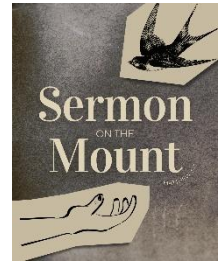


The Sermon on the Mount: Introduction

Lesson 1: September 15 & 16

Read Matthew 5:1–2



Sermon Reflection Question: What captured your attention from Sunday's sermon?

1. As Jesus begins his ministry in Mt. 4:17–24, what is the message of his ministry and to whom?

Jesus presents his teachings in the Sermon on the Mount in continuity with the thought categories of the Hebrew Bible: Torah (Law/Instruction), Prophecy, and Wisdom.

The Sermon as Torah (Law/Instruction):

2. *Jesus' impact to the audience:* Jesus "went up on the mountain", (v. 1).
 - a. Refer to Exodus 24:12. What is the significance of this action to the Jewish audience? Feel free to refer to the Deeper Discoveries.
 - b. Why is it important for us to view Jesus as the "Greater Moses", rather than just as a teacher? See Hebrews 3:3–6.
3. How does Jesus present himself and his teachings from Matthew 5:17 & 7:28–29?

Jesus is presented as a new Moses, teaching a renewed torah/law/instruction for the people of God. People are not shocked that Jesus is teaching something foreign or new. They are amazed that he is assuming to have the same divine authority as the God of Israel, summoning Israel to allegiance to him as the way to be faithful to Israel's God.

Jesus didn't give this sermon to set an impossible standard that no one could ever follow—he gave it as a real, practical guide for how God desires ordinary people to live every day.

4. The phrase "opened his mouth" (v. 2) often precedes a weighty, divine revelation in Scripture. What are your impressions of the teachings of Jesus? Do you view them as a set of "suggestions," or as an explanation of God's will for your life? Why?
5. Jesus is the "Word made flesh" (John 1:14). Why must His spoken teaching be the final authority for the believer's life and ethics?
6. Imagine yourself participating in this mountaintop classroom today. What thoughts, feelings, or questions do you have as you place yourself under the teachings of Jesus?

The Sermon as Prophetic: J

Jesus' main message, summarized a few sentences before the sermon begins, is "the Kingdom of God has come near" (Mt. 4:17).

The restorative reign of God, announced by Jesus, was the fulfillment of Moses and the prophets' anticipation of a "new covenant" where God's will, revealed in the Torah, would be "written on the hearts" of his people.

7. How does Jeremiah 31:31–34 and Ezekiel 36:26–27 explain how Jesus will fulfill the Torah and the Prophets (Mt. 5:17?)
8. The disciples "came to him" (v. 1). John 6:44 tells us that no one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws them. In what way does this affect how you approach the Word, Jesus?
9. Jesus is the Prophet who connects God's Law (Torah) to the human heart. What is one specific area in your life (money, politics, family) where the Holy Spirit is already tugging on your heart to be refocused by Christ's teaching?

The Sermon as Wisdom:

Jesus is showing up as the ultimate source of wisdom—just like the "Lady Wisdom" and King Solomon we read about in Proverbs. He's telling everyone, "If you want the good life and true blessings, follow my teachings." By doing this, he forces the people of his time to make a choice: are they going to listen to him or not?

10. Wisdom literature is an evidence-based worldview. Compare how Jesus presents wisdom in Matthew 7:13–14 & Matthew 7:24–27 to Proverbs 1:7 & Proverbs 4:10–11. Where is true wisdom found and what does it lead to?
11. When we position ourselves as students before Jesus, we open ourselves to receive His Wisdom. How does this posture as a student change your view of Jesus as a "Prophet or King"?
12. Matthew 5:1–2 sets the stage for a "kingdom culture" that is upside-down compared to the world. As a "covenant community," how can we better support one another in living out the radical demands Jesus is about to speak? (See Hebrews 10:24-25).