

## CHAPTER 7: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT (W7)

Having taught the church how she is to practice pure religion (loving God), Jesus now turns his admonitions on matters between brothers and sisters within the household of God (loving neighbor): how we are to live amongst one another (and the world).

- (7:1–12) Mercy Not Judgment, Expectant Supplication, and The Golden Rule
- (7:13–23) Narrow Way, False Prophets, and True Disciples
- (7:24–29) Building the Church on the Word of Jesus

### Judging Others

**1** “Judge not, that you be not judged. **2** For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. **3** Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? **4** Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye? **5** You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and **then you will see clearly** to take the speck out of your brother's eye.

The Church and her discipline is in view (not secular matters). Christ gives the church authority to expel sinners but only under extreme circumstances when all attempts to move the sinful member to repentance fail (18:15-18).

Jesus is not forbidding judgment, but commands to look inward first, to remove sins, ‘taking the log’ out first. For what if one be judged? It should be one who commits no such sin.

His injunction therefore in these words is as follows, that he who is chargeable with countless evil deeds, should not be a bitter censor of other men's offenses, and especially when these are trifling. He is not overthrowing reproof nor correction, but forbidding men to neglect their own faults, and exult over those of other men. (Chrysostom). The goal is always to bring sinners to repentance for healing and reunion- not condemnation.

## **Do Not Profane the Holy**

**6** “Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.

In the Old Testament “what is holy” & “that which is holy” is meat offered in sacrifice (Exodus 29:33; Lev. 2:3).

“Dogs” like “Swine” become a metaphor for gentiles within Judaism (Mat 15:26-27). Do not give that which is most precious and holy to swine or dogs.

What is ‘that’? The Eucharist, the Holy Communion (Didache Ch. 9; 1 Cor 10:9; Heb 13:9). Jesus is warning the church. This is to safeguard against destroying the community as a sacred fellowship.

## **Ask, and It Will Be Given**

**7** “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened. **9** Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? **11** If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

We mustn’t miss the connection of asking the Father to feed us with the heavenly bread, for the liturgy is but one prayer for God the Father to meet us, feed us, and heal us. And, we also find a general rule for corporate prayer: we ask, seek, and knock knowing our Father in heaven is the giver of every good gift!

## **The Golden Rule**

**12** “So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Jesus applies this not only to the household of God but any and all we live amongst and encounter.

## **A Tree and Its Fruit**

**13** “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. **14** For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

There are two ways a man can go (Ps 1). The way or road in the OT is the way of righteousness (Dt 11:26-28; 30:15-18; Jer 21:8)

The narrow gate is the way of Christ, “I am the gate” which leads to life. It is in the imitation of Christ, the hard way, that leads to life.

## **A Tree and Its Fruit**

**15** “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. **16** You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles? **17** So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. **18** A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. **19** Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. **20** Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

Beware of false prophets and teachers who only wish to devour the church.

## **I Never Knew You**

**21** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ **23** And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Lawlessness connotes a wicked hardening of the heart (24:12), indeed ultimate evil (2 Cor 6:14; 2 Thess 2:3, 7; 1 John 3:4). Do not be self-deceived but examine your life, your heart, your intentions that you may not be excluded from the Reign of God.

## **Build Your House on the Rock**

**24** “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. **26** And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. **27** And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Hearers and Doers, that we might be known to God (see above).

The church is wise to put into practice that which Jesus has spoken (this sermon), for doing the things of Christ is to ground the church on the rock, Christ himself. A house built upon any other foundation shall not stand.

### **The Authority of Jesus**

**28** And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, **29** for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

This conclusion brings us back to the beginning (5:1) and reminds us that Jesus is speaking to the crowds, not only to the disciples: all that are wise will heed the words of Christ.

“And when Jesus finished these sayings” concludes the 1st of 5 discourses. Like Moses, Jesus then (8:1) descends from the mount of Divine revelation, followed by a great throng of people, a picture of the new people of God (both Jew and Gentile), a people charged with the promise of beatitude.

## **Chapter 9: Instruction regarding the Eucharist.**

9:1 But as touching the Eucharistic thanksgiving give you thanks thus.

9:2 First, as regards the cup:

9:3 We give You thanks, O our Father, for the holy vine of Your son David, which You made known to us through Your Son Jesus;

9:4 Yours is the glory for ever and ever.

9:5 Then as regards the broken bread:

9:6 We give You thanks, O our Father, for the life and knowledge which You did make known to us through Your Son Jesus;

9:7 The glory is Yours for ever and ever.

9:8 As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and being gathered together became one, so may Your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Your kingdom;

9:9 For Yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever and ever.

9:10 But let no one eat or drink of this Eucharistic thanksgiving, except those who have been baptized into the name of the Lord;

9:11 For concerning this also the Lord has said:

9:12 Give not that which is holy to the dogs.

## **Chapter 1: Teaching of the Two Ways**

1:1 There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between the two ways.

1:2 The way of life is this.

1:3 First of all, Love God who made you;

1:4 Secondly, Love your neighbor as you love yourself.

1:5 Do not do anything to another you would not want to befall yourself.

1:6 Now of these words the doctrine is this.

1:7 Bless those who curse you, pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you;

1:8 For what thanks do you deserve, if you love them that love you? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? But do love those who hate you, and you will not have an enemy.

1:9 Abstain from fleshly and bodily lusts.

Compare 1 Peter 2:11, "abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

1:10 If any man give you a blow on your right cheek, turn the other to him also, and you will be flawless;

1:11 If a man compel you to go one mile with him, go two with him;

1:12 If a man take away your cloak, give him also your coat;

1:13 If a man takes away from you that which is your own, do not ask it back, for you are unable to do that.

1:14 Give to every man that asks of you and do not ask it back;  
1:15 For the Father desires that gifts be given to all from His own bounties.  
1:16 Blessed is he that gives according to the commandment;  
1:17 For he is guiltless.  
1:18 Woe to him that receives;  
1:19 For, if a man in need receives, he is guiltless;  
1:20 But he that has no need shall give satisfaction why and wherefore he received;  
1:21 And being put in confinement he shall be examined concerning the deeds that he has done, and he shall not come out from there until he has given back the last penny.  
1:22 Yea, as touching this also it is said;  
1:23 Let your alms sweat in your hands, until you will have learned to whom to give.

### **Chapter 11: Marks of true and false apostles, prophets, teachers, etc.**

11:1 Whoever therefore shall come and teach you all these things that have been said before, receive him;  
11:2 But if the teacher himself be perverted and teach a different doctrine to the destruction thereof, hear him not;  
11:3 But if to the increase of righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord, receive him as the Lord.  
11:4 But concerning the apostles and prophets, do according to the ordinance of the Gospel.  
11:5 Let every apostle, when he comes to you, be received as the Lord;  
11:6 But he shall not abide more than a single day, or if there be need, a little more.  
11:7 But if he abide three days, he is a false prophet.  
11:8 And when he departs, let the apostle receive nothing except bread, until he finds shelter;  
11:9 But if he asks for money, he is a false prophet.  
11:10 And you shall not put to a test nor discern any prophet speaking in the Spirit;  
11:11 For every sin shall be forgiven, but this sin shall not be forgiven.  
11:12 Yet not every one that speaks in the Spirit is a prophet, but only if he have the ways of the Lord.  
11:13 From his ways therefore the false prophet and the prophet shall be recognized.  
11:14 And no prophet when he orders a table in the Spirit shall eat of it;  
11:15 Otherwise he is a false prophet.  
11:16 And every prophet teaching the truth, if he does not what he teaches, is a false prophet.  
11:17 And every prophet approved and found true, if he does anything as an outward mystery typical of the Church, and yet does not teach you to do all that he himself does, shall not be judged before you;  
11:18 He has his judgment in the presence of God;  
11:19 For in old times the prophets did the same.  
11:20 And whoever shall say in the Spirit, Give me silver or anything else, you shall not listen to him;  
11:21 But if he tell you to give on behalf of others that are in need, let no man judge him.