

The Sermon on the Mount  
(Lesson 5)

Introduction:

1. In His Sermon Jesus had much to say about how He wants His followers to live.
  - a. In the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12) He revealed certain traits He wants us to possess.
  - b. Beginning at vs.21 He presented a number of commands that are quite challenging.
2. There are various ways in which we can respond to the Lord's teachings.
  - a. We can refuse to obey Him.
  - b. We can pick and choose which commands we will obey.
  - c. We can claim to obey but actually disobey as King Saul did.
  - d. We can do what He instructs us to do.
3. The information in Matthew 5:17-20 will help us have the right approach to doing His will.

Discussion:

- I. (vs.17-18) JESUS FIRST TALKED ABOUT HIS OWN RESPONSE TO GOD'S LAW
  - A. (vs.17) Jesus did not come to destroy the Law of Moses or the writings of the prophets.
    1. Rather than destroy them, He came to fulfill them.
    2. In order to fulfill them He submitted to their teachings and obeyed them.
      - a. He was the only one who ever kept the Law of Moses perfectly.
      - b. He also fulfilled all the prophecies made about Him by the prophets.
    3. This is significant because Jesus was accused of disobeying the law (Matthew 12:10-11).
    4. After saying that He did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, . . .
  - B. (vs.18) Jesus said that the smallest fraction of the law would not pass until all was fulfilled.
    1. Jesus had great respect for God's law (Luke 16:17).
    2. In order to fulfill the law Jesus had to suffer a horrible death.
    3. Even though Jesus had all authority as God's Son, He suffered crucifixion on the cross rather than change one small part of the law.
  - C. Since Jesus had such high regard and respect for the Law of Moses that was imperfect, shouldn't we respect and obey His perfect law?
  - D. In teaching the right way to respond to His commands, Jesus first talked about His own response to God's law.
- II. (vs.19) JESUS CONTRASTED 2 RESPONSES TO HIS COMMANDS
  - A. One response is to "break" [disobey] God's commands and to teach others to disobey them.
    1. This was not the Lord's approach.
    2. Jesus said that those who disobey and teach others to disobey will be called least in the kingdom.
  - B. The other response is to "do" [obey] God's commands and to teach others to obey them.
    1. This was the Lord's approach (see Acts 1:1).
    2. Those who respond in this way will be called great in the kingdom.
  - C. We learn from this contrast that there is a wrong way and a right way to respond to God's commands.
- III. (vs.20) JESUS WARNED AGAINST THE RESPONSE OF THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES
  - A. Unless our righteousness exceeds theirs, we will not be able to be a part of the kingdom.
  - B. These people were guilty of disobeying certain commandments and teaching others to disobey them.
    1. (Matthew 23:23) They liked to pick and choose the commandments they would obey.
    2. (Mark 7:9-13) They kept their traditions rather than God's law.
  - C. The Lord teaches us not to follow their example.
  - D. In avoiding the mistake of the scribes and Pharisees we must maintain the right attitude when we do God's will (Luke 17:10).