

Sermon on the Mount

Matthew Chapter Five . Repudiating Religious Activity

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When Jesus gave this famous sermon, considered by many to be the masterpiece of all sermons, it is interesting to note some of the context. When it was given in the Jewish society in which He found Himself, He over and over again refudiated or came against some of the concepts and traditions which their society was built upon. He was clearly saying these *things are wrong. I have a better way.*

The Kingdom of God that our Lord was describing and began to elaborate on in this sermon on the mount was not just outward rules and outward manifestations. But rather the Kingdom is something that goes on in the *inside* of a man that Jesus was concerned about. The Kingdom of God is born in our hearts. It isn't born in our spoken prayers. It isn't born in any outward sign at all, a large steeple, or any fine Church building, robes or vestments, or any other physical attributes. It is built on something that is *inside of our hearts*. Jesus says that if it isn't happening in there then something is wrong, very wrong. The Kingdom of God is totally different from earthly concepts.

Jesus wanted to *shake up* the whole society and to say, "*Guys, you are going the wrong way! Everything that you were taught you put into the wrong context. You've perverted the true meaning. It was never meant to be an outward thing; it was always meant to be something from the inside. Things need to change. Things need to change drastically from the outward focus to an inward one. It doesn't negate at all the fruit of the Spirit, love, peace, joy etc. It doesn't negate the good works that the good fruits of the Spirit produce. But it means, if they are not coming from the heart, the inward man, then we are losing it. We are not really 'hitting the mark.'*"

When we have a refocusing from outward manifestations to inward heart-driven motivations, we see the tendency of our enemy to twist and pervert things becoming very real. He'd like you to think that is the wrong way to think. We may picture a cartoon character drawn with a devil on one side and an angel on the other side of the head, whispering back and forth. *But*, we don't have these "thought-police." Instead we have the Holy Spirit. He is there to convict and encourage as well, but He is *not like a hard task master* or a policeman to enforce what He wants you to do. Rather as Apostle Paul says, "*We have this mystery within us, the Holy Spirit.*" The Holy Spirit within us not just as a counselor to outweigh the remarks of the devil but One to embrace us from the inside! One to encourage us in our heart in the context of what we are thinking, doing and wanting on the inside. If you find yourself thinking the wrong things it isn't time to say you need better "thought-police." It is time to say, "*I need to change my heart.*"

So, if you have an enemy, if you are Republican you have an enemy. If you are a Democrat you have an enemy. What do you do with your response in the natural man? Is it one of anger, one of protection, etcetera, all kinds of things to protect ourselves from our enemy to have one up on him or her, to overcome them? If we haven't changed our heart something else happens. How we respond to our enemy isn't a list of do's and don'ts and what you should or shouldn't say. Something in your heart needs to change towards them. The Church is not called to be a curse. The Church has been called to be a blessing upon the earth. If it ever comes to a place where it is a curse, you know we are in a wrong place.

I thought to myself, *"Wow. That's just not going to happen. I'm not perfect. God didn't create me perfect."*

Another aspect of the Holy Spirit embracing our inner man (what this chapter is all about) is that we don't just hold on with all of our might to be righteous, feeling that somehow the enemy is going to take it from us. Rather, we let go and let the Holy Spirit do His work within us.

Let Go and Let God

Let's demonstrate this. How many people like country music? A few. I like country music a lot. Carrie Underwood sang a song *"Jesus Take the Wheel."* Have you heard of that one? It is about a young woman, a single mom. The kids are in the backseat and she's going home to be with the family. Things are bad and she is not making it, she's in the middle of a snow storm and the car goes into a spin. She yells out, *"Jesus, take the wheel! I'm letting go."* At that point she probably didn't have much of a choice, the car is spinning. You realize that the circumstances are too much for her. She cannot control the circumstances no matter how much she wants to. They are out of her control. *"Jesus, take the wheel! I'm letting go."* Let Him take over in the circumstances you find yourself in, thoughts of hate, animosity, thoughts of protection, thoughts you have in many circumstances. We want to have the best outcome. Well, God wants that too. But it is His car, His wheel. *"Jesus, I'm letting go!"* When you finally say that and do it from your heart, you are letting the Holy Spirit have His way, totally, freely to do whatever He wants to do in your life.

In my dream, the car spins around and as the train is coming down the tracks, headed for the collision, the car stops just short of the tracks. Only a nick of it hits the train as a sign that it is by the grace of God alone. We need to be reminded that it is by grace and only grace that we can do this. It is not by our own strength, our own will, our own ability to grasp ahold of His righteousness. But rather, *"Jesus, take the wheel. I'm letting go."*

How this happens we learn and read about in John 14, 15 and 16. We aren't going there but to let you know that when Jesus gives this sermon He doesn't mention very much about the Holy Spirit here in Matthew but it is clear that by the end of chapter five that the ONLY way that you can fulfill this kind of

Kingdom in your heart is by letting go and letting the Spirit rule in your life, letting the Spirit have His way, not your own way but His way. Isn't that good!?

The Sermon Begins

You are a blessing and not a curse.

Matthew 5¹³⁻¹⁴ You are the salt of the earth but if the salt becomes tasteless, how will it be made salty again? It is good for nothing any more except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world, a city set on a hill. It cannot be hidden . . .

So you cannot be hidden even if you wanted to be. The Holy Spirit within you just cannot be hidden.

15-16 Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a peck measure, but onto a lamp stand and it gives light to all those who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify (not you nor your work but glorify) your Father who is in heaven.

The people, even those who are not saved know what is going on and can tell within a second and a half what is really going on in your heart. You can say all the right words but if it is not coming from your heart, they get it and know that it is not true. The people that are the most successful in communicating God's heart are the ones who have God's heart, not because they are good speakers, not because they have the right words to say but because something within them is true and correct and cannot be changed. Isn't that good!?

Now it says that it cannot be hidden. We might be doing things to try and hide because we don't want people to find out the naked truth that we love Jesus. We don't want people to know that somehow. We want to be cool! When I was in the world I wanted to be cool. I don't want to be cool any more. I want to let Jesus take the wheel. If it makes me look uncool, fine. Let the tears come. Let the stories be real. Let them not speak lies.

This was different from the kingdom of the world. This was different from the Jewish society Jesus was speaking to and against. The Jewish society that He was speaking to believed the practices one did, carrying out the work of the law, doing good works, *but apart from the Spirit*, was doing God's will. In the New Testament these are called dead works. They may be good to society but they are dead because they are not born in Christ, not born by the heart of God which is within you and needs to be expressed and WILL BE expressed. That is the point. We are not out after the outcome only. When something is born in your heart, eventually whether you want it to be or not, it WILL BE expressed in good works. It cannot help but be expressed. When there is a nuclear reaction inside of a bomb it cannot be hidden. The effects are everywhere in just a few seconds.

So it is with you, when the Lord comes into your life, you cannot hide it. You are a blessing to the earth, a light to those who have no light. The light came into the darkness and the darkness did not understand it. But those that dwelt in the darkness said, “*This is a good thing, awesome!*” So when they see your life and the things you are doing they will know that it is not just because you are *doing* them but because something changed within you, in your heart. Some of them have no concept of this. They just think it is in your DNA. You can tell them it is just true. Long after your DNA protein ceases to exist, your soul will go to heaven to be resurrected on the last day when He returns and you will live forever.

Christ Fulfills the Law

The Law does not fulfill the Law but Christ does.

Matthew 17-18 Do not think that I came to destroy the law of the prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill it. For surely I say to you until heaven and earth pass away not one little part of it, jot or tittle, will by no means pass from the law until all is fulfilled.

Who is going to fulfill it? Jesus! How is He going to do that? He is going to do it by the Holy Spirit within you not by a written text of rules, of do's and don'ts. Remember the one law everybody seems to remember pretty well, “*Thou shalt not kill.*” I've never killed anyone but murder might have been there because hate and anger are the beginnings of it.

Murder Begins in the Heart

21-22 You have heard that it was said to those of old that you shall not murder and whoever murders will be in danger of judgment. But I say to you whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of judgment.

So there is a righteous anger but without cause, you will be just as guilty as one who murders.

22-23 Whoever says to his brother, “empty head or Raca” shall be in danger of the counsel. For whoever says “you fool” shall be in danger of hellfire. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift (your offering) before the altar and go your way and be reconciled to your brother.

So what is important? Not the outward act but something within your heart needs to be changed. Be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift, your sacrifice.

25-26 Agree with your adversary quickly while he is on the way lest your adversary deliver you to the judge and the judge hand you over to the officer and you be thrown into prison. For surely I say to you that you will by no means get out of there until you have paid the last penny of your debt.

So there is a concept here that something needs to be changed. There are all kinds of outcomes to anger. That's what this paragraph is all about. There are a lot of outcomes to anger, bitterness, strife, etc. All of them wind up in death. All of them wind up in judgments against you so what has to change? You could say, "*Well, I'll just stop being angry.*" That's not going to work either. The Holy Spirit has to embrace you to the point that your heart changes the anger into something else. You can do that sometimes just by confessing it with your mouth. You can feel it. Say, "*Lord, Holy Spirit, take over that anger in my life. Change it so it is not anger so that it is turned to something else that brings life and grace upon the earth, bringing a blessing even to my enemies.*"

Sexual Lust

The next one is one of the travesties of modern society with the beginning of Playboy magazine and Playboy philosophy which was saying sex was a good thing *all by itself*. It didn't have any other meaning except to own and possess and to want other material things. How terrible that our fathers accepted this and allowed that doctrine into our society at all. Before Hugh Hefner it didn't exist; sex all by itself was always considered a sin. Pornography was considered a sin. Jesus said, "*You have heard that it was said 'you shall not commit adultery.'*" (One of the ten commandments) *But I say to you whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*" Well, guys, how many of us are not guilty?! He talks about the aspect of judgment and what it will cause. We need to get rid of this thing at all costs. If your eye offends you, get rid of it. If your hand causes you to sin, cast it off. (Matthew 5:27-30)

You need to change but it is not the outward things; it is the inward things in your heart that need to change. When I worked in the ICU, every morning I was surrounded by ICU girls. They could be very attractive. Almost everybody in the hospital felt that way actually. The doctors would flirt with them. When I was off the floor, people would make jokes about them, etc. "*Wow. She really looks XXXX.*" And then she would be the subject of jests and jokes. I thought to myself what an absolute tragedy that we allowed that into our society, where we could let this become normal behavior amongst guys with testosterone. We all have it but it is for a God-given purpose of propagation, for the purpose of focusing love and attention to our wives and our children. It isn't to lust after another woman. Amen?

We need to settle this in our heart and keep on guard since this has been inbred and woven into our society to the point where almost all advertising is centered around sex and lust and adultery. The more risqué it could become, the better. Now it has passed the realm of male to female. Now it is male to male, female to female. And who knows what is next! The enemy will try to pervert, change and destroy what God has intended for good, what *God has intended for a blessing upon the earth!*

He repeats over and over again (verses 20, 22, 28, 32, 34, 38, 44), “. . . *but I say to you. . .*”

We’ve heard a lot of messages about what is okay, how to build the society, what are the tenants and fabric that makes our society. But Jesus says, “*NO. NO. NO. NO! There is a better way.*” Not just a better way but a Kingdom way. The Kingdom way is not just focused on the outside and the outward evidence, but it is focused on the inside so that the outward evidence is not fake but real!

Marriage is Sacred and Binding

³¹ “*Furthermore I say to you, whoever divorces his wife let him give to her a certificate of divorce;*”

What is this saying? Marriage has become just a contract. Now the word covenant is a good word in the bible; there is no question about it. However if it is reduced to just a paper contract, if it is reduced to that, you missed it! Your marriage is no longer a marriage at all. It becomes so easy to divorce somebody. “*Okay I’ll just give a certificate of divorce and go on. No problem.*” You can go to Vegas and do that. Right? As long as both persons are in agreement that this marriage is not working, the certificate is done. You walk away.

Well, marriage is a LOT more than that. If it breaks up there should be a lot of tears. There should be a lot of pain. It is sacred what God has done. He even refers to this as not being just about a relationship between and man and a woman, but it is a mystery of the relationship between Christ and the Church, a sacred relationship. Family is based upon that relationship. It shouldn’t end up with guys constantly thinking about adultery. It shouldn’t end up with a certificate of divorce. It should end up as submitting one to another, not just outwardly but from the heart. If I just love my wife outwardly, there is a huge hole, something missing.

When I express to her my love, I don’t just say, “*Cheryl, I love you,*” but my **heart** is saying, “*Cheryl, I love you.*” Out of that comes the words of expression of love in many different ways. One of which is, “*Cheryl, I love you,*” over and over again. In the middle of the night when she is not listening, fast asleep, I say it, because it is what is in my heart not just so she can hear it.

Jesus Forbids Oaths

An oath is when you swear that you are going to do something.

³³ *Again I say to you do not swear falsely but you shall preform your oaths to the Lord. (So you had to swear by God.) But I say to you this is wrong.*

I have made oaths before but it means nothing more to me than my “yes” and my “no.” Therefore when I say it I’m thinking, “*Lord do you want me to swear on the bible, ‘so help me God.’*” ? I pray before I even say those words that my yes is yes and my no is no. To fulfill this scripture I cannot just say

words outwardly but in reality to God. When I was a government servant, 27 years ago, before I was hired, I had to take an oath as all government servants have to do, whether a congressman or an aid to a congressman, or anybody in government service, that they would uphold the constitution of the United States of America, “*so help me God.*” I had to take that oath. When I did, I thought to myself, let my yes be yes and my no a no. Right. It is interesting to me how many people have taken that oath, “*so help me God,*” and don’t uphold the constitution at all.

So Jesus is saying here, “*You know what? That whole system doesn’t work. It is just an outward thing that is easily broken, like the divorce contract.*” Just write it off. It doesn’t mean anything to the individual. Rather if the truth is residing in your heart as He is the way, the truth and the life, when the truth is residing in your heart your yes is going to be yes because it is true! Your no is going to be no because it is not true. It happens in the heart so I have the *desire and want, and especially love the truth.* I can be a lover of the truth. To be a lover of the truth you must seek it out. I say to myself, “*You know I don’t know if that thing is true or not. Let me investigate. Let me pray. Let me understand the heart and the mind of God.*”

Go the Second Mile

When I was a little kid I read this and tried to put it into practice practically.

³⁸⁻³⁹ “*You have heard that it was said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you, ‘Do not resist the evil person but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also.’ ”*

So one day as I was in a playground, going to school, this kid hit me. I said, “*Go ahead and hit the other side!*” You know what he did? He hit me! My response was not to ever do that again! But this scripture is not speaking about an outward thing. He is speaking about an inward thing. You *don’t take offense* at the attack. How easy it is to take an offense. I have seen Godly men, some of the most Godly men I know, that when they are attacked will respond with a counter-offensive. They might walk away saying, “*I can’t take this any more.*”

Jesus says no. That is not what needs to be in your heart when you are under attack. You need to find the truth of what is going on. The attack will amount to nothing, nothing if God isn’t behind it. Why? Because the truth is the truth whether you defend it or not. In the end of matters, the truth will indeed be known. Those who are coming with lies *will become known* that they are liars. You don’t have to prove it. You don’t have to make a defense. You don’t have to attack back. God may ask you to say a few words; He may even ask you to defend it. But God does not want you to respond in kind with malice and hatred and anger.

Love Your Enemies

⁴³ *You have heard that it is said that you should love your neighbor and hate your enemy*

Sounds good. Some of you may understand this having come as children through the “Cold War” years. You were to hate Russians, love Americans. Do you remember in WWII we hated the Japanese, loved the Americans. So when I was a little kid, my brother and I would play with airplanes and we would build a little city and pretend it was Tokyo. We would take our bombers and bomb Tokyo! I was thinking about that and thought, “*Wow. This is so wrong.*” Now we love Japan and we love Germany, love Italians. In those days they were the axis of evil. They were certainly doing terrible things based on what the bible calls ambition and out of ambition comes EVERY evil work. So whether it is by a single human being or by a country, if it is being done by ambition, you will have problems.

But Jesus says, “*There is something wrong, Israel. There is something wrong, this society of Jews that I’m preaching to. There is something wrong with the way this whole fabric is woven into your society, the whole concept of hate and loving. You need to change.*” Wait a minute; they were building the Roman Empire. There wasn’t too much righteousness going on. In the Roman Empire they worshiped Caesar. He was considered a god.

Interestingly in Nagasaki, in which there was a Japanese village that was bombed by the United States by the Hydrogen bomb (one of the first) there was terrible calamity. There was a small congregation, one of the few Christian congregations in Nagasaki that prayed first of all that the emperor would admit that he was not god and secondly that there would be an end to the war. Ground zero where that bomb landed was on their Catholic Church building. There were a few survivors who had been away visiting other towns when it happened, so they could tell us the story. The bell and the steeple of the Church still survive there today, standing as a monument of the answered prayer of that congregation.

There was something in their heart that was different than everyone else who was there, to hate your enemy and to love yourself. But these people said this was wrong. “*We need the Kingdom of God in our life and in this country and in the world!*” They didn’t ask for their Church to be bombed. There were bombers that were headed into Tokyo that day but the weather was so bad that they had to divert to the secondary target, this small village. It was by happenstance that they ended up as the target. Yet God knew that He was going to answer their prayer. Are you ready for God to answer your prayer that way? I’m not. But God can answer prayers in ways that we do not expect. We think, “*That just cannot be God.*” But, look at the outcome. Look at what is going on in people’s hearts. The emperor did end up saying that he was not God and peace was brought forth upon the earth.

Jesus says,⁴⁴ *“but I say to you love your enemies.”*

How DO you love your enemies? Not just by saying, *“Well I forgive you and love you,”* outwardly. But something has to happen on the inside.

Bless those who curse you.

Don't bring another curse upon the earth. Bring a blessing. Do good to those who hate you. There aren't just bad things in their heart. They HATE you. Jesus says in the beginning of this, *“They hated Me before they hated you. Don't be surprised. We are in this together.”* There is hate out there. There are people who want me, personally, dead. They want me dead. They don't even know me but if they were to hear this sermon today, hear the things that I'm preaching, teaching about love and mercy, grace, God is the only answer, they would be more than just a little upset. They would hate and do hate. They hate white men, period, nevermind what I believe. Sad that could happen today when we think that racism is dead. It is very much alive.

He says to love your enemies and then what? Bless those who curse you. They are not just standing around and hating you but *“are right in your face!”* Do good to those who **hate** you. Pray for them who spitefully use you, persecute you; pray for them.

All right. *What is prayer?* Prayer is talking to God. So what are you going to be talking to Him about? Your enemies. What are you going to say to Him about them? *“Bless them with a brick.”* NO. That's not a change of the Holy Spirit in your heart! It might be what I'd want but . . . *“Turn their own weapons against them”* You can do that too but that's not my prayer. That's not when I'm talking to God about them. I've had enemies in my life, despising me. They didn't want me around. My prayer to God for them was that He would change their heart. That's number one that God would be in the process of changing their heart. Change the circumstances in their life to show them that what is in their heart is wrong and show them what is true and right in the Holy Spirit. Even if some of them don't have the Spirit, I will pray it anyway. The blessing of the Lord can come even to the unrighteous. The rain falls on the just and the unjust. Keep that in mind.

And so, I pray for the blessing of God upon them physically that the Lord would bless them. Wow. There is a change in my heart of HOW I pray. Remember I'm not just praying words. I'm praying and talking to God about them. Next time I see them I don't say, *“I've been praying for you.”* For them it might seem like a curse. Rather I say, *“I talked to God about you.”* They don't know what you are talking about. *“Really. What did you say?”* *“I asked Him to bless you and to change your mind and to bring into focus something different than hate against me, or a curse against me. Rather that you would know the true path you are supposed to be on.”*

Now it is beginning to make sense to me, what this chapter is about.

44-48 Pray for those who spitefully use you that you may be the Kingdom of God people, the sons of your Father in Heaven for He makes the sun rise on the evil and on the good. He sends the rain on the just and the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward is there for you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If I greet only brethren when do you do more than others? Do not even tax gatherers do the same? Therefore I say to you . . .

Be Perfect as Your Father is Perfect

This is scripture is the last one here but the most difficult to understand.

. . . therefore I say to you be PERFECT just as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Now the Apostle Paul didn't say that. John didn't say that. Nor Luke, etc. None of the writers of the New Testament would have said that. These are the words of JESUS Himself.

Therefore you shall be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.

I thought to myself, "*Wow. That's just not going to happen.*" I'm not perfect. God didn't create me perfect. Some people try to "*speak it into existence.*" NO. It really means this word "perfect" is translated more accurately as "**whole.**" You shall be whole just as your heavenly Father is whole. Healed just as your heavenly Father is totally well. You shall be whole and perfect in that way. I still say, "*How can that be?*" I'm full of imperfections in the natural and sometimes my spirit just wants to go the wrong way. Romans 8 says that if your spirit wants to go the wrong way you have to DIE to the flesh. Die to it and embrace the Spirit of God. You were called to be sons of our God most high. You are called into the Kingdom of God. This is where it is focused. The only way that can happen is if you embrace the Holy Spirit INSIDE and say, "***Jesus, take the wheel! I'm letting go.***" I'm letting go of trying to make enemies understand and trying to not commit adultery and trying to not murder and say to people, "*What a crazy person that is driving down the road.*"

You cannot read this sermon without saying, "*Boy, this is impossible!*" I said something at home the other day and had to apologize to my grandson, "*I shouldn't have said that. I'm so sorry.*" But even if you say "fool" you are guilty before the court. "Crazy driver!" Whatever. It doesn't matter what. Those things shouldn't be in your heart. If you do say them, examine your heart and say, "*Why am I saying that?*" The Lord will say, "*That's what's in your heart.*" Out of the mouth comes what is IN your heart. So, I don't just try to stop saying "you fool." I try to say, "*No. He is not a fool.*" God did not create him that way. God created him to be whole and complete, he's just not there yet. Neither are we.

And so, Jesus said these things. You shall be perfect. You shall be whole because it IS possible for you to live this Kingdom life here and now. It is possible to take all of those things that society is built on and throw them away as rub-

bish. They are just outward things, rubbish. Now He says the Kingdom of God is not established on the outward things at all. It is established on the inward things in your heart and as the Holy Spirit takes over and starts driving the car, things are going to be different in your life. Let go and let God. The Kingdom rules are totally different from the rules of this society. The Kingdom focuses on the inward character not the outward character. It is the inward character which will bring to birth truth's reality to the outward character. Not the other way around. It isn't just by positive confessions or positive thinking that we get this done. This comes against a lot of people who think that we just need to say the positive thing and have a good confession.

It is MORE than just a good confession. It is about the Holy Spirit changing what is going in our individual hearts. Isn't that true? Yes. It sure is. It doesn't negate the outcome of the fruit of the Spirit at all. In fact that is exactly what fruit of the Spirit means. The fruits are going to be good works. It cannot help but be a good work. The Church is called to be a blessing and not a curse. This can only happen if there is change on the inside.

People may say, "*The Church has to be relevant to the society.*" It has to have programs in place which will minister to our society. But Jesus says No. **Society has got to get relevant to the Kingdom of God.** How does that happen? As the Church becomes a blessing upon the earth. How does that happen? The Church has to change its heart to not just DOING good things, but have a *heart of blessing* upon the earth in which it walks. Whether it is our own "Kid's Zone," work, your job, school, the people you meet every day. It doesn't matter what. It is what is in our heart that matters. This will effect everything we do! This is good.

You are the salt of the earth. *If salt loses its flavor . . .* What does that really speak about? Flavor is not just what you do or say, but it is *how* you say it and where it is coming from. The people of the world know where the flavor is coming from. Is this true or are you just saying that?! Do you know how I know this?

My daughter's cocker spaniel taught me this. How could this be? Just so, if I am angry on the inside, when I walk into my home that dog knows within two seconds or less that Grandad is angry! He knows what is happening in my heart not just by outward actions. But he is looking (as a DOG mind you) into what is going on in my spirit. He responds accordingly. "*Whoa. Watch out. Stay out of his way.*" If a dog can do it, you don't think people can too? Absolutely. They sure can. You don't think your children can know what's inside? People do know. That's the whole point.

We are going to pray this morning that God will miraculously do this because we cannot do it in ourselves. It is a fact that Jesus Christ called us as a Church to come into this Kingdom of Heaven which is perfect out there in the universe . . . to bring it right into our hearts, start there, change those things which are wrong. If there is malice, anger, bitterness? Let God take the wheel.

Circumstances can be pretty mean. They can be unrelenting, unforgiving. But you are to be forgiving, not angry but full of love and mercy. For that to happen we need the wisdom of God. That can only happen through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore when Jesus taught this sermon to be perfect, the only way for that to happen is if you embrace the gospel of John, chapters 14, 15 and 16, by the Holy Spirit within you. It is the only way that can happen and John knew and understood that. And the writers of the New Testament knew and understood that. It was evident in Jesus' life but when He gave that sermon, there was no way the listening congregation could understand, since at that point in time the Holy Spirit was not yet given in power, even to His disciples. So Jesus was speaking down the ages to us, the Church today, the Church which finds itself in this evil society, the Church which finds itself with all kinds of stuff woven into the fabric of our society, which are wrong. Jesus wants us to embrace the Kingdom of heaven which is in our hearts. Amen.

Let's Pray: Father, we thank you this morning for the work of the Holy Spirit within us. We are just a small congregation but it doesn't matter if there were only one or two. We can understand the Kingdom of heaven and what You are here to do in our hearts. Lord, we pray that it wouldn't just be words from my mouth or theirs. But it would be a work of the Holy Spirit within us to bring Your love upon the earth in a way that would be a blessing that cannot be ignored any longer. We know the enemy is more than concerned. He is bleeding from the attack of the Church upon him. For we have led the charge to bring God's mercy upon the earth in a way that it has never been done before. The enemy is doing everything he can to prevent us from hitting the target. Well, Lord, we pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit we would hit the target ON THE MARK! Every time, in Jesus' name. Amen.