

February 13–19. Matthew 5: Luke 6, “Blessed Are Ye”

Overview

In this weeks reading assignment we read similar sermons given by Christ. In Matthew it's called The Sermon on the Mount. In Luke it's called The Sermon on the Plain. In 3rd Nephi a similar sermon is given again. Sometimes we call it The Sermon at the Temple

These sermons appear to be directed to those who had already been converted.

Luke 6:17

17 ¶ And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples...

Matt 5:1-2

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

JST Matt 5:1-4

1 And Jesus, seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain; and when he was set down, his disciples came unto him;
2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
3 Blessed are they who shall believe on me; and again, more blessed are they who shall believe on your words, when ye shall testify that ye have seen me and that I am.
4 Yea, blessed are they who shall believe on your words, and come down into the depth of humility, and be baptized in my name; for they shall be visited with fire and the Holy Ghost, and shall receive a remission of their sins.

It is a sermon given to his disciples on how they should perfect their lives following baptism and Holy Ghost. These teaching are contradictory to, and would not be understood by the world who believe, “Blessed are the rich, powerful, pampered, glamorous, etc.”

The Beatitudes

Matt 5:2-12

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

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

Verse 3 - Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

JST Matt 5:5

Blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me...

What does it mean to be "poor in spirit"?

Humble - see footnote

O. Leslie Stone

What is meant by "poor in spirit"? Is it not humility, which renders us teachable and eager to learn? They who feel themselves spiritually poor approach God, asking him to supply their needs. They who have faith in him, learn his laws and try diligently to obey him. They thus become eligible for the great blessings he has promised, including salvation, exaltation, and eternal life, which are the greatest of all the gifts of God." (CR, Oct. 1974)

Verse 4 - Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted.

We have all had occasion to mourn.

How does the Savior provide comfort to those who mourn?

Comfort from the burden of sin

Harold B. Lee

"To mourn, as the Master's lesson here would teach, one must show that 'godly sorrow that worketh repentance' and wins for the penitent a forgiveness of sins and forbids a return to the deeds of which he mourns." (Decisions for Successful Living, pg. 58)

Comfort from physical and emotional pain

David E. Sorensen

"Remember the Lord has promised that He will help us as we face adversity. He has particular compassion for those who suffer. It was He who said, 'Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.'

"As part of the Atonement, our Savior suffered all things. He knows

physical and emotional pain; He knows the sorrow of loss and betrayal. But He showed us that ultimately love, patience, humility, and obedience are the path to true peace and happiness.... Jesus offers us solace despite our suffering. His life was not free of conflict or pain, but it was free of fear and full of meaning.” (CR, April 2005)

Comfort from death of a loved one

Russell M. Nelson

"My heart goes out to each individual who bears the burden of mourning. I share my feelings of empathy and sympathy. The separation imposed by the departure of a loved one evokes pangs of sorrow and shock among those left behind. The hurt is real. Only its intensity varies. Even though we understand the doctrine-even though we dearly love God and his eternal plan-mourning remains....

"Where can we turn for peace? We can come unto the Lord Jesus Christ.... His is the peace provided by our knowledge of the resurrection. His gift of life after death applies to all mankind.... Peace comes when we go directly to our best friend-the Prince of Peace." (The Gateway We Call Death, pg. 22-24)

Verse 5 - Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.

What does it mean to be meek?

David A. Bednar

“Meekness is a defining attribute of the Redeemer and is distinguished by righteous responsiveness, willing submissiveness, and strong self-restraint....

“The Christlike quality of meekness often is misunderstood in our contemporary world. Meekness is strong, not weak; active, not passive; courageous, not timid; restrained, not excessive; modest, not self-aggrandizing; and gracious, not brash. A meek person is not easily provoked, pretentious, or overbearing and readily acknowledges the accomplishments of others.” (CR, April 2018)

Verse 6- Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

JST Matt 5:8

...for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost

In what way will those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” be filled?

Harold B. Lee

“Did you ever hunger for food or thirst for water when just a crust of stale bread or a sip of tepid water to ease the pangs that distressed you would seem to be the most prized of all possessions? If you have so hungered then you may begin to understand how the Master meant we should hunger and thirst after righteousness. It’s that hungering and thirsting that...induces worship on the Lord’s Day [and] prompts fervent prayer.” (Decisions for Successful Living, pg. 60)

Joseph F. Smith

"The Holy Spirit is to enlighten the minds of the people with regard to the things of God, to convince them at the time of their conversion of their having done the will of the Father, and to be in them an abiding testimony as a companion through life, acting as the sure and safe guide into all truth and filling them day by day with joy and gladness, with a disposition to do good to all men, to suffer wrong rather than to do wrong, to be kind and merciful, long-suffering and charitable. All who possess this inestimable gift, this pearl of great price, have a continual thirst after righteousness." (JD, 18:271)

Verse 7- Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

Gordon B. Hinckley

“How godlike a quality is mercy. It cannot be legislated. It must come from the heart. It must be stirred up from within. It is part of the endowment each of us receives as a son or daughter of God and partaker of a divine birthright. I plead for an effort among all of us to give greater expression and wider latitude to this instinct which lies within us. I am convinced that there comes a time, possibly many times, within our lives when we might cry out for mercy on the part of others. How can we expect it unless we have been merciful ourselves?...

“Let us be more merciful. Let us get the arrogance out of our lives, the conceit, the egotism. Let us be more compassionate, gentler, filled with forbearance and patience and a greater measure of respect one for another. In so doing, our very example will cause others to be more merciful, and we shall have greater claim upon the mercy of God who in His love will be generous toward us.” (CR, April 1990)

Verse 8- Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

What does it mean to be pure in heart?

Helaman 3:35

Nevertheless they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ,

unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God.

Why do you think that being pure in heart will allow us to enduring God's presence?

Marion G. Romney

"I can think of no blessings to be more fervently desired than those promised to the pure and the virtuous. Jesus spoke of specific rewards for different virtues but reserved the greatest, so it seems to me, for the pure in heart, 'for they,' said he, 'shall see God.' And not only shall they see the Lord, but they shall feel at home in his presence.

"Here is his promise—the Savior's promise: 'Let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God' (D&C 121:45)." (CR, April 1979)

Verse 9- Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.

What can we do to become peacemakers and good examples of followers of Christ?

Russell M. Nelson

"Now, as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, what does the Lord expect of us? As a Church, we must 'renounce war and proclaim peace' (D&C 98:16). As individuals, we should 'follow after the things which make for peace' (Rom 14:19). We should be personal peacemakers. We should live peacefully—as couples, families, and neighbors. We should live by the Golden Rule.... We should bring divine love and revealed doctrines of restored religion to our neighbors and friends. We should serve them according to our abilities and opportunities. We should keep our principles on a high level and stand for the right. We should continue to gather scattered Israel from the four corners of the earth and offer the ordinances and covenants that seal families together forever. These blessings we are to bring to people of all nations." (CR, Oct. 2002)

Verses 10 -12:

JST Matt 5:12-14

12 Blessed are all they that are persecuted for my name's sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

13 And blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

14 For ye shall have great joy, and be exceeding glad; for great shall be your

reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

What do we learn from this clarification in the JST?

He does not expect us to rejoice in being prosecuted, but we will have great joy in our reward when we are persecuted for His name's sake

Bruce R. McConkie

“Persecution for his name's sake is the heritage of the faithful... it evidences that they have forsaken the world and come unto Christ, so as to be future inheritors of the fulness of his Father's kingdom. ‘And whoso layeth down his life in my cause, for my name's sake, shall find it again, even life eternal’ (D&C 98:13).” (DNTC, 1:216)

Gospel Principles

Christ tells His disciples that He has called them to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world

Matt 5:13-16

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

JST Matt 5:

15 ¶ Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the salt of the earth...

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, I give unto you to be the light of the world...

What does it mean to be the salt of the earth?

James E. Talmage

“Salt is the great preservative; as such it has had practical use since very ancient times.... To be of use salt must be pure; to be of any saving virtue as salt, it must be salt indeed, and not the product of chemical alteration or of earthy admixture, whereby its saltiness or ‘savor’ would be lost; and, as worthless stuff, it would be fit only to be thrown away. Against such change of faith, against such admixture with the sophistries, so-called philosophies, and heresies of the times, the disciples were especially warned.” (Jesus the Christ, pg. 232)

Why is it important to the Lord that His disciples not lose their “savor”?

(if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?)

Carlos E. Asay

"In 1833 Joseph Smith received a revelation which included these instructions: 'When men are called into mine everlasting gospel, and covenant with an everlasting covenant, they are accounted as the salt of the earth and the savor of men' (D&C 101:39)....

"When the Lord used the expression 'savor of men,' he was speaking of those who represent him. He was referring to those who have repented, who have been washed clean in the waters of baptism, and who have covenanted to take upon them his name and his cause....

"There should be salt between us and all men. We should extend honor, friendship, and hospitality to all of our brothers and sisters. To the inactives we extend the hand of fellowship; to the nonmembers we extend the divine invitation 'come and see'; with the fathers of yesteryear we establish links which weld fathers to children and children to fathers. In all of this, we advance the purposes of the Master and assist in the reconciliation of men to the God who gave them life. And, in the process, we not only preserve our savor but we save ourselves.." (CR, April 1980)

Why is it important to the Lord that His disciples let their light shine?

(that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven)

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

"Christ's light brings hope, happiness, and healing of any spiritual wound or ailment. Those who experience this refining influence become instruments in the hands of the Light of the World to give light to others. They will feel what King Lamoni felt: 'This light had infused such joy into his soul, the cloud of darkness having been dispelled, and... the light of everlasting life was lit up in his soul' (Alma 19:6).

"My dear brethren, my dear friends, it is our quest to seek the Lord until His light of everlasting life burns brightly within us and our testimony becomes confident and strong even in the midst of darkness." (CR, Oct. 2017)

Jesus states that He has come to fulfill the law of Moses

Matt 5:17-20

17 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

In what ways did Jesus fulfill the Law of Moses?

Tracy Y. Browning

"Ultimately a great portion of the Israelites rejected His message, even going so far as to accuse the Savior—He who gave the law and declared that He was 'the law, and the light'—of breaking it. Yet Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount, speaking on the law of Moses, declared, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.' Then the Savior, through His eternal Atonement, ended the codes, regulations, and ceremonial practices observed by the people of Israel at that time. His final sacrifice led the shift from sacrificial burnt offerings to our rendering of 'a broken heart and a contrite spirit' (2 Nephi 2:7) from the ordinance of sacrifice to the ordinance of sacrament." (CR, Oct. 2022)

Control your anger

Matt 5:21-26

21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

I'm glad that its alright to be angry with someone when you have a cause. I think I always have cause. Is that the correct interpretation?

(JST removed "without a cause")

Brigham Young

“In our daily pursuits in life, of whatever nature and kind, Latter-day Saints, and especially those who hold important positions in the Kingdom of God,

should maintain a uniform and even temper, both when at home and when abroad. They should not suffer reverses and unpleasant circumstances to sour their natures and render them fretful and unsocial at home, speaking words full of bitterness and biting acrimony to their wives and children, creating gloom and sorrow in their habitations, making themselves feared rather than loved by their families. Anger should never be permitted to rise in our bosoms, and words suggested by angry feelings should never be permitted to pass our lips. (JD 11:136)

What should we learn from Jesus' statement about agreeing with our adversary?

Marion D. Hanks

"It is reported that President Brigham Young once said that he who takes offense when no offense was intended is a fool, and he who takes offense when offense was intended is usually a fool. It was then explained that there are two courses of action to follow when one is bitten by a rattlesnake. One may, in anger, fear, or vengefulness, pursue the creature and kill it. Or he may make full haste to get the venom out of his system. If we pursue the latter course we will likely survive, but if we attempt to follow the former, we may not be around long enough to finish it." (CR, Oct. 1973)

Deny yourself of worldly temptations – cast them from you

Matt 5:27-30

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

What do you think that Jesus is admonishing us to do when He references plucking out eyes and cutting of hands?

The JST makes it clear that plucking out your eye and cutting off your hand is a parable

JST Matt 5:31,34

31 Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart; for it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell.

34 And now this I speak, a parable concerning your sins; wherefore, cast

them from you, that ye may not be hewn down and cast into the fire.

What is the lesson Jesus is teaching us about our sins?

(They are as much a part of us as our eyes, hands, and feet. But we must cast them off)

Making promises

Matt 5:33-37

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

What does Jesus mean when He tells us to "let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay"?

Bruce R. McConkie

Beginning in the meridian of time, Jesus revealed a higher standard relative to truthfulness in conversation. It was simply that Yea meant Yea, and Nay meant Nay, and that no oath was required to establish the verity of any promise or thing. Every man's every word was to be as true and accurate as if it had been spoken with an oath. (DNTC, 1:226)

Turn the other cheek

Matt 5:38-42

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

JST luke 6:29-30

29) And unto him who smiteth thee on the cheek, offer also the other; or, in other words, it is better to offer the other, than to revile again. And him who taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also.

30) For it is better that thou suffer thine enemy to take these things, than to

contend with him. Verily I say unto you, Your heavenly Father who seeth in secret, shall bring that wicked one into judgment.

How does the JST version effect the emphasis of the message?

Bruce R. McConkie

Contention leads to bitterness and smallness of soul; persons who contend with each other shrivel up spiritually and are in danger of losing their salvation. So important is it to avoid this evil that Jesus expects his saints to suffer oppression and wrong rather than lose their inner peace and serenity through contention. 'He that hath the spirit of Contention is not of me,' he told the Nephites, 'but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another' (3 Ne 11:29). (DNTC, 1:228)

Love your enemies; Be perfect

Matt 5:43-48

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Joseph Fielding Smith

"[Perfection] will not come all at once, but line upon line, and precept upon precept, example upon example, and even then not as long as we live in this mortal life, for we will have to go even beyond the grave before we reach that perfection and shall be like God.

"But here we lay the foundation. Here is where we are taught these simple truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in this probationary state, to prepare us for that perfection. It is our duty to be better today than we were yesterday, and better tomorrow than we are today... If we are keeping the commandments of the Lord, we are on that road to perfection". (Doctrines of Salvation, 2:18-19)