

The Amazing Teaching of Jesus

TEXT: Matt. 7:28-29

THESIS: The teachings of Jesus are so powerful and yet simple. But it calls for a righteous life.

INTRODUCTION:

1. This morning we come to the end of our journey through the Sermon on the Mount.
 - A. It has been a journey of highs and lows, of comfort and of challenge.
 - B. I hope that this section of Scripture has been a friend to you.
 - C. Not one of those friends that always tells you what you want to hear, but a friend that cares enough to tell you the truth and encourage you to live according to it.
 1. A friend that walks along with you and points out the proper path.
 2. A friend that will not abandon you.
 3. The things we have learned and been challenged with will stay with us the rest of our lives - if we are careful to heed its message.
2. This has been one of the most personally challenging studies of Scripture that I have done.
 - A. It has forced me to look squarely into the mirror and see what is in the depth of my own soul, and the reflection has not always been pretty.
 - B. How easily self righteousness can rise within the human heart.
 - C. How quickly sinful pride can take over and twist that which is good and pure into a window dressing that has the form of godliness, but not its power.
3. The most challenging part of this journey through the Sermon on the Mount has been the conclusion of Jesus' message where he warned us to beware of false prophets dressed in sheep's clothes that would lead us astray.
 - A. He warned of false shepherds that would lead us through the wide gate leading to destruction while telling us it was the narrow path to life.
 - B. We were warned of the deceitfulness of self righteousness that trusts in itself.
 - C. We were told of the horror these self deluded people who thought they were serving God will experience when they hear Jesus say, *"I never knew you; Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness."*
4. Then there was that final section, that we looked at months ago, that challenges us to make sure we are building on something solid having a true, living faith in Jesus Christ and not faith in faith or a faith that is only a pretense.
5. Now, in Matt. 7:28-29, these two verses record the reaction of those that heard the Sermon on the Mount that day, and it gives the reason for that reaction.
 - A. *"The result was that when Jesus had finished these words, the multitudes were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."*

DISCUSSION:

I. REFLECTING

- A. Remember back in Matt. 5 when this sermon began, Jesus had been busy going about in all the region of Galilee teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people (Matt. 4:23).

1. Great multitudes had come out to see Him, to be healed from their disease and follow Him.
 2. They came not only from the immediate area of Galilee, but also from other areas of that region, such as Decapolis, Syria, Jerusalem and Judea and from the other side of the Jordan river (Matt. 4:25).
 3. As Jesus sees the multitudes gathered on the side of that mountain overlooking the Sea of Galilee, He sat down with His disciples and began to teach them and the multitudes that were also present.
 4. And as Jesus teaches out of his compassion for them, what we find Jesus teaching about is a separation between the people that would truly believe and follow and those that were just curious, which he gives a warning to.
- B. Notice the response of the people in Matt. 7:28, they were "amazed," "astonished."
1. The teaching of Christ throughout this sermon had such an impact upon those that were listening they were literally: shocked and dazed.
 2. How could a man like Jesus be teaching like this?
 - a. Jesus was not schooled.
 - b. Jesus was a carpenter's son.
 - c. Jesus' friends are local fishermen.
 3. How could such an untrained man who keeps that kind of company be saying such things?
- C. But you see, that is exactly why the multitudes were so amazed.
1. Vs. 29 says they were astonished because Jesus *"was teaching them as one having authority, not as the scribes."*
 2. Jesus did not teach based on the authority of training received from one of the schools of religion or on the authority of what someone else said.
 3. He taught on the basis of His own authority

II. CHAPTER FIVE AND SIX

- A. Throughout Matt. 5, Jesus contrasts the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees by saying, *"You have heard that the ancients were told,"* (vs. 21) and *"you have heard that it was said"* (vs. 38) because they only rehashed what those who had gone before them had said.
1. When they would teach, they would quote this ancient scribe and that ancient scribe.
 2. Their authority was not based in the Scriptures any longer, but in what teachers in the past had said about those scriptures.
 3. The basis of authority was really the traditions of men.
 4. Maybe some of you have heard people preaching, who have done this.
 - a. It was popular and still is in many churches for this kind of preaching.
 - b. When you can quote past preachers and say, "this man said this," or "that preacher said that" and it gives the appearance of being intellectual and therefore having authority on the topic.
 - c. But in truth, it does not matter what any of these men said, just like it does not matter what Augustine, Luther or Calvin said.

1. What matters is what God says!

- B. As for Jesus, when he quoted someone, it was to correct their improper theology.
1. And, other than that, He only quoted the Scriptures.
 2. That is why the multitudes were so amazed.
 - a. Jesus spoke on His own authority and throughout the whole sermon we see this.
- C. Each of the Beatitudes are factual statements that Jesus proclaims on His own authority.
1. For example, in the last beatitude, righteousness is equated with living for Christ.
 - a. Matt. 5:10 says, *"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
 - b. Matt. 5:11, explains the persecution, *"Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecuted you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me."*
 1. If Jesus was not God in human flesh, such a statement would be blasphemous.
 - c. In Matt. 5:17 Jesus' claim is that He would fulfill the Law and the Prophets.
 1. Again, if Jesus was not God in human flesh, such a statement would be blasphemous for no man could fulfill the law.
 - d. In Matt. 5:20 Jesus begins a series of statements contrasting self righteousness as seen in the scribes and Pharisees with true righteousness.
 2. And, the general point of the sermon is found in vs. 20, *"For I say to you, that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."*
 3. In other words, true righteousness is more than what you see in the scribes and Pharisees and if want to enter the kingdom of heaven, you had better have true righteousness.
- D. Throughout the rest of Matt. 5 Jesus contrasts the teaching of the scribes with the real meaning of the Law, and each time Jesus makes His statement solely on His own authority not upon what any teacher before Him had said.
1. Matt. 5:21-22, *"You have heard it that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court"*
 2. Matt. 5:27-28, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery;' but I say to you that everyone who looks upon a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart."*
 3. Matt. 5:31-32, *"And it was said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of dismissal'; but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the cause of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*
 4. Matt. 5:33, 34, 37- *"Again, you have heard it said, 'you shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I say to you, make no oath at all "But let your statements by 'yes, yes' or 'No, no' and anything" beyond these is of evil."*
 5. Matt. 5:38-39, *"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil"*
 6. Matt. 5:43-44, *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and*

- hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you."*
- E. These are not idle words or the bantering back and forth of people discussing ethereal points of theology.
 - 1. This is the positive declaration of how God wants us to live.
 - 2. Every declaration Jesus makes is based in His own authority as God incarnate.
 - a. These proclamations cannot be dismissed lightly as a matter of someone's opinion.
 - b. They are statements of fact made by the one that created everything and who will sit in judgment of everyone.
 - F. These same thoughts continue in Matt. 6 where Jesus contrasts the religious practices of the self-righteous as compared to true righteousness.
 - 1. In all three examples - giving alms, praying and fasting - Jesus simply commands what is to be done and not done.
 - 2. We are not to follow the example of the religious leaders who drew attention to themselves in order to receive the praise of men, instead we are to quietly do things for the praise of God.
 - G. Also, the three things at the end of Matt. 6 and beginning of Matt. 7 are not suggestions, but commands.
 - 1. Do not lay up treasure on earth, but lay it up in heaven by seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.
 - 2. Do not judge like the self righteous Pharisees or you will be judged like them.
 - a. Instead, examine yourself and then go help your brother.
 - 3. Do not give the holy and precious things of God to those who revile them.
 - H. And in the last section of the sermon Jesus places Himself as the judge.
 - 1. Notice in Matt. 7:21 that it is to Jesus that these people come saying, "lord, lord."
 - 2. Their defense in verse 22 is given to Jesus based upon doing things in His name, and it is Jesus that condemns them in verse 23 saying, "*I never knew you; Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.*"

III. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

- A. The Sermon on the Mount is not something for our leisure.
 - 1. It is not for intellectual stimulation or discussion in ethical classes, which is often done in the secular world and by liberal theologians.
 - 2. This is not some great work on ethics by a great philosopher or a series of suggestions and thoughts by mere man.
 - 3. This is an authoritative message.
 - 4. These are the declarations and commands of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is God in human flesh as Matthew has already declared in Matt. 1:23; 3:17.
 - 5. You cannot read it and then pick and choose what you agree with and what you disagree with at your own pleasure.
 - a. You have to take it as a whole and conform yourself to it, for God will hold you accountable for all of it.
 - b. If you reject it, or any part of it, then you are on the wide road leading to

destruction.

- B. This is also not something for us to pick apart and use at our pleasure to back up our pet theologies, even though that is done by many Christians.
 - 1. This is Jesus' manifesto of His kingdom program.
 - 2. It is a message that is to be taken as a whole revolving around one central theme for one central purpose.
 - a. And, you cannot take Matt. 5:38-42 and use that as support for pacifism.
 - 1. You have to put the verse back into their context at which point you find that Jesus is not dealing with pacifism.
 - b. You cannot quote Matt. 7:1 as a defense against people examining your life for when you put it back in context you discover that if those people have examined themselves and come speaking the truth in love to you, they are fulfilling Jesus' commands in that passage.
 - c. And you cannot repeat the "Lord's prayer in Matt. 6:9-13 until you have put it in context and learned that it is a pattern for prayer, not a prayer to be thoughtlessly repeated.
- C. The theme and purpose of the sermon is that we might understand true righteousness and live in true righteousness so that we might enter the kingdom of heaven.
- D. Without the righteousness that Jesus describes in this sermon, the righteousness which surpasses that of the religious righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter heaven (Matt. 5:20).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. But you say that you have listened carefully to all of Jesus' commands throughout the sermon and **you have not been able to keep them.**
 - A. You have examined your life and see that you have been angry with others and know that you are guilty before the court (Matt. 5:22).
 - B. You have lusted in your heart after someone other than your spouse so that you are guilty of adultery (Matt. 5:28) and have broken vows you have made.
 - C. You have failed to fulfill your promises and are therefore under God's judgment (Matt. 5:34).
 - D. You have contemplated and sought after revenge against those that have personally hurt you (Matt. 5:39).
 - E. The command to love your enemy seems an impossibility when you do not even love your neighbor properly (Matt. 5:44).
 - F. The command in Matt. 5:48 to "be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" brings you to see yourself as a complete failure.
 - G. You do not even need to go into chapter 6 and 7 to understand your personal sinfulness.
- 2. But what are you to do since you cannot keep all these commandments perfectly?
 - A. Will you be shut out?
 - B. Did not Jesus say in Matt. 7:26 that everyone that hears His words and does not do them will be like the foolish man whose house was destroyed?
 - 1. If that describes you, then you are in a good position to enter the straight gate and begin the journey along the narrow path leading to life.

2. If that does not describe you and you think you can keep all these commandments of Jesus perfectly, then had better reevaluate your position.
 - a. Jesus' exposition of the law and the commandments He gives should remove all doubt from anyone's mind that they can somehow earn their way to heaven because these things are impossible for a human to do alone.
3. Jesus said that your righteous must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:20).
 - A. Jesus also said that it is the person who hears His words and acts upon them that is the wise man whose house is built upon a rock and it does not fall, yet we all see that we cannot keep all the commands that Jesus has given.
 - B. So, are we in a dilemma without hope? No.
4. Go back to the beginning, the section we call the beatitudes, because in them Jesus tells us what is needed for salvation.
 - A. Notice again the first one, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*"
 - B. If you want to enter the kingdom of heaven, if you want salvation from the just wrath of God against sinners, it comes through God convicting you of sin and bringing you to the place where you see that you are spiritually impoverished.
 1. You are bankrupt with nothing to give and nothing to offer.
 2. There is not even a basis for bargaining - i.e. Lord save me and I will do this for you.
 - a. You are reduced to the state of the Publican in Lk. 18 who cries out, "God, be merciful to me, the sinner."
 - b. That is the starting point of salvation because it is only when we are reduced to that level that we are willing to place our trust wholly and solely in Jesus Christ alone.
5. If that is where you are at - in full knowledge of your sinfulness and need for God that is the first step.
 - A. But notice that it does not stop at being poor in spirit, for true poverty of spirit produces mourning over sin, and God brings comfort in salvation through repenting, confession and baptism into Christ (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-4).
 - B. Next, learning to lean on Jesus brings meekness, which is the willingness to do whatever the Lord wants you to do because you realize that true life is only found in Him.
 - C. All this in turn produces a hunger and thirst to live in righteousness, to live according to the commands Jesus has given even though we may stumble and fall at times.
 - D. From there, they are merciful to others as a response to the mercy they have received from God; having purity of heart and being peacemakers desiring and working to bring others into peace with God.
 1. Of course such a righteous life is salt and light, which the world hates and persecutes.
6. Still, Jesus said that those that heard His words and acted upon them were like a wise man who built his house on a rock.
 - A. It is a great joy to develop the beatitudes within us, to be used by God as salt and light, to have joy even in persecution and to live life on a different plane than the world.
 - B. It is a great joy for Christians to commune with the Father in prayer, not be anxious

about the things of this world, because God meets our needs and gave us a house that will stand in the storms of life.

7. The teaching of Jesus amazed those that heard because He spoke with authority.
 - A. And, you cannot ignore what Jesus says without paying a terrible price, but you will not hear and heed what Jesus says unless your heart is in the right place.
 - B. I guess it all comes down to where your heart is because if you have never given your heart to Jesus and surrendered to him by doing what he has asked, you never have had a part with him.