

He Began to Teach Them

The Sermon on the Mount

Eric Ross / General

He (Jesus) Appointed Twelve

Mark 3:13-19

Luke 6:12-16

Mark 3:14 says that Jesus did this "so that they would be with him" and there are accounts where Jesus needed their assistance in dealing with the crowds of people. This appointment came with delegation of authority and mission.

So That He Could Send Them Out To Preach

Mark 3:13–19 LEB

¹³ And he went up on the mountain and summoned *those* whom he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴ And he appointed twelve, so that they would be with him and so that he could send them out to preach ¹⁵ and to have authority to expel demons. ¹⁶ And he appointed the twelve. And to Simon he gave the name Peter, ¹⁷ and James the *son* of Zebedee and John the brother of James (and he gave to them the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"), ¹⁸ and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, ¹⁹ and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

Jesus appointed them so, in Mark 14-15 "he could sent them out to preach and to have authority to expel demons". Also note in Mark 3:19 that Judas was among them and received the same appointment.

These short verses give us great insight into Jesus method of development for these men. He didn't pre-judge them but gave them full access, even Judas. He was clear about the purpose they were appointed to "Jesus called them to him for two purposes. First, he called them *to be with him*. He called them to be his steady and consistent companions ... Second, he called them *to send them out*. He wanted them to be his representatives".

He Began to Teach Them

Barclay, W. (2001). *The New Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Mark* (p. 85).
Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press.

And, they were equipped with what they needed to accomplish the task "Jesus equipped them with two things. First, he gave them *a message*. They were to be his heralds ... Second, he gave them *a power*. They were also to cast out demons".

Barclay, W. (2001). *The New Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of Mark* (p. 86).
Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press.

Whom He Also Named Apostles

Luke 6:12–16 LEB

¹² Now it happened that in these days he went away to the mountain to pray, and was spending the whole night in prayer to God. ¹³ And when day came, he summoned his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he also named apostles: ¹⁴ Simon (whom he also named Peter) and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, ¹⁵ and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, ¹⁶ and Judas *the son* of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Luke 6:12 tells us that Jesus "was spending the whole night in prayer to God" and then in Luke 6:13 "he summoned his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he also named apostles". Jesus made these selections after prayer as these would become his ambassadors. But Luke does not describe their role or function. This is a new term for the Church but not a foreign concept for Jesus and the disciples. They understood that "The Greek word *apostolos* means *someone who is sent out*. It can be used for an envoy or an ambassador. They were to be his ambassadors".

Barclay, W. (2001). *The Gospel of Luke* (p. 89). Louisville, KY; London:
Westminster John Knox Press.

See "Ezra 7:14; Dan 5:24; 2 Chr 17:7–9 ... Christianity, therefore, appears to have picked a secular term and made it into a specific office and title."

Betz, H. D. (1992). Apostle. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.), *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (Vol. 1, p. 309). New York: Doubleday.

Teaching, Preaching, and Healing Every Disease

Matthew 4:23–25 LEB

He Began to Teach Them

²³ And he went around through all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. ²⁴ And a report about him went out throughout Syria, and they brought to him all those who were sick with various diseases and afflicted by torments, demon-possessed and epileptics and paralytics, and he healed them. ²⁵ And large crowds followed him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from the other side of the Jordan.

Jesus was, in Matthew 4:23 "teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and every sickness among the people". And in Matthew 4:24 "a report about him went out ... they brought to him all those who were sick ... and he healed them". Then in Matthew 4:25 again, "large crowds followed him" and now they are also from Decapolis and "from the other side of the Jordan".

The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5:1–12 LEB

¹ Now *when he* saw the crowds, he went up the mountain and *after he* sat down, his disciples approached him. ² And opening his mouth he began to teach them, saying, ³ “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed *are* the ones who mourn, because they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed *are* the meek, because they will inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed *are* the ones who hunger and thirst *for* righteousness, because they will be satisfied. ⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful, because they will be shown mercy. ⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart, because they will see God. ⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers, because they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰ Blessed *are* those who are persecuted because of righteousness, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute *you* and say all kinds of evil things against you, lying on account of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because your reward *is* great in heaven, for in the *same* way they persecuted the prophets before you.

This famous passage begins when in Matthew 5:1 "he saw the crowds". Jesus had been teaching, preaching and healing in the synagogue, but the word of healing was spreading and more and more people came. Jesus realized they could not be accommodated in the synagogue so "he went up the mountain".

Then, Jesus did not begin healing, instead, he began teaching. But his teaching wasn't about some future blessing, a prize that would be awarded later. The significance of the form of the beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 is lost on us because "Jesus did not speak the beatitudes in Greek; he spoke them in Aramaic, which was the kind of Hebrew people spoke in his day. Aramaic and Hebrew have a very common kind of expression, which is in fact an exclamation ... The beatitudes are not simple statements; they are exclamations: ‘O the blessedness of the poor in spirit!’"

Barclay, W. (2001). *The Gospel of Matthew* (Third Ed.). Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press.

The Sermon on the Mount - The Beatitudes

Jesus is teaching his followers here in Matthew 5:1-2 "*he* saw the crowds, he went up the mountain and *after he* sat down, his disciples approached him. **2** And opening his mouth he began to teach them". Yes, there well may have been sick and demon possessed in the crowd, but that isn't mentioned here. In fact, healing isn't mentioned until after this message. And, there may well have been scribes and Pharisees or others in the crowd, but again, they aren't mentioned here. This message isn't spoken to those in opposition, it is spoken to His disciples to teach them how to handle opposition.

Matthew 5:3-12 LEB

Matthew 5:3–12 LEB

³ “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed *are* the ones who mourn, because they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed *are* the meek, because they will inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed *are* the ones who hunger and thirst *for* righteousness, because they will be satisfied. ⁷ Blessed *are* the merciful, because they will be shown mercy. ⁸ Blessed *are* the pure in heart, because they will see God. ⁹ Blessed *are* the peacemakers, because they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰ Blessed *are* those who are persecuted because of righteousness, because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute *you* and say all kinds of evil things against you, lying on account of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because your reward *is* great in heaven, for in the *same* way they persecuted the prophets before you.

You Are the Salt of the Earth

Matthew 5:13–16 LEB ¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, by what will it be made salty? It is good for nothing any longer except to be thrown outside *and* trampled underfoot by people. ¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city located on top of a hill cannot be hidden, ¹⁵ nor do they light a lamp and place it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it shines on all those in the house. ¹⁶ In the *same* way let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Jesus uses two very familiar analogies, things everyone is familiar with, as he describes who "you are". The "you are" refers to his disciples and followers. Jesus is not addressing the needy crowd to be healed or fed.- He first compares them to salt. We all enjoy salt as a seasoning in our food. And if you have ever been on a salt free or salt restricted diet you will understand the point that Jesus is making in Matthew 5:13. And here is the point, a little salt seasons the whole pot, the whole dish. Who we are changes the whole environment around us, if we are the salt He intends us to be. - Second, He compares us to light. Most of us have electricity and strong and bright light bulbs, maybe several in each room so that even at night, the whole room is illuminated. They didn't have electricity. They had oil lamps, and candles, but you understand that in a dark room, that small light source makes all the difference between seeing and being in the dark. Jesus says, in Matthew 5:14-16 "let your light shine", "on top of a hill", "on a lampstand", not so they see you, but "so they can see your good works and glorify your Father". When we are living the Christian life, there is something different in us. It may not be blinding light, but it is bright enough for people to notice.

Great in the Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 5:17–20 **LEB**17 “Do not think that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have not come to destroy *them* but to fulfill *them*. 18 For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one tiny letter or one stroke of a letter will pass away from the law until all takes place. 19 Therefore whoever abolishes one of the least of these commandments and teaches people to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever keeps *them* and teaches *them*, this person will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I say to you that unless your righteousness greatly surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus teaches them about the importance of the Law and the Prophets. He had turned over the tables of the money changers, He had healed on the Sabbath, His disciples took grain from the field to eat on the Sabbath, and there were those challenging his authority and methods accusing Him of breaking the Law of Moses. Jesus sets the record straight in Matthew 5:17 (LEB) “Do not think that I have come to destroy the law or the prophets. I have not come to destroy *them* but to fulfill *them*”. It is by this law that He can be the sacrifice for sin. Righteousness must be fulfilled, and it is fulfilled through Him. This doctrine, this fulfillment of the word of the prophets, is one of the most misunderstood concepts. It is not by our keeping the law that we are saved. It was by his keeping the law that He was able to be the sacrifice for us. And by that sacrifice, He opened the way for God's grace by faith. Ephesians 2:8–9 (LEB) For by grace you are saved through faith, and this *is* not from yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; **9** *it is* not from works, so that no one can boast. Romans 5:1–2 (LEB) Therefore, *because we* have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom also we have *obtained* access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we boast in the hope of the glory of God. Read Revelation 5, the fulfillment of what Jesus did through His life on the earth.

First Go Be Reconciled to Your Brother

Matthew 5:21–26 LEB21 “You have heard that it was said to the people of old, ‘Do not commit murder,’ and ‘whoever commits murder will be subject to judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that everyone who is angry at his brother will be subject to judgment, and whoever says to his brother, ‘Stupid fool!’ will be subject to the council, and whoever says, ‘Obstinate fool!’ will be subject to fiery hell. 23 Therefore if you present your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and first go be reconciled to your brother, and then come *and* present your gift. 25 Settle the case quickly with your accuser while you are with him on the way, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I say to you, you will never come out of there until you have paid back the last penny!

Many people recite commandments, as Jesus says in Matthew 5:21 and He begins here to push back from the act and addresses the thoughts that have led to the act. There are things we do as reflexive action, pulling our hand away from a fire for example, but here, Jesus is talking about our thought life. He is exposing the thoughts that build in our minds and lead to an action. We say and do things that we shouldn't. We say and do things that hurt other people. Jesus is saying, in Matthew 5:21-26 that we, as His followers, should take the initiative when we remember, when we realize, that someone has something against us. He says, "be reconciled". We can't control other people's reactions or their feelings, but we can offer an apology, we can ask them to forgive us if we have hurt them. How can we have a clear conscience before God if we have a bad relationship nagging us?

In His Heart

Matthew 5:27–32 LEB27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 And if your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw *it* from you! For it is better for you that one of your members be destroyed than your whole body be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw *it* from you! For it is better for you that one of your limbs be destroyed than your whole body go into hell. 31 “And it was said, ‘Whoever divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ 32 But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for a matter of sexual immorality, causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Here, Jesus teaches about another "Do Not", saying and again is trying to go beyond the external behavior to address the thoughts that result in that behavior. Divorce is the end behavior that begins with, well, in Matthew 5:27 "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery' "Then He says in Matthew 5:28 (LEB) But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. This is another are where many struggle so please read this carefully. Jesus doesn't say a man should not look at a woman (or that a woman should not look at a man for that matter). What He says is, not to look with lust for her. There are many right relationships between a man and a woman, father to daughter, mother to son, brother to sister, friend to friend. But there is only one relationship that is appropriate as a sexual one and that is husband and wife.

Fulfill Your Oaths to the Lord

Matthew 5:33–37 LEB33 “Again you have heard that it was said to the people of old, ‘Do not swear falsely, but fulfill your oaths to the Lord.’ 34 But I say to you, do not swear at all, either by heaven, because it is the throne of God, 35 or by the earth, because it is the footstool of his feet, or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great king. 36 And do not swear by your head, because you are not able to make one hair white or black. 37 But let your statement be ‘Yes, yes; no, no,’ and anything beyond these is from the evil one.

Go with Him Two

Matthew 5:38–42 LEB38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, do not resist the evildoer, but whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 And the one who wants to go to court with you and take your tunic, let him have your outer garment also. 41 And whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Pray for Those Who Persecute You

Matthew 5:43–48 LEB43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor’ and ‘Hate your enemy.’ 44 But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven, because he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors also do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing that is remarkable? Do not the Gentiles also do the same? 48 Therefore you be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Again, in Matthew 5:43 Jesus uses the phrase, "you have heard that it was said". Here, the saying was "Love your neighbor' and 'Hate your enemy.'" But that isn't the nature of God. Jesus shows us who God is in Matthew 5:45 "he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust". Anyone can like those that like you and as Jesus says in Matthew 5:47 "Do not the gentiles also?". But He tells us in Matthew 5:48 to "be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect". In this we should follow our heavenly father, love even those that are our enemies. Love even those that persecute us.

Your Father Who Sees in Secret Will Reward You

Matthew 6:1–4 LEB1 “And take care not to practice your righteousness before people to be seen by them; otherwise you have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. 2 Therefore whenever you practice charitable giving, do not sound a trumpet in front of you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, in order that they may be praised by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full! 3 But you, *when you* practice charitable giving, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 in order that your charitable giving may be in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Shut Your Door *and* Pray

Matthew 6:5–8 LEB5 And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, because they love to stand *and* pray in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order that they may be seen by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full! 6 But whenever you pray, enter into your inner room and shut your door *and* pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. 7 “But *when you* pray, do not babble repetitiously like the pagans, for they think that because of their many words they will be heard. 8 Therefore do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Did it ever occur to you that there is a reward for prayer? And there are two ways to be rewarded. That is what Jesus said in Matthew 6:5-6 "whenever you pray" is how he starts. - Then he says, "they love to stand and pray ... in order that they may be seen by people". For these he says, "they have received their reward in full!" and it is the praise of men. - He also says, "pray to your Father who is in secret". When you do this, he says, "Your father who sees in secret will reward you". But in this short introduction, Jesus doesn't say anything about the content of the prayer or the answer to the prayer. His first and foremost distinction is that "The essence of prayer is the communion of the disciple with his Father" (France, R. T. (1985). *Matthew: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 137). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. And it might be enough simply to be in God's presence because as it says in Psalm 16:11 (LEB) You will make known to me *the* path of life. In your presence *is* fullness of joy. At your right hand *are* pleasures forever. Jesus doesn't say what the reward is, but that the Father "will reward you" which may also mean to pay back, to render what is due, to cause to happen. Now, at the end, Jesus gives us a glimpse of the content of the prayer he is speaking about in Matthew 6:8 "your Father knows what you need before you ask". So, these prayers are for our needs. And our Father wants us to ask him and when we do, Jesus says He will reward us, He will answer us as He said in Jeremiah 33:3 (LEB) 'Call to me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great *things* and inaccessible *things that* you have not known. 'Prayer is not an activity to undertake lightly. Prayer is spiritual warfare as described in Ephesians 6:10-20. Ephesians 6:18 (LEB) with all prayer and supplication praying at all times in the Spirit, and to this *end* being alert with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

Pray In This Way

Matthew 6:9–15 LEB9 Therefore you pray in this way: "Our Father who is in heaven, may your name be treated as holy. 10 May your kingdom come, may your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven. 11 Give us today our daily bread, 12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13 And do not bring us into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. 14 For if you forgive people their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive people, neither will your Father forgive your sins.

Many people have heard the Lord's prayer, and this is it in Matthew 6:9-15. It is a simple prayer that covers the needs of our life right now and for today. It begins though, by acknowledging that God is Holy, it honors God for who He is. Then there is a request for God's kingdom on earth. And if you haven't noticed, God's Kingdom is in heaven and the earth has not yet been subdued. This is the place where spiritual warfare takes place. Then there are the three things we need, our daily bread, forgiveness, and protection as he says, deliverance from evil.

Your Father Who Sees in Secret

Matthew 6:16–18 **LEB**¹⁶ “Whenever you fast, do not be sullen like the hypocrites, for they make their faces unrecognizable in order that they may be seen fasting by people. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward in full! 17 But *when* you are fasting, put olive oil on your head and wash your face 18 so that you will not be seen by people as fasting, but to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Next, Jesus speaks about fasting. Not, in Matthew 6:16 "like the hypocrites ... that they may be seen fasting by people". Jesus says in Matthew 6:17-18 "when you are fasting" do it "to your father who is in secret, and you Father ... will reward you". These statements could easily be from Isaiah 58:5 (LEB) Is *the* fast I choose like this, a day for humankind to humiliate himself? To bow his head like a reed, and make his bed *on* sackcloth and ashes; you call this a fast and a day of pleasure to Yahweh? And the fast in secret is the works of feeding the poor, taking in the homeless as it continues here Isaiah 58:6–9 (LEB) Is this not *the* fast I choose: to release *the* bonds of injustice, to untie *the* ropes of *the* yoke, and to let *the* oppressed go free, and tear every yoke to pieces? **7** *Is it* not to break your bread for the hungry? You must bring [home] *the* poor, *the* homeless. When you see *the* naked, you must cover him, and you must not hide yourself from your relatives. **8** Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall grow quickly. And your salvation shall go before you; the glory of Yahweh will be your rear guard. **9** Then you shall call, and Yahweh himself will answer. You shall cry for help, and he will say, ‘Here I *am!*’ If you remove from among you *the* yoke, the finger-pointing and evil speech,

Store Up for Yourselves Treasures in Heaven

Matthew 6:19–24 **LEB**¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and consuming *insect* destroy and where thieves break in and steal, 20 but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor consuming *insect* destroy and where thieves do not break in or steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22 “The eye is the lamp of the body. Therefore if your eye is sincere, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be dark. Therefore if the light in you is darkness, how great *is* the darkness! 24 “No one is able to serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You are not able to serve God and money.

Do Not Be Anxious

Matthew 6:25–34 LEB25 “For this *reason* I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you will eat, and not for your body, what you will wear. Is your life not more than food and your body *more than* clothing? 26 Consider the birds of the sky, that they do not sow or reap or gather *produce* into barns, and your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they *are*? 27 And who among you, *by* being anxious, is able to add one hour to his life span? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow: they do not toil or spin, 29 but I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of these. 30 But if God dresses the grass of the field in this way, *although it is here* today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not *do so* much more for you, you of little faith? 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’, 32 for the pagans seek after all these *things*. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these *things*. 33 But seek first his kingdom and righteousness, and all these *things* will be added to you. 34 Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow, because tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Do Not Judge

Matthew 7:1–6 LEB1 “Do not judge, so that you will not be judged. 2 For by what judgment you judge, you will be judged, and by what measure you measure out, it will be measured out to you. 3 And why do you see the speck *that is* in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the beam of wood in your *own* eye? 4 Or how will you say to your brother, ‘Allow *me* to remove the speck from your eye,’ and behold, the beam of wood *is* in your *own* eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the beam of wood from your *own* eye and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye! 6 “Do not give what is holy to dogs, or throw your pearls in front of pigs, lest they trample them with their feet, and turn around *and* tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

Matthew 7:7–12 LEB7 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened for you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or what man is *there* among you, *if* his son will ask him *for* bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or also *if* he will ask for a fish, will give him a snake? 11 Therefore if you, *although* you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him? 12 Therefore *in all things*, whatever you want that people should do to you, thus also you do to them. For this is the law and the prophets.

Enter Through the Narrow Gate

Matthew 7:13–14 LEB13 “Enter through the narrow gate, because broad *is* the gate and spacious *is* the road that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it, 14 because narrow *is* the gate and constricted *is* the road that leads to life, and there are few who find it!

There are many distractions in the world, many demands, many needs and they all consume your time. But there are few things in life that carry with them eternal value. Jesus also said this another way in Mark 8:36–37 (LEB) For what does it benefit a person to gain the whole world and forfeit his life? **37** For what can a person give in exchange for his life? And to add emphasis, here are a few related references for vs. 13: Proverbs 9:6. Isaiah 55:7. Ezekiel 18:27–32 vs 14: Isaiah 30:21; 35:8; 57:14. Jeremiah 6:16 Blayney, B., Scott, T., & Torrey, R. A. with Canne, J., Browne. (n.d.). *The Treasury of Scripture knowledge* (Vol. 2, p. 5). London: Samuel Bagster and Sons.

Every Good Tree Produces Good Fruit

Matthew 7:15–20 LEB15 “Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inside are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits: they do not gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles, *do they?* 17 In the *same* way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. 18 A good tree is not able to produce bad fruit, nor a bad tree to produce good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 As a result, you will recognize them by their fruits.

Jesus warns that there will be false prophets, these are people that claim to be Christians, they claim to have God's word for you, yet are out for their own gain. These are false leaders in the Church. And "The connection of thought with vv. 13–14 may well be that, like the false prophets in the Old Testament (Jer. 6:13–14; Ezek. 13:1–16)". France, R. T. (1985). *Matthew: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 151). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. Jesus said we would know them by their fruit: Are they bringing people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ? Are they raising disciples? Are mature believers going out from their ministry? Or are they teaching some other doctrine, as it says in 2 Peter 2:1–3 (LEB) But there were also false prophets among the people, as there will be false teachers among you also, who will bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, *thus* bringing on themselves swift destruction. **2** And many will follow their licentious ways, because of whom the way of truth will be reviled. **3** And in greediness they will exploit you with false words, whose condemnation *from* long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. "prophecy was an honoured gift (Acts 11:27–28; 21:9–11; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28; 14:1–3ff.; etc.)". France, R. T. (1985). *Matthew: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 1, p. 151). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

The One Who Does the Will of My Father

Matthew 7:21–23 LEB **21** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. **22** On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many miracles in your name?' **23** And then I will say to them plainly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

After Jesus cautions about false prophets, false teachers, false leaders, he turns to a caution about false followers. There is a simple test in Luke 6:21 "the one who does the will of my father". And then there are those that always have a reason, who say God's grace is sufficient, who continue in their own way. To these, Jesus will say, from Luke 6:23 "depart from me, you who practice lawlessness". There is a righteous and holy life that God has for us to live and he will lead us into it: John 10:14, 27–30, 2 Timothy 2:19 Blayney, B., Scott, T., & Torrey, R. A. with Canne, J., Browne. (n.d.). *The Treasury of Scripture knowledge* (Vol. 2, p. 5). London: Samuel Bagster and Sons.

A Wise Man Who Built His House

Matthew 7:24–27 LEB24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain came down and the rivers came and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it did not collapse, because its foundation was laid on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain came down and the rivers came and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it collapsed, and its fall was great.”

Jesus now reinforces this concept of "doing the will of my Father" by saying in Luke 6:24 "everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man". It is by hearing His words and doing what He says that we are able to stand against the adversity in this world. We have had recent evidence that hurricanes are not selective about their path. But the son of God, the man and woman that know Jesus Christ will speak to the storm. This wise man, will still be standing. Matthew 8:26 (LEB) And he said to them, “Why are you fearful, *you* of little faith?” Then he got up *and** rebuked the winds and the sea and there was a great calm.

Like One Who Had Authority

Matthew 7:28–29 LEB28 And it happened when Jesus finished these words the crowds were amazed at his teaching, 29 because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.

Some of this message, that we call the sermon on the mount, was new information to some of these followers in the crowd. Jesus wasn't talking like the scribes who may have offered this one's opinion or that one's ideas or the wisdom from the books of the oral or written tradition. Instead, "he (Jesus) was teaching them like one who had authority".

Conclusion