



## **Chapter 7**

# ***Sermon on the Mount Conclusion***

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**Chapter summary.** Jesus has established that relationship with God is an “in secret” kind of thing (chap. 6). The theme continues as Christ reminds us to judge ourselves, not others (7:1–6). In a series of brief sayings Christ encourages us to depend actively on God. We are not to wait passively, as if we might expect only the crumbs God casually drops for us, but are to confidently ask, seek, and knock (vv. 7–12). How important that we focus on living for God—in His way (vv. 13–14). While we are not to judge others, we are to distinguish between the true and false prophet. The way we do this is by observing the fruit of their lives, those words and actions which spring from and reveal their innermost motivations (vv. 15–20). It is not verbal commitment to the Lord that counts. Only doing His will is an adequate expression of relationship with Him (vv. 21–23). Jesus’ lengthy Sermon on the Mount concludes with a powerful illustration. We build on a solid foundation by putting Jesus’ words into practice. Only then will we be able to withstand the storms of life (vv. 24–28).<sup>1</sup>

## **Matthew 7:1**

### **Judge not, that ye be not judged.**

Cf. 1 Cor 5. Paul is saying here within the fellowship, we are to judge.

Mt 18:15. Scripture does not say that you cannot go to law against a brother, it says there are some procedures you should invoke first.

Whole passage is to believers (Cf. Rom 14:4-13, 1 Cor 4:5). We are not to judge the intent of the heart. We are to judge the fruits. Only one person knows the intent of the heart, God only.

*Judge not*, etc. This command refers to rash, censorious, and unjust judgment. See Romans 2:1. Luke 6:37 explains it in the sense of *condemning*. Christ does not condemn judging as a magistrate, for that, when according to justice, is lawful and necessary. Nor does he condemn our forming an opinion of the conduct of others, for it is impossible *not* to form an opinion of conduct that we know to be evil. But what he refers to is a habit of forming a judgment hastily, harshly, and without an allowance for every palliating circumstance, and of *expressing* such an opinion harshly and unnecessarily when formed. It rather refers to *private* judgment than *judicial*, and perhaps primarily to the habits of the scribes and *Pharisees*.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Richards, L. O. (1991; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996). *The Bible readers companion* (electronic ed.) (609). Wheaton: Victor Books.

<sup>2</sup>Barnes’ Notes

This verse does not disallow the right of making moral and spiritual judgments (cf. 7:6; 1 Cor 2:15; 5:9; 2 Cor 11:4; Phil 3:2; 1 John 4:1) but forbids a bitter, hostile, and unkind spirit which delights in finding fault with others. Hypocritical self-righteousness has no place in the life of a Christian. The verse is particularly applicable to the area of motives. No one of us can know the heart of another, and thus to draw conclusions as to the “why” of people’s actions, especially when those actions are indifferent or even good, is to invite God’s judgment upon one’s life.

As throughout this midrash, Yeshua's admonition is a reflection of Pharaic opinion:  
**Babylonian Talmud, Avot 2:14** - *Do not judge your fellow until you have been in his place.*

**Babylonian Talmud, Avot 4:10** - *Do not be a judge of others, for there is no judge but the one (God).*<sup>3</sup>

### **Matthew 7:2**

**For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.**

- Whole passage is to believers (Cf. Rom 14:4-13, 1 Cor 4:5).
- There are occasions we are to judge within the fellowship (Cf. 1 Cor 5).
- We are not to judge the intent of the heart; we are to be fruit inspectors.
- Scripture does not say that you cannot go to law against a brother; there are some procedures we should invoke first (Mt 18:15).

*With what judgment, etc.* This was a *proverb* among the Jews. It expressed a truth; and Christ did not hesitate to adopt it as conveying his own sentiments. It refers no less to the way in which men will judge of us, than to the rule by which God will judge us. See 2 Samuel 22:27, Mark 4:24, James 2:13.

Jesus tells us to examine our own motives and conduct instead of judging others. The traits that bother us in others are often the habits we dislike in ourselves. Our untamed bad habits and behavior patterns are the very ones that we most want to change in others. Do you find it easy to magnify others’ faults while excusing your own? If you are ready to criticize someone, check to see if you deserve the same criticism. Judge yourself first, and then lovingly forgive and help your neighbor.<sup>4</sup>

**McGee:** These verses have really been misunderstood. To *judge* can mean “to decide, to distinguish, to condemn, to avenge,” and it actually can mean “to damn.” These verses do not mean that a child of God is forbidden to judge others, but it does mean that we are not to judge the inward motives of others in the sense of condemning them. We do not know or understand why a brother in Christ does a certain thing. We see only outward acts. God doesn’t forbid our judging wrong and evil actions, as we will see. The point is that if you are harsh in your judgments of others, you will be known as the type of person who

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<sup>3</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

<sup>4</sup> Life Application Notes

is severe in his considerations of others. I know this type of person, and I am sure you do, also. Perhaps somebody has said to you, “Don’t pay any attention to what he says; he never has a good word to say.” You see, he is being judged by the way he judges. This is what our Lord is saying in these verses.<sup>5</sup>

The idea of a measuring scale (the image is from the ancient marketplace) was used elsewhere for the day of judgment or divine retribution; “As a man measures it will be measured back to him” occurs a number of times in later Jewish sources and may have been a maxim. For the principle, see 5:7, 6:14–15 and Proverbs 19:17. Compare also the Old Testament principles that false witnesses were to receive the penalty they sought for the accused (Deut 19:18–21) and that God opposed unjust judges (Ex 23:6–8; Deut 16:18–20).<sup>6</sup>

This is the same standard as found in the Talmud:

**Babylonian Talmud, Mishnah Sotah 1:7** - *By a person's standard of measure, is he, too, measured.*

**Babylonian Talmud, Shabat 127b** - *How you judge others, does God judge you.*

The Torah is the "perfect law of liberty" that we are to judge by:

**James 1:23-25** - *For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into **the perfect law of liberty**, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*<sup>7</sup>

### **Matthew 7:3**

**And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?**

[**mote**] Small dried twig, which is typically blown about in the wind.

[**beam**] A stick of timber or a splinter. Substantially larger and more dangerous than a twig. The contrast is one of size.

He is comparing a little piece of sawdust in your brother’s eye to the great big redwood log in your own eye. The “log” is the spirit of criticism and prejudice. With that blocking your vision, you are in no position to judge the little sin of another.

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<sup>5</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:40). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>6</sup>Keener, C. S., & InterVarsity Press. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary : New Testament* (Mt 7:1). Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.

<sup>7</sup>Yashanet.com/studies

Ver. 3-5 Yet are we all too ready to condemn others and to be lenient to ourselves. It will be wise to act upon the precisely opposite principle, making every excuse for others, and accepting none for ourselves.<sup>8</sup>

### **Matthew 7:4**

**Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?**

### **Matthew 7:5**

**Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**

[hypocrite] Actor (in Greek); literally, means two-faced.

Jesus' statement, "Do not judge," is against the kind of hypocritical, judgmental attitude that tears others down in order to build oneself up. It is not a blanket statement against all critical thinking, but a call to be *discerning* rather than negative. Jesus said to expose false teachers (Matthew 7:15-23), and Paul taught that we should exercise church discipline (1 Cor. 5:1-2) and trust God to be the final Judge (1 Cor. 4:3-5).

This matter of harsh judgment is certainly something about which we need to be very careful. Although Jesus makes it clear that we are not to sit in harsh judgment upon another, He also said that by their fruits we would know them. The late Dr. James McGinley put it in his rather unique fashion, "I am no judge, but I am a fruit inspector." And we can really tell whether or not a Christian is producing fruit.

Yeshua's words are a reflection of the teachings of the Pharisees:

**Babylonian Talmud, Er'chin 16b** - *Rabbi Tarfon said, "I wonder if there be anyone in this era who will allow himself to be reprov'd. If someone says to another, 'Cast out the speck that is in your eye!' he will retort, Cast out first the beam that is in your own eye!"*

**Babylonian Talmud, Kidushin 70a** - *He who condemns others, sees in them his own faults.*

**Babylonian Talmud, Bava Mezia 59a** - *Do not rebuke your fellow with your own blemish.*<sup>9</sup>

### **Matthew 7:6**

**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.**

Cf. 2 Peter 2:22: The dog *is* turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. [*Pearls were not Kosher.*]<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Spurgeon Devotional Commentary

<sup>9</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

**2 Peter 2:22** *But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.*

**[pearls to the swine]** Used as a proverb implying poor economy. The Lord's intention in that phrase, goes deeper. Most of us don't think of the error of casting pearls before swine as putting us in danger. The concept of taking God's precious truths and wasting them upon the world, is also a way of incurring danger. Where the world will turn on you and use it on you. In a world with hostility toward God, they will become your enemy.

Not suggesting that you withhold your witness. But remember that you are to BE a witness, not "to witness."

**[Give not that which is holy unto the dogs]** Do not force truth upon rebels who reject it, or give holy things to faultfinders, mote hunters, evil speakers.

**[dogs]** Used figuratively of nine classes:

1. Homosexuals (Deut. 23:18)
2. Anyone despised (1 Samuel 17:43; 1 Samuel 24:14; 2 Samuel 9:8; 2 Samuel 16:9; 2 Kings 8:13)
3. Satanic powers (Psalm 22:20)
4. Wicked men (Psalm 22:16; Psalm 59:6,14)
5. False prophets (Isaiah 56:10; Phil. 3:2)
6. Deceived people (Matthew 7:6; Rev. 22:15)
7. Fools (Proverbs 26:11)
8. Gentiles (Matthew 15:26-27; Mark 7:27-28)
9. Backsliders (2 Peter 2:20-23)

**[swine]** Used figuratively of three classes:

1. Indiscreet women (Proverbs 11:22)
2. Deceived people (Matthew 7:6)
3. Backsliders (2 Peter 2:20-22)

*Give not that which is holy*, etc. By some, the word *holy* has been supposed to mean *flesh offered in sacrifice*, made holy, or separated to a sacred use. But it probably means here *anything connected with religion*-admonition, precept, or doctrine. Pearls are precious stones found in shell-fish, chiefly in India, in the waters that surround Ceylon. They are used to denote anything peculiarly precious, Revelation 17:4, 18:12-16, Matthew 13:46. In this place they are used to denote the doctrines of the gospel. *Dogs* signify men who spurn, oppose, and abuse that doctrine; men of peculiar sourness and malignity of temper, who meet it like growling and quarrelsome curs, 2 Peter 2:22, Revelation 22:15. *Swine* denote those who would trample the precepts under feet; men of impurity of life; corrupt, polluted, profane, obscene, and sensual; who would not know the value of the gospel, and who would tread it down as swine would pearls, 2 Peter 2:22, Proverbs 11:22. The meaning of this proverb then is, do not offer your doctrine to those violent and abusive

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<sup>10</sup> Chuck Missler, Commentary on Matthew, khouse.org

men, who would growl and curse you; nor to those peculiarly debased and profligate, who would not perceive its value, would trample it down, and abuse you. This verse furnishes a beautiful instance of the *introverted* parallelism. The usual mode of poetry among the Hebrews, and a common mode of expression in proverbs and apothegms, was by the parallelism, where one member of a sentence answered to another, or expressed substantially the same sense with some addition or modification. See my Introduction to Isaiah. Sometimes this was alternate, and sometimes it was introverted-where the first and fourth lines would correspond, and the second and third. This is the case here. The dogs would rend, and not the swine; the swine would trample the pearls under their feet, and not the dogs. It may be thus expressed:

**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,  
Neither cast ye your pearls before swine,  
Lest they trample them under their feet,  
And turn again [that is, the dogs] and rend you.<sup>11</sup>**

Pigs were unclean animals according to God's law (Deut. 14:8). Anyone who touched an unclean animal became "ceremonially unclean" and could not go to the temple to worship until the uncleanness was removed. Jesus says that we should not entrust holy teachings to unholy or unclean people. It is futile to try to teach holy concepts to people who don't want to listen and will only tear apart what we say. We should not stop giving God's Word to unbelievers, but we should be wise and discerning in what we teach to whom, so that we will not be wasting our time.<sup>12</sup>

**McGee:** We have to determine who the dogs are and who the pigs are, don't we? These are not four legged animals He is talking about. We are not to give that which is holy unto dogs or cast our pearls before swine; therefore, there is a judgment that we need to make.

There are certain times and places where it is not worthwhile to say a word. This is a judgment you need to make. I remember a Tennessee legislator friend of mine who was a heavy drinker. He was wonderfully converted and is a choice servant of God today. The other members of the legislature knew how he drank. Then they heard he "got religion," as they called it. One day this fellow took his seat in the legislature, and his fellow-members looked him over. Finally, someone rose, addressed the chairman of the meeting and said, "I make a motion that we hear a sermon from Deacon So-and-So." Everyone laughed. But my friend was equal to the occasion. He got to his feet and said, "I'm sorry, I do not have anything to say. My Lord told me not to cast my pearls before swine." He sat down, and they never ridiculed him anymore.

A police inspector in the city of New York told me about certain apartments which were filled with no one but homosexuals. He told me, "They know I'm a Christian, and when they are brought into the station, they say to me, 'Preach us a sermon!' But I never cast my pearls before swine." He looked at me and said, "I guess you think I'm a little hardboiled, but I was a flatfoot in that area, and I know those folk. I worked with them for years."

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<sup>11</sup> Barnes' Notes

<sup>12</sup> Life Application Notes

May I say to you, there are swine and there are dogs in our society. What are we to do? Jesus tells us that we are *not* to judge, and then He tells us we are to judge. Well, He tells us in the next verse what we are to do.<sup>13</sup>

Holy and valuable things should be given only to those able to appreciate them. No specific application is indicated, but we may remember that there is a time to speak and a time to be silent (Ec. 3:7). God's truth must not be exposed unnecessarily to abuse and mockery.<sup>14</sup>

What is it that is "Holy" that we can misuse? The topic has not changed -- it is the Torah. A similar sentiment is found in the Talmud:

**Babylonian Talmud, Ket. 111a - R. Levi said:** *"God made Israel swear that they should not reveal the [Messianic] end, and should not reveal the secrets of [of the Torah] to the idolators."*<sup>15</sup>

### **Matthew 7:7**

**Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:**

God answers. Cf. Phil 4:6,7, 19; Jas 1:5; Isa 26:9; Ps 65:2; Lk 11:5-10.

**[Ask]** Greek: *aiteo* (GSN-154), to ask (John 15:7; Matthew 21:22; James 1:5-8; 1 John 3:22; 1 John 5:14-16); to crave (Mark 15:43); to beg (Matthew 27:58); to desire (Mark 11:24); and to require or demand (Luke 1:63; 1 Cor. 1:22; Luke 12:48; 1 Peter 3:15). The idea here is to demand something that is due one because of family and redemptive rights. Five times it is found in Matthew 7:7-11. The first letters of ask, seek, and knock spell "A-S-K." It is God's will that we ask and get what we want (Psalm 23:1; Psalm 34:9-10; Psalm 84:11; Mark 11:24; John 15:7,16).<sup>16</sup>

**[seek]** Seeking must be with the whole heart (Deut. 4:29; 2 Chron. 7:14; 2 Chron. 11:16; 2 Chron. 15:2; Proverbs 8:17; Luke 15:8; Col. 3:1; Hebrews 11:6; James 1:5-8; 1 Peter 3:11).

**[knock]** The third way of getting an answer to prayer (Luke 11:5-13; Luke 18:1-18). To ask implies want; seeking implies loss; and knocking implies need. One must ask with confidence and humility, seek with care and application, and knock with earnestness and perseverance (Luke 11:4-8).

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<sup>13</sup> McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:40). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

<sup>14</sup> Carson, D. A. (1994). *New Bible commentary : 21st century edition*. Rev. ed. of: The new Bible commentary. 3rd ed. / edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970. (4th ed.) (Mt 7:7). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>15</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

<sup>16</sup> Dake's Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

**Ask—seek—knock**—These three words include the ideas of want, loss, and earnestness.

**Ask:** turn, beggar at, the door of mercy; thou art destitute of all spiritual good, and it is God alone who can give it to thee; and thou hast no claim but what his mercy has given thee on itself.

**Seek:** Thou hast lost thy God, thy paradise, thy soul.—Look about thee—leave no stone unturned there is no peace, no final salvation for thee till thou get thy soul restored to the favor and image of God.

**Knock:** Be in earnest—be importunate: Eternity is at hand! and, if thou die in thy sins, where God is thou shalt never come.

**Ask** with confidence and humility.

**Seek** with care and application.

**Knock** with earnestness and perseverance.<sup>17</sup>

Ask for what? Money, fame or happiness? No, the spiritual man seeks spiritual things in the form of the truth and blessings of the Torah:

**James 1:17-21** - *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*

The prime example of what we are to pray for was given to us by Yeshua. He prayed for us to become one (a unity - Hebrew: *echad*) with the Father, as He is *echad* with the Father:

**John 17:20-26:** *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.*

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<sup>17</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

## **Matthew 7:8**

**For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.**

Commandment—an imperative. It is a commandment in the sense that it is not discretionary. God answers. Cf. Phil 4:6,7, 19; Jas 1:5; Isa 26:9; Ps 65:2; Lk 11:5-10.

**[every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened]** No exception to the rule for anyone. If there is it is because of the failure to ask in faith, nothing wavering (James 1:5-8), to seek diligently (Hebrews 11:6), and to knock with importunity (Luke 11:5-13; Luke 18:1-8). The only reason for unanswered prayer to a Christian is "unbelief" (Matthew 17:17-21; James 1:5-8; Hebrews 11:6). Unbelief is caused by wrong teaching (Romans 10:17). The promises are unlimited (Psalm 34:9-10; Psalm 84:11; Psalm 91:1-12; Matthew 17:20; Matthew 21:22; Mark 9:23; Mark 11:22-24; John 15:7,16), so if there is a limitation in answer there is a limitation of faith, not of God's will or power.

**[opened]** The door is never opened in the East until the one who knocks is first questioned (Luke 11:5-8). Note the threefold assurance of an answer—"receiveth," "findeth," "it shall be opened."

Jesus tells us to persist in pursuing God. People often give up after a few halfhearted efforts and conclude that God cannot be found. But knowing God takes faith, focus, and follow-through, and Jesus assures us that we will be rewarded. Don't give up in your efforts to seek God. Continue to ask him for more knowledge, patience, wisdom, love, and understanding. He will give them to you.

Here is a precept expressed by three words, ask, seek, knock; and a promise annexed in three distinct terms, it shall be given you, ye shall find, it shall be opened unto you. The thing commanded is prayer; the thing promised is an audience of prayer, or an answer to prayer. The multiplying of the terms in which the precept is expressed is not idle and superfluous, it lets us know our averseness to the duty, and that God in it requireth of us faith, diligence, constancy, and importunity. Christ had before told us of whom we should ask, our Father; it is not said what we should ask, both in regard we have a liberty to ask any thing we have need of, and he had, Mt 6:8, particularly directed the matter of our prayers. The promise, that we shall have, signifies an answer, either in kind or in value; the promise of giving lets us know that our prayers are not meritorious.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Matthew Poole's Commentary

### **Matthew 7:9**

**Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?**

### **Matthew 7:10**

**Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?**

Fish - symbol of Jesus

Serpent - symbol of Satan

The child in Jesus' example asked his father for bread and fish—good and necessary items. If the child had asked for a poisonous snake, would the wise father have granted his request? Sometimes God knows we are praying for “snakes” and does not give us what we ask for, even though we persist in our prayers. As we learn to know God better as a loving Father, we learn to ask for what is good for us, and then he grants it.

### **Matthew 7:11**

**If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?**

**[how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him]** If wicked fathers see, to the fullest extent of their ability, that their children get what they ask and that they are fed, clothed, happy, prosperous, healed, protected, and free from suffering, how much more will the heavenly Father do for His children "that ask Him." Luke adds, "give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him" (Luke 11:13).

**[good things to them that ask him]** If deliverance from dangers, preservation from evil, physical healing and health, material prosperity, or any other answer to prayer is a "good thing," then ask to receive it and no longer question the will of God in the matter. It is already His will or this teaching of Matthew 7:7-11 is false.

**James 1:5-8** *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. [6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. [7] For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. [8] A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.*

**Encouragement to prayer (see Lk. 11:9–13).** Persistence in prayer (the imperatives are all in the present tense, which suggests continuous asking, seeking and knocking, not just a single request) can expect an answer not because of the technique used but because of the God who is being addressed. If even human fathers, who are *evil* (a recognition of the essential sinfulness of humanity), can be relied on to do the best for their children, how much more can God? This is not, of course, a guarantee that any

prayer we care to offer will be successful; God gives only *good gifts*, which may not correspond to our ideas of what we should have!<sup>19</sup>

Prayer is thus urgently recommended to us; we are asking of a Father, not of a tyrant, and that Father will employ all his wisdom and judgment not in repelling our pleas, but in doing for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or even think.<sup>20</sup>

### **Matthew 7:12**

**Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**

A summary of all the teachings of Matthew 7:1-12 about judging, faultfinding, mote hunting, dispensing holy things, and parental responsibility. In fact, it is the sum of the law and the prophets.

Father's gifts: The model here is a father seeking to do good for his child. Cf. Jas 1:5. [Law and the prophets: divisions of the Tenakh]

Golden rule in terms of an ethic or a moral. But that is NOT what this says, they leave off the first word, "Therefore." "Therefore" implies a linkage to the foregoing verse. What Jesus is expressing is NOT just an ethical principle, He is linking this practice with a supernatural agency of the Father.

#### **The Golden Rule**

- Confused with K'ung Fu-Tze, a writer in China, also known as Confucius: He says don't do that which you don't want people to do to you. *It's negative and it's passive.* The same idea is also found in the Talmud, again in the negative, don't do that to somebody else that which you don't want him or her to do to you.
- "Therefore" implies a linkage to the previous verse. What Jesus is expressing is *not* just an ethical principle: He is linking this practice with a supernatural agency of the Father.
- The Golden Rule does not include the gospel: it is the fruit of the gospel.
- The concept of the Golden rule as described by Confucius or the Talmud is not a declaration of God's love: this is. *It is positive, and an active imperative.*

This is commonly known as the Golden Rule. In many religions it is stated negatively: "Don't do to others what you don't want done to you." By stating it positively, Jesus made it more significant. It is not very hard to refrain from harming others; it is much more difficult to take the initiative in doing something good for them. The Golden Rule as Jesus formulated it is the foundation of active goodness and mercy—the kind of love God shows to us every day. Think of a good and merciful action you can take today.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Carson, D. A. (1994). *New Bible commentary : 21st century edition*. Rev. ed. of: The new Bible commentary. 3rd ed. / edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970. (4th ed.) (Mt 7:7). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>20</sup> Spurgeon Devotional Commentary

<sup>21</sup> Life Application Notes

**Jewish New Testament Commentary:** The Golden Rule can be found in Jewish writings as early as the Apocryphal book of Tobit (third century B.C.E.), “What you hate, do to no one” (Tobit 4:15); similar sayings are attributed to Isocrates, Aristotle and Confucius. Rabbi Hillel expressed it in the generation before Yeshua; a famous passage in the Talmud comparing Hillel with his contemporary, Shammai, tells the story: “A pagan came before Shammai and said to him, ‘Make me a proselyte, but on condition that you teach me the entire *Torah* while I am standing on one foot!’ Shammai drove him off with the builder’s measuring rod which he had in his hand. When he appeared before Hillel, the latter told him, ‘What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole *Torah*. The rest is commentary. Go and learn it!’ ” (Shabbat 31a)

The Golden Rule paraphrases Leviticus 19:18, “You are to love your neighbor as yourself,” which Yeshua called the second-greatest commandment (Mk 12:28–31).

Some apologists for Judaism see superiority in Hillel’s “negative form” of the Golden Rule (“do not do to others ...”) as over against Yeshua’s “positive form” (“do unto others ...”). One was the well-known Jewish writer, Achad Ha’Am (see discussion and reference in Abba Hillel Silver, *Where Judaism Differed*, New York: The Macmillan Company (1956), paperback edition 1972, pp. 125–126). The point seems to be that others may not react as you do, so that it is unkind and possibly unjust to treat them as you would yourself. But one could take the opposite tack: the goal is to treat people as they want to be treated, and this is better stated as a positive command. Logically there is no substantive difference between the forms, and the spirit of the Golden Rule can emerge from either; likewise, its spirit can be quenched by tedious and tendentious arguments.<sup>22</sup>

***The guiding principle.*** This is the so-called “Golden Rule,” one of the most misunderstood statements in the Bible. This statement is not the sum total of Christian truth, nor is it God’s plan of redemption. We should no more build our theology on the Golden Rule than we should build our astronomy on “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.”

This great truth is a principle that ought to govern our attitudes toward others. It only applies to believers, and it must be practiced in every area of life. *The person who practices the Golden Rule refuses to say or do anything that would harm himself or others.* If our judging of others is not governed by this principle, we will become proud and critical, and our own spiritual character will degenerate.

Practicing the Golden Rule releases the love of God in our lives and enables us to help others, even those who want to hurt us.

But remember that practicing the Golden Rule means paying a price. If we want God’s best for ourselves and others, but others resist God’s will, then they will oppose us. We are salt, and salt stings the open wound. We are light, and light exposes dirt.<sup>23</sup>

This time Yeshua is directly quoting Hillel, the grandfather of Gamliel, who taught Paul: **Babylonian Talmud, Shabat 31a** - *What is hateful to you, do it not unto others -- this is the entire Torah, and the rest is commentary*

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<sup>22</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 7:12). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

<sup>23</sup>Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1989). *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. (Mt 7:6). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

Yeshua does not say, "for this *replaces* the Law and the Prophets." He clearly said that He did not come to do that (Matthew 5:17-21). He is summarizing His teachings that the whole of Torah is given for the good of man - to establish and improve His relationship with God and with his fellow man. It is by learning and following God's Torah that we "do what is right unto others."<sup>24</sup>

### **Matthew 7:13**

**Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:**

**[Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction]** Compare Luke 13:24-27 and note the reasons for entrance into the two ways (Deut. 30:15; 1 Kings 18:21; 2 Peter 2:2,15). See also the two destinies here and in Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; Galatians 6:7-8. Up to physical death destruction can be canceled by repentance (Luke 13:1-5; John 3:16-20; Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:9) and life can be canceled by sin (Genesis 2:17; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 8:12-13).

**[strait gate]** An allusion to strict observance of the golden rule of Matthew 7:12, and to repentance and walking the Christian way of life to the end of the narrow way.

**[for wide is the gate, and broad is the way]** An allusion to the careless sinful way of life of the wicked, intimating that it is easier to be revengeful and covetous, to take advantage of another to enrich self rather than walk according to the golden rule.

**[leadeth to destruction]** This way of life leads to destruction which does not actually come until the end of the road (Romans 6:16-23; Romans 8:12-13; Galatians 5:19-21; Galatians 6:7-8; Hebrews 9:27). The reason is that destruction can be canceled by turning from sin to God (Acts 26:18).

*Enter ye in at the strait gate.* Christ here compares the way to life to an entrance through a gate. The words *straight*, and *strait*, have very different meanings. The former means *not crooked*; the latter *pent up, narrow, difficult to be entered*. This is the word used here, and it means that the way to heaven is pent up, narrow, close, and not obviously entered. The way to death is open, broad, and thronged. The Saviour here referred probably to ancient cities. They were surrounded with walls, and entered through gates. Some of those, connected with the great avenues to the city, were broad, and admitted a throng. Others, for more private purposes, were narrow, and few would be seen entering them. So says Christ, is the path to heaven. It is narrow. It is not *the great highway* that men tread. Few go there. Here and there one may be seen-- travelling in solitude and singularity. The way to death, on the other hand, is broad. Multitudes are in it. It is the great highway in which men go. They fall into it easily, and without effort, and go without thought. If they wish to *leave that*, and go by a narrow gate to the city, it would require effort and thought. So, says Christ, *diligence* is needed to enter into life. See Luke 13:24. None go

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<sup>24</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

of course. All must strive to obtain it; and so narrow, unfrequented, and solitary is it, that few find it. This sentiment has been beautifully versified by Watts :--

*"Broad is the road that leads to death,  
And thousands walk together there;  
But wisdom shows a narrower path,  
With here and there a traveller."*<sup>25</sup>

The question at this point is, "Has God indicated to us which the straight and correct gate is, and what the broad ways of destruction are -- or do we simply pick what sounds good to us?"

Of course the answer is that He has given us the Torah as our guideline to define sin, how to live, how to sanctify ourselves, and how to learn more of Him.

Choose not your religion because it is easy, and is patronized by the multitude, for the evil way is that which has charms for the crowd, since it is prepared by the Evil One so as to be pleasant to flesh and blood.<sup>26</sup>

### **Matthew 7:14**

**Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

This is a rebuttal to universalism: many paths to God; it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you are sincere. If you find yourself going along with many people, and the gate you are going through is gigantic and open to all, then you have the wrong gate. Because this verse notes that narrow is the gate and hard is the way that leadeth to life. Sincerity is not enough.

[gate] Jesus Christ. He is the gate (Jn 14). In John 10 Jesus states "I am the gate." (Or door.) The way to find the gate is to be called. We are to focus on the gate to find our way home. Who is the gate? Jesus Christ.

This narrow way is leading to life but it cannot be given as an unforfeitable right until the end of the narrow way.

"the gate," "the way" and "the life" all point to Jesus.

**few there be that find it**—The recommendation of the broad way is the ease with which it is trodden and the abundance of company to be found in it. It is sailing with a fair wind and a favorable tide. The natural inclinations are not crossed, and fears of the issue, if not easily hushed, are in the long run effectually subdued. The one disadvantage of this course is its end—it "leadeth to destruction." The great Teacher says it, and says it as "One having authority." To the supposed injustice or harshness of this He never once

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<sup>25</sup> Barnes' Notes

<sup>26</sup> Spurgeon Devotional Commentary

advert. He leaves it to be inferred that such a course righteously, naturally, necessarily so ends. But whether men see this or no, here He lays down the law of the kingdom, and leaves it with us. As to the other way, the disadvantage of it lies in its narrowness and solicitude. Its very first step involves a revolution in all our purposes and plans for life, and a surrender of all that is dear to natural inclination, while all that follows is but a repetition of the first great act of self-sacrifice. No wonder, then, that few find and few are found in it. But it has one advantage—it “leadeth unto life.” Some critics take “the gate” here, not for the first, but the last step in religion; since gates seldom open into roads, but roads usually terminate in a gate, leading straight to a mansion. But as this would make our Lord’s words to have a very inverted and unnatural form as they stand, it is better, with the majority of critics, to view them as we have done. But since such teaching would be as unpopular as the way itself, our Lord next forewarns His hearers that preachers of smooth things—the true heirs and representatives of the false prophets of old—would be rife enough in the new kingdom.<sup>27</sup>

Perhaps few absolutely, certainly few comparatively take the right road. If we would be saved we must swim against the stream, we must bear the cross and deny ourselves: this is not the popular course and never will be, but gracious souls choose it.<sup>28</sup>

### **Matthew 7:15**

**Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**

Cf. 1 Tim 4:1.

“In sheep’s clothing”: Sheep are you and I, the flock model. They seem like one of us, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. The expression “wolves in sheep’s clothing” comes from this verse. They are out to devour you. They are not in here innocently misguided, they are here as minister to the Church of Satan!

Keep away from false prophets or teachers.

*1 Tim. 4:1-3 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; [2] Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; [3] Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

**Beware of false prophets**—By false prophets we are to understand teachers of erroneous doctrines, who come professing a commission from God, but whose aim is not to bring the heavenly treasure to the people, but rather to rob them of their earthly good. Teachers who preach for hire, having no motive to enter into the ministry but to get a living, as it is

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<sup>27</sup>Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. On spine: Critical and explanatory commentary. (Mt 7:14). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>28</sup>Spurgeon Devotional Commentary

ominously called by some, however they may bear the garb and appearance of the innocent useful sheep, the true pastors commissioned by the Lord Jesus, or to whatever name, class or party they may belong, are, in the sight of the heart-searching God, no other than ravenous wolves, whose design is to feed themselves with the fat, and clothe themselves with the fleece, and thus ruin, instead of save, the flock.<sup>29</sup>

The **kingdom** community must guard against not only false prophets (vv. 15–20) but also false disciples. **Lord, Lord**. An oral confession of Jesus as Lord does not always indicate a repentant heart.

Ver. 15-20 Judge religious teachers not by their claims to apostolic descent, or Episcopal ordination, but by their doctrines and actions. He who glorifies God by gracious preaching and holy living has the best certificate of ordination in the world; while he who promulgates error, or lives unrighteously, is no servant of the Lord, however loud his pretensions may be.<sup>30</sup>

### **Matthew 7:16**

**Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?**

**[Ye shall know them by their fruits]** Seven ways false prophets are known:

1. By outward general conduct (Matthew 7:15; Matthew 5:20; Matthew 6:1-24; Matthew 23:1-33; 2 Tim. 3:5)
2. By inward state (Matthew 7:15; Matthew 5:22,28; Matthew 23:25-28; Mark 7:21-23)
3. By the kind of fruit in works produced (Matthew 7:16-20; Matthew 23:1-24; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Phil. 1:15-17; Phil. 3:3,17-19)
4. By the kind of fruit in doctrine taught (Matthew 7:16-20; Matthew 12:33-37; Matthew 15:1-9; Matthew 16:12; Matthew 23:1-33; 1 Tim. 4:1-6; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:1-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; 2 Peter 2)
5. By professing to do, not doing the will of God (Matthew 7:21; Matthew 5:20; Matthew 23:1-33)
6. By satanic backing (Matthew 7:22; Matthew 24:24; Acts 8:9-13; Acts 13:6-13; Acts 16:16-24; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; 2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:1-18; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:20)
7. By their destiny (Matthew 7:23; Matthew 25:41,46; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 19:20; Rev. 20:10-15)

What are these "fruit" we shall know them by? They are certainly not "miraculous manifestations," as Satan and his angels can and do perform miracles as God allows. Nor are the fruits simply "good results" such as healed marriages, release from addictions, etc.

Even secular, pagan and atheistic groups and cults can and do get good results. The key here is that the fruits are coming from "the tree." What is the tree? In Judaism the Torah is called the Tree of Life. As mentioned in our notes to chapter 3, the phrase "to

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<sup>29</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>30</sup> Spurgeon Devotional Commentary

bring forth fruit" in a Hebraic spiritual context, refers to deeper spiritual insight and teachings.

The question is, are the fruits (teachings) true to the Torah, or are they in opposition to it, as Yeshua warned about at the beginning of this sermon? (5:17-20) As with any good teacher, Yeshua is "closing the loop" to his argument, summarizing with what He began with. This is expounded on (with a warning) in the next section:<sup>31</sup>

### **Matthew 7:17**

**Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.**

False prophets\_how do you know? Cf. 1 Tim 4:1. "In sheep's clothing": They seem like one of us, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. The expression "wolves in sheep's clothing" comes from this verse. They are out to devour you. They are not in here innocently misguided, they are here as ministers of the Church of Satan!

Just as this is true in the natural realm, so it is in the spiritual. A man cannot be a saint and a sinner at the same time (Matthew 7:24; Romans 6:16-23; Romans 8:13).

### **Matthew 7:18**

**A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.**

### **Matthew 7:19**

**Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.**

[cast into the fire] Later, not during the harvest, after the harvest. For amplification of this do read Paul's letters. Cf. Col 2:8; 1 Tim 4:1; 6:20; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 Cor 2:17; 11:13-15; Titus 1:10, 11.

What a sentence upon professed preachers and Christians who do not bring forth good fruit! See John 15:1-8.

### **Matthew 7:20**

**Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**

We should evaluate teachers' words by examining their lives. Just as trees are consistent in the kind of fruit they produce, good teachers consistently exhibit good behavior and high moral character as they attempt to live out the truths of Scripture. This does not

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<sup>31</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

mean we should have witch hunts, throwing out church school teachers, pastors, and others who are less than perfect. Every one of us is subject to sin, and we must show the same mercy to others that we need for ourselves. When Jesus talks about bad trees, he means teachers who deliberately teach false doctrine. We must examine the teachers' motives, the direction they are taking, and the results they are seeking.

***The basis for judging (vv. 13–20).*** Since there are false prophets in the world, we must be careful of deception. But the greatest danger is *self-deception*. The scribes and Pharisees had fooled themselves into believing that they were righteous and others were sinful. It is possible for people to know the right language, believe intellectually the right doctrines, obey the right rules, and still not be saved. Jesus used two pictures to help us judge ourselves and others.<sup>32</sup>

A proper effect discovereth the cause. Lest his disciples should ask, How shall we distinguish true from false teachers? Our Saviour tells them, By their fruits ye shall know them. Our Saviour sends not his disciples to inquire into the truth of their mission, whether that more internal from God, of which they could not judge, or more external from men, who may err, and send out those whom God never sent; but you shall know them (saith our Saviour) by their faithful or unfaithful discharge of their duty: if they be true teachers, by their discharging the ministry in a faithful revelation of the mind and will of God, or by their holy life, living as ensamples to the flock; by their fruits of true doctrine and a holy life, by the discharge of their ministry in good conscience; for it is with men as it is with the trees, good trees bring forth good fruit, corrupt trees bring forth evil fruit. If men have the root of the matter; the seed of God abiding in them, they will in every relation bring forth the fruits of truth and holiness: if they have not, they will bring forth error and wickedness. From whence we may learn, that our Lord expecteth from his people such a knowledge of the Scriptures, as that they may be able to discern truth from falsehood; and such a diligence, as to search the Scriptures, whether those things which their teachers deliver to them be according to them or not, Ac 17:11; not taking divine truths upon trust, nor believing any thing because dictated by teachers, using their teachers not as dictators, but only as helpers of their faith.<sup>33</sup>

## **Matthew 7:21**

**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**

No person merely professing faith in Me and My atoning work will be saved, "but he that doeth the will of My Father" (Matthew 7:21; 1 Peter 4:18; Hebrews 12:14; James 1:19-27; Romans 6:16-23; Romans 8:12-13).

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<sup>32</sup>Wiersbe, W. W. (1996, c1989). *The Bible exposition commentary*. "An exposition of the New Testament comprising the entire 'BE' series"--Jkt. (Mt 7:6). Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books.

<sup>33</sup>Matthew Poole's Commentary

[**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord ...**] The 6th New Testament prophecy in Matthew (Matthew 7:21-23, unfulfilled; will be fulfilled at the great white throne judgment, Rev. 20:11-15; Acts 17:31). Next, <sup>□</sup>Matthew 8:11.

**Jewish New Testament Commentary: Lord**, Greek *kurios*, which can have four possible meanings (see 1:20N). In the present verse, Yeshua seems to say that a day will come when people will address him as the divine Lord—more than human but not necessarily *YHVH*; however, see Pp 2:9–11&N. In the Septuagint “*kurios*” is the most common rendering of “*YHVH*.” In Paul’s writings and in the General Letters “*kurios*” sometimes refers to Yeshua.

**Only those who do what my Father in heaven wants**, only those who obey the *Torah* as I have expounded it in this sermon, **will enter the Kingdom of Heaven** (see 3:2N).<sup>34</sup>

### **Matthew 7:22**

**Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?**

They claim to have prophesied in the name of Jesus Christ, they claim to have cast out demons in the name of Jesus Christ, they will point out that in the name of Jesus Christ they have done many wonderful works..... These are people in the church, they are not the Mormons, or the Hairy Krishna’s, or Buddhist.

[**Many will say to me in that day**] “Many” will be lost (Matthew 7:13,22; Matthew 20:16) and “few” will be saved (Matthew 7:14; Matthew 22:14; Luke 13:23-30).

This is what some will say, trying to escape hell, but it is not stated that they actually did these things.

**JFB Commentary: Many will say to me in that day**—What day? It is emphatically unnamed. But it is the day to which He had just referred, when men shall “enter” or not enter “into the kingdom of heaven.” (See a similar way of speaking of “that day” in 2Ti 1:12; 4:8).

**Lord, Lord**—The reiteration denotes surprise. “What, Lord? How is this? Are we to be disowned?”

**have we not prophesied**—or, “publicly taught.” As one of the special gifts of the Spirit in the early Church, it has the sense of “inspired and authoritative teaching,” and is ranked next to the apostleship. (See 1Co 12:28; Eph 4:11). In this sense it is used here, as appears from what follows.

**in thy name**—or, “to thy name,” and so in the two following clauses—“having reference to Thy name as the sole power in which we did it.”

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<sup>34</sup>Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 7:21). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

**and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works**—or, miracles. These are selected as three examples of the highest services rendered to the Christian cause, and through the power of Christ’s own name, invoked for that purpose; He Himself, too, responding to the call. And the threefold repetition of the question, each time in the same form, expresses in the liveliest manner the astonishment of the speakers at the view now taken of them.<sup>35</sup>

**devils demons.** There is only one devil (Satan), but there are many demons. The demons are those angels who sinned with Satan by following him when he revolted against God. Some are confined (2 Peter 2:4), but many are active in the world (12:43-45). They seek to thwart the purposes of God (Eph. 6:11-12); they promote their own system of doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1); they can inflict diseases (9:33); and they possess the bodies of men and of animals (4:24; Mark 5:13).

False disciples may exercise power in Jesus' **name** but their activities are meaningless because they deceive themselves and other believers, desiring attention for their own spectacular displays. **Mighty works** are not proof of the Father's will since they can come from sources other than God, including demons and human contrivance (cf. Acts 19:13–16; 2 Thess. 2:9–12; Rev. 13:13–14).

### **Matthew 7:23**

**And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

Not what you know, it’s *who* you know. It’s not how much of the Bible you know, it’s who you know. Are you in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? The issue is fellowship, not head-knowledge, nor is it even service! [Does He know you? Have you spent time with Him?]<sup>36</sup>

### **Personal Jeopardy**

- There are supernatural spirits that will attempt to seduce you (1 Tim 4:1).
- You can be derailed by pseudo-intellectualism, the prattling of science or knowledge falsely so-called (Col 2:8; 1 Tim 6:20).
- Does our Shepherd lose His sheep? *Not this shepherd!* (Jn 10:27-30).

**Jewish New Testament Commentary: Lawlessness**, Greek *anomia*, “absence of law, absence of *Torah*.” Hence **you workers of lawlessness** means “you who act as if there were no *Torah*”; it confirms Yeshua’s teaching on the permanence of the *Torah* (5:17–

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<sup>35</sup> Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., Fausset, A. R., Brown, D., & Brown, D. (1997). *A commentary, critical and explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments*. On spine: Critical and explanatory commentary. (Mt 7:22). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>36</sup> Chuck Missler, Commentary on Matthew, khouse.org

20&NN). The Greek word “*anomia*” can be rendered “wickedness,” but doing so here skirts the Jewish context.<sup>37</sup>

These verses have often been used by some groups to point a finger at other "apostate" or "more liberal" groups who "claim the name of Christ." But what is Yeshua's criteria for those who fall into this group?

At the beginning of this midrash (Matthew 5:17-20), Yeshua had given three examples to make a point about Torah still being in effect.

1. He did not come to do away with the Torah
2. This included even the tiniest part (jot and tittle) of the Torah
3. Those who taught otherwise would be "least in the Kingdom"

Here at the conclusion of His midrash, He again shows in three different ways, who falls in this category of those, "He does not know."

He describes them as follows:

**Matthew 7:21** - *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

**Matthew 7:23** - *And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

**Matthew 7:26** - *And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:*

Regarding the first, Matthew 7:21-- At the time Yeshua spoke, where was the Father's will to be found? Only in the Torah (and its extension through the rest of the Tenakh). Concerning, what He next says in verse 23 -- How is iniquity (sin) defined even in the "New Testament?" It is the breaking of Torah:

**1 John 3:4** - *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

The word for "iniquity" in verse 23 is "lawlessness," from the Greek *anomia*. Yeshua clearly states that those who practice lawlessness will not enter into His kingdom. What "law" are these people violating with their "lawlessness?" As it has been clearly shown, the context of Matthew 5:17 through 7:29 is that of "religious law" - the Torah.

Lastly, in verse 26, when Yeshua, says, "*these sayings of mine,*" He is in no way stating that "His commandments" now replace those of the Father's. Such a statement would immediately disqualify Him as being the Messiah. Yet, this doctrine (usually in a roundabout way) is taught in many places today. Yeshua's sayings are those of the Father - they are One. If you have heard Him you have heard the Father, and vice-versa. He makes this clear throughout all four gospel accounts.

Paul also reminds us that this does not change for believers in Messiah. The Torah remains:

**Romans 3:31** - *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Stern, D. H. (1996, c1992). *Jewish New Testament Commentary : A companion volume to the Jewish New Testament* (electronic ed.) (Mt 7:23). Clarksville: Jewish New Testament Publications.

<sup>38</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

That by that day is to be understood the day of judgment is generally agreed by interpreters.

We have prophesied in thy name; that is, revealed thy will unto people; and in thy name, that is, by thy authority and power, cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, that is, wrought many miraculous operations. In the Old Testament we find Baalam and Saul prophesying, who were both wicked men. Judas was sent out (under the New Testament) both to preach and to work miracles. So as none from gifts, no, not the most eminent and extraordinary gifts, can conclude the goodness of his state, or any special favour with God.

I will profess, that is, I will openly declare to them, I never knew you, that is, so as to approve you, or take pleasure in you.<sup>39</sup>

### **Matthew 7:24**

**Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:**

Learning is the modification of behavior; don't just listen, *do* them. The concept of building on a foundation other than Christ is tremendous because it embraces the whole chapter. It covers the false doctrines, anyone that builds on a foundation other than Jesus Christ will be in big trouble.

**Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine**—That is, the excellent doctrines laid down before in this and the two preceding chapters. There are several parables or similitudes like to this in the rabbins. I shall quote but the two following:—

Rabbi Eleasar said, “The man whose knowledge exceeds his works, to whom is he like? He is like a tree which had many branches, and only a few roots; and, when the stormy winds came, it was plucked up and eradicated. But he whose good works are greater than his knowledge, to what is he like? He is like a tree which had few branches, and many roots; so that all the winds of heaven could not move it from its place.” Pirke Aboth.

Elisha, the son of Abuja, said, “The man who studies much in the law, and maintains good works, is like to a man who built a house, laying stones at the foundation, and building brick upon them; and, though many waters come against it, they cannot move it from its place. But the man who studies much in the law, and does not maintain good words, is like to a man who, in building his house, put brick at the foundation, and laid stones upon them, so that even gentle waters shall overthrow that house.” Aboth Rab. Nath.

Probably our Lord had this or some parable in his eye: but how amazingly improved in passing through his hands! In our Lord's parable there is dignity, majesty, and point, which we seek for in vain in the Jewish archetype.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Matthew Poole's Commentary

## **Matthew 7:25**

**And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.**

### **“The Principle of Expository Constancy”**

- The theory that an idiom is used the same way throughout Scripture:
  - “Rock”: Exodus, Numbers: the rock is Jesus Christ (1 Cor 10:4).
  - Stone builders rejected (Ps 118:22; Isa 8:14; Mt 21:42,44; Acts 4:11; 2 Pet 2:6-8).
- Headstone of the corner (Gen 49:24; Isa 28:16; Dan 2:34,35; Mk 12:10; Lk 20:17; Eph 2:20).
  - Sure foundation (Isa 28:16; Rom 9:33).

**[floods]** Eastern monsoons, floods, and winds do great damage to strong houses and completely destroy some.

**John 10:27-30** *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: [28] And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. [29] My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. [30] I and my Father are one.*

Our Saviour maketh frequent use of that ancient way of instructing people by similitudes and parables, which by their easy incurring into the senses give advantage to the memory: he here chooseth a similitude to conclude his excellent sermon upon the mount. The builder intended, who our Saviour dignifies with the name of a wise man, is he that not only heareth Christ's sayings, but doeth them. Under the notion of hearing is comprehended understanding and believing them; by doing them, he understandeth a sincere desire and endeavour to do them, with a practice so far as human frailty will permit. The house intended seems to be a hope for eternal life and salvation: by the rock is meant Christ, 1Co 10:4; Eph 2:20; 1Pe 2:4. Every wise Christian, before he buildeth up to must himself a hope of eternal life and salvation through Christ, must find that he is one who doth not only read and hear the word of God, but so hears as to understand and believe it, that has an operative faith, working upon his soul to the obedience of the will of God, or at least a sincere endeavour to it. And he who doth so, though his hope may be sometimes assaulted with fears, doubts, temptations, (which are like the assaults of a house builded on a rock, by winds; floods, and storms), yet it shall not fail, because it is truly founded on Christ, according to the revelation of his will, Pr 10:28; 1Jo 3:3.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Adam Clarke's Commentary

<sup>41</sup> Matthew Poole's Commentary

## **Matthew 7:26**

**And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:**

**And every one that heareth—and doeth them not**—Was there ever a stricter system of morality delivered by God to man, than in this sermon? He who reads or hears it, and does not look to God to conform his soul and life to it, and notwithstanding is hoping to enter into the kingdom of heaven, is like the fool who built his house on the sand. When the rain, the rivers, and the winds come, his building must fall, and his soul be crushed into the nethermost pit by its ruins. Talking about Christ, his righteousness, merits, and atonement, while the person is not conformed to his word and spirit, is no other than solemn self-deception.

Let it be observed, that it is not the man who hears or believes these sayings of Christ, whose building shall stand, when the earth and its works are burnt up; but the man who DOES them.

Many suppose that the law of Moses is abolished, merely because it is too strict, and impossible to be observed; and that the Gospel was brought in to liberate us from its obligations; but let all such know, that in the whole of the old covenant nothing can be found so exceedingly strict and holy as this sermon, which Christ lays down as the rule by which we are to walk. “Then, the fulfilling of these precepts is the purchase of glory.” No, it is the WAY only to that glory which has already been purchased by the blood of the Lamb. To him that believes, all things are possible.<sup>42</sup>

## **Matthew 7:27**

**And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.**

**True and false discipleship (cf. Lk. 13:24; 6:43–46; 13:25–27; 6:47–49).**

Four vivid contrasts between true and false conclude the discourse. The division between true and false is drawn at different points in the four scenes, so that the whole complex forms a searching basis for self-evaluation.

First (13–14), comes a straightforward contrast between the saved and the lost; the two *gates* and the two *ways* lead respectively to *destruction* and to *life*. True discipleship is a minority position, a matter of deliberately opting out from the mainstream, but it is a matter of life and death.

Secondly (15–20), there is a more subtle division, which falls within the group of professed disciples. *False prophets* present themselves as insiders (*in sheep’s clothing*), but their intention is destructive (*ferocious wolves*). So not all alleged prophecy is to be taken at face value; it must be tested. And the test is not the prophets’ profession but *their fruit*. The meaning of *fruit* is not specified, but the metaphor occurs several times in Matthew to indicate behaviour which is genuinely pleasing to God (cf. 3:8–10; 12:33–37; 21:43).

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<sup>42</sup> Adam Clarke’s Commentary

*cf.* compare

Thirdly (21–23), and even more searchingly, we are introduced to those who apparently believe themselves to be genuine disciples and can appeal to their charismatic activities to prove it, but nonetheless turn out to have no real relationship with the *Lord* to whom they appeal. The false prophets of v 15 were deceivers, but these are self-deceived. Acceptance depends not on profession, nor even on apparently Christian activity, but on whether Jesus *knew* them. Note the extraordinary authority he assumes as judge; to *enter the kingdom of heaven* depends on his acknowledgment and consists in being with him.

Finally (24–27), a further division on the basis of behaviour. Both *wise* and *foolish* are depicted as hearing *these words of mine*; the difference is in putting them *into practice* (cf. the ‘fruit’ of vs 16–20). This division too, therefore, runs through the middle of those who belong to the Jesus-circle. This whole concluding section of the discourse thus leaves us with the uncomfortable demand to consider not just what we profess but whether it is based on a genuine relationship with Jesus and issues in the life of a true disciple.

**Notes.** **15** *False prophets* are familiar in both Old and New Testaments. Cf. Dt. 13:1–5; Je. 23:9–32; Mt. 24:11, 24; 1 Jn. 4:1–3. **21** *Lord* translates *kyrios*, hitherto used only as a title for God. In everyday Greek it was a normal term of polite address and is so used commonly in the gospels. Here, however, it is clearly a mark of allegiance, even of worship. **22** *On that day* refers to the final judgment.<sup>43</sup>

### **Matthew 7:28**

**And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:**

[astonished at his doctrine] Why, because it was so radical? v. 29 answers...

### **Matthew 7:29**

**For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.**

Scribes were staff men, people espousing that which they had read, not that which they had written.

Not astonished at what He said, but the way He taught them as one having authority, His manner.

The teachers of the law (religious scholars) often cited traditions and quoted authorities to support their arguments and interpretations. But Jesus spoke with a new authority—his own. He didn’t need to quote anyone because he was the original Word (John 1:1).

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<sup>43</sup>Carson, D. A. (1994). *New Bible commentary : 21st century edition*. Rev. ed. of: The new Bible commentary. 3rd ed. / edited by D. Guthrie, J.A. Motyer. 1970. (4th ed.) (Mt 7:13). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill., USA: Inter-Varsity Press.

## The Law of Christ

- He did not set aside the Law of Moses, He fulfilled it! He takes the Law of Moses, interprets it in the extreme, and in an absolute sense.  
And then He absolutely fulfills it!
- Remember that your salvation does not accrue because of your ability to fulfill Matthew 5, 6, and 7, but because Jesus did—and *you* can appropriate His achievement to *your* benefit.

This ends the Sermon on the Mount. There are a lot of things which we can learn from, but we can also get caught up in extreme legalism from these chapters.

Jesus closes the sermon on the mount by a beautiful comparison, illustrating the benefit of attending to his words. It was not sufficient to *hear* them; they must be *obeyed*. He compares the man who should hear, and obey him, to a man who built his house on a rock. Palestine was, to a considerable extent, a land of hills and mountains. Like other countries of that description, it was subject to sudden and violent rains. The Jordan, the principal stream, was annually swollen to a great extent, and became rapid and furious in its course. The streams which ran among the hills, whose channels might have been dry during some months of the year, became suddenly swollen with the rain, and would pour down impetuously into the plains below. Everything in the way of these torrents would be swept off. Even a house erected within the reach of these sudden inundations, and especially if founded on sand, or any unsolid basis, would not stand before them. The rising, bursting stream would shake it to its foundation; the rapid torrent would gradually wash away its base; it would totter and fall, and be swept away. Rocks in that country were common, and it was easy to secure for their houses a solid foundation. No comparison could, to a Jew, have been more striking. So tempests, and storms of affliction and persecution, beat around the soul. Suddenly, when we think we are in safety, the heavens may be overcast; the storm may lower; and calamity beat upon us. In a moment, health, friends, comforts, may be gone. How desirable then to be possessed of something that the tempest cannot reach! Such is an interest in Christ; attention to his words; reliance on his promises; confidence in his protection; and a hope of heaven through his blood. Earthly calamities do not reach these; and, possessed of *religion*, all the storms and tempests of life may beat harmlessly around us.

There is another point in this comparison. The house built on the sand is beat upon by the floods and rains; its foundation gradually is worn away; it falls, and is borne down the stream, and is destroyed. So falls the slumber. The floods are wearing away his sandy foundation; and soon one tremendous storm shall beat upon him, and he and his hopes shall fall, for ever fall. Out of Christ, perhaps having heard his words from very childhood; perhaps having taught them to others in the Sunday-school; perhaps having been the means of laying the foundation on which others shall build for heaven, he has laid for himself no foundation; and soon an eternal tempest shall beat around his naked soul. How great will be that fall! What will be his emotions when sinking for ever in the flood, and destined for ever to live and writhe in the peltings of that ceaseless storm that shall beat when "God shall rain snares, fire, and a horrible tempest" upon the wicked!<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Barnes' Notes

Yeshua is teaching and making definitive rulings on the Torah. Rabbis in His day would typically teach "in the name of" of another Rabbi who preceded them -- even if the other Rabbi was long since deceased. Yeshua taught in His own name. The "authority" He has, stems from the fact that He **IS** the Torah in the flesh -- as John's Gospel says in its Hebrew context:

**From John 1** - *In the beginning was the Torah, and the Torah was with God and the Torah was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made ... In him was life and that life was the light of men ... And the Torah became flesh and made his dwelling among us.*

At the time John wrote this, the term "Word" was equated both with God and with the Torah. In fact the last book of the Torah, is called *Devarim* (Deuteronomy) and means "words."<sup>45</sup>

### **McGee: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT IN PERSPECTIVE**

**N**ow that we have concluded the Sermon on the Mount, I feel that we need to back off and get a perspective of it because many of my comments may have been new and strange to some folk. A great many people feel that the Sermon on the Mount states the way believers are to live in our contemporary society, that it is given to the church.

However, if we step back and look at the Word of God as a whole, we will see that God has given three great systems by which He is to govern and rule mankind.

The first one is the Mosaic system, the Law. As you know, early in Genesis (ch. 7) is the record that God had to destroy the entire human race (with the exception of one man and his family) because of their violence and because "... every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). The human family had departed from God, and He had to judge it. Out of the earth He could save only one man and his family, and from these God began a movement toward drawing out of this new population a man who would become the father of a people who would be a witness for Him. Actually, He was going to give them a land, and He was going to make them a great nation—numberless—and He was going to make them a blessing to the world. God, through them, was to reach the world. He gave them through Moses the Mosaic system, and it was a great sacrificial system. The Book of Exodus gives us the details of it and reveals that the very heart of it was the burnt altar where sacrifices were offered. That altar speaks of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God never forgave a sin apart from a sacrifice that was made, because, you see, Law did not save man. It only revealed to man that he was a sinner. It became a system of *condemnation*, not a system of *salvation*. Therefore, throughout the Old Testament the burnt offerings pointed to the coming of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus came and offered Himself as the King in order to fulfill the prophecies of the Old Testament. But His nation rejected Him.

The Gospel of Matthew presents Him as King. It is my personal conviction that everything in this gospel is to be understood in the light of the fact that He is the King. In the Gospel of Matthew, as we have indicated, He was born a King, He lived a King, He

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<sup>45</sup> Yashanet.com/studies

died a King, He rose again from the dead as a King, and He is coming again to this earth as a King.

One of the things that He did while He was here on earth was to enunciate a law that was different from the Mosaic Law. It was the so-called Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5–7. Excerpts of it are found in the other gospels, but in Matthew it is given in its fullest extent. As I have mentioned, I am confident that it is an abridged edition, and the evidence of this is that He took two of the Mosaic commandments and lifted them to a higher degree of interpretation than they ever had been held in the Old Testament. For example, He said that if you are angry with your brother, you are guilty of murder. There is nothing about that in the Old Testament. Also, He said that if you so much as look upon a woman to commit adultery in your heart, that you are guilty of it. Believe me, friend, that involves half the human race today. There are very few men who are not guilty of breaking that commandment. Sometime ago a very fine looking woman, a wonderful Christian, and an excellent Bible teacher, told about meeting a certain man, and he happened to be a preacher. She said, “When he looked at me, I could tell what he was doing. He was undressing me, and I think he would have tried to rape me.” The man never moved an eyelash, he was just sitting watching the woman approach him. According to the Sermon on the Mount, he was guilty of adultery.

The Sermon on the Mount lifts the Law to the nth degree. Somebody asks, “Isn’t that what we are to live by today?” No, it is for the kingdom which is coming on the earth. At that time we will probably have the unabridged edition of the Sermon on the Mount. It will be the law of the kingdom, which Christ will set up in the future. There are great principles in it for us, but we have been given a different system. You and I are living in what is called the age of grace or the age of the Holy Spirit. It is a time when God saves by grace, not by keeping a law, not by following a law. We are not saved by anything that we do. Frankly, friend, you are not a Christian until you *believe* something, and that something is “... that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures” (1 Cor. 15:3–4). That is the gospel; that is what saves you.

After you have been saved, God has a way for you to live, and that way is not the Mosaic Law, not the Ten Commandments. Oh, I know what all the great denominations teach. I was brought up and educated in one of them. My Shorter Catechism, when it comes to the subject of sanctification and how to live for God, drags in the Ten Commandments. Suppose you did keep all ten of the commandments (which you don’t), that wouldn’t save you, because that which saves you is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Law cannot save you.

Neither is the Law a way of life; it is not the Christian way of life. Immediately someone asks, “Does that mean you can break it?” Of course it does not give you freedom to break it. It merely means that we have a way of life which is much higher than the Ten Commandments. “But,” you may argue, “you have just said that the Sermon on the Mount lifts the Law to the nth degree, so that must be our way of life.” No, that’s not it. Have you ever stopped to consider if you could keep the Sermon on the Mount?

Are you ready for some startling statements? The Sermon on the Mount has made more hypocrites in the church than anything else. I told you the story of a man who was a church member and an officer but who could cuss like a proverbial sailor, and he thought he was a Christian. When I turned on the light of the Sermon on the Mount, I found that

all he did was vote for it; he just approved of it. He didn't keep it. He could not live by it. No one can live by it. You see, it provides a veneer of religion which a great many people assume when their heart is not changed. The *heart* of man has to be *changed*.

As a result, liberalism is not only found in politics, but liberalism in theology has played a great part. They talk about the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Well, the Lord Jesus contradicted that theory when He said even to the religious rulers of His day, "Ye are of your father the devil ..." (John 8:44). Evidently, there were some folk in that day who couldn't call God their Father. The universal fatherhood of God did not apply then, and it does not apply today. Since World War II, the United States has attempted to deal with the world in a spirit of brotherly love. We are hated by many of the nations of the world today and are envied by the rest of them. We have spent literally billions of dollars to buy peace, and we do not have peace in the world today. Why? Because, friend, you cannot run the world by the Sermon on the Mount. We have had politicians who have tried to put these principles to work. Well, aren't the principles good? Of course they are good, but there is something wrong. What is wrong? It is the *heart* of man that is wrong. Man is the problem.

A listener to our radio program wrote, saying, "Dr. McGee, I don't *have* problems; I *am* the problem!" That is the difficulty in the world. There is nothing wrong with the Ten Commandments. They have come from God. They reveal His mind, His will. The Sermon on the Mount reveals the mind and will of God as well. Certainly, there is nothing wrong with either of those. But there is something radically wrong with mankind.

Listen to the words of the Lord Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew; He will tell you where the problem is. He says, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man" (Matt. 15:18–20).

You can have a religion that requires the washing of hands and body, and you can go through any kind of ritual or liturgy, but the *heart* is the problem. Man has a desperate case of heart trouble today, and jogging won't help him. He needs Jesus, not jogging. The Lord Jesus Christ alone can change the heart by a miracle known as regeneration. He told even a nice, respectable Pharisee by the name of Nicodemus that he must be born again. Although the phrase *born again* is being misused and abused in our day, it is a marvelous, miraculous truth.

My friend, I say to you that you and I have to be regenerated because we've got this old nature. When the Lord Jesus talked about what comes out of the heart, He was not talking about the heart of Joe Doaks, although his is included, He was talking about my heart and your heart. You see, the heart is the problem.

The apostle Paul enlarged upon this fact. He said, "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like ..." (Gal. 5:19–21).

Now we live in a day of situation ethics. We live in a day of gross immorality. People have thrown overboard the so-called Judeo-Christian ethic, and they do as they please. I heard a college professor being interviewed on television. He was asked the question: What is right in our day? His answer was: Anything is right if it makes you feel good.

According to that, if it makes you feel good to kill your father and mother, it is perfectly all right.

God gave the Ten Commandments to control the old nature. But they didn't control the old nature, because the nation to whom God gave them departed from Him. They went far from God.

Nevertheless, man was not able to measure up to it—Paul repeatedly states this in his epistles.

Now how is man to live? He is not to live by his own effort, because he can't make it. The Word says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance [self-control]: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:22–23.). There is no law which can produce these things. It is not naturally in you or me to love—I am not referring to sexual love but to a real concern for others and a real love for God. That kind of love does not come naturally. There used to be a popular song entitled "Doing What Comes Naturally." Well, when man does what comes naturally, he produces our contemporary civilization which is as lawless and as violent as it can be. There is a question in the minds of many serious men in high places concerning whether or not our nation can survive. We cannot, my friend, apart from a restoration of control upon the old nature of man.

How can you produce these wonderful fruits of love, gentleness, meekness, etc.? Well, you cannot produce them by your own effort. Go back to the Sermon on the Mount where it says, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). Talk to the Communists about that. Are they inheriting the world by being meek? Ask the people of Afghanistan if the Russian invaders came with meekness. And I received a letter from a missionary in Ethiopia which reveals that the meek are not inheriting the earth. Well the meek are going to inherit the earth—but not until the King comes, the One who was the meekest Man who ever walked this earth. He is going to come in great power and glory, and He is going to put down unrighteousness upon this earth and establish His kingdom. When He does that, the Sermon on the Mount will be the law of the kingdom. But today, how are we to live? By the power of the Spirit; He is the One who produces these wonderful fruits in our lives: love, joy, peace. How about peace in your own heart? Do you have peace with God? Only the Spirit of God can give that to you. And joy—my friend, do you know what it is to have that real joy of the Lord? Then how about this business of meekness? You and I cannot be meek. We have a proud heart. I've got one—I enjoy having folk pat me on the back. Now don't tell me that you don't like it, because you like it, too. We are proud. That is the old nature manifesting itself. But the fruit of the Spirit is meekness. All through my ministry I have asked God to make me a meek man—"Oh, God, make me a meek man. Give me humility. Make me the kind of Christian that I ought to be!" I can't do it for myself. God wants to do it for us by the Holy Spirit.

My friend, this is a new way of living. This is not the Mosaic system, this is not the Sermon on the Mount, this is *new*! God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies—it is spiritual blessings that He has given to us. And now we are to walk through this world in meekness, lowliness of mind and heart, by the power of the Spirit of God. And today we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit which will enable us to live for God. It will produce fruit in our lives. It will enable us to *serve* God. This is the high plane to which we are called.

It is my hope that you now see the Sermon on the Mount in its true perspective.

Now we are ready to come down from the mount where He enunciated the ethic, and we will see that He also has the dynamic to enforce this law when He comes to rule upon this earth.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>McGee, J. V. (1997, c1981). *Thru the Bible commentary*. Based on the Thru the Bible radio program. (electronic ed.) (4:43). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.