

Sermon on the Mount I

by Stephen Kaung

The Sermon on the Mount is a call to live a heavenly life on earth, through the power of the new life given to us, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Duration: 1:00:53

Scripture: Matthew 4:23-24, Matthew 5:1-20, Matthew 6:9-13, Matthew 7:24-27

Topics: "Kingdom Living", "Faith Trust"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7. He emphasizes that while the sermon is well-known, it is often misunderstood. The purpose of the sermon is not to condemn, but to encourage believers to trust in God and live a heavenly life on earth. The speaker highlights that with man, living according to the sermon is impossible, but with God, all things are possible. The sermon is a call to discover and rely on the Lord, and to see the wonderful life He has given to believers.

Transcript

We will read from Matthew Chapter 4, Verse 23. Matthew Chapter 4, Verse 23. And Jesus went round the whole of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every bodily weakness among the people.

And his fame went out into the whole of Syria, and they brought to him all that were ill, suffering under various diseases and pains, and those possessed by demons, and lunatics, and paralytics, and he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and beyond the Jordan. But seeing the crowd, he went up into the mountain, and having sat down, his disciples came to him.

And having opened his mouth, he taught them. May we have a further word of prayer. Dear Lord, as we gather together here this morning, our hearts are full of gratitude.

We want to thank thee for this opportunity. We thank thee that thou art always mindful of us. That thou shalt gather us together to hear thy word.

Dear Lord, we ask that thou will speak to us. May thy word truly be life and spirit to us. We commit ourselves to thee for this morning.

We pray that thou will open our understanding. Thou will grant to us the spirit of wisdom and revelation. That we may truly know thee.

And know thee is eternal life. We praise and thank thee. Because we know that thou art here with us.

And thy spirit is here to do thy work. We just commit this time totally into thy hands. And may thy name be glorified.

We ask all in the name of our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Amen. We do thank the Lord for gathering us together here this time.

I always feel that every time God's people come together is the mercy of God. We know that our Lord is coming soon. And he is preparing us for his return.

So we thank him for this opportunity. And we just look to him that he will speak to our heart. That we may be prepared, ready for him.

The burden of this time is on the so-called Sermon on the Mount. This is recorded in Matthew Chapter 5, Chapter 6 and Chapter 7. I believe that the Sermon on the Mount in a sense is well known. And yet it is very little understood.

What does the Lord really say to us? And how shall we respond to his word? I think it is very important for us to know. Because it has much to do with our daily living. And much to do with our readiness for his return.

Now in order to understand what the Sermon on the Mount really teaches. I think first of all we need to understand what is the theme of the Gospel according to Matthew. I believe probably most of us know.

That the Gospel according to Matthew is centered upon our Lord Jesus as King. And he came into this world to set up his kingdom upon this earth. Now truly our Lord Jesus is the Savior of the world.

His very name Jesus means he shall save his people from their sins. But you notice that he shall save his people from their sins. So you know here there is his people.

And he is coming to save his people. So he is King. He came into this world to save his own people from their sins.

He is not only the King of the Jews. He is the King of all those whom he has called to himself. He is the King of all those whom he has called to himself.

You remember when our Lord Jesus was judged by Pilate. That is recorded in John Chapter 18. Pilate asked him, are you the King of the Jews? And our Lord Jesus answered, I am the King.

I was born for that very purpose. But my kingdom is not of this world. I came to bear witness to the truth.

And those who are of the truth, hear me. So we know that our Lord Jesus, he is the King. But his kingdom is not of this world.

He is bringing the kingdom of the heavens upon this earth. He came into his own. And his own did not receive him.

But whosoever receive him, they are given the right to be the children of God. And all who believe in him, they are born not of this world. Not of man's flesh.

And not of man. But of God. So in other words, our Lord Jesus came into this world to gather a people out of every tribe, every tongue, every nation.

And to gather them unto himself. To be his own people. And he is to be their King.

But when our Lord came into this world, the world rejected him. But in God's mysterious way, when the world crucified him on the cross, there on the cross he accomplished the work of redemption. He redeemed the people unto himself.

We may say that heaven invaded the earth. And heaven came upon this earth. And then draw a people into that kingdom.

And by the grace of God, we who are saved, we who have received the light from above, we became the son of the kingdom. You remember in Matthew chapter 13, our Lord Jesus spoke to us in parables. And in the first parable he said, the sower went out to sow the seed.

And the sower is none other but the Lord himself. And the seed is the word of the kingdom. And some seeds fall into the wayside.

In other words, there are some people's hearts like the wayside. It has been trodden and hardened. And here you find the birds will come and pick up these seeds.

But some seeds fall into the stony ground. And it comes out very quickly. But because there is no root, so when the sun shines upon it, it withers.

And then some fall into stony ground. It does get root. But when it grows up, it is being killed by the thorns.

So it cannot, it does not bear fruit. But thank God that some seeds fall into good ground. And patiently you find it begins to grow and bear fruit.

And a hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold. Now brothers and sisters, you hear us say our Lord Jesus, when he came into this world, he is the sower. And he sowed the word of the kingdom.

And when the word reaches the heart, there are some who receive the word of the kingdom to their heart. And then our Lord Jesus continue with the second parable. And in the second parable, the Lord said the man went out and sowed the seed on the field.

And the man again is our Lord Jesus. But the seed here in the second parable is different. It is no longer the word of the kingdom.

The seed here is the son of the kingdom. In other words, those who have received the word of the kingdom into their heart, they become the sons of the kingdom. And the Lord sowed them on the field.

But the field here is not the same field as in the first parable. In the first parable, the field is the heart. But in the second parable, the field is the world.

In other words, God sowed the son of the kingdom in this world. God sowed the son of the kingdom in this world. But when the man slept, and in the original you find the man here is plural number.

It is not the singular number man who sowed the seed. It is not the man who sowed the seed. Who are these men? These men slept.

In other words, they are not watchful. They are the servants of the Lord. But they are not watchful.

And while they are sleeping, the enemy came in, and sowed into the same field. He sowed the bad seed. The pear, the donald.

Now in the beginning it was noticed. But when gradually these seeds began to grow, and began to bear fruit, then you find a great difference there. The wheat, as it grows, and when it is full of fruit, you find that it will bend down.

But the donald, you find that it will also bear a kind of black seed. But it will stand straight. So at that time, the servants of the Lord began to notice the difference.

So they came to the master. And they said, is it not that you saw only the good seed? Now why is it there are all these bad things? Well, the master knows. He said the enemy does it.

And then these servants said, should we go out and pick them out? No, the master said. Don't do that. Because their root has already intertwined.

So when you root out the donald, you will root out the wheat too. Let them grow until the harvest time. And the angels will come and separate them.

So brothers and sisters, through these parables we understand that our Lord Jesus came into this world to sow the seed, the word of the kingdom. And those who receive these words, they become the sons of the kingdom of the heaven. And our Lord sold them into this world to be a testimony to the world.

Until the day shall come when the kingdom of the heavens shall publicly appear on this earth. Then everything will be clear. So brothers and sisters, you will find that our Lord, the purpose why our Lord came into this world is not just to save some people, but to bring them into his kingdom.

And to train them so that one day when his kingdom shall appear on this earth. They shall reign with him. In Colossians chapter one, you remember there is such word.

He has delivered us out of the power of darkness. And has translated us into the kingdom of the son of his love. So dear brothers and sisters, we need to understand one thing.

That we are not only saved, being saved. But we are put into the kingdom of the heavens. And having been put into the kingdom of the heavens, our Lord will teach us how to live in that kingdom.

What is kingdom living? Even though we are on earth. And yet because our life is from above. So we should live a kingly, a heavenly life upon this earth.

And that is what the Sermon on the Mount is all about. Now let us turn to Matthew. In Matthew chapter four, we find that our Lord Jesus, he was preaching there.

And then you find people came from all directions to hear him. And then here you find great crowds followed him from Galilee and Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and beyond the Jordan. And when our Lord saw the crowds, he went up into the mountain.

Now usually you find when the crowds came to our Lord, you find our Lord, he was moved with compassion. Because he saw them as sheep without shepherds. So he will go out to them and he will preach to them and he will heal them.

But at this particular occasion, you find instead of our Lord going forward to the crowds, he retreated into the mountain. And he stepped down. And his disciples came to him.

Then he opened his mouth and he spoke to them. According to the tradition of Latin Church. They say that the mountain is the horns of Hades.

Horns of Hades. And it is situated between Mount Tabor and Tiberias. Mount Tabor and Tiberias.

It is about 7 miles from Capernaum. And this horn of Capernaum, Hades, there is the top of the mountain. And then when you descend from the mountain, there is a lower level.

And when the Lord spoke Matthew 5-7, he was at the top of the mountain. His disciples came to him. And then he stepped down and he opened his mouth.

So in other words, the discourse in Matthew was given at the top of the mountain. And he spoke these words to his disciples. Even though the crowds gradually came up.

And they also heard these words. But he did not address these words to the crowds. He addressed these words particularly to his own disciples.

Then after he finished speaking these words, now according to Luke chapter 6, maybe you turn to Luke chapter 6. In Luke chapter 6, probably we will read a little bit more. We begin with verse 12. And it came to pass in those days that he went into the mountain to pray.

And he spent the night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called his disciples. And having chosen out twelve from them, whom also he named apostles.

Simon, by whom also he gave the name of Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip and Bartholomew, and Matthew and Thomas. Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alpha, and Simon, who was called Zealot, and Judas, brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who was also the betrayer. Now notice verse 17.

And having descended with them, he stood on a level place, and the crowd of his disciples, and a great multitude of the people, from all Judah, Judea and Jerusalem, and the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases. And those that were beset by unclean spirits were healed. And all the crowd sought to touch him, for power went out from him and healed all.

And he, lifting up his eyes upon his disciples, said, Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. So you notice here, in Luke chapter 6, First he called twelve disciples to be apostles. And then he descended from the mountain to a level place.

And then you find a crowd of disciples, and a great multitude of people gathered to him. And then he began lifting up his eyes at the disciples and spoke. Now you find Matthew and Luke, there are similarities there, in the words.

And yet there are differences. In Matthew you find these words are deeper and more mysterious. Because he spoke these words to his disciples.

Maybe to those who are being chosen. But in Luke chapter 6, you find he still lifting up his eyes and spoke to the disciples. But there are crowds of disciples.

And there are great multitudes there. In other words, when he was speaking in Luke, even though he directs his speech to his disciples, and yet he had the crowds also in mind. They seem to be similar, and yet they are different.

Now we will ask a question. And I think this is something very important to us. What does the Lord really say in the so-called Sermon on the Mount? In the so-called Sermon on the Mount, what does the Lord really say? When we read Matthew 5 to 7, what is your impression? What do you think the Lord is trying to say to you? How should you react to what he is saying? Usually when we think of the Sermon on the Mount, it seems that this is our Lord Jesus giving us a new law.

The law of the kingdom of the heavens. You know, Moses gave the law to the children of Israel, for them to keep. Now if they keep the commandments, then they will be God's people.

And God will be their God. So people said when our Lord Jesus spoke on the Sermon on the Mount, he was giving a new law. The law of the kingdom of the heavens.

He gave these laws that we may keep. And by keeping them, we will be the citizens of the kingdom. Now there is a question.

Can anyone keep the words in the Sermon on the Mount? Now if you have never tried, you may think that you can. But if you really study the Sermon on the Mount, and if you really take these words, by heart, and you really want to do whatever the Lord has commanded, do you think you can do it? Many have tried. But the more you try, the more you feel it is beyond you.

By our natural life, we will never be able to fulfill these words. Then why are these words being given? What are really the meaning of these words? I think this is something we need really to grasp. We believe that the Sermon on the Mount is not a new law.

It is not a law for us to keep. Because this is humanly impossible. There is only one person who does keep these words.

And that is our Lord Himself. When He was in this world, you find that He literally fulfilled every word that He has spoken. He is all righteous.

But aside from Him, there is no one who is able to keep these words. Then what are these words? What is the real meaning behind these words? What does these words really tell us? We believe that here in the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord is telling us what is the character, the nature of the Kingdom of the Heavens. The nature of the Kingdom of the Heavens, the characteristics of the Kingdom of the Heavens, the personality of the Kingdom of the Heavens.

Then the Kingdom of Heavens is very different from all other kingdoms in the world. In which aspect, how is it different? Because the character of the Kingdom of Heavens, the personality of the Kingdom of Heavens, originates from the King of Heavens. Here our Lord demonstrates to us who He is and what He

is.

When He was on this earth, He brings the Heaven upon this earth. He lives a heavenly life upon this earth. And this is what the Kingdom of Heavens is like.

In other words, the Kingdom of the Heavens is characterized by the King Himself. The characteristics of the Kingdom of Heavens are the characteristics of the King. He expresses Himself.

It is a description of His life. That's the way He lives on this earth. And that's the way all the sons of the Kingdom shall live.

So brothers and sisters, you find that these words are not given as law to be kept. These words are the description of a life. And it shows us what this heavenly life is like.

Now if we live by that life, then we will live in this way. So it is a matter of life. It is a matter of grace.

The Sermon on the Mount is not a law. It is grace. God has given us His own life.

Our Lord Jesus Himself is our life. And He lives within us. If we allow Him to live out through us, then this will be the way that we live.

So brothers and sisters, do not take the Sermon on the Mount as a law for us to keep. But rather see that it is grace. We thank God that His life is in us.

And now with these words before us, we know how we shall live by that life on this earth. So this is what the Sermon on the Mount is all about. So this is the meaning of the Sermon on the Mount.

But brothers and sisters, we are not as pure as our Lord Jesus. Even though we have His life within us. And this life has a new nature.

And this new nature is heavenward. And if we follow this nature, then we develop the same nature as our Lord Himself. But brothers and sisters, unfortunately we still have our old life within us.

With that old life, we will never be able to perform the words in the Sermon. There is only one way to live out these words. It will live by the new life given to us.

That new life has been proven. It has been demonstrated on this earth. When our Lord was on earth, He demonstrated to us what this heavenly life is like.

And that is what the kingdom of the heavens is like. It has been tested. And proved to be true.

But the requirement is you have to live by that life. So brothers and sisters, how do we enter into this life? How can we live by that life and not by that old life? And this is where the cross must work in us. The cross has to work in our lives.

To put that which is of the flesh to death. So that this new life of ours may be able to take over. This is why our Lord Jesus said, If you want to follow me, you must deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow me.

Brothers and sisters, we are His disciples. We are to learn of Him. We are to be yoked together with Him.

You remember in Matthew Chapter 11, our Lord Jesus said, Yoke with me and learn of me. For I am low and meekly in spirit. And you shall find rest in your soul.

Dear brothers and sisters, we are not only saved, we are called to be disciples. We need to learn of Him. See how His life works.

But then we realize we have that old life within us. That Adamic life is still there. And it tries to live the old way.

But then God, He is giving us the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit dwells in us. So whenever our old life begins to raise its head, the Holy Spirit within us will remind us.

Because the anointing within us, He will teach us in all things. Big things and small things. And whatever He teaches is truth.

And if we obey His teaching, we abide in Christ. So thank God. He has not only given us a new life, but He has given us the Holy Spirit.

And He is there within us, teaching us. You know, every believer has the Holy Spirit dwelt in him or in her. And the Holy Spirit is teaching us daily.

And what we need is to listen to His small voice. And when we obey the Holy Spirit, then you'll find our old man, our flesh, is being put to death. And the new life within us is given the opportunity to live.

At the same time, the Holy Spirit arranges our circumstances. He is the one who orders our environment. To a believer, nothing comes by chance.

Because we are so precious to the Lord. So the Holy Spirit will arrange our daily life. And whatever happens to us, there is a meaning behind it.

The Holy Spirit tries to use these things to bring our old man, our flesh, to death. And to release the new life within us. So we need to learn.

We need to deny ourselves. We need to deny ourselves. Deny ourselves is very simple.

It means that I do not know you. You remember Peter. He denied the Lord.

And he said, I don't know him. But unfortunately he then denied the wrong person. He should deny himself.

He said, I don't know you. But he denied the Lord. And how often we did the same thing.

Whenever our old man rises up, we should tell him, I don't know you. And then we take up the cross. And follow the Lord.

And by doing that, you find the Holy Spirit began to do the work of transformation in our lives. And he will gradually transform us from glory to glory. Even as by the Lord, the Spirit.

So this is the way how we enter into this heavenly life. Now brothers and sisters, when you read the Sermon on the Mount, what is your feeling? If you are honest, what is your feeling? Probably your feeling is being condemned. The more you read the Sermon on the Mount, the more condemned you become.

Now why is it so? It is because you take the Sermon on the Mount as a law. Because you take the Sermon on the Mount as a law. You want to follow it by your own way.

You find this is beyond you. But this is not the purpose of the Sermon on the Mount. The purpose of the Sermon on the Mount is actually an encouragement.

The purpose of the Sermon on the Mount is actually an encouragement. It shows us how wonderful is the life God has given to us. Or to put it more clearly, how wonderful is the Lord in us.

So it encourages us to discover Him. It encourages us to lead upon Him. To trust in Him.

Now if we really trust in Him, you will find this is the result. Now that is what the Sermon on the Mount is all about. That is what the Sermon on the Mount is all about.

So brothers and sisters, this morning, I have only one burden. And that is, I hope every brother and sister will see the Sermon on the Mount with a different viewpoint. Do not allow the Sermon on the Mount to condemn you.

But rather, let it encourage you. Knowing that with men it is impossible, but with God all things are possible. And if we can have this kind of attitude, then you go to read the Sermon on the Mount.

And whenever you find there is something lacking, you look to the Lord. And say, Lord, with me it is impossible, but with You it is possible. I want to put my confidence in You.

So may the Lord help us. Let us pray. Dear Lord, how we want to praise and thank Thee, because You love us so much.

You have not only given Your life to us, but You show us by Your Word how wonderful is that life, how practical is that life, how livable is that life. So dear Lord, we do ask Thee to enable us to really lean upon Thy life and let our lives be released from and through us that Thy name may be honored and glorified. Again, we commit ourselves to Thy Word.

And may Thy Holy Spirit lead us into all truth that Thou mayst be honored and glorified. We ask in Thy precious name. Amen.

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