**Matthew: The King and His Kingdom**

***Session 6: The Bar is Raised by the King***

Chapter 5: Sermon on the Mount; Part 1

* In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus gives the new law of the New Covenant.
* In the Old Testament there is an emphasis on the externals. In the New Testament there is an emphasis on the internals. The bar is raised.
* The Beatitudes lead us to true happiness. The Sermon on the Mount is the new law of the kingdom.
* The Sermon on the Mount is to Jesus what the Ten Commandments are to Moses. It is the law.
* The Sermon on the Mount is a rule for personal conduct. The Beatitudes describes perfectly and perfectly reflects the image of Christ.
* In the Beatitudes, Jesus revels to us what it is like to be Him. The Beatitudes flow into each other. They build on each other.

***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*** *(Matt 5:3)*

* The Hebrew word that is used for “blessed” is “ashrei”. Ashrei means happy.
* Blessed are the poor in spirit speaks of humility. St. Thomas Aquinas said that you cannot have any virtues without humility.
* The opposite of humility is pride. Pride is the root of all sins. Humility is spiritual poverty. In spiritual poverty we acknowledge our dependence on God. We allow Christ to rule and reign in our life.

***“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”*** *(Matt 5:4)*

* Once a person walks in humility and they mourn their own brokenness they will be comforted.

***“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*** *(Matt 5:5)*

* Meek does not mean weakness. Those who are meek are strong. To be meek is to have your strength controlled, and to be teachable.
* When God makes us strong, we submit that strength to the Lord.

***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”*** *(Matt 5:6)*

* Those who are meek have a hunger and thirst for righteousness. To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to hunger and thirst for God.
* Righteousness is right standing with God.

***“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.”*** *(Matt 5:7)*

* The response of those who have been satisfied with the righteousness of God is to be merciful.
* We have been given mercy. Are we eager to give mercy?

***“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”*** *(Matt 5:8)*

* Pure of heart refers to those who have attuned their intellect and wills to the demands of God’s holiness.
* Purity of heart is the capacity for truth.

***“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”*** *(Matt 5:9)*

* We become perfect instruments of God when peace is extended through us.

***“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (****Matt 5:10)*

* What do the riches of this world point to? They point to the ultimate riches which is the kingdom.
* God is not calling us to material goods but is calling us to the kingdom.
* Jesus proclaims that he did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill the law. The Beatitudes appear to be contrary to the Old Testament. Jesus was raising the bar

***“You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgement.”*** *(Matt 5:22)*

* Jesus goes beyond killing to holding onto anger.

***“You have heard it said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery.”*** *Matt 5:27-28*

* Jesus goes beyond the act of adultery to entertaining impure thoughts.

***“It was also said, ‘whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce. But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”*** *(Matt 5:31-32)*

* God allowed for divorce in Deuteronomy so as not to have wives killed by their husbands.
* Jesus is firmly proclaiming that divorce is wrong.

***“You have heard it said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”*** *(Matt 5:43-44)*

* In the Old Testament a person killed or harmed their enemies. In the New Testament we are to love our enemies.
* True piety is not a matter of external obedience where we observe the Ten Commandments.
* True piety is internal obedience. Conformity to God and His will where we live in the beatitudes.