

**Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama**  
**Synopsis of Sermon Preached by Rev. B. C. Datiri, Pastor**

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**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

January 3, 2016

1. The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:1-12

**Happy New Year (2016)! What a blessing we have received from the Lord to begin on a new clean slate again! This could be the Year that the Lord would return to take His for His eternal reign in His Kingdom. In preparation for His second coming, this year we shall begin with the Sermon on the Mount, and specifically with the Beatitudes.**

**The Sermon on the Mount is the sermon that Jesus gave and is recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7. The title is derived from the description given in Matthew 5:1-2: “Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them”. A sermon is teaching with a persuasion to transform lives for the better. This Sermon on the Mount is the most famous sermon Jesus ever gave and perhaps it is the most famous and perhaps longest sermon ever given by anyone. It covers three chapters of Matthew (5-7) and if we were to summarize this particular sermon in a single sentence, it would perhaps read “How to live a life that is dedicated and pleasing to God, free from hypocrisy, full of love and grace, wisdom and discernment”.**

**The teachings of Jesus of Nazareth were always simple but unique and innovative during his life on earth. His teaching began about 30 AD during the ruthless Roman occupation of Palestine. At the time there were four major groups in the Jewish religion: the Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and the Zealots, all of whom presented a different viewpoint to the Jewish people. The Pharisees demanded and were strict observants of the Mosaic Law expressed in the Torah, but also accepted the oral tradition of Jewish customs and rituals. The Sadducees were mainly from the priestly families and strictly accepted the Law of Moses but rejected oral tradition. The Pharisees, unlike the Sadducees, believed in the resurrection of the dead, spiritual beings like the angels, and the life after death. The monastic Essenes were the Jews awaiting a Messiah that would come to establish a physical Kingdom on earth and free the Israelites from oppression. The Zealots were a militant Jewish group who wanted freedom for their homeland, and were centered in Galilee; recall one of the Twelve Apostles was Simon the Zealot!**

**The Ten Commandments, given to Moses on Mount Sinai in the Old Testament Book of Exodus, related a series of "Thou shalt not" phrases or evils which one must avoid in daily life on earth. In contrast, the message of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is one of humility, charity, and brotherly love. He teaches transformation of the inner person. The Beatitudes is the opening topic of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus presents the Beatitudes positively as virtues in life which will ultimately lead to reward. Love, then, becomes the motivation for the Christian. All of the Beatitudes have an eschatological meaning promising us salvation - not in this world, but in the next. The Beatitudes initiate one of the main themes of Matthew's Gospel that the Kingdom so long awaited in the Old Testament is not of this world, but of the next – it is the Kingdom of Heaven!**

**While the Beatitudes of Jesus provide a way of life that promises salvation, they also provide peace in the midst of our trials and tribulations on this earth. An early contemplation on the Beatitudes came from St. Gregory of Nyssa, a mystic who lived in Cappadocia in Asia Minor around 380 AD. He described the Beatitudes this way: "Beatitude is a possession of all things**

held to be good, from which nothing is absent that a good desire may want. Perhaps the meaning of beatitude may become clearer to us if it is compared with its opposite. Now the opposite of beatitude is misery. Misery means being afflicted unwillingly with painful sufferings."

Thus our text of the day states: "Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them. He said: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you". " (Matthew 5:1-12).

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." - "Poor in spirit" means to be humble. Humility is the realization that all your gifts and blessings come from the grace of God. To have poverty of spirit means to be completely empty and open to the Word of God. When we are an empty cup and devoid of pride, we are humble. Humility brings openness and an inner peace, allowing one to do the will of God. He who humbles himself is able to accept our frail nature, to repent, and to allow the grace of God to lead us to Conversion. It is pride, the opposite of humility that brings misery. For pride brings anger, and vindictive and revengeful spirit, especially when one is offended. If every man were humble and poor in spirit, there would be no war anywhere in the world!

"Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted." - If we are humble and appreciate the fact that all of our gifts and blessings come from God, we would grow in love and gratitude for Jesus Christ our Savior. This would then only produce mourning and regret over our own sins (or sinful ways) and the sins of this world, for we have hurt the one who has been so good to us. One also mourns for the suffering of others. St. Gregory describes another reason to mourn: the more one ascends in meditation of Divine Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, and then realize the poverty of human nature, man can only be left in sorrow. When one contemplates that we were made in the image and likeness of God and lived in Paradise, the Garden of Eden, and compare that to our present state after "the Fall", one can only mourn our present condition. But the sentence continues that they shall be comforted, by the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, and hopefully one day in the Kingdom of Heaven. Mourning in this context is called a blessing, because mourning our fallen nature creates in us a desire to improve ourselves and to do what is right!

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." - St. Gregory of Nyssa taught that the Beatitudes build one upon another. A humble person becomes meek, or becomes gentle and kind, and exhibits a docility of spirit, even in the face of adversity and hardship. A person that is meek is one that exhibits self-control. Therefore meekness is never weakness but strength! St. Augustine advises us to be meek in the face of the Lord and not resist but be obedient to him. Obedience and submission to the will of God are certainly not the fashion these days, but they will bring you peace in this world and in the next.

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." - Justice

and righteousness in the New Covenant indicate the fulfillment of God's will in your heart and soul. It is not mere observance of the law (Matthew 5:20), but rather an expression of brotherly love (I John 3:10). A continuous desire for justice and moral perfection will lead one to a fulfillment of that desire - a transition and conversion to holiness. This is true for all the virtues - if you hunger and thirst for temperance, you will head towards the goal you have in mind. St. Augustine called the Beatitudes the ideal virtues for every Christian life! In his discourse on the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, he noted the correspondence of the several gifts of the Holy Spirit and their necessity in fulfilling the Beatitudes. For example, one must have the gift of fortitude so one may be courageous in seeking social justice.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." - Mercy is the loving disposition towards those who suffer distress. Love, compassion, and forgiveness towards one's neighbor will bring peace in your relationships. We say in the Lord's Prayer: Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. As we are merciful to others, so our Heavenly Father will be merciful with us! Jesus reminds us that whatever "you did to the least of my brethren, you did it to me (Matthew 25:31-46)." Thus, St. Paul calls for the obedience of faith in the beginning and end of his Letter to the Romans (1:5, 16:25-27). The following are ways to be merciful to your neighbor as well as to be obedient in faith to Christ our Savior.

The Corporal Works of Mercy include – 1 Feeding the Hungry; 2 Giving drink to the thirsty; 3 Clothing the naked; 4 Sheltering the homeless; 5 Comforting the imprisoned; 6 Visiting the sick; and 7 Burying the dead

The Spiritual Works of Mercy include - 1 Admonishing sinners; 2 Instructing the uninformed; 3 Counseling the doubtful; 4 Comforting the sorrowful; 5 Being patient with those in error; 6 Forgiving offenses; and 7 Praying for the living and the dead

"Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God."- Moses (Exodus 33:20), John 1:18, and Paul (I Timothy 6:16) all say that no one can see God here on earth! But Jesus says the pure of heart shall see God! To be pure of heart means to be free of all selfish intentions and self-seeking desires (in other words void of self-indulgence). What a beautiful goal! How many times have any of us performed an act perfectly free of any personal gain? Such an act is pure love. An act of pure and selfless giving brings happiness to all.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." - Peacemakers not only live peaceful lives but also try to bring peace and friendship to others, and to preserve peace between God and man. St. Gregory of Nyssa calls a peacemaker a man who brings peace to another; but one cannot give another if one does not possess peace himself. Hence the Lord wants you first to be filled with the blessings of peace and then you can communicate it to those who have need of it. By imitating God's love of man, the peacemakers become children of God.

"Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." - The biblical passage continues to elaborate: "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:11-12). Jesus said many times that those who follow Him will be persecuted. "If they persecute me, they will persecute you" (John 15:20-21).

**Mt Traveler members, as we conclude today, the following are some main points to remember: The Sermon on the Mount is the most famous sermon Jesus ever gave and perhaps it is the most famous sermon ever given by anyone. In it Jesus taught us:**

- **The Beatitudes – are virtues in life which will ultimately lead to reward in this life and the life thereafter.**
- **And let the church say, “Amen!”**

**To have the ability to practice the Beatitudes, which are virtues that ultimately lead to the reward of eternal life, you must first know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior and then allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in this pilgrim’s journey to eternity with God. If you have not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope you will make room in your heart for Him today! Then confess with your mouth your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved and become part of God’s family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you through the Holy Spirit with wisdom, courage and boldness to do the work of the Church to cause the continual growth of God’s kingdom as you practice the Beatitudes. May God bless you as you humbly open your heart to provide room for Him as the choir leads us in a song!**

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**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

**January 10, 2016**

**2. Salt and Light of the World**

**Matthew 5:13-16**

**Glory to God for allowing us to see another New Year (2016)! This could be the Year that the Lord would return to take His own for His eternal reign in His Kingdom. In preparation for His second coming, this year we shall begin with the Sermon on the Mount and today’s sermon emphasizes on believer as “Salt and Light of the World”.**

**The Sermon on the Mount is the sermon that Jesus gave and is recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7. The title is derived from the description given in Matthew 5:1-2: “Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, 2 and he began to teach them”. A sermon is teaching with a persuasion to transform lives for the better. If we were to summarize this Sermon on the Mount in a single sentence, it would perhaps read “How to live a life that is dedicated and pleasing to God, free from hypocrisy, full of love and grace, wisdom and discernment”.**

**The teachings of Jesus of Nazareth during his life on earth were always simple but unique, innovative and full of metaphors and/or parables. His teaching began about 30 AD during the ruthless Roman occupation of Palestine. The message of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is one of humility, charity, and brotherly love. Jesus Christ taught transformation of the inner person. The Sermon on the Mount is also one of the main teachings of Jesus on morality and discipleship. In His teachings, Jesus used a lot of metaphors. Salt and light are metaphors Jesus**

used in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:13-16 immediately following the Beatitudes which stipulated expectations required of the disciples.

Thus our text of the day states: “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. 14. “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 15. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven”. ” (Matthew 5:13-16).

Jesus used the metaphors of salt and light several times as concepts to refer to the role of His followers in the world. Matthew 5:13 states: “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.” Salt has several purposes but looking at things from the context, salt had two main purposes in the Middle East in the first century. First, considering the lack of refrigeration then, salt was used to preserve food, especially meat which would quickly spoil in the desert environment due to the heat. So, Believers in Christ are preservatives to the world, preserving it from the evil inherent in the society of ungodly men whose unredeemed natures are corrupted by sin (Psalm 14:3; Romans 8:8). Secondly, salt was used then, as well as now, as a flavor enhancer. In the same way that salt enhances the flavor of the food it seasons; the followers of Christ are to stand out as those who “enhance” the flavor of life in this world. Christians, living under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in obedience to Christ, will inevitably influence the world for good, as salt has a positive influence on the flavor of the food it seasons. Where there is strife, believers are to be peacemakers; where there is sorrow, we are to be the ministers of Christ, binding up wounds, and where there is hatred, we are to exemplify the love of God in Christ, returning good for evil (Luke 6:35). Mark 9:50 suggests that saltiness can be lost specifically through a lack of peace with one another; it reads “Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt among yourselves, and be at peace with each other.” A third attribute of salt is that it used as a fertilizer in the soil. And so Luke 14:34-35, makes reference to the metaphor of salt once again, this time in the context of obedient discipleship to Jesus Christ. The loss of saltiness occurs in the failure of the Christian to daily take up the cross to follow Christ wholeheartedly. This lack of total commitment deters unbelievers from coming to Christ. Christians should actually be like salt that causes thirst to draw unbelievers and make them yearn for the living water (Jesus Christ) by their “saltiness” qualities of preservation, flavoring and fertilization of soils to become productive. For wholehearted obedience to commandments of Christ leads to producing more fruit for Jesus.

In the analogy of light to the world, the good works of Christ’s followers are to shine for all to see. The following verses in Matthew 5 highlight this truth: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16, NASB). The idea here is similar—the presence of light in darkness is something which is unmistakable. The presence of Christians in the world must be like a light in the darkness, not only in the sense that the truth of God’s Word brings light to the darkened hearts of sinful man (John 1:1-10), but also in the sense that our good deeds must be evident for all to see. And indeed, our deeds will be evident if they are performed in accordance with the other principles which Jesus taught in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-11. Notice especially that the concern is not

that Christians would stand out for their own sake to be praised by men, but that those who looked on might “glorify your Father who is in heaven” (v. 16, KJV).

In conclusion, in view of these verses, what sorts of things can hinder or prevent the Christian from fulfilling his or her role as salt and light in the world? The passage clearly states that the difference between the Christian and the world must be preserved; therefore, any choice on our part which blurs the distinction between Christians and the rest of the world is definitely a step in the wrong direction. This can happen either through a choice to accept the ways of the world for the sake of comfort or convenience or to contravene (or break) the law of obedience to Christ. Also, it is evident that the role of the Christian as salt and light in the world may be hindered or prevented through any choice made to compromise or settle for what is more convenient or comfortable, rather than what is truly best and pleasing to the Lord. Moreover, the status of salt and light is what follows naturally from the Christian’s humble obedience to the commandments of Christ. Whenever believers depart from the Spirit-led lifestyle of genuine discipleship, the distinctions between Christians and the rest of the world become blurred and our testimony is hindered. Therefore only by remaining focused on Christ and obedient to Him can we expect to remain salt and light in the world.

Mt Traveler members, as we conclude today, the following are some main points to remember: The Sermon on the Mount is the most famous sermon Jesus ever gave and perhaps it is the most famous sermon ever given by anyone. In it Jesus taught us:

- The Beatitudes – are virtues in life which will ultimately lead to reward in this life and the life thereafter.
- Using the metaphors of Salt and Light – to explain the roles of believers in the world
- And let the church say, “Amen!”

To have the ability to practice the Beatitudes, which are virtues that ultimately lead to the reward of eternal life, you must first know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior and then allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in this pilgrim’s journey to eternity with God. If you have not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope you will make room in your heart for Him today! Then confess with your mouth your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved and become part of God’s family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you through the Holy Spirit with wisdom, courage and boldness to do the work of the Church to cause the continual growth of God’s kingdom as you practice the Beatitudes. May God bless you as you humbly open your heart to provide room for Him as the choir leads us in a song!

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**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

**January 17, 2016**

**3. Jesus Fulfilled the Law**

**Matthew 5:17-20**

We, believers or followers of Jesus Christ give glory to God for allowing us to see and celebrate

**the Year 2016! Perhaps, this could be the Year that the Lord would return to take His own for His eternal reign in His Kingdom. In preparation for His second coming, this year we shall begin with the Sermon on the Mount and today's sermon topic focuses on Jesus' "Fulfillment of the Law".**

**What was the Law and why did Jesus come to fulfill the Law? Is it relevant for Him to fulfill the Law if His coming was to provide grace through which we can be saved? How did Jesus fulfill the Law? The Law is the commandments of God to mankind for building relationships. The Law of God is the basic instruction to mankind to abide by before leaving this earth into eternity. It is the road map to guide mankind to eternal destiny. It is a school master to show mankind the way to eternal destiny. Without the law man won't know what sin is and would not be converted. Jesus fulfilled the Law so as to prove to mankind that it is possible to obey God, live without sin and attain a righteousness that surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law. If anyone becomes His true follower (disciple) and obeys His teachings by practice them, then wisdom to navigate through this pilgrim's journey would be acquired and sin avoided by such an individual.**

**A sermon is teaching with a persuasion to transform lives for the better. The teachings of Jesus of Nazareth during his life on earth were always simple but unique, innovative and full of metaphors and/or parables. Jesus Christ taught transformation of the inner person. The Sermon on the Mount is one of the main teachings of Jesus on morality and discipleship. The message of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is one of humility, charity, and brotherly love. If we were to summarize this Sermon on the Mount in a single sentence, it would perhaps read "How to live a life that is dedicated and pleasing to God, free from hypocrisy, full of love and grace, wisdom and discernment".**

**Thus our text of the day states: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19 Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20 For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven". "**  
**(Matthew 5:17-20).**

**The key question today is how did Jesus Fulfill the Law? To comprehend how Jesus fulfilled the Law, we must first understand the meaning of the word fulfill, translated in Matthew 5:17 from the Greek verb pleeroo. Depending on the context, pleeroo is understood as either 1) fulfill (do, carry out); 2) bring to full expression, i.e., show forth the true spiritual meaning; or 3) fill up, as in "to complete" (Arndt and Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament). As our spiritual Lawgiver, Christ fulfilled the Law of God by bringing it to its full expression, thus revealing its complete spiritual meaning and intent. He "filled the Law to the full" by teaching obedience in the spirit of the Law. That is how He magnified the laws and commandments of God and made them honorable. To fulfill the Law of God by amplifying its meaning and application is the exact opposite of abolishing the Law. If Jesus had come to abolish the laws of God, He would not have magnified and expanded their meaning, making them even more binding. Jesus taught His disciples the spiritual meaning and application of every one of**

## **God's laws and commandments.**

**Obviously, the spiritual office of Jesus far overshadows the physical office of Moses as we had learned in the Book of Hebrews. Christ was God manifested in the flesh—the Lord God of the Old Testament Who had established the Old Covenant with the children of Israel. His death ended the Old Covenant with its “administration of death,” and established the New Covenant which offers the gift of eternal life (II Cor. 3:6-11). Unlike the Old Covenant, which required obedience only to the letter of the Law, the New Covenant is based on obedience to the spiritual intent of the Law. For this reason, Christ came as the spiritual Lawgiver to amplify and magnify the laws of God: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the Law and make it glorious” (Isa. 42:21). The Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry reveal that God requires obedience to His commandments not only in the letter of the Law, but in the spirit of the Law as well. Throughout His ministry, Jesus taught repentance from sin—which is clearly defined as the transgression of the laws of God (I John 3:4).**

**In spite of Jesus’ clear teachings which magnify the laws and commandments of God, most professing Christians have been taught that Christ came to abolish the laws of God. Jesus, however, emphatically denounced this idea in today’s text that states, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matt. 5:17-18).**

**Our text of the day then concludes with a strong warnings, “Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:19-20). Your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law when you walk in obedience by the spirit of the Law and not merely in obedience to the letter of the Law because Christ’s righteousness has been imputed to you through the New Covenant in Christ Jesus. Then you will be blessed as you hunger and thirst for this kind of righteousness and become a peacemaker because now you are a child of God as stated in the Beatitudes.**

**Mt Traveler members, as we conclude today, the following are some main points to remember: The Sermon on the Mount is the most famous sermon Jesus ever gave and perhaps it is the most famous sermon ever given by anyone. In it Jesus taught us:**

- The Beatitudes – are virtues in life which will ultimately lead to reward in this life and the life thereafter.**
- Using the metaphors of Salt and Light – to explain the roles of believers in the world**
- He has come to fulfill the Law**
- And let the church say, “Amen!”**

**To have the ability to practice the Beatitudes, which are virtues that ultimately lead to the reward of eternal life, you must first know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior and then allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in this pilgrim’s journey to eternity with God. If you have not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope you will make room in your heart for Him today! Then confess with your mouth**



**your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved and become part of God’s family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you through the Holy Spirit with wisdom, courage and boldness to do the work of the Church to cause the continual growth of God’s kingdom as you practice the Beatitudes. May God bless you as you humbly open your heart to provide room for Him as the choir leads us in a song!**

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**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

**January 24, 2016**

**4. Anger and Murder**

**Matthew 5:21-26**

**Last Sunday we learned that Jesus came to fulfill the Law. Obviously, the spiritual office of Jesus far overshadows the physical office of Moses as we had learned in the Book of Hebrews. Christ was God manifested in the flesh—the Lord God of the Old Testament Who had established the Old Covenant with the children of Israel. His death ended the Old Covenant with its “administration of death,” and established the New Covenant which offers the gift of eternal life (II Cor. 3:6-11). Unlike the Old Covenant, which required obedience only to the letter of the Law, the New Covenant in Christ is based on obedience to the spiritual intent of the Law. For this reason, Christ came as the spiritual Lawgiver to amplify and magnify the laws of God: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the Law and make it glorious” (Isa. 42:21). The Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry reveal that God requires obedience to His commandments not only in the letter of the Law, but in the spirit of the Law as well. Throughout His ministry, Jesus taught repentance from sin—which is clearly defined as the transgression of the laws of God (I John 3:4).**

**In spite of Jesus’ clear teachings which magnify the laws and commandments of God, most professing Christians have been taught that Christ came to abolish the laws of God. Jesus, however, emphatically denounced this idea with His statement, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matt. 5:17-18). Today we shall begin to consider how Jesus amplify and magnify a few of the laws of God which dealt with human relationships in order to help His followers become not only obedience to the letter of the Law but more importantly obedient to the spiritual intent of the Law that builds a loving Christ-like relationship among His followers. We shall begin with the sixth commandment, “You shall not murder”.**

**Thus our text of the day states, “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder, [Exodus 20:13] and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ 22 But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister [The Greek word for brother or sister (adelphos) refers here to a fellow disciple, whether man or woman; also in verse 23][ Some**

manuscripts brother or sister without cause] will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ [An Aramaic term of contempt] is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. 23 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. 25 “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court: Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. 26 Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny” (Matthew 5:21-26).

Jesus taught His disciples the spiritual meaning and application of every one of God’s laws and commandments. For example, He magnified the Sixth Commandment by showing that murder begins in the heart and is rooted in hatred and anger (Matt. 5:21-22). The spiritual amplification of the Sixth Commandment extends far beyond the letter of the Law, which judges only physical acts of violence. Under the New Covenant, hatred in one’s heart is judged as murder (1John 3:15 – “Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him”). This spiritual standard also applies to hatred for an enemy (verses 43-44 – “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor [Lev. 19:18] and hate your enemy. 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous”).

Mt Traveler members, as we conclude today, the following are some main points to remember: The Sermon on the Mount is the most famous sermon Jesus ever gave and perhaps it is the most famous sermon ever given by anyone. In it Jesus taught us:

- The Beatitudes – are virtues in life which will ultimately lead to reward in this life and the life thereafter.
- Using the metaphors of Salt and Light – to explain the roles of believers in the world
- He has come to fulfill the Law
- And let the church say, “Amen!”

To have the ability to practice the Beatitudes, which are virtues that ultimately lead to the reward of eternal life, you must first know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and savior and then allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in this pilgrim’s journey to eternity with God. If you have not, we invite you to come, repent, and humbly accept Jesus Christ into your heart and life by faith. I hope you will make room in your heart for Him today! Then confess with your mouth your faith in Him that He died and rose again to save you from your sin through the shedding of His blood on Calvary, and you will be saved and become part of God’s family and kingdom. Then ask Him in prayers to empower you through the Holy Spirit with wisdom, courage and boldness to do the work of the Church to cause the continual growth of God’s kingdom as you practice the Beatitudes. May God bless you as you humbly open your heart to provide room for Him as the choir leads us in a song!

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**Mt. Traveler Missionary Baptist Church, Waverly, Alabama**  
**Synopsis of Sermon Preached by Rev. B. C. Datiri, Pastor**

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**SERMON ON THE MOUNT**

January 31, 2016

5. Lust and Adultery

Matthew 5:27-30

In continuation of his amplification and magnification of the Laws that govern good relationships, Jesus taught on lust and adultery. The seventh commandment says “You shall not commit adultery”. Nevertheless, this sin has been committed throughout history although adultery seems more rampant today than ever. While tabloid stories report the affairs of politicians, millionaires, and movie stars, films like “The English Patient,” “The Prince of Tides,” or “The Bridges of Madison Country” feature and even promote adultery. The question then is how prevalent is adultery?

Two of the most reliable studies come to similar conclusions. The Janus Report on Sexual Behavior estimates that “More than one-third of men and one-quarter of women admit having had at least one extramarital sexual experience.” A survey by the National Opinion Research Center (University of Chicago) found lower percentages: 25 percent of men had been unfaithful and 17 percent of women. Even when these lower ratios are applied to the current adult population, this will imply that some 19 million husbands and 12 million wives have had an affair. Whatever the actual numbers, the point is that adultery is much more common than we would like to admit. Family therapist and psychiatrist Frank Pittman believes “There may be as many acts of infidelity in our society as there are traffic accidents”. He further argues that the fact that adultery has become commonplace, has altered society’s perception of the weight of this sin. He says, “We won’t go back to the times when adulterers were put in the stocks and publicly humiliated, or become one of those societies, and there are many, in which adultery is punishable by death. Society in any case is unable to enforce a rule that the majority of people won’t break, and moreover infidelity is so common that it is no longer deviant or abnormal. However, there is hope because believers who pray and practice the word of God are far less likely to engage in adultery.

The purpose of the Law and the Prophets and all the writings of the Old Testament is to teach people to love, worship and obey God, and Him alone as well as to build solid great relationships with others. Christ revealed the spirit and intent of the Law and the Prophets when He was asked by a scribe to name the “greatest” commandment. Jesus replied, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment; and the second one is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:35-40). And again, “Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 7:12).

Therefore, Christ came as the spiritual Lawgiver to amplify and magnify the laws of God as stated in Isaiah: “The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will magnify the Law and make it glorious” (Isa. 42:21). The Gospel accounts of Jesus’ life and ministry reveal that God requires obedience to His commandments not only in the letter of the Law, but in the spirit of the Law as well. Throughout His ministry, Jesus taught repentance from sin—which is clearly defined as the transgression of the laws of God (I John 3:4).

In spite of Jesus’ clear teachings which magnify the laws and commandments of God, most

professing Christians have been taught that Christ came to abolish the laws of God. Jesus, however, emphatically denounced this idea with His statement, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished” (Matt. 5:17-18). Today we shall continue to consider how Jesus amplify and magnify a few of the laws of God which dealt with human relationships in order to help His followers become not only obedience to the letter of the Law but more importantly obedient to the spiritual intent of the Law to build loving Christ-like relationships among His followers. Last week we addressed the sixth commandment, “You shall not commit murder”. Today we will address the seventh commandment, “You shall not commit adultery”. Adultery begins as lust in the heart when it is initiated by what we see and hear.

Thus our text of the day states, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ [Exodus 20:14] 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell” (Matthew 5:27-30).

Jesus taught His disciples the spiritual meaning and application of every one of God’s laws and commandments. For example, He magnified the Seventh Commandment by teaching its spiritual meaning and application when He said, “You have heard that it was said to those in ancient times, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you [as the spiritual Lawgiver], everyone who looks upon a woman to lust after her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matt. 5:27-28). Jesus made the Seventh Commandment far more binding than did the letter of the Law. Thus, every individual is held accountable for his or her adulterous thoughts, even if no physical act is committed. The hope that the believer has is that under the New Covenant, true worship and love toward God is made possible through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which enables the believer to reverence God and obey Him from the heart. Through deep faith in Jesus Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the believer learns to obey every command of God in the full spirit and intent of the Law, as magnified by Jesus Christ. This is the manner in which every true believer will keep the laws and commandments of God, because he or she loves God the Father and Jesus Christ with all the heart, mind, soul and strength. And as the believer prays, worships and obeys God through the understanding of the spiritual meaning, application and intent of the Law, he is protected from engaging in adultery.

Finally, the Book of Proverbs 6 in warning against adultery concludes, “People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his hunger when he is starving. Yet if he is caught, he must pay sevenfold, though it costs him all the wealth of his house. But a man who commits adultery has no sense; whoever does so destroys himself. Blows and disgrace are his lot, and his shame will never be wiped away” (Prov. 6:30-33).

Mt Traveler members, as we conclude today, the following are some main points to remember: The Sermon on the Mount is the most famous sermon Jesus ever gave and perhaps it is the most famous sermon ever given by anyone. In it Jesus taught us:

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**life thereafter.**

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