

The Message of The Sermon On the Mount: Prepare yourself for the coming Kingdom

The characteristics of those who will be in the Kingdom (the Beatitudes)

- Poor in spirit—looking to God for truth
- Repentant—desiring change in your own life and the world
- Humble—willing to learn the new things God want to teach you
- Seeking righteousness—actually doing the things God instructs you to do
- Merciful—realizing others are on the same journey as you
- Pure Hearts—willing to examine yourself to improve
- Peacemaker—going out of your way to reconcile with others
- Persecuted—willing to stand firm

Your purpose on earth: to prepare yourself and encourage others to prepare

Greater Righteousness Part 1 (towards fellow man):

Primary point—discerning the spirit of God’s commandments and writing them on your heart and mind.

Secondary point—dismiss various traditions of men that had been built up around the commandments.

- Murder—address anger, hatred, solution: proactive reconciliation
- Adultery—sexual sin
- Divorce—replace faithlessness with commitment
- Oaths—honesty in all situations
- Vengeance—letting go of personal offense
- Love—towards those outside our select groups

Greater Righteousness Part 2 (towards God):

Primary point: test the motivation of your heart by doing your good works privately unto God rather than as a show for others. Look to God for reward rather than other people. **Secondary point**—dismiss various traditions of men that had been built up around good works.

- Generosity
- Prayer
- Fasting

Clarification on rewards:

- Is seeking a reward OK?
- What kinds of rewards are we working towards?

Contrasting earthly vs. heavenly rewards:

Our reward is from God is spiritual and everlasting rather than material and temporary.

The role of judgment

- How it affects interpersonal relationships
- God’s example of mercy & forgiveness as a role model for us

Conclusion:

Some will prepare themselves for the kingdom, others will not, God will judge