

# Online Grace Bible School

With  
Ken Legg, Australia

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**Online Grace Bible School  
Phase 4  
Living a Life of Significance  
(The Sermon on the Mount)**

**1) You Can't But He Can!**

This is the most concentrated passage of Jesus' teaching. How are we to understand it?

- ✓ It is nothing to do with salvation
- ✓ It is not an exposition of the Law.
- ✓ It is for Christians, disciples 5:1-2. There's no teaching here which is not also found in the NT epistles.
- ✓ It's a picture of the kind of life to be lived in the Kingdom. Jesus died so we could live like this. Titus 2:14

2 of the greatest needs of man are **security** and **significance**.

- ✓ Security is found in our salvation, or position in Christ. We are loved and eternally secure.
- ✓ Significance is found in having a meaningful relationship to time and eternity. The life I have access to and am capable of enjoying is the highest quality of life imaginable. AND what I do will not evaporate in time but will endure and still bear fruit in the age to come. It will have eternal significance. Rev.14:13.
- ✓ This is what the Sermon on the Mount is about; a life of significance. Believers can live a divine life!
- ✓ We were destined to reign. That was stolen at the Fall but potentially restored at salvation.
- ✓ If you don't see that you have been destined to reign your identity is sadly lacking.
- ✓ This sermon is about the rewards for living for God's goal. 5:3,5,7,10,20; 6:1,6,19-20,33; 7:2,21-23,24-27.
- ✓ The decisions we make and the life we live are for the greatest cause. Mk. 14:9; Col.3:23-24; 1 Cor.15:58.
- ✓ But you and I cannot live this life! Only One Person ever has.
- ✓ A life of significance happens when we are connected to the life source. We must be born again.
- ✓ Otherwise we will seek to manufacture it by trying to impress others, building a monument to ourselves, impressing others with superiority, gaining a following, etc.
- ✓ Thus Jesus begins with the beatitudes. Being precedes doing. God's way of changing what we do is to change who we are. Failure to understand this leads to legalism.

**5:1-4.** Beatitudes 1&2 = 'You can't, but He can'. 'Blessed' – happy, to be congratulated or envied.

**1) Blessed are the poor in spirit.**

- ✓ The first step in the Christian life is to acknowledge 'I don't have it'. In my flesh dwells no good thing.
- ✓ But He has everything – righteousness, sanctification, power, grace, etc. It is a manifestation of His life.
- ✓ It is the exact opposite of being proud in spirit. It is a consciousness of my emptiness outside of God.
- ✓ In the place of independence is Christ-dependence. We live by grace. God gives grace to the humble.
- ✓ That's why Jesus was the most humble person who ever lived on earth. He never did anything of and from Himself. He did only what the Father enabled Him to do (Jn.5:19&30).
- ✓ He who said, 'The Son can do nothing of Himself', said, 'Without me you can do nothing.'
- ✓ The first lesson Jesus taught is: do not trust in yourself. This shapes the way we live our lives.
- ✓ Jesus illustrated this when He said that He is the true vine, i.e. all other vines exist to illustrate Him. A vine needs branches in order to manifest its life in fruit. But Jesus doesn't want us to be anything other than a branch, i.e. to receive His life. He doesn't want us to go and start our own vineyard.
- ✓ Our purpose in life is to bear fruit (v.2). Fruit is not for us but for others, especially for God.
- ✓ The Father is the vinedresser. His role is to ensure we abide. Law produces works; life produces fruit.

**2) Blessed are those who mourn.**

- ✓ Jesus is not commanding us to mourn but assuming we do.
- ✓ Confession of sin does not result in cleansing, we are already clean.
- ✓ It is a declaration that I failed because I tried to do it the flesh; now I will do it in the Spirit. I exchange what I am for all He is.

**2) It's Not About Us, Right?**

3) Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. It's easy to admit to ourselves and to God that it's not about us. But when others point out our lack we defend ourselves. Blessed are the meek.

- ✓ Meekness is not weakness but strength under control.
- ✓ When we are criticized, provoked, insulted, etc. the meek don't need to justify ourselves or hit back.
- ✓ We have the ability to retaliate but we don't. We are not interested in defending ourselves.
- ✓ Authentic Christianity frees you to be real. We have no need to pretend or perform.
  
- ✓ The Hebrew word for meekness is *anav* = to be subdued by labor, tamed by toil, ploughed under, etc.
- ✓ The Greek word, *praus*, is often used in non-biblical literature for taming wild animals. It speaks of those whose nature is telling them one thing, but they have learned to answer the reins.
- ✓ Meekness is not a natural quality. It is the fruit of the Spirit; produced by God's grace, Matt.11:28-29.
- ✓ Jesus was the personification of meekness. His whole life was humility and meekness.
- ✓ Just as we received our pride from another so too we receive our meekness from another.
- ✓ It is the fruit of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a dove. A dove is the embodiment of tenderness and love.
- ✓ When Jesus reigns over the earth the lion will lie down with the lamb. When Jesus reigns in the heart the lion becomes the lamb. Jesus never offers us a life free of offenses, but a shared yoke and a meek spirit.

4) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Everyone wants to be happy, but most go seek it the wrong way. Happiness is not something we seek directly. It is a by-product of seeking righteousness. You will never be happy if you put the pursuit of happiness in the place of righteousness, (Matt.6:33).

- ✓ Jesus did not say 'Blessed are the righteous', but those who hunger and thirst for it. Congratulations!
- ✓ Appetite is not self-produced. You can't will yourself to be hungry. The first 3 beatitudes lead into the 4<sup>th</sup>.
- ✓ The hungry cry out to God. Hunger and thirst are instincts which prove we are not extinct.
  
- ✓ The gospel reveals the righteousness of God, (Rom.1:16-17).
- ✓ In Romans we learn that God's way of righteousness is not change, but exchange, 2 Cor.5:21. God takes your life, puts it to death and replaces it with Christ's life. This is imputed righteousness.
- ✓ To the degree I practice self-righteousness I will hate God's righteousness. The Pharisees rose to 100% in self-righteousness, and fell 100% in God's righteousness. They crucified Christ.
- ✓ Matt.5:20. It exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Theirs was external, self-produced and brought glory to themselves. True righteousness is by grace through faith in Christ and boasts in Him
- ✓ Practical righteousness flows out of imputed righteousness. Being precedes doing. We work out what He has worked in. The superstructure rises up from the substructure. Materials that were meant for the superstructure, include such things as prayer, ministry, serving, character, etc.
- ✓ How do you live righteously? By eating from the tree of life, 2 Cor.3:15-18. *'They shall be filled'*.

5) Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. The beatitudes are what Jesus is like. This is the life that has come to live in us. Jesus is merciful.

- ✓ Mercy is the currency of the kingdom. Mercy is holding back one's feeling to punish or repay. It is to show forgiveness to those who do not deserve it.
- ✓ Why? Because we have been shown mercy.
- ✓ This follows on from 4<sup>th</sup> beatitude and is the principle of Jn.7:37-39.
- ✓ Congratulations! You must be happy! You are in the kingdom! Freely we receive, freely we give.
- ✓ They shall obtain mercy. Not salvation. Remember, everything we do in this life has significance.
- ✓ As we show mercy to others so we will receive mercy from God at the judgment seat of Christ.
- ✓ The same standard which we use with others now will be measured back to us, (Jas 2:13).

**3) The Pure Gospel Produces Peace**

6) Blessed are the pure in heart. Matt.5:8. Our whole life flows from our heart. Matt.12:34-35. Whatever is there will be dispersed throughout our lives. If my heart controls my life what controls my heart?

- ✓ At the new birth we receive a new heart, (Ezek.36:26).
- ✓ By nature no one has love for God. Grace changes that, (Rom.5:5).
- ✓ The Greek word for 'pure' is *katharos*, from which we get the word catheter. A catheter is used for purging foul matter that is stagnant in the bowels or bladder.
- ✓ But what is it that our hearts need to be purified from? Not sin. It is Christ who purifies us from sin. Tit.2:14. We received that by faith, Acts 15:9.
- ✓ '*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you doubleminded*' (Jas.4:8). Purity is freedom from double-mindedness, (Psa.86:11).

7) Blessed are the peacemakers. '*The way of peace they have not known*' (Rom.3:17). Men do not know the way of peace. The NT is a book of peace. It shows us the way of peace, Eph.2:14-17.

- ✓ He Is Our Peace (2:14). Peace is a Person. Not a *something*, but a *Someone*. Jesus is the Prince of Peace.
- ✓ He Made Peace (2:15). Paul speaks of peace in two of the widest chasms ever in relationships – between men and God and between Jew and Gentile. To understand the enmity in both cases go to the temple.
- ✓ The barrier between God and man was emphasized by the veil. Heb.9:7-8. When Jesus died the veil was rent from top to bottom. The barrier has become a way of entrance, (Isa.53:5; Rom.5:1; Isa.32:17).
- ✓ The temple was full of barriers. The courts of Gentiles, women, the Israelites, the priests, the high priest. 'The middle wall of separation' divided the Jews and the Gentiles.
- ✓ The enmity between them existed in '*the law of commandments contained in ordinances*'. It was this which separated the Jews from the rest of the world. The 'keepers of the law' vs 'the non-keepers'.
- ✓ Jesus destroyed the barrier between Jew and Gentiles.
- ✓ First, He made them see that all were guilty of the true standard set by the law.
- ✓ Then He died, removing this barrier, having abolished it in His flesh. When He died it was torn down.
- ✓ Next, He established a new and living way to God for both Jews and Gentiles. The only ground we have to stand on before God and with one another is grace. Therefore we are all on the same level.
- ✓ Also He created a new body in which all are accepted and equal.
- ✓ Peace is destroyed when the focus is on issues; when we put something in the place of Someone: Doctrines, church rules, Sabbath, tongues, baptism, (Rom.14:17).
- ✓ In Christ there is no division. The two groups are one new body (Jn.10:16; 1 Cor.10:17; 12:13; Eph.4:4-6).
- ✓ Anyone who proclaims that their group is the only way is an enemy of the cross, (Rom.16:17; 14:19).
- ✓ When Jesus died both barriers were removed. In bringing all to God He also brings all to one another.
- ✓ He Preached Peace. To be a peacemaker you must understand how peace is made. It is made by proclaiming who we are by grace.
- ✓ This is the wisdom that descends from above. It's first pure. It will not tolerate mixture.
- ✓ When you understand that you are what you are by grace alone then you can make peace with others because all barriers have been removed, (2 Cor.5:16).
- ✓ Jas.3:13-18. 3 times in 6 verses James mentions wisdom.
- ✓ Knowledge is having information; wisdom is knowing how to apply it.
- ✓ Wisdom is valued because no one wants to be called stupid.
- ✓ James 3:1. True teachers preach peace. We can be enlightened by God, but used by the devil!
- ✓ Bitter envy attacks those who don't agree with us; selfish ambition wants to appear better than others.
- ✓ The most notable thing about the wisdom from below is that it produces disorder and division.
- ✓ True wisdom is from above – the life of Jesus. Peacemakers are from above – they are sons of God.

**4) The Effects of Authentic Christianity Upon the World**

Authentic Christianity produces people of influence. Live like this and you'll have a 3-fold effect on the world.

1) You will be persecuted by the world, 5:10-12. The first 7 beatitudes concern being and doing. The 8th is doing nothing. It is done to you. (2 Tim.3:12; Jn.15:20).

- ✓ This began at the commencement of the Church Age. Peter and John were imprisoned. Stephen and James were martyred. Paul was stoned, beaten, imprisoned and finally executed. Peter was executed.
- ✓ More Christians have been martyred in the last century than throughout the entire history of the Church.
- ✓ We are to pray for those who are in chains for the gospel, (Heb.13:2).
- ✓ The purpose of persecution is to destroy Christianity. But it has failed to do so. 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church'. The Church grows under persecution.

What is persecution?

- ✓ It is not self-invited trouble (persecution complex or martyrdom spirit).
- ✓ It is not suffering which results from our wrongs, 1 Pet.4:15.
- ✓ It is not suffering for a good cause but for *His* cause, for the gospel, see 5:11.
- ✓ Therefore, choose your battles. Fight the good fight! Preach the gospel.

Have you ever been persecuted? Matt.5:11. It is to be:

- ✓ Reviled = to jeer, to mock, to scoff at, to heap insults upon. E.g. Jesus on the cross.
- ✓ Persecuted = to be physically or circumstantially vexed or attacked.
- ✓ Slandered = all kinds of evil against you falsely.

This persecution might come from 2 sources:

- ✓ The world. *'In the world you shall have persecution: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world'*.
- ✓ The religious world. See 5:12. When religion is confronted by the true gospel it is offended.

1 Pet.4:12-19.

- ✓ Authentic Christianity will always evoke a response from the world (4:12).
- ✓ It is not an abnormal thing. *This* life is an offense. 2 Tim.3:12.
- ✓ Those who share the sufferings of Christ also share His Glory (4:13).
- ✓ There is a special manifestation of grace every time we are persecuted (4:14).
- ✓ There is no shame in persecution, but glory for God (4:16).
- ✓ Persecution fills us with compassion for the lost (4:17-18)
- ✓ The *souls* of the persecuted are in the hands of God (4:19).

2) You will slow down the process of moral decay and delay God's judgment of the world (5:13).

- ✓ Salt rubbed into meat stops it from going bad. The world is perishing, 1 Cor.1:18; 2 Cor.2:15; 4:3; Lk.13:3.
- ✓ Receiving eternal life stops the process of perishing, Jn.3:16; 10:28.
- ✓ In the meantime the Church provides a buffer against the onslaught of degeneracy, etc.
- ✓ It also puts off judgment. As long as the Church is here God can deal in mercy with the world.
- ✓ *'But if the salt loses its savour how shall it be seasoned?'* Salt is totally different from the medium into which it is placed. This is where its power and influence lies.
- ✓ Salt loses its flavour when it comes into contact with the ground. The ground draws the power from it.

3) You will point people to Christ (5:14-16).

- ✓ *'You are the light of the world'*. Compelling people to come to Christ like *'a city that is set on a hill...'*
- ✓ When Jesus was on earth He said, 'I am the light of the world.' When He left the earth, He said, 'You are the light of the world.'
- ✓ The Church shines, like the moon, with borrowed light.

**5) A Life That Excels**

Matt.5:17. What was Jesus' relationship to the Law? His association with sinners could give the wrong idea. People ask similar questions about those who teach grace. What is our attitude to behavior under grace?

- ✓ Jesus was eager to prove 2 things: 1) He didn't disparage the law or encourage lawlessness; 2) He will not leave His people under the law but lift them to a much higher and more effective way of living.
- ✓ If we are under law we must keep the whole law. We must read all of 5:17-20 or we will misinterpret.
- ✓ 'Fulfill'. Jesus does not talk of the law in terms of what we must do for Him but what He will do for us.
- ✓ 'I have come to fulfill'. See 3:15. The One who did not come to destroy is the One who fulfills. How?
- ✓ Throughout Matthew we read that Jesus fulfilled what was written in the prophets – 1:22; 2:15,17,23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9, 35. In the same way He also fulfilled the Law.
- ✓ The Law and the Prophets spoke of and waited for Someone to fulfill all they wrote about.
- ✓ Jesus fulfilled every minute detail of the law. He obeyed all its commands and fulfilled all its types and shadows. And He fulfilled all the prophecies. It's all about Him. He came to fulfill it. Lk.24:26, 44-47.
- ✓ He exhausted its judgments. It all fell upon Him until 'It is finished!' He is the end of the law, Rom.10:4.
- ✓ Matt.5:18. The law is long-lasting; not *everlasting*. Until its fulfillment. It has a task to perform and will continue until it is completed. It cannot be fulfilled if it is always continuing.
- ✓ Every part of the law has a destiny to reach. But it was an interim measure only. Paul: Gal.3:19, 25.
- ✓ So the aim of Jesus was not to destroy the law nor maintain it; but fulfill it.
- ✓ Matt.5:19. Here the focus is on the disciple and the teacher.
- ✓ The law is not the standard Jesus has for His disciples. The standard of the kingdom transcends the law.
- ✓ Matt.5:20. The scribes professed a zeal for the law. They invented hundreds of commandments to protect it and ensure it was fulfilled. They were zealous for these traditions more than for the law itself.
- ✓ People thought this was the example to aspire to. But Jesus condemned their self-righteousness and said that our righteousness must exceed theirs or we would not enter the kingdom of heaven.
- ✓ This is not salvation, but kingdom rule.
- ✓ The righteousness of the Pharisees was external. See Matt.23:25-28. Outwardly impressive; inwardly corrupt. This is the emptiness of religion and legalism. It focused on reputation rather than reality.
- ✓ The Pharisees were never able to deal with the source of sin, the heart. Because they only had the law.
- ✓ The law is the Word written down (open to interpretation) Jesus is the Word made flesh for all to see. Jesus is the glory of God (Jn.1:14; Heb.1:3). If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus.
- ✓ The glory of God was His will for every human being. The law shows us we have come short of His glory.
- ✓ We cannot get the glory back by trying to keep the law. Christ in you is the hope of glory, Col.1:27.

Jesus gives 6 examples of how the standard of the kingdom transcends that of the law.

- 1) Murder is the effect; anger is the cause. The law never legislated against the heart; only the actions springing from the heart. Jesus superseded the law.
- 2) Adultery also has a cause. If adultery is the effect, lust is the cause. Jesus transcended the law.
- 3) Divorce. The Pharisees wanted divorce tidy. Jesus superseded the law by going back to the beginning.
- 4) Vows. Jesus transcended the law by saying that Christians should always tell the truth.
- 5) Jesus did not do away with the legal system but outclassed it by addressing the issue of personal revenge.
- 6) He superseded the 'qualified love' of the law with unqualified love, which is the perfection of the Father.

Jesus ends with 5:48. It is the divine life. He replaces the law with something far more radical. His life. Righteousness is ultimately an expression of who God is.

- ✓ Practical righteousness is the outworking of imputed righteousness. Jesus changes from the inside out.
- ✓ Our attitude to our behavior will be rewarded. We will either be regarded as small or great.
- ✓ Our orientation now is towards Jesus. We are His disciples, not Moses'.

**6) Grace and Reward****1) Is the teaching about rewards Scriptural?**

- ✓ Jesus and the apostles offered the gospel freely by grace to the unsaved.
- ✓ Once we are saved, all that God gives to us and wants to do in our lives has already been paid for.
- ✓ We cannot earn blessing or favor from God; all is by grace through faith, and even our faith is a gift.
- ✓ Yet, Jesus, Paul and the other NT writers encouraged their readers with the glorious prospect of the reward in the coming kingdom on account of their faithfulness and diligence.
- ✓ It is a prominent theme throughout the Sermon on the Mount, (5:11-12, 19, 46; 6:1,2,4,5,6,16-18, 19-20)
- ✓ The disciples understood very well that the nature of the reward and wanted to be as close to Him as possible in the coming kingdom (e.g. Mk.10:35-45).
- ✓ The apostles looked forward to the reward of their inheritance (1 Cor.9:25-27; Phil.3:12-14; 2 Tim.4:7-8).

The following words express the idea of something received in response to an effort put forth:

- ✓ *misthos* means wages, pay for service, hire, reward. Matt.5:12; 1 Cor.3:14; Rev.22:12.
- ✓ *antapodosis* means a reward; to give back in return, or pay back. Col.3:24.
- ✓ *brabeion* means a prize. 1 Cor.9:24; Phil.3:14. A prize which is given in competitive games.

**2) Is it new?**

- ✓ No. Jesus, the apostles, Augustine, Luther, Calvin, G H Lang, Watchman Nee, Zane Hodges, R T Kendall, Michael Eaton, and many others taught this from the Scriptures.
- ✓ The fact that this doctrine is hardly taught today does not invalidate it. Read the New Testament systematically and determine for yourself whether these things were an integral part of the teaching of Jesus and the apostles.

**3) Is it legalistic?**

Is the idea that God rewards faithfulness consistent with grace? Does it produce mercenary Christians? Does it take us back into legalism? No. It is by grace because:

- ✓ All that we have and do for Christ and His kingdom is only possible by grace. 1 Cor.4:7. The same grace which saves us empowers us to reign in this life.
- ✓ There's nothing fair about rewards. Fair = you get what you deserve. But God is not obligated. Luke 7:7-10. E.g. son uses his inheritance wisely and is given more. So reward is not according to merit but grace.

Matt.20:1-15. The parable of the labourers in the kingdom. Just trust in the goodness of God, not your merit.

- ✓ The first laborers were characterized by commercialism, complaining and envy. They were proud and only served to get what they thought they deserved. That is legalism. The Rich Young Ruler was like this.
- ✓ The other laborers had confidence that the master would do the right thing. Don't dictate how He should act. Peter and the others were like this. They did not know what He was going to do but they were captivated by His lordship, they trusted in His character and were surprised by His grace. But now Peter asks about it. And Jesus surprises him. Grace surprises us.
- ✓ We do not serve on a contractual basis. We serve out of love and in faith that the Lord will do what is right. When we do this we discover He is more than fair. He is super-fair.
- ✓ Biblical motives for works: Love: 1 Jn.4:19; Jn.14:15; 2 Cor.5:14. Forgiven: Lk.7:47. Pleasing God: 2 Cor.5:9; 2 Tim.2:4. Yet this will be rewarded.
- ✓
- ✓ Reward consists of greater opportunities in the life to come, 2 Tim.2:12; Rev.2:26.
- ✓ It is the natural thing to feel satisfied and fulfilled that the way we lived our lives is as God planned for us. 2 Tim.4:6-8.
- ✓ Our rewards are tokens of worship, Rev.4:8-11
- ✓ And also tokens of encouragement, Matt.5:10-12.

**7) Prayer in the Kingdom**

- ✓ Fallen man seeks glory from others. Jesus teaches us not to seek glory from another, but from God.
- ✓ Appreciation is good but it can lead to approval addiction. When this happens we do things just to receive praise - 'to be seen of men'. This nullifies the deeds. Do it unto the Lord and then forget about it.
- ✓ Prayer is such a good thing that individuals want to be known as people of prayer.
- ✓ Hypocrites pray as well (Matt.6:5a). See Matt.15:8; Mk.12:40.
- ✓ Jesus challenged hypocritical and Pharisaical approach to prayer. Mt.6:7. Simple prayer vs long prayers.
- ✓ Matt.6:8. God doesn't need our prayer. It is we who need to pray. Prayer does not *inform* God.
- ✓ Neither does it *persuade* God. Some think that prayer is the way to get what we want from God.

Jesus gave us an outline to prayer. When we cover these things we have covered the main things.

#1 God's Name. *'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name'* (Matthew 6:9).

- ✓ God is our Father. Until understand this our prayers will be powerless. Prayer is based upon relationship.
- ✓ We are sons not servants. We have intimacy with God.
- ✓ We experience provision and protection. See Matt.6:31-32; Psalm 103:13.
- ✓ The first thing we do as we come into His presence is to worship Him. His name is to be hallowed.

Use this part of your prayer to remind yourself that God is your Father and to worship Him

#2 God's Reign. *'Your kingdom come'* (Matthew 6:10).

God's name and kingdom are more important than our needs, Matt.6:33. Col. 1:13.

To pray for God's kingdom is to pray for the spread of the gospel.

In this part of your prayer pray for God's kingdom to spread through evangelism and discipleship

- ✓ Those who preach the gospel
- ✓ Your unsaved friends, neighbours, etc.
- ✓ The ministry of the local church
- ✓ Evangelism in the community
- ✓ Evangelism in our nation
- ✓ Evangelism in other nations

#3 God's Will. *'Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven'* (Matthew 6:10).

- ✓ What did Paul pray in Colossians 1:9?
- ✓ What will this result in, according to Colossians 1:10?
- ✓ What will God do in order to help us to do His will, according to Colossians 1:11?

Use this part of your prayer to pray that you may understand and do God's will

#4 Our Needs. *'Give us this day our daily bread'* (Matthew 6:11)

- ✓ James 1:17. God is the source of our provision.
- ✓ Does praying for our needs conflict with the command against anxiety? No, I am not afraid of tomorrow because I have prayed today. As God's children we cast all our cares upon Him. Joe.

Use this part of your prayer to bring your daily needs to God and thank Him for His provision each day

#5 Our Sins. *'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors'* (Matthew 6:12)

- ✓ God has already forgiven all our sins through the blood of Jesus, Eph.4:32.
- ✓ This is now speaking of horizontal sins. James 2:8,11-12; 5:15-16. Forgive us as, not because.

Use this part of prayer to seek God for grace for your weakness and to forgive those who have offended you.

#6 Our Enemy. *'Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one'* (Matthew 6:13)

- ✓ As Christians we have an enemy - the devil. The devil will try to defeat us by tempting us to sin. See 1 Corinthians.10:13.
- ✓ What do we need to do when we meet with temptation, according to James 4:7?

Use this part of your prayer to ask that God will keep you from succumbing to the wiles of Satan

**8) Winning over Worry**

Jesus said, 'Do not worry' 4 times in this passage. Matt.6:25,28,31&34.

- ✓ The Greek word is *merimnao* = to constantly give thought to; be full of care or distracted by it.
- ✓ The English word 'worry' is from an old German word *wurgen* = to strangle, choke.

How do we deal with worry?

Remember, we can't deal with emotions directly. They are a product of our thoughts. Change the way you think and you change the way you feel. We have a sound mind, i.e. the ability to control our thinking. 2 Cor.10:4-5. This means:

- ✓ Recognize and reject 'stinking thinking'. We cannot determine what thoughts enter our minds, but we can control which ones stay there. The root of anxiety is a belief that is not based in truth. If what you believe is not based on truth, then what you feel is not based on reality.
- ✓ Replace wrong thinking with the truth. Peace is the result of fixing our minds on the right things.

Jesus did not only say 'Don't worry'. He helps us to change the way we think. He said:

**1) God Gave Us Our Life – He Will Sustain It (Mt.6:25).** God does not start a thing and leave it unfinished. He brings everything to its fulfilled purpose. Phil.1:6. He has given life; He will sustain it.

- ✓ Example #1: Look at the birds (v.26). They work; but they don't worry.
- ✓ Example #2: Look at the flowers (vs 28-30). If God clothes the fields with flowers of such beauty, how much more will He look after you who have a greater purpose and destiny.

**2) Worry cannot change my circumstances (Mt.6:27).** We can't increase our height or add to our length of days by worrying. In fact worry risks shortening our lives. It affects blood circulation, heart, glands and the whole nervous system.

**3) Worry Is Characteristic of the Unsaved (Mt.6:31-32).** We worry about those things we care about. God doesn't worry; but He cares. God doesn't worry because of Who He is. He is omnipotent. We are His children. We shouldn't worry because of who we are.

Worry is understandable in an unbeliever, without divine resources. Before we came to Christ we were programmed like unbelievers to look to our own resources and efforts. Now, the Holy Spirit indwells us and leads us to place our trust in Christ. A believer who worries is one with 'little faith'.

**4. Distracted people worry (Mt.6:33).** Food, clothing and other legitimate needs are only functional requirements. They should never become our major focus in life. The main purpose for disciples of Christ is the kingdom. If we worry over temporal needs we become distracted from the main focus.

**5. Live one day at a time (Mt.6:34).** Worrying concerns the future; we worry about what might or might not happen. *Merimnao* means to rip, divide or tear apart. It tears us apart and half of us goes off into the future anticipating problems we cannot deal with because tomorrow is not here yet.

When we worry chemical and electrical energy is released in our body, but it cannot be channelled into action because there is nothing we can act upon. What we are worried about has not happened yet! So all the emotional energy has to do something and it eats away inside us until we become sick. The answer is to get involved in today's responsibilities. See Matt.6:34. Emotions cannot be turned off but they can be channeled. Christianity is living for Jesus one day at a time.

**9) How to Judge without being Judgmental**

Is there no place for judgment? Matt.7:15,20.

- ✓ 1 Cor.5. Not only do we have the *right* to judge but the *responsibility*. Dealing with destructive behaviour.
- ✓ 1 Cor.6:3-5.
- ✓ *'He who is spiritual judges all things'* (1 Cor.2:15).
- ✓ *'Do not despise prophecies. Test all things; hold fast to what is good'* (1 Thes.5:21).
- ✓ 1 Tim.3:1-7. *'A bishop must be blameless...able to teach...not quarrelsome...sober minded...gentle...'*
- ✓ *'Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world'* (1 Jn.4:1).
- ✓ Paul not only warned against heresy he even named the heretics, (2 Tim.2:17; 4:14).

So don't be judgmental but be discerning (7:1-5). What is the difference? 4 questions to ask when judging:

**1) Is it your business?**

- ✓ We are not judges. God is. We don't have the capacity to judge. Only God can correctly judge people.
- ✓ God intended for His creation to discover the knowledge of good and evil by relating everything to Him.
- ✓ Paul, Jesus, the Word have already made judgment. We are to apply that judgment, (Lk.12:13-14).
- ✓ If I judge something in our church that is not being judgmental. That's my business as a pastor. But if I make a judgment about something in another church I'm being judgmental because it's not my business.
- ✓ It was the business of the church at Corinth to judge the man in sin there. If they failed to do so they would be in the wrong (1 Cor.5:1-5). But if the Thessalonians judged Corinth they would be judgmental.
- ✓ Is it your business? If not then you are being judgmental, 1 Thes.4:11.

**2) Does it minister life or death?**

- ✓ When Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, 2 things happened: 1) He experienced death; 2) He began to impart death.
- ✓ One of the ways he does this is by judging others.
- ✓ You would have to look very carefully to notice a speck in another's eye and not see anything else.
- ✓ The word 'judgment' is a translation of Gk. *krino* = to separate (e.g. good from bad). Judgment that brings death does not separate behavior, but people - the good guys and bad guys.
- ✓ There is a place for judgment in the church, but its purpose is life, not death. It is redemptive, not punitive. It is constructive, not destructive. It wants to build up, not tear down. It is to cleanse not crush.

**3) Is it characterized by humility and tenderness?**

- ✓ Gal.6:1. *'Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted'*. Don't shoot the wounded.
- ✓ Matt.7:3. The eye is the most sensitive organ of the body. The moment a finger touches it, it closes up.
- ✓ Jesus did not forbid the removal of a speck, but the spirit in which it is done. It calls for a steady hand.
- ✓ The process which ensures patience. Matt.18:15-18.

**4) Is it invited and reciprocal?**

- ✓ It is invited. As a teacher I do not have the right to speak directly into your life uninvited.
- ✓ It is reciprocal. *'If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet'* (Jn.13:14). *'One another'* Greek – *allelon*, a Greek reciprocal pronoun. Both parties will experience the action of the verb. It is not one-way traffic. Mutual ministry. Judgment which brings death is usually blind to its own faults.
- ✓ It is spiritual pride to think our role is to bring others to account, but we ourselves are not accountable to anyone. We become dangerous people, capable of doing untold damage to others, if we live like this.
- ✓ Judgment that brings life comes out of relationship. *'Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful'* (Prov.27:6).
- ✓ Do you have people like that in your life? Pray for friends like that. *'Let the righteous strike me; it shall be a kindness. And let him rebuke me; it shall be as excellent oil; let my head not refuse it'* (Psa.141:5).

**10) God's Grace, God's Ways and God's Time**

- ✓ Jesus has finished His teaching about life in the Kingdom.
- ✓ He began by speaking of the character of those in the Kingdom (5:1-12), followed by the impact we would have on the world as we experience His life and light.
- ✓ Then, (5:20) He raised the bar of the standard of life way beyond the Law and the Pharisees.
- ✓ What would the disciples think about this? What do we think? Impossible!
- ✓ So He brings us back to what He said in the beginning – 'You can't, but He can!'

1) Ask (Matt.7:7)

- ✓ You have not because you ask not, (Heb.4:16).
- ✓ We live in a state of constant dependency upon Him, (Rev.3:17).
- ✓ 7:8. Many have taken this verse out of context to make it say we can have anything we want. Prayer is not getting what we want but what God wants. What we want may be harmful to us. Thus see 7:9-11.
- ✓ Under the OC God sometimes gave His people what they asked for even though it was contrary to His will and was not good for them, (Psa.106:15).
- ✓ God gave them manna from heaven but they were tired of it and asked for meat and they became sick.
- ✓ Under the New Covenant God gives us 'good gifts' to His children, i.e. what is best for us.
- ✓ This is why we not only ask, but also seek. Prayer is aligning ourselves with God's purposes.

2) Seek (Matt.7:7)

- ✓ We seek Him to know His mind, (Jer.29:13).
- ✓ After the golden calf God promised His Angel to lead them to the Promised Land, victory over their enemies, a land flowing with milk and honey, but not His presence. Many Christians would settle for that. Today we are offered everything but the best – an intimate relationship with God.
- ✓ Moses was a friend of God. See his prayer, (Exodus 33:13-14).
- ✓ The difference between Moses and the Children of Israel, (Psa.103:7). The Children of Israel saw some spectacular miracles but never entered the Promised Land.
- ✓ The disciples wanted to know the ways of the Lord. This is what the word 'disciple' means (John 15:14-15). *'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him'* (John 14:21).
- ✓ In contrast see 7:21-23.

3) Knock (Matt.7:7)

- ✓ Be patient. *"The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!" The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD'* (Lam.3:24-26).
- ✓ *'...do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises'* (Heb.6:12).
- ✓ *'I would have lost heart, unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living'* (Psa.27:13).

7:12. The true purpose of the Law is only fulfilled through the gospel, by grace. It is to love others as we love ourselves. E.g. if a man found his neighbor's ox straying the command said he was to return it to his neighbor. He did so because he did not want to fall foul of the Law and be penalized. Under the gospel it works by the principle of love. That could have been my ox!

Summary: Ask, seek, knock = Ask God for His grace; seek Him for His ways and wait upon Him for His time.

**11) Entering by the Narrow Gate**

- ✓ Matt.7:13. Jesus calls for a response to enter the kingdom. 5:3, 10, 20; 7:13.
- ✓ Entering the kingdom is an appeal to experience the power and authority of God's kingdom in their lives.
- ✓ The works mentioned here are the outworking of the life of Christ; the fruit of divine life; not law.
- ✓ Grace doesn't make decisions for us. Christians can still make bad decisions or choose wrong lifestyles.
- ✓ We are at a crossroads with 2 pathways: a narrow gate/way and a broad gate/way.
- ✓ The broad road is opposed to this teaching of the Sermon on the Mount.
- ✓ The narrow way is the pathway chosen by few. It's a lonely, persecuted road.
- ✓ But the broad road leads to destruction, *apoleia* = to destroy or ruin; to exterminate or wipe out; to cause to perish. This is a reference to inheritance, not salvation, which may suffer severe loss.
- ✓ At the Judgment Seat our works will be tried by fire, (1 Cor.3:15; Jn.15:6; Rev.2:11).
- ✓ Matt.7:14. The narrow way leads to life, i.e. experiencing the full life of Christ in the kingdom.
- ✓ By walking in the Spirit believers will find true significance and be honored with high status in the future.
- ✓ Both narrow and broad gates/ways ultimately will lead to the millennial kingdom at the Second Coming.
- ✓ But the one who chooses the broad gate and way will suffer loss, (Rom.8:12-13).
- ✓ One choice leads to life, an enriched experience of life and reward, and the other leads to destruction.
- ✓ A Christian who takes the broad way is seeking a life of pleasure, but it will result in loss of inheritance.
- ✓ **7:15-20.** False prophets come to us at the crossroads. Take heed (Matt.6:1; 10:17; 16:6,11-12; 24:11-12).
- ✓ They are wolves, but come dressed as sheep. They are ravenous, greedy, profiting from their ministry.
- ✓ By their fruits, i.e. teaching rather than behavior because their behavior is covered up.
- ✓ They constantly teach the broad way. See James 3:1 in context.
- ✓ They *use* the Bible instead of *expounding* it. They have huge gaps in their teaching; they are off-center.
- ✓ They teach us to use our faith to get you things. Conditioning us to think that this is the normal life.
- ✓ Their teaching reduces the Christian life to concern for temporal things.
- ✓ Fruit takes time. It takes time to realize that it doesn't work as they say it will.
- ✓ They call Jesus 'Lord' and prophesy. They even cast out demons (Mt.12:25-28).
- ✓ Examine their fruit and side-step them.

Doing the will of the Father (7:21-23).

- ✓ This is not a message about examining ourselves, but the false prophets waiting at the crossroads.
- ✓ You shall know them by their fruits. Don't let anyone cause you to self-focus for salvation on this passage
- ✓ The phrase 'the will of the Father' is used 4 times in Matthew (7:21; 12:50; 18:14; 21:31) and 3 times in John (4:34; 5:30; 6:40). The *concept* of God's will is found in many places in the Gospels. In no instance does it refer to salvation but in each case of obedience to the Father, (Matt.6:10).
- ✓ Doing the will of God is about obedience, not salvation, (Eph.6:6; Rom.12:2).

'I never knew you'

- ✓ The Greek word in verse 23, 'I never knew you' is *ginōskō*. It is more personal than the other word for 'know', *oída*, and means a 'personal relationship between the one who knows and the one known'.
- ✓ In Matt.25:12 He rebuked the foolish virgins, saying, 'I do not know you'.
- ✓ In a similar way Paul says, '...if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him' (1 Cor.8:3).
- ✓ The charismatic prophets did not keep His commandments, i.e. the teaching of the Sermon. Jesus 'never knew' them in the sense of knowing them as ones who had entered into the kingdom way of living. He never approved of them. 'I never recognized your claim to be doing ministry in My name.'

Summary: Each day we stand at the crossroads. There is a broad road which is the way of the world and appeals to the flesh, yet leads to destruction. False prophets would lead us onto this road. But Jesus leading us onto the narrow road which leads to fullness of life. He will empower us with His grace for this way.

**12) Building on a Solid Foundation**

- ✓ Life is like building a house. *'...you are God's building'* (1 Cor.3:9).
- ✓ *'...let each one take heed how he builds on it'* (1 Cor.3:10). See 1 Cor.3:12-15.
- ✓ We are not building with dead works, but good works, Eph.2:10. Jesus died so we could live like this.
- ✓ He intended us to experience this life, (Jn.14:23).
- ✓ And teach it *'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations... teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you'* (Matt.28:19-20). It is the doctrine of Christ, (2 Jn.9-10).
  
- ✓ Almost every part of this Sermon is found in the epistles. For example, compare the following:
- ✓ *'Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth'* (Matt.5:5) with *'Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering'* (Col.3:12).
- ✓ *'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God'* (Matt.5:9) with *'Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace'* (Eph.4:3). See also Heb.12:14; Rom. 12:18.
- ✓ *'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'* (Matt.5:10) with *'But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled"'* (1 Pet.3:14).
- ✓ *'Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you'* (Matt.5:11-12) with *'If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you'* (1 Pet.4:14).
- ✓ *'You are the light of the world... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven'* (Matt.5:14,16) with *'...you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light'* (Eph.5:8).
- ✓ *'You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment'* (Matt.5:22) with *'Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him'* (1 Jn.3:15).
- ✓ *'I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery'* (Matt.5:32) with *'Now to the married I command, yet not I but the Lord: A wife is not to depart from her husband. But even if she does depart, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. And a husband is not to divorce his wife'* (1 Cor.7:10-11).
- ✓ *'...let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one'* (Matt.5:37) with *'...do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No,"'* (James 1:12). Also Eph.4:25.
- ✓ *'Whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also'* (Matt.5:39) with *'Repay no one evil for evil'* (Rom.12:17).
- ✓ *'But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you'* (Matt.5:44) with *'Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse'* (Rom.12:14).
- ✓ *'Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect'* (Matt.5:48) with *'Therefore be imitators of God as dear children'* (Eph.5:1) (Also 1 Pet.1:15).
- ✓ *'...when you do a charitable deed, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory from men'* (Matt.6:2) with *'Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart'* (Eph.6:5-6).
- ✓ *'Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life'* (Matt.6:25) with *'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God'* (Phil.4:6).
- ✓ *'Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you'* (Matt.7:1-2) with *'Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things'* (Rom.2:1).

- ✓ *'Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you' (Matt.7:7) with '...if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him' (1 Jn.5:14-15).*
- ✓ *'Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock' (Matt.7:24) with 'But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves' (James 1:22).*

#### Conclusion

- ✓ The way these two men built was entirely different. One is wise the other foolish.
- ✓ Foolish = one who hears but does not do.
- ✓ A foolish man just wants to get his building (ministry) up. 2 Cor.5:9-10.
- ✓ Matt.7:28-29. People were astonished at His teaching. He spoke with authority.
- ✓ He is central to the Sermon.
- ✓ His teaching gets right to the heart of godliness. He came to reveal a righteousness which is far greater than the Law, of which He is the architect.
- ✓ There are not many rules but character – meekness, peacemaker, freedom from greed, anxiety, pride.
- ✓ He deals with our judgmentalism, religiosity – i.e. parading our works.