

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

Matthew wrote with a Jewish audience in mind and he wrote to show them Jesus is their prophesied Messiah/King. The theme of the book is “**Christ the King**”. Matthew wrote thematically presenting various lines of evidence to show that this is true.

In chapter 4, Matthew shows that the Galilean ministry of Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophesy from Isaiah 9:1-2. There it was prophesied that **Galilee of the Gentiles** would see a GREAT LIGHT – which in context was the Messianic LIGHT.

Matthew shows that Christ’s message in this context was a call to repentance because the kingdom was at hand. The King was now present, and the kingdom was being offered by Him on the condition of repentance.

Matthew then went on to show that Christ uniquely did KINGDOM MIRACLES of healing to verify that indeed He was the true Messiah. What was unique about Christ's miracles? Well, He healed **everyone**, He healed them of **everything** and He did so on a massive scale that included masses of people from regions far and wide. This was KINGDOM stuff. This was the work of the KING presenting His kingdom credentials.

We noted last time that Matt. 4:23 describes Jesus' Messianic ministry as including three things.

Slide # 2

Jesus' Galilean Ministry

- Teaching
- Preaching
- Healing

Which one of these three really jumps out at you? Which of these three really emphasizes the Kingly-Messianic nature of Jesus in keeping with the coming kingdom?

Slide # 3

Matthew 4:23–24 (NKJV)

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, **teaching** in their synagogues, **preaching** the gospel of the kingdom, and **healing** all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

24 Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him **all sick** people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and **He healed them**.

Certainly, UNIVERSAL HEALING was one major evidence that Jesus was the promised Messiah, but what about His equally UNIQUE teaching ministry?

The Messiah's TEACHING ministry prophetically was to be so UNIQUE so as to also be a MAJOR Messianic credential (cf. Deut. 18:15-18).

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Isaiah 11:2 (NKJV)

2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The **Spirit of wisdom** and **understanding**, The **Spirit of counsel** and might, The **Spirit of knowledge** and of the fear of the LORD.

I want you to see this connection.

Slide # 5

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV)

17 From that time Jesus began to **preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”**

Matthew 4:23 (NKJV)

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, **teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom,** and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.

Chapter 5-7 – Kingdom Ethics

We have now come to the famous sermon on the mount. There is nothing to compare with it in all the literature of the world. Even the greatest of the world’s moral, religious, and philosophical statements blush and stammer in the presence of this sublime declaration.

– ***John Phillips***

When Jesus got done with this teaching what was the response of the people?

Slide # 6

Matthew 7:28–29 (NKJV)

28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the **people were astonished at His teaching,**

29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

You see He taught them with the authority of the Messianic King – which He was! Thus, His profound par excellent TEACHING was a major evidence that He was indeed the King presenting the kingdom.

But what is the significance of this teaching? Scholars have long debated this.

The Sermon on the Mount is probably the most famous of all the teachings of Christ, but it is difficult to determine exactly what the purpose is. – ***The Moody Bible Commentary***

But if we think in context, realizing the thematic format of Matthew, I don't know that it is that difficult. Matthew does not simply go from chapter 4 to chapter 5 without design. There is a connection here. The message in the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5-7 continues on with the KINGDOM THEME.

The Sermon on the Mount does not present the way of salvation but rather presents "***kingdom ethics***" which are indicative of the REPENTANCE called for by Christ in view of the kingdom being at hand. (cf. Mt. 3:2; 4:17). The Sermon on the Mount amounts to a detailed explanation of what true REPENTANCE looks like in the lives of those prepared to enter into the kingdom.

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Jesus's sermon therefore must be understood in the context of His offer of the kingdom to Israel and the need for repentance to enter that kingdom. ... The sermon showed how a person who is in right relationship with God [a true repentant] should [now] conduct his life. ... The sermon applies to Jesus' followers today for it demonstrates the standard of [kingdom] righteousness God demands of His [kingdom citizens]. – ***The Bible Knowledge Commentary***

There is a "***kingdom ethic***" applied to the Church today as seen in the NT. We can only live out this "***kingdom ethic***" by the power of the Holy Spirit in accordance with the New Covenant which is indicative of kingdom reality.

As God's people we are kingdom people and are therefore to live accordingly. The kingdom is not here yet, but we are to live in light of it as those whose citizenship is ultimately going to be in the kingdom.

In chapter 4 Jesus lays down the necessity of REPENTANCE to enter the kingdom (4:17). Now in chapters 5-7 He lays out how those truly repentant should then live and what is to characterize their lives. This "***kingdom ethic***" is what defines those that are truly repentant. This is what it means to live out repentance in light of the coming kingdom.

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The purpose of the Sermon on the Mount, which is not to present the way of salvation but principles of character and conduct for those who are members of the kingdom – who already belong to Christ.

– **Howard Vos**

As kingdom citizens this is how God's people should live as so instructed by the King.

A couple of footnotes:

- Matt. 5-7 is the first of five major discourses in Matthew (cf. chps 5-7; chp. 10; chp. 13; chps 18-20; and chps 24-25).
- The discourse in Matt. 5-7 has similarities to what has been called "**The Sermon on the Plain**" in Luke 6:17-49, but it also has dissimilarities. Therefore, it is debated as to whether these are two different sermons on two different occasions or whether they just overlap in terms of content.

Matthew 5:1–12 (NKJV)

1 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

Some see two different groups here, namely the multitudes in one group and the disciples in another. Luke 6:17 mentions "**a crowd of His disciples**" but also, "**a great multitude of people**". That seems to emphasize a distinction between those merely in the crowd and those who were His disciples.

The multitudes are those referenced at the end of chapter 4. The word "**disciple**" means "**learner**" or "**follower**". And note the emphasis says they were "**His disciples**" indicating some level of personal commitment.

The emphasis here is on those who were learning followers coming to Him as He was seated on the mount – perhaps near Capernaum. Often this was the posture of rabbis or teachers when they went to teach. They would SIT down in a prominent place so they could easily be heard while the listeners would characteristically stand (cf. Lk. 4:20; Mt. 13:2; 23:2; 24:3).

Maybe we could try that. I as the teacher will sit down and you as learners can all stand. All you at home in your recliners please stand up for the duration of this message. It certainly would cut down on the problem of falling asleep – at least I would hope so. Maybe another time! 😊

2 Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

Disciples are LEARNERS and learners need a teacher, and in this case it was the King spelling out His **kingdom ethic** to His disciples who had evidently responded to the message to repent in view of the coming kingdom. Here is what is to define KINGDOM people.

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

In verses 3-10 we have a total of eight beatitudes. The word “beatitude” comes from a Latin word (beatus) meaning “blessed” or “happy”.

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"A fairly accurate description of the human race might be furnished to one unacquainted with it by taking the Beatitudes, turning them wrong side out, and saying, "Here is the human race." For the exact opposite of the virtues in the Beatitudes are the very qualities which distinguish human life and conduct." – **A. W. Tozer**

The word “Blessed” (*Gk. makarios*) means more than merely being happy. It signifies a state of well-being in terms of relationship with God. It signifies the favor of God resting upon a person resulting in a deep spiritual joy.

In the OT the “**poor**”, in a godly sense, were those who were destitute and cried out to God for help in dependence upon Him. Christ here applies it to those who acknowledge they are spiritually destitute and look to God for salvation. This fits the Messianic emphasis seen in Isa. 61:1.

Slide # 10

Isaiah 61:1 (NKJV)

1 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me **To preach good tidings to the poor**; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

Luke 4:17–18 (NKJV) [Christ in the synagogue in Nazareth]

17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

18 “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me **To preach the gospel to the poor**; He has sent Me to heal the

brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

To be “**poor in spirit**” means to be spiritually HONEST in recognizing that you are “spiritually bankrupt”. It is the opposite of being PROUD in spirit. It humbly acknowledges I don’t have anything to offer God that would make myself right with Him. It is the opposite of being “spiritually self-sufficient” and “self-righteous”.

Slide # 11

Luke 18:11–14 (NKJV)

11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.

12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’

13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’

14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who **exalts himself** will be humbled, and he who **humbles himself** will be exalted.”

The kingdom belongs to the humbled! This is the right place to start because this is where salvation starts. True saving faith acknowledges I am spiritually bankrupt – I am dependent upon God - I need a Savior. I can’t get to the kingdom by what I have to offer – because I am spiritually destitute. This this is a very humbling reality and true believers are “**poor in spirit**” having humbled themselves before God as sinners in need of the mercy and grace of God.

It is the “**poor in spirit**” to whom the kingdom belongs. It is they who will be in the kingdom not the self-righteous. “**Poor in spirit**” is descriptively characteristic of those who have been saved and are therefore headed to the kingdom.

The Beatitudes are not primarily promises to the individual but a description of him. They do not show a man how to be saved, but describe the characteristics manifested by one who is born again.

– **Wycliffe Bible Commentary**

4 Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

There is a thematic connection between this beatitude and the Messianic text of Isaiah 61. Isaiah 61 is set the context of Messianic restoration based on Israel's brokenness over their sin. Comfort is extended to those who mourn over their sin, but without the mourning there is no Messianic comfort. Repentance comes first – then the restoring comfort.

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Isaiah 61:1–3 (NKJV)

1 “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the **brokenhearted**, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

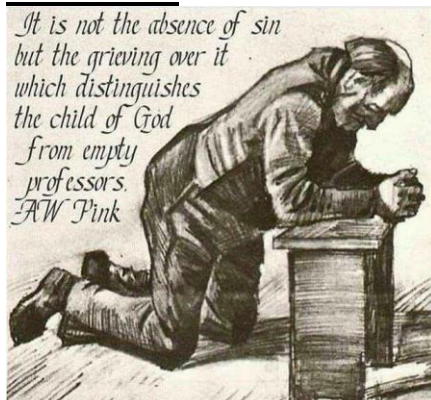
2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To **comfort all who mourn**,

3 To **console those who mourn** in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy **for mourning**, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

The mourning in view is sorrow over sin and the resulting consequences. This is an attitude of repentance corresponding with godly sorrow which produces repentance that leads to salvation as spelled out by Paul in 2 Cor. 7:10.

Those who in repentance mourn over their sin will know Messianic comfort – ultimately in the context of the kingdom. As seen in Isaiah 61 it is the Messiah/King Who brings this COMFORT. It is the comfort of restoration that gives beauty for ashes and the oil of joy for mourning.

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5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

The word “meek” does not mean “weak”. It is the idea of power under control or in submission. The word “meek” was used in reference to a horse that had been broken to ride. The power of the horse was now under control – being controlled by a bit, bridle, and reign of the rider. A good definition is this: REIGNED IN UNDER THE REIGN OF GOD!

Meekness is power in submission to the governing control of God! Instead of taking matters into their own hands the meek yield to God. Instead of asserting a SELF agenda they yield to God’s agenda. They humble down under the REIGN of God.

The Greek word translated as "**meek**" is also often translated as "**gentle**". But it is more than mere "**gentle**". It is gentle because of submission to the control and reign of God. Jesus is the ultimate example of meekness. The life of Christ epitomized submission to the heavenly Father. He had power but He never used it independently. He never rebelled. He never did His own self-assertive thing! God had the REIGNS of His life. That is meekness!

Slide # 14

Matthew 11:29 (NKJV)

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle [or MEEK] and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Meekness is inherently related to lowliness of heart. "Lowly" is often translated as "humble". To be lowly in heart is to have a humble heart. It is to humble down before God! It yields to God's way versus striving in the flesh to do it your own way. A humble heart is one that is SUBMISSIVE to God. So, both meekness and humble have this same basic idea of submission.

It's in learning SUBMISSION that we find rest for our souls. In saving faith we submit to the gospel TRUTH of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 10:3) and then as we are yoked up with Christ, we continue to learn from Him the truth of what it means to be "meek and lowly in heart".

It is the “meek” who have come to submit to the rule of God’s reign who will inherit the earth (cf. Isa. 61:7).

The meek – not the strong, aggressive, harsh, tyrannical – will inherit the earth. – **D.A. Carson**

Today the meek inherit scorn and ridicule, one day they shall inherit the earth as they reign with Christ (Ps. 37:9, 11, 22, 29, 34).

– **David Jeremiah**

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

To hunger and thirst for something is to desire it with a passion. It is to crave it. Kingdom citizens long for practical “**righteousness**”. They characteristically want to be RIGHT in their walk with God. Paul in wrestling with sin in himself said, “**what I hate, that I do**” (Rom. 7:15). The point is he hated it when he did wrong. He had a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

When God’s people see wickedness all around it bothers them. Even Lot, compromised as he was by living in the context of Sodom, yet “**tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds**” (2 Pet. 2:8). This defines true kingdom citizens.

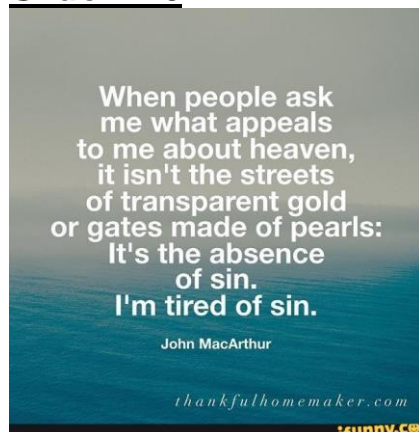
Slide # 15

2 Peter 3:13 (NKJV)

13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth **in which righteousness dwells.**

The deep desire for righteousness will be completely satisfied when the Messiah brings in the kingdom in all its fullness. Then God’s people will be “filled” – that is completely satisfied. That is why John the apostle, having seen the end of the story said in Revelation 22:20, “Even, so, come, Lord Jesus!”

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This is the mark of the saved – those who will inherit the kingdom. They long for righteousness – when they will finally be free from their own sin and from the effects of sin.

7 Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

“When this beatitude addresses those who will show mercy, it speaks to those who have already received mercy.” (David Guzik) We do not earn salvation by being merciful. Rather, because we have already been saved, we should then be merciful. It’s a matter of bearing good fruit.

God expects His kingdom children to be merciful because they have received mercy. And in the showing of mercy, they are blessed and receive even more mercy.

God is a merciful God, and His children are therefore also called to be merciful. We reap what we sow and as we extend mercy, we reap mercy. This is certainly true in relationship to kingdom rewards.

The chief reference may be to the mercy of God in the final awards of the kingdom, but the application need not be restricted to this.

– ***Expositors Greek Testament – A.B. Bruce***

In this harsh old world, it is God’s people who are to be the “balm” of mercy. It is kingdom people who are to be a merciful influence of kindness and caring in a God-honoring way.

Mercy cares about the hurting. It takes pity on those who are in misery because of their own foolishness.

The “merciful” are characterized by a caring attitude for those who are in misery (v. 7). – ***Spiros Zodhiates***

But there is more! To be merciful is to be actively compassionate, but it goes even goes even further - being extended towards those who don’t deserve it.

It is one thing to have pity on those who deserve it, but mercy extends pity and sympathy towards those who don’t deserve it. That is God-like. God cares about people who don’t deserve His care. That is mercy!

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GRACE – In undeserved favor God gives us what we DON'T deserve.

MERCY – In pity for us in our misery God DOESN'T give us what we DO deserve.

There is overlap, but in terms of emphasis mercy has compassion on people in the misery of their sinfulness, while grace bestows the unmerited favor of forgiveness. Grace deals with the guilt – mercy with the consequences.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

The heart is the core of our being related to the motives and will of a person. A “pure” heart is not a perfect one, because in this life no one is perfect. We are in process, but not perfected yet. That awaits glorification.

What God wants is the HEART of a person. He is not interested in mere EXTERNAL religion. 1 Sam. 16:7 says that while man looks on the outward appearance, God “**looks at the heart**”. Romans 10:10 says it is with the HEART that one believes unto righteousness. Acts 15:7-8 says it is God who knows the heart and purifies the heart by faith.

The idea here of “**pure in heart**” is that of singleness of heart. It is HONEST to God. It is an undivided heart that is devoted to God above all. This person’s conscience is clear in their sincere commitment to God. The sense of a pure heart is spelled out by David in the Psalms.

Side # 18

Psalm 32:2 (NKJV)

2 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Psalm 51:6 (NKJV)

6 Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.

God doesn’t want us playing “games” with Him. He wants an HONEST TO GOD loyal commitment. Game players are hypocrites. In contrast a true saving faith is sincere and undivided– it is a “pure in heart” commitment. It is this type of HEART commitment that shall see God (cf. 1 Jn. 3:2; Rev. 22:4).

Blessed are the sincere in heart for they are the ones who will see God intimately in the kingdom.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

God is the ultimate “peacemaker”. God the Father is said to be “***the God of peace***” in Heb. 13:20, Jesus is called “***Prince of Peace***” in Isa. 9:6. Eph. 2:14 says of Jesus, “***He Himself is our peace***”. The fruit of the Spirit is peace as seen in Gal. 5:22.

Thus, family likeness is seen in God’s children seeking to be “***peacemakers***”. Hence, they are to be called “***sons of God.***” This is God-like and therefore indicative of those who are truly His children.

Peacemakers are not compromisers, but rather seek reconciliation and peace as a top priority without compromising God’s truth. We desire that people be brought into a “***peace***” relationship with God through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

Slide # 19

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, having been **justified by faith, we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ,

We as God’s children should seek to get along with everyone if at all possible – as much as it depends on us. We can’t help what other people do, but as far as our part we want to be peacemakers.

Slide # 20

Proverbs 16:7 (NKJV)

7 When a man’s ways please the LORD, He **makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.**

Romans 12:18 (NKJV)

18 If it is possible, **as much as depends on you,** live peaceably with all men.

Slide # 21

Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV)

14 **Pursue peace with all people,** and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

James 3:17–18 (NKJV)

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then **peaceable**, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

18 Now the **fruit of righteousness is sown in peace** by those **who make peace**.

This beatitude must have been shocking to Zealots when Jesus preached it, when political passions were inflamed. – **D.A. Carson**

Instead of delighting in division, bitterness, strife, or some petty “divide-and-conquer” mentality, disciples of Jesus delight to make peace wherever possible. – **D.A. Carson**

We are to be “peacemakers” but that does not mean we seek peace at all costs. Sometimes God’s people don’t consider the whole counsel of God or the context of what is being said. To misapply being a “**peacemaker**” in some contexts amounts to flagrant compromise.

For example, to continue to let a divisive person have their way in the name of “**peace**” is wrong. Titus 3:10 says to “**reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition**”. The word “**divisive**” is the Greek word “**hairetikos**” which the Authorized Version translated as “**heretic**”. However, in view here is not so much bad theology as it is BAD CHARACTER.

Yes, bad theology must not be tolerated, but neither can BAD character which is represented in BAD behavior. Proverbs 6:16-19 names seven things that are an abomination to the LORD concluding with “**one who sows discord among brethren.**” A divisive person’s actions are not to be tolerated. You must not say, “*Well, in the name of peace we must just tolerate it.*” NO! Such a person must be rejected because as Titus 3:11 goes on to say they are “warped and sinning.”

Charles Spurgeon was involved in what is called “The Downgrade Controversy” in which he accused the Baptist Union of which he was a member of compromise in terms of fellowship with those not faithfully holding to the faith. The Union proceeded to censure Spurgeon (even including his own brother). Spurgeon broke from the Union and to the charge that fellowship (being a peacemaker) was to trump all he responded that the wisdom from above is FIRST PURE then PEACEABLE (see James 3:17). Exactly!

All this to say yes, we seek to be peacemakers if at all possible. This is God-like. But that is different than saying we seek peace at all costs. We must ever be “peacemakers” in keeping with the WHOLE counsel of God. We want to get along if at all possible, but not at the expense of God’s Word, not when it requires compromise. Sometimes in the name of tough love we must take a stand and say that cannot be tolerated. Compromise that in the name of “peace” goes along with error is wrong. Yet, even in taking strong stands we must always do so with the right spirit.

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

It is the expected that God’s people will stand for “righteousness’ sake” and be persecuted for it (cf. Jn. 15:18-25; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12-14, 5:10). Jesus said, “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.” (Jn. 15:20). Paul said, “all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” (2 Tim. 3:12). But in this persecution the people of God are blessed because the kingdom belongs to them.

Building on this Jesus gets even more personal. Where as the beatitudes in verses 3-10 are in the third person, Jesus now speaks more directly in the second person “you” in verses 11-12. Thus, Jesus hones in and emphasizes this point about being persecution.

11 “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Verse 10 emphasizes persecution for “righteousness’ sake” – that is for what is RIGHT according to God’s standards generally. If you just take a stand for simple morality such as biblical marriage or stand against immorality the world will seek to persecute for it in one form or another.

However, in verse 11 Jesus makes it very personal – that is He makes it about association with Him.

To “revile” is to insult. Ridiculing with insults and persecution tend to go together. And then Jesus adds, “**and say all kinds of evil against you falsely**”. That is slander! Few things are more damaging and hurtful than slander. The name “**devil**” means “slander”.

But then Jesus very specifically says He is addressing the case when people are persecuted in this way for “**My sake**”.

This happens because of association with Jesus. But in God's sovereign eternal ways this ultimately turns out to be in the position of being blessed. And He tells us why in the next verse.

Note, that Jesus here indicates that sometimes persecution takes the form of VERBAL persecution. It's not always violence. In fact, probably most of the time it is VERBAL involving insult, ridicule, and slander.

12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

When we are verbally persecuted for Christ's sake we should "rejoice and be exceedingly glad" for two reasons. Number one: Our reward will be great in heaven. Maintain an eternal perspective. Be faithful! The day of reward is coming and that is something to celebrate (cf. Heb. 11; Ja. 1:2-4).

Number two, in enduring verbal persecution we are in good company, because this is how the prophets of old were also persecuted. What an honor to be in the company of the holy prophets.

Note the parallel here. The prophets were persecuted for being faithful to God while we are persecuted for our faithfulness to Jesus. This in effect puts Jesus on par with God – which He is.

This emphasis on "**persecution**" certainly shows that this discourse has application to the present time because in the kingdom there won't be any more persecution of God's people.

In closing let me make some application. Someone may say well if Christ was really presenting "kingdom ethics" then what does that have to do with us in the Church Age?

The answer is this: Even though the kingdom proper is future, as God's children, as the body of Christ, as the bride of Christ, we are kingdom citizens and we are to live like it.

Paul said those who practice ungodly behavior will not inherit the kingdom of God (cf. 1 Cor. 6:9-11). In contrast those who practice righteousness give evidence that they will inherit the kingdom. In Col. 4:11 Paul said his fellow workers were "workers for the kingdom of God".

Slide # 22

One must be saved and evidence righteous behavior to enter the kingdom. On the other hand, those who are characterized by evil deeds show that the kingdom does not belong to them. These truths do not indicate that salvation or kingdom entrance is based on works, but they show that, by faith, kingdom citizens have the power of the New Covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit in their lives bringing forth righteous behavior. – **Dr. Michael Vlach**

By the way commentators point out the “***the fruit of the Spirit***” could just as well be called “***the fruit of the kingdom***”. And the reason for this is because the New Covenant ministry in which the Spirit is prominent is a major component of KINGDOM truth.

It is with all this in view that Paul makes this statement in Romans 14.

Slide # 23

Romans 14:17 (NKJV)

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

What Paul is saying is that we as God’s people in the Church age should live in light of a “kingdom ethic” because in fact we are kingdom people. We are headed for the kingdom and therefore should live accordingly.

Slide # 24

1 Thessalonians 2:11–12 (NKJV)

11 as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children,

12 that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

One Bible scholar writes: “Matthew, chapters 5 through 7 represent the Magna Carta (Great Charter) of the King. The Sermon on the Mount presents the King’s description of true repentance – of a lifestyle that pleases God.” In reality it lays out the kingdom ethics of how God’s people are now expected to live in light of their kingdom citizenship.

There is an old spiritual that has a line that says: “***Everybody talkin’ ‘bout heaven ain’t goin there.***” How true! If we truly know the King and are headed for the kingdom it should be obvious in our life. We live by a whole different “ethic” than does the world.

It is the folly of our day that we think we can have none of His kingship in this life, yet have some claim to part of His Kingdom in the next. But for those who reject the rule of the Lord Jesus now, there is only the fearful expectation of the fury of the wrath of God, the Judge of heaven and earth. -**Thomas Vincent** – *a Puritan Minister* (1634-1678)

Kingdom people live according to kingdom ethics. God help us to do so.