

Living Jesus

Extra Teaching Points

Chapter 2 (week 1)

[Matt. 5:3 Poor in spirit.](#)

- If a person is *spiritually* poor, they realize they have nothing but an open hand... they have nothing of worth to offer to God.
 - Peter thought he had nothing to offer Jesus but embarrassment ([Luke 5:8](#)).
- A beggar is not a proud person; they are humble; they realize they need help; and have nothing to offer anyone else.
 - Christians can't walk the way God wants them to walk unless God gives them the ability to ([1Cor. 4:7](#)).
 - They have to trust God--not their own ability ([Matt. 7:7-8](#)).

In [Luke 18:9-14](#) Jesus told a parable to address people who were confident in their own righteousness.

- People who are poor in spirit are people who humble themselves ([Luke 18:14](#)).

The Bible speaks frequently about the blessing of having a low opinion of yourself.

- High self-esteem is often recommended today; but the Bible makes no such recommendation.
 - [Romans 12:3](#); [1Cor. 1:26-31](#); [Phil. 2:3-9](#) all stand in sharp contrast to popular pursuit of high self-esteem.
- God gets all the glory because we have brought nothing of value to the relationship!

[Matt. 5:4 Those who Mourn.](#)

Those who mourn are the suffering--those whose life, from a worldly point of view, is an unhappy one, and particularly those who suffer for their loyalty to God ([Matt. 5:10-12](#)).

There are all types of mourning. Not all mourning is good; some forms of mourning are just plain selfish ([2Cor. 7:10-11](#)).

- **Wallowing in self-pity or self-disappointment is not blessed!**

Mourning could also be about repenting.

- [James 4:7-10](#) says mourning is about being grieved about sin.
 - Mourning over sin, and grieving because you have offended God could be what is intended here.
- Godly sorrow is the kind of mourning that is blessed.
 - Do you see sin from God's standpoint, or yours?
 - Do you see your sin as God being cheated and offended?
 - Do you see other people's sin as God being cheated and offended?

Who is it that comforts those who mourn?

- [2Cor. 1:3-7](#) talks about God's comfort.

[Matt. 5:5 The Meek.](#)

Those who do not throw their weight around, but rely on God to make things right.

- Jesus' meekness is stressed by Matthew ([11:29](#); [12:15-21](#); [21:5](#)).

"Meek" means "gentle, tender, and free from pride."

- A meek person is a gentle person... they handle other people gently... they don't push other people around.
 - A self-assertive or pushy person is just the opposite.

- The person who pushes to have their way is not meek.
 - The one who defers to others is meek.
- Meekness is strength under control--able to sacrifice having your own way.
 - Meekness is being willing to give up your rights to let someone else have their way. ([Matt. 5:39-43](#))
- **[Romans 15:1-3](#) Paul tells us about how to be meek.**

Biblically, you can't be strong unless you are meek.

- Moses was one of the strongest leaders ever, and was also meek above all others ([Num. 12:3](#)).
 - A cowardly, timid person is not really meek; they may just be insecure or weak.

What does it mean to inherit the earth?

Jesus could be referring to the spiritual earth or Kingdom of Heaven, but He might have meant the physical earth.

- There will be a new heaven and a new earth, and people in His Kingdom will be reigning with Him ([1Peter 3:13](#); [Rom. 8:21-22](#)).
 - Cesar, Napoleon, Hitler and others have tried to inherit the earth through force; but the meek (those who don't use force) will inherit it!

But if you don't stand up for your rights... won't people walk on you?

- Maybe for a little while, as it serves the Lord's purposes. But ultimately, Jesus will stand up for the meek ([Is. 11:4](#)).
 - Jesus will pass judgment in favor of the meek (See NKJV - Some translations use the word "meek", others use "afflicted" or "poor").
- In [1Peter 2:23](#) Jesus demonstrated His meekness and trusted God to take care of those who abused Him.
 - [1Peter 4:19](#) tells us to do like Jesus did, and let God deal with those who mistreat you.

[Matt. 5:6](#) Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness.

Hunger and thirst are two of the most powerful cravings we can have.

- If you are really hungry or thirsty you will be relentless in your pursuit of food and water.

A desire for righteousness is a desire for God, because a man cannot come near God unless he has true righteousness; and a man has no need of true righteousness unless he desires to come near to God.

- If a man is only concerned with his reputation, he can be satisfied with "fake" righteousness" like the Pharisees.
- If a person's dominant desire is to have no obstacle between him and God, that person is blessed because God will satisfy that desire.

Most people are never satisfied. They crave things that don't last, or they can never truly get enough to be satisfied. But those who hunger for righteousness will be satisfied ... and their satisfaction will last forever!

- Satisfaction doesn't come from seeking the things we think will satisfy us, but by seeking the right things, and God will give us the other things as well ([Matt. 6:33](#)).

Chapter 2 (week 1) Follow Up Assignment

How poor in spirit are you?

- Read Luke 18:9-14. Which of these two men are you more like?
- Read Phil. 2:3-9. On a scale of 1 to 10, (1 being not at all, and 10 being exactly) how well does this passage describe you? _____

What kind of mourner are you? (Answer each on a scale of 1 to 10. 1 being not at all, and 10 being all the time.)

- I wallow in self-pity and/or self-disappointment: _____
- I mourn my sin (James 4:7-10): _____
- I mourn for people who cheat and offend God: _____

How meek are you? (Answer each on a scale of 1 to 10. 1 being not at all, and 10 being all the time.)

- I try to control things and/or people: _____
- I fight for my rights: _____
- I am willing to defer to others: _____

How hungry and thirsty for righteousness are you?

- What do you spend the most time and money on: Possessions and entertainment... or knowing God?

Next Week:

Chapter 2 (Week 2)



Extra Teaching Points

Chapter 2 (Week 2)

Matt. 5:7 What does it mean to be Merciful?

All of us want mercy from God, probably more so than justice; but from people, we usually want justice, and only sometimes mercy.

- Justice requires you not to violate someone else's rights.
- Mercy requires the surrender of some of your rights.
 - Mercy says I will surrender some of my rights so that you can have something you don't deserve to have.
 - If someone strikes you on one cheek, justice would say you have the right to strike that person back.
 - But if you show mercy, you are giving up your right to justice and extending to them the opportunity to hit you again.

There are two aspects of mercy: 1) forgiving; and 2) generosity.

Forgiveness: [Matt. 6:12, 14-15](#)

- Your feelings may or may not change when you forgive people. You can't always do much about your feelings, but you have complete control to cancel a debt.
 - A Christian who feels justified in harboring bitterness, nursing a grudge, or refusing to forgive is an oxymoron. It just can't be.
- [Matt. 18:23-35](#). God can obviously revoke His forgiveness and reinstate the debt.
 - People who find it difficult to be merciful to others and forgive their debt are likely not in touch with how much they have been, and continue to be, forgiven of.
 - If you are thinking God is asking too much of you to forgive someone, you may not have ever truly repented.
 - Repentance means agreeing with God... agreeing with Him about how large your debt of sin was and is.
 - When you really agree with God about your sin, you can't refuse to cancel someone's debt against you.

Generosity:

- Giving to the poor is showing mercy.
 - The money you earned is surrendered to someone who didn't earn it and had no claim to it.
 - [James 2:14-17](#) & [1John 3:17](#) says your faith is not genuine if you are not merciful!

[Luke 6:37](#) is an expansion on this beatitude.

- The measure you use to dish it out to others is the measure God will use to dish it back out to you.
 - How do you want to be treated?
- [Prov. 21:13](#) says that the unmerciful will not receive mercy.
 - What's the point of being a Christian at all if you're not going to be forgiven?

Matt. 5:8 What does it mean to have a "pure heart?"

The "pure in heart" is a statement that comes from [Psa. 24:3-5](#).

- Who can appear before God and commune with Him? The pure in heart!

"Pure" means uncorrupted, undiluted... it is not a mixture of things. It is a unified heart. It has one focus.

- In [Psa. 86:11](#) David asked God to "unite my heart."
- In [James 4:8](#) we are commanded to purify our hearts.

The heart has to be set out after only one thing or else it is mixed.

- “The heart” is a metaphor for the center of your emotions and logic.
- **“The heart” is the seat of the motives.**

David was a man after God’s own heart ([1Sam. 13:14](#); [Acts 13:22](#))... he wanted a heart like God’s.

- [Psa. 27:4](#) David said there was one thing that was his motivation in everything he did... he wanted to stand before God and commune with God.
 - Those who want to see God must have one desire: the desire to see God.
- [Heb. 11:6](#) says God is the rewarder of those who earnestly or diligently seek Him.
 - The reward is finding Him! That can only be done with a pure heart.

What does it mean to “see God?”

(To see God is a complex doctrine.)

- Moses asked to see God’s glory ([Ex. 33:18-20](#)) and God said no one could see His face and live. Yet God said that He spoke to Moses face to face ([Ex. 33:11](#)).
 - Apparently we cannot see God with our physical eyes because it would be too much for flesh to be exposed too. But there is a spiritual sense in which we can see God.
- [2Cor. 3:18](#) says we can see God, but it’s like looking at Him in a mirror.
 - They didn’t have mirrors that were as clear as the ones we have today; theirs were often polished metal.
- [1John 3:2](#) says we will see Him as He is when He appears.
 - Right now we don’t see Him fully, but someday we will.
 - **But the more like Him we become, the more we see Him as He really is.**
 - Our ability to see God is determined by our resemblance to Him.
 - **The ones who are pure in heart will be the ones who see Him the best.**

Motive is everything!

In [Matt. 6:2](#), [Matt. 6:5](#), and [Matt. 6:16](#) Jesus condemns those who do some good things, but have more than one ambition in their hearts as hypocrites.

- They want more than just the rewards of God for what they do. They also want the approval of people.
 - In every case Jesus says they have their reward--people’s approval is all they will get.

In [Heb. 6:11](#) we see that God rewards people with finding Him... when they are seeking Him.

- But sometimes people can get to the place where that is not enough for them... they want the approval of people.
 - If it is the approval of men that you are trying to earn, that will be your reward.
 - The saddest thing about that, is that will be the only reward you will get.

It feels good to have the approval of people, so we can get caught up in the trap of pursuing their approval or trying not to lose their approval.

- Wanting to manage other people’s approval of you will result in your pretending to be pure in heart even when you’re not.
- Do that long enough and you may start pretending to be pure in heart more often than you really are.
- You may find that it is gratifying enough just to be thought of as a spiritual person that you are satisfied with only looking like you are spiritual.

- This doesn't mean you don't have any desire to be right with God, but it has become polluted by the desire for people to think of you as somebody who is right with God.
 - All the original humility is gone; all the original hunger for God is gone; and all that is left is maintaining the image.
- The Pharisees were prone to this "*approval-seeking image consciousness*" ... Jesus called them hypocrites or actors.
 - In [Matt. 6:1](#) Jesus gives a stern warning about this.

Jesus, in this beatitude, is addressing the prevailing problem among the worshipers of God in that day--the mixed heart. Seems the problem is just as prevalent today.

- A pure heart is difficult to maintain, but it is necessary to keep your heart pure ([Prov. 4:23](#)).
 - It is like a garden that has to be weeded carefully.
 - If you don't, the wrong things will grow there and eventually take over.
 - If that happens, you won't be able to see God.

[Matt. 5:9](#) What does it mean to be called sons of God?

[James 3:18](#) James connected the fruit of righteousness to peacemaking.

[Romans 14:19](#) Paul said that making peace was the way to build people up.

[Romans 5:17](#) Paul said the "way of peace they have not known."

- The "way of peace" has to do with personal relationships.
- **People who make peace in their personal relationships rather than push, divide, or dominate others, bear a family resemblance to God.**

[2Cor. 5:18-19](#) Paul tells us how God acted toward those who had sinned and rebelled against Him.

- In [2Cor. 5:20-21](#) we are told how we are to act like He does.
- [Matt. 5:23-24](#) again instructs us to initiate peace in our relationships... even if we aren't the ones who have been offended.

[Matt. 5:10](#) Persecuted for righteousness sake.

[Romans 12:17-21](#) makes it clear that not everyone will be willing to be reconciled, but we must make every effort.

- Being a peacemaker, pursuing peace - even with those who are mistreating us - usually will result in peace, **but not always**.
 - Sometimes people will persecute us and resist any attempt to be reconciled with them.

[1Peter 3:13-14](#) tells us we should make sure that if we are persecuted it should not be for unrighteousness sake but for righteousness sake.

- In other words, it is better to be mistreated for trying to be a peacemaker than being mistreated for standing your up for your rights! (*Meek & Merciful*)

[Psalm 120:5-7](#) Some people love hostility, or hate peace.

- You can't do anything to change them, but you can do everything within your power to be reconciled and have a clear conscience before God.
- God deals with that same dynamic all the time.
 - He has done everything He can to be reconciled with people, yet many people reject Him and resist reconciliation.
- We are always to be like God, and making peace is no exception.

Peacemaking is the activity of God. People who actively make peace show themselves to be His children.

Chapter 2 (Week 2) Follow Up Assignment

How merciful are you?

- How forgiving are you? (1 to 10)
- How generous are you? (1 to 10)

How pure is your heart?

- Is there something you would stop doing if no one noticed or cared?
- Is there something you would start doing if people would appreciate it?

How much of a peacemaker are you?

Use the scale below to chart your personal relationships.

I tend to make peace and

bring people together. < 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 >

I tend to push people

away, cause divisions, or only hang
with people who do what I want.

Which are you persecuted for more often: Righteousness sake, or Unrighteousness sake?