

HYPOCRISY, LEGALISM

1. DISCUSS THIS

How are the Beatitudes a map, and the Sermon on the Mount a microscope?

2. DISCUSS THIS

Why do we tend to prefer rule following, behavior management, managing appearances, moral minimums, and getting ourselves off the hook, than the genuine demands of righteousness?

How can this unfortunate tendency color our understanding of the Sermon on the Mount?

Why does the Sermon on the Mount not contain rules to be followed...and instead contain illustrations of how a Kingdom liver will typically act in a given situation?

3. DISCUSS THIS

Why does an “outside of the cup” (behavior management/managing appearances) approach never work in the long-term?

How is it that we can follow all the rules required of us, but still be a miserable person for others to be around?

Actions are outside, but attitude/motivation, is inside. Why does Jesus, in this sermon, constantly look beyond our actions, and peer into our attitudes?

For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

4. DISCUSS THIS

How does Jesus bypass the superficial and get to the roots of human problems in this sermon?

Why are we always looking for the moral minimum required of us, in the form of a rule?

5. DISCUSS THIS

Why did the religious teachers of Jesus's day refuse to clean the inside of their cups?

Why did they come up with so many elaborate rules to be followed?

What was the motivation for their hypocrisy?

What is the test we can use to test if we are hypocrites ourselves?

ANGER, HATRED, CONFLICT

6. DISCUSS THIS

You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'

But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

7. DISCUSS THIS

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

8. DISCUSS THIS

"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

9. DISCUSS THIS

"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.

10. DISCUSS THIS

If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

11. DISCUSS THIS

And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.

12. DISCUSS THIS

Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

SEXUAL LUST

13. DISCUSS THIS

You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'

I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

14. DISCUSS THIS

If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away.

DISHONESTY

15. DISCUSS THIS

“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’

But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

EXAMINING OUR MOTIVATIONS

16. DISCUSS THIS

“Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

[When you give to the needy, fast, or pray] don’t announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

ANXIETY, WORRY, FEAR

17. DISCUSS THIS

“Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

(END OF AUDIO SEGMENT ONE)

(START OF AUDIO SEGMENT TWO)

JUDGMENTALISM, INSECURITY, PRIDE

18. DISCUSS THIS

Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

19. DISCUSS THIS

What is pride?

What is the relationship between pride and insecurity?

What is humility?

20. DISCUSS THIS

Why do we tend to be judgmental of each other?

21. DISCUSS THIS

Why do we all tend to be insecure?

What should we do about that?

James 4:6 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. How do we do this?

22. DISCUSS THIS

What is the relationship between pride and excessive feelings of guilt?

23. DISCUSS THIS

There is no fear in love. Perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. 1 John 4:18

24. DISCUSS THIS

Why is humility the gateway into the Kingdom?

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

He called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me. Matthew 18:1-5

Why does Jesus teach that true greatness is humility?

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:24-28

“AGONIZING” FOR THE KINGDOM

25. DISCUSS THIS

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

26. DISCUSS THIS

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

“Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

TRUE VS. FALSE DISCIPLES AND TEACHERS

27. DISCUSS THIS

“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

28. DISCUSS THIS

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

MORALITY IN A NUTSHELL

29. DISCUSS THIS

So, in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

THE SERMON AS A SAFE FOUNDATION ON WHICH TO BUILT OUR LIVES

30. DISCUSS THIS

Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”