christians in Antioch doing before and after Barnabas and Paul were called to a special ministry? See Acts 13:1-3.

They were worshipping the Lord and fasting.

- b. When Paul and Barnabas returned to churches they had established in their mission trip, what activities were included in the establishment of elders at those churches? See Acts 14:21-23.

They appointed elders through prayer and fasting and then committed them to the Lord.

21. What have you learned about our acts of worship, and how has God spoken to you through your study of Matthew 6:1-18?

Student's answers here will vary according to how the Lord has been speaking and dealing with them. Be encouraging.

22. In your study and devotion time this week, continue reading through the Sermon on the Mount—pay close attention to Matthew 6:19 to 7:6, the passages you'll be studying next lesson.

Encourage your student to read through the Sermon on the Mount in one sitting.

LESSON 4: Staying on Track

1. History is full of people who have allowed money and possessions to rule and ultimately ruin their lives.
 - a. Read the story of Achan in Joshua 7. What was Achan's sin and what were the results of this sin?

Achan's sin was that he took articles from the city of Jericho, articles that had been devoted to the Lord (Joshua 7:1). Achan himself describes this in detail in Joshua 7:20-21:

"It is true! I have sinned against the Lord, the God of Israel. This is what I have done: When I saw in the plunder a beautiful robe from Babylonia, two hundred shekels of silver and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels, I coveted them and took them. They are hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

The result of his sin was this:

- **38 men died in the attack on Ai (7:5).**
 - **God and all Israel were shamed before their enemies (7:8-9).**
 - **All Israel was called before God to be prosecuted for breaking their covenant with the Lord (7:10-18).**
 - **Achan and his family were stoned to death (7:25).**
 - **The bodies and all of Achan's possessions were burned, along with that which Achan stole (7:25).**
- b. Solomon was a man of great wisdom. Yet his heart turned away from God. Read 1 Kings 11:1-11. What caused Solomon's failure and what was the result of this failure?

Solomon loved and intermarried with 700 wives and 300 concubines, women that God had specifically told him would turn his heart away from God (11:1-3). As a result of this sin, Solomon's heart did turn away from God; he did not follow God wholeheartedly. Solomon turned both himself and the nation of Israel to syncretism—he worshiped other gods along with the worship of the Lord. This sin led God to declare, *"I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates."*

- c. Read the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11. What was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira and what was the result of that sin?

Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of property and donated the proceeds to the church. They did, however, keep some of the money for themselves, while they made it appear that they had given it all to the church—Ananias and Sapphira lied about their charitable gift, and they died as a result.

2. Read 1 Timothy 6:3-10. Fill in the blanks below from 1 Timothy 6:10.

*“For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of **evil**.”*

3. Read Proverbs 23:4-5 and fill in the blanks below.

*“Do not wear yourself out to **get rich**; do not **trust (or wisdom)** your own **cleverness (or restraint)**. Cast but a glance at **riches**, and they are **gone**, for they will surely sprout wings and fly off to the sky like an eagle.”*

4. Read Luke 12:13-21.

- a. What is Jesus' warning in verse 15?

Jesus warns us to be on guard against all kinds of greed and living for possessions.

- b. How does the story in verses 16-21 illustrate what Jesus is trying to teach?

The parable is about a man who gives himself to money and possessions. God calls him a “fool” because none of his possessions will follow him to the grave or help him in the afterlife. The consequences of greed are an ultimately useless life on earth that results in an implied eternal separation from God.

5. Read Psalm 19:7-11.

- a. What is more precious than gold (verse 10)?

The law of the Lord is more precious than gold—His statutes, precepts, commands, and ordinances.

- b. What will bring the servant of God great reward (verse 11)?

There is great reward for the servant of God who keeps God's Law.

6. **Check required.**

7. What practical instruction does the apostle Paul give us about what to do with our worries in Philippians 4:4-7?

We are not to be anxious about anything. We are to present our requests before God through prayer and petition that includes thanksgiving.

8. Read Matthew 11:28-30. A yoke is a harness that fits over the neck of an animal so that it can pull a heavy load under the direction and control of its master. Keeping this in mind, in your own words, write a short paragraph about what you believe Jesus is teaching in Matthew 11:28-30.

Students' answers to this question will vary, possibly providing insight into the burdens they carry. Respond lovingly and appropriately. The burden Jesus is referring to here is the burden of legalism that the scribes and Pharisees placed on the people. Not only was this burden heavy because of its stringent commands, but it was ultimately useless—nothing but human religion void of divine reward (see Matthew 23:1-4). Even though Jesus' demands are even greater (Matthew 5:20), He beckons us to come under His yoke—that is, under His control as one of His disciples. In contrast to the “hard labor” of legalism, Jesus invites us to come and learn from Him. He is a gentle and humble Master. Under His yoke we will find a relationship where we are encouraged, loved and empowered. (Note: Your student will study Matthew 7:13-27 in the next lesson—there we will see a more “stern” side of Jesus. This is a good time to emphasize the tenderness and gentleness of Jesus that all of His disciples will experience as they follow Him.)

9. Many people are gripped by worry because they believe the events in their lives happen by chance, luck, or fate. In contrast to this way of life, what confidence can we gain from Romans 8:28-39?

The confidence we gain is this: If we are people who love God and delight in doing His will, all things, whether good or bad, are working under His plan for our good. God's plan for us is an outworking of His love, election, and calling. His plan results in our conforming to Christ and our eventual glorification. There is no room for worry here!

10. What confidence can we gain in our battle against worry from Luke 12:11-12?

This verse gives us confidence in a very worrisome environment—defending ourselves and the Gospel before authorities. We are promised that the Holy

Spirit will be there with us and for us, teaching us what to say. By implication we can say that the Holy Spirit will be with us in all our anxious times.

11. We learn to worry less as we develop a closer relationship to our heavenly Father. What are three things you can do to develop a closer relationship to Him?

Students will have various answers here. Commonly they will write such things as prayer, Bible reading, Bible study (doing Crossroads lessons!), and church attendance. Encourage your student and possibly suggest other ways they can develop a closer relationship to God: singing, Bible memory, Bible meditation, or fellowship.

12. God takes our sin of judging others very seriously. In Psalm 50:19-22, God is speaking. If we slander other people, what will God eventually do (see verse 21)?

God says He will accuse and rebuke us.

13. James echoes the teaching of Jesus in James 4:11-12.

- a. Fill in the blanks: He says, "*Brothers and sisters, **do not slander** one another*" (verse 11a).
- b. What are some reasons James gives for this command? (Note: The law here can be interpreted as the law of love.)

James gives this command because:

- **To slander someone breaks the law of love.**
- **Slander is speaking evil against someone—it is motivated by envy and comes from the devil.**
- **The slanderer sets themselves against and above the Law of God.**
- **The slanderer sets themselves against God, the One and Only Judge and Lawgiver.**

14. Matthew 7:6 shows us that we are to be discerning.

- a. What does Titus 3:10-11 tell us to do about a divisive person?

Warn the divisive person up to two times, then have nothing to do with them.

- b. What does Matthew 10:11-16 tell us to do with those who will not value the gifts and words of the Kingdom?

If a person or group will not value the gifts and words of the Kingdom of God, we are to leave them—at the loss of our presence and, more importantly, at the loss of the presence of Jesus whom we represent. To “shake the dust off your feet” was a symbolic way of showing that the home or town involved was pagan, polluted and under God’s judgment.

15. Read Acts 13:13-48. How does this account illustrate the principle in Matthew 7:6 (pay close attention to Acts 13:46-48)?

Paul regularly announced the Gospel first to the Jews in any place he endeavored to minister (see Acts 13:5; 14:1; 17:1,10,17; 18:4,15; 19:8). If the Jews rejected the Gospel, Paul removed himself and went to the Gentiles in that place.

16. What did you learn in this lesson that will encourage you as you seek to “stay on track” in your spiritual life?

Here again students will answer in various ways. Be alert to ways you can encourage, help, and pray for your student.

17. Keep reading and meditating on the Sermon. Focus mostly on Matthew 7:7-29, which you will study in your next lesson.

Encourage your student to be reading through the Sermon on the Mount in one sitting.

LESSON 5: Committing to the Kingdom

1. Read Luke 11:9-13, a parallel passage to this section of the Sermon. According to verse 13, what special good gift is God willing to bestow on His children?

God will bestow the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.

2. Jeremiah 29:10-13 and Deuteronomy 4:28-31 are also promises that God will listen to the prayers of His repentant children. Fill in the blanks from Jeremiah 29:11-13.

*"For I know the **plans** I have for **you**," declares the **LORD**, "plans to **prosper** you and not to **harm** you, plans to give you **hope** and a **future**."*

3. Matthew 7:7-11 should not be interpreted to mean that God will give us anything and everything we want. These verses assume that we have understood the rest of the Sermon—we are no longer self-centered but God-centered in our Christian living and prayer life. We now pray for what God wants because what He wants, we want. Read James 4:1-3.

- a. Describe the kind of people James is speaking about here.

James is speaking about people who profess to be Christians yet they are filled with envy that demonstrates itself in fighting and quarrelling. Furthermore these people are selfish pleasure seekers.

- b. Describe the kind of prayer life they have.

James describes two aspects of their prayer life:

- **They rarely ask God for things in prayer.**
- **When they do ask, it is with wrong (selfish) motives.**

4. Another summary of the Law and the Prophets is given in Matthew 22:36-40. Try to summarize these verses in one word.

Love.

5. Read Romans 13:3-10.

- a. What continuing debt do we have as Christians?

We are to love one another.

- b. What one rule sums up the entire law of God?

Love your neighbor as yourself.

- c. Fill in the blanks below.

*"Therefore **love** is the fulfillment of the **law**." (verse 10)*

6. **Check required.**

- 7. Now write out your own summary of the Law and the Prophets in the space below.

Students' answers will vary here. We are looking for their own expression of love both for God and for others.

- 8. Read Deuteronomy 30:15-20. Here Israel is engaged in renewing their commitment to God. Answer the following questions.
 - a. What are the "two ways" set forth in verse 15?

There is the way of life and prosperity, or of death and destruction.

- b. For those who choose God's way, what command are they to follow? (verse 16)

. . . to love the Lord your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commands, decrees and laws . . .

- c. What will be the reward of those who faithfully follow in God's way?

. . . then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you . . .

- d. What punishment does disobedience to God's way bring?

The disobedient will live a life under the curse of God that will lead to destruction.

- 9. The Greek word that is translated *narrow* in Matthew 7:14 is related to the Greek word for tribulation and hardship used in Acts 14:22. With what words did Paul and Barnabas encourage and strengthen the new disciples of Jesus Christ in Acts 14:21-22?

We must go through many hardships to enter the Kingdom of God.

10. It is particularly fashionable today to believe that “all religions are ultimately the same” and that they all lead to some kind of eternal life of bliss. This passage speaks directly against such a teaching. Jesus is clear that He alone is the way to salvation and eternal life. Jesus also teaches this in John 10:7-10 and John 14:6. Write out John 14:6 in the space below.

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

11. The full office of prophet as we have it in the Old Testament no longer exists. Read Matthew 5:17-18, Hebrews 1:1-3, and Ephesians 2:19-21. Who was the last prophet? What makes Him greater than all the other prophets?

Jesus is the Last Prophet in the fullest sense of the word. He is also the Greatest Prophet because:

- **He came to fulfill, carry out and complete all that the Law and Prophets spoke about.**
- **The office of apostle and prophet is built upon Him. It is He who joins the entire Church together.**
- **Jesus’ revelation is superior to all of the other prophets because He is an exact, authentic representation of God—He is God!**

12. While Jesus has fulfilled the office of prophet, God still speaks to us through messengers today. The early messengers after Jesus’ ascension were the apostles. From them we have gained a rich history in the Church of elders and teachers who both teach and apply the Word of God to our lives. The New Testament makes very clear that these elders and teachers must be tested. For example, read what Paul has to say in Acts 20:17-38. Then answer the following questions.

- a. Who is Paul speaking to? (verse 17)

Paul is speaking to the elders of the church in Ephesus.

- b. What else does Paul call these men? (verse 28)

Paul calls them overseers and shepherds of the Church of God.

- c. What does Paul call the people in the Ephesian church? (verse 28)

Paul refers to the Church as a flock of sheep.

- d. What does Paul warn will happen in the Ephesian church? (verses 29-30)

Paul warns that savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. These “wolves” are false teachers who will distort the truth and draw many away.

13. The apostle John gives us another test to apply to teachers in the Church. Read 1 John 4:1-3. In your own words, describe the test he gives.

John tells us that one way to test a teacher is to see if they believe that Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine. Your students may find different and interesting language for this doctrine. Give gentle help and extra instruction if necessary.

14. Read the short book of Jude. ☐ **Check here when you're done.** This book is written as a defense against false teachers. Verses 20-23 give us some practical help on how to make progress in our Christian life (contend for the faith, verse 3). What do these verses teach you?

Check required.

We make progress in the Christian faith by . . .

- **Building ourselves up in the faith—knowing and holding on to the pure message of the Gospel with all its implications for our lives.**
- **Praying in the Holy Spirit—praying according to the prompting and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and through His power.**
- **Keeping ourselves in God's love—obeying God's commands out of love for Him (see John 15:10).**
- **Waiting for and focusing on the mercy that will be shown us on the Last Day.**
- **Dealing mercifully, straightforwardly, and patiently with those who have been succumbing to false teaching.**

15. If we listen to this Sermon with its warnings, we will never hear Jesus say to us:

*“Away from me, you evildoer” but rather, “**Well done, good and faithful** servant! . . . Come and share your master's happiness” (Matthew 25:21).*

16. Read 1 John 3:4. Here we are given a definition of sin. Fill in the blank below.

Sin is **lawlessness**.

17. Read Psalm 119:1-24. In the space below, describe how the author of this psalm feels about the Law of God.

The Psalmist is passionate about the Law of God. He knows that fully obeying God's Law is the only way of blessing and life. To the Law he entrusts his entire life and gives all his energy. He is consumed with the Law of God; it is his delight and counsel.

18. This section of the Sermon makes it very clear that we must have an relationship with Jesus in order to enter the Kingdom of God. Read 1 John 2:3-6 and answer the following questions.

- a. On what basis can we be sure that we know God? (verse 3)

We can be sure that we know God if we obey His commands.

- b. If we claim to know God but do not obey His commands, what are we? (verse 4)

People like this are liars; the truth is not in them.

- c. How do we know that we are in Christ (that is, that we intimately know Him)? (verse 6)

We can be sure that we know Christ if we are daily living a life characterized by obedience to Him.

19. Based on the study above, mark each statement below as either true (T) or false (F).

- a. **F** All people will be saved.
- b. **F** As long as a person has asked Jesus into their heart, they can live any way they want to and still expect to be saved.
- c. **T** The real evidence that we are saved, or that we are citizens of the Kingdom of God, is that we, through faith in Jesus Christ, obey God and do His will out of gratitude to Christ.

20. Read Isaiah 28:14-18. Here Isaiah says that the people of Israel are deceived by thinking they have built their lives on strong foundations for the day of trouble, when in reality they live on faulty foundations that will lead to destruction (verses 14-15). Then God says in verse 16 that He will lay a new cornerstone for a sure foundation in Zion. Read 1 Corinthians 3:11 and 1 Peter 2:4-7 and write down whom this is referring to.

These passages are referring to Jesus Christ.

21. According to Matthew 7:24, how can we know if we are building on the correct foundation? Also see Matthew 7:21.

We can be sure we are building on the foundation of Jesus Christ when we are consistently hearing and practicing the words of Jesus, that is, doing the will of God.

22. James 1:22-25 and 2:14-22 also discuss this subject of hearing the Word of God and doing it.
- a. Like the foolish builder, who also hears the word of God but does not do it? (2:19)

The demons hear the Word of God, but they do not do it.

- b. In James 1:22 we are commanded to not only listen to God's Word, but to:

"Do what it says."

- c. What will be the result in a person's life if they listen to God's Word and do it? (James 1:25)

The person that listens to and does the Word of God will be blessed in what they do.

23. Describe one way that the study of the Sermon on the Mount has changed not only the way you think, but also the way you act.

Students will vary in what they express here. Be encouraging to them. Also encourage your student for finishing this course!

24. While waiting for the return of this lesson, please read through the Sermon on the Mount one last time. Take some time to reflect on all God has taught you through this portion of Scripture.

No mentor comment necessary.



CROSSROADS
PRISON MINISTRIES

cpministries.org