

To carefully and fully analyze this topic of Jesus and His teaching, we would need to expound every bit of the four gospels. That can't be done in a short amount of time, so what we study tonight will be a brief overview of some things regarding Jesus' teaching.

What I believe we will learn about this topic is this:

JESUS CHRIST TAUGHT ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, AND HOW ONE RESPONDS TO WHAT JESUS TAUGHT IS A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH.

Jesus, being God in human flesh (Col. 2:9), was the master teacher. Jesus claimed that what He spoke was of direct instruction from God the Father (John 12:49). He also made clear, "everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 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. (Matthew 7:24-25)" Jesus declared: those who listen and respond properly to what He said would be wise with a strong and stable foundation for life on this earth and for eternity beyond this earth.

The way I'd like us to study Jesus' teaching is to observe facts about Jesus' teaching. Only 4 facts will be brought up tonight; we will continue this message in part 2 next time.

Fact #1 - Jesus' ministry was primarily a ministry of teaching.
Matthew 4:17, 23; 5:2

Jesus came as a teacher of the truth of God. The term we often see in the Bible is the term rabbi.
John 1:38

Jesus came to teach, and He was known by the masses and even by His closest followers as a teacher. Jesus may have been a healer. He may have been a miracle worker. He may have been a personal display of the righteousness of God. But of primary importance, Jesus was a teacher. His ministry centered on the fact that He was a teacher. Jesus came to teach the truth of God. It has been well noted that the Bible is the written word of God (**2 Timothy 3:16**), and Jesus is the living Word of God (**John 1:1**).

If Jesus is the teacher, we ought to be the learners. I want us to realize this. Although Jesus came as a great example, His primary ministry was not to set an example for us to follow. Jesus' primary ministry was to teach us the truth of God for us to learn the truth of God, making our primary responsibility to learn from Him.

Fact #2 - Jesus' teaching was bold and it included rebukes, warnings, and calls to serious commitment to Him.

When Jesus taught, His words cut to the souls of men and women. Jesus was no shy teacher. Jesus taught piercing truth that convicted people. He did not shy away from sin and its consequences. Jesus was a brave teacher. He wasn't afraid to tell it like it is. He wasn't afraid of what people would think. He told it straight, and He didn't care if it made people angry.

Matthew wrote that Jesus amazed people, because He taught with authority unlike the scribes (**Matthew 7:29**). He taught with confidence. He had come from heaven (**John 6:38**). He knew what He was talking about (**John 3:11**).

And Jesus didn't beat around the bush. He didn't dance around the truth. He told it straight. Jesus rebuked the religious leaders straight to their face. **Luke 11:39-44**

Jesus never shied away either from warning people about the consequences of their sin (John 8:21-24).

Jesus' teaching was never intended to gain Him a large following of a bunch of half hearted people. He didn't want that. His teaching clearly indicated, "I am after the few who are serious about God, His Word, and the things of heaven." **Luke 14:25-33**

Jesus didn't just say rebuking words to Pharisees and religious leaders, He even rebuked believers of the church age. **Revelation 3:14-19**

I think we can learn a powerful lesson when we read of the harsh things Jesus would say to people. The rebukes and warnings of Jesus shouldn't make us proud of ourselves, they should make us get down on our knees and confess our own guilt and sin and hypocrisy.

Jesus was a teacher who called it like it is, and we are to be learners of him. We would be wise to call it like it is to God. Jesus wants us to confess our guilt and our sin before God. When we humble ourselves before Him because the truth of his word has convicted us, that is when He will start to use us and that is when He does great things in our lives.

Fact #3 - Jesus' teaching was also gentle and merciful, full of grace and good news.

The message of Jesus to those who refuse to acknowledge the truth about themselves before the Holy God is, "you're headed to judgment." But at the same time, the message of Jesus to those who do acknowledge the truth and who do place their faith in Christ for salvation is a message that is comforting, gentle, gracious, merciful, and is a message that provides joy.

Jesus taught that He had come to give life abundantly (**John 10:10**). Jesus taught about the full joy of God being in a person and made full (**John 15:10-11**). Jesus' teaching promoted rejoicing. He told his disciples in **Luke 10:20** that they were to rejoice because they had a spot in heaven.

How was it they had a spot in heaven? Jesus had thought on that in **John 6:40**. Jesus provides the greatest message of all. He taught good news (gospel) of grace (unmerited favor). There is no greater comfort in the world than to know that when we heard the message of salvation, when we heard that Jesus died and rose again for us and we believed in Him, at that very moment, we were forgiven of all our sins, our sins were washed away, and we gained eternally a placement in heaven (**Ephesians 1:13**).

Jesus' words are harsh to those who reject the truth. People who reject the truth often hate the words of Jesus. But for those of us who acknowledge, "Yes, I am a sinner and I need a Savior. I can't earn heaven. I need Christ to gift it to me.." To those people, Jesus' words are comforting.

His gentle teaching and gentle words brought children and kids in to hear the good news that God loves this world and is on a mission to save people of this world. **Luke 18:15-17**

We need to know that Christ is gentle to those who come to him in humble honesty. His teaching will build us up in joy, peace, and confidence in this life and the next, so long as we listen to what He has taught, and we acknowledge that He is right when we have been wrong, and we need Him to make us right. When we say that, Jesus says, "now that is the type of person I can work with."

Fact #4 - Jesus taught about distinct subjects.

It is important for us to realize that Jesus' teaching was not all directed at the same group of people. Jesus had distinctions in His subject material. He also had distinctions in His audience. Sometimes what Jesus said was directed at Israel and pertained the Kingdom, while other times, what Jesus said was directed at church age believers and pertained to the church.

Failing to recognize these distinctions in Jesus' teaching can lead a person to all kinds of confusion. If a person reads the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 thinking this is how to get to heaven, that person will be confused about salvation and won't have a grasp on the grace of God, the law of God, or the Kingdom age. If a person started reading Matthew 24-25 thinking that Jesus was speaking about how the church age would end, that person would be confused about the rapture and would start to think that the church will enter the wrath of God in the tribulation period. It is important to recognize these distinctions.

Jesus came into this world during a critical time, and He had three major programs of God to juggle all at the same time (Law, Church, Kingdom). Jesus' life and death signaled the end of the Law age. The law of Moses would be done away when Jesus nailed it to His cross, and the church would be officially established in just a matter weeks after

Jesus' death on the cross. Pivoting on Jesus' life, death and resurrection, we have a major transition in the program of God from law age to grace/church age. While that transition is happening, there is a third program of God that is at play. That age would be called the Kingdom. The Kingdom age is the age of time that was predicted in the Old Testament to come for Israel in the future. The kingdom age essentially said this: Israel's messiah is going to come and reign on this earth and make Israel a great kingdom, and it would be a reign of righteousness and peace. When Jesus came to this world, He came presenting that Kingdom to Israel and He was declaring, "I am your King." We read earlier in **Matthew 4:23** that Jesus was going through all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom.

Jesus initially began His ministry by presenting a good news message about the Kingdom for Israel. Jesus was preaching, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (**Matthew 4:17**).\" That is how the book of Matthew begins. Jesus begins talking about the Kingdom, and He teaches Kingdom standards and Kingdom qualifications in His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. He was teaching Israel, \"If you want to be fit for the kingdom, this is what the standards of the kingdom are.\"

Then in **Matthew 12**, we see a significant transition taking place. Jesus announces that the leaders of the Jews had reached their climax in their rejection of Jesus, and from that point on, He begins a transition in His teaching. Jesus began with discussing a kingdom for Israel in chapter 4, but by the time we get to chapter 16 Jesus has totally stopped presenting Israel a kingdom, and He said in **Matthew 16:18**, \"I will build my church.\" The church is different than the kingdom. This church that Jesus is teaching about in Matthew 16 is something brand new. This is not an earthly kingdom for Israel that Jesus originally was presenting, this is a spiritual people gathered from all over the world, not just Israel, to be citizens of heaven.

So during the life of Jesus, the Bible has a transition from the Law age of Moses and the Nation Israel, to the church age of people from the entire world, but in all of this, there was a kingdom age that was presented to Israel but Israel rejected her King and her kingdom.

Three programs of God are all presented in the teachings of Jesus, and it is important that we discern the distinctions between the three.

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