

Get Real - The Sermon On The Mount, Part 3

- **Matthew 5:1-2 (MSG)** When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:
- In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is teaching His disciples, not preaching to sinners. In fact, ***The Message*** introduces this passage to show us that Jesus always expects more from His disciples than He does from the crowd. As He “climbs higher” with His disciples, instead of Jesus telling us what HE wants to do for US (salvation), He now tells us what He wants US to do for HIM (discipleship). The Sermon on the Mount is about becoming a “climbing companion” of Jesus. It is about GETTING REAL with God, ourselves, and others.
- The first part of Jesus’ sermon in Matthew 5 taught us to get real in HOW WE LIVE and in WHAT WE BELIEVE. The second part in Matthew 6 taught us to get real in our SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES. The third part in Matthew 6 & 7 teaches us these important principles ... to get real in our ATTITUDE and get real in our OBEDIENCE.
- **Matthew 7:12 (MSG)** Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them. Add up God’s Law and Prophets and this is what you get.
- The dictionary defines ATTITUDE as “a feeling or emotion toward a fact.” In other words, the fact doesn’t change, but our attitude toward it can make or break us. The English language has a stronger word, DISPOSITION, which is defined as “a habitual inclination” or “one’s usual mood.” Disposition is when attitude becomes permanent!
- John Maxwell wrote a book called “The Winning Attitude” nearly a decade ago. In that book, he includes this brilliant piece ...
- **WHAT IS AN ATTITUDE?**
It is the “advance man” of our true selves.
Its roots are inward but its fruit is outward.
It is our best friend or our worst enemy.
It is more honest and more consistent than our words.
It is an outward look based on past experiences.
It is a thing which draws people to us or repels them.
It is never content until it is expressed.
It is the librarian of our past.
It is the speaker of our present.
It is the prophet of our future.

- In this section of The Sermon On The Mount, Jesus teaches us about several key areas of life where our attitude is undoubtedly the single most important factor. ATTITUDES DON’T LIE AND THEY CAN’T BE SILENT!
- **AN OPEN-HANDED ATTITUDE (Matthew 6:19-24) DON’T HOARD!**
 - **Matthew 6:19-24 (MSG)** Don’t hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it’s safe from moth and rust and burglars. It’s obvious, isn’t it? **The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be**, and end up being. Your eyes are windows into your body. If you open your eyes wide in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light. If you live squinty-eyed in greed and distrust, your body is a dank cellar. If you pull the blinds on your windows, what a dark life you will have! You can’t worship two gods at once. Loving one god, you’ll end up hating the other. **Adoration of one feeds contempt for the other**. You can’t worship God and Money both.
 - **Discussion:** Describe a person who puts himself ahead of God.
- **AN OPEN-ENDED ATTITUDE (Matthew 6:25-34) DON’T WORRY!**
 - **Matthew 6:25-34 (MSG)** If you decide for God, living a life of God-worship, it follows that you don’t fuss about what’s on the table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the birds, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, **careless in the care of God**. And you count far more to him than birds. Has anyone by fussing in front of the mirror ever gotten taller by so much as an inch? All this time and money wasted on fashion—do you think it makes that much difference? Instead of looking at the fashions, walk out into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They never primp or shop, but have you ever seen color and design quite like it? The ten best-dressed men and women in the country look shabby alongside them. If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers—most of which are never even seen—don’t you think he’ll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? **What I’m trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God’s giving**. People who don’t know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don’t worry about missing out. You’ll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. **Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don’t get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow**. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.

- **Discussion:** Describe a person who properly lives in the present.
- When Matthew 6:25 tells us to “take no thought for your life” (KJV), the Greek word is MERIMNAO. It is translated “worry” by most of the newer Bible versions. Its root word means to divide into parts, literally illustrating a distraction or preoccupation that causes anxiety.
- What is the difference between proper concern and worry? Basically this – proper concern mobilizes while worry immobilizes!
- **I AM** (a poem by Helen Mallicoat)
I was regretting the past and fearing the future.
Suddenly, my Lord was speaking. "My name is I Am."
He paused. I waited. He continued.

When you live in the past, with its mistakes and regrets,
it is hard. I am not there. My name is not “I was.”

When you live in the future, with its problems and fears,
it is hard. I am not there. My name is not “I will be.”

When you live in this moment it is not hard. I am here.
My name is “I AM.”
- **AN OPEN-MINDED ATTITUDE (Matthew 7:1-6)**
DON'T CRITICIZE!
 - **Matthew 7:1-6 (MSG)** Don't pick on people, jump on their failures, criticize their faults—unless, of course, you want the same treatment. **That critical spirit has a way of boomeranging.** It's easy to see a smudge on your neighbor's face and be oblivious to the ugly sneer on your own. Do you have the nerve to say, 'Let me wash your face for you,' when your own face is distorted by contempt? It's this whole traveling road-show mentality all over again, playing a holier-than-thou part instead of just living your part. Wipe that ugly sneer off your own face, and you might be fit to offer a washcloth to your neighbor. **Don't be flip with the sacred.** Banter and silliness give no honor to God. Don't reduce holy mysteries to slogans. In trying to be relevant, you're only being cute and inviting sacrilege.
 - **Discussion:** Describe non-verbal ways that we can be critical.
- **AN OPEN-HEARTED ATTITUDE (Matthew 7:7-11)**
DON'T QUIT!
 - **Matthew 7:7-11 (NLT)** **Keep on asking,** and you will be given what you ask for. **Keep on looking,** and you will find. **Keep on knocking,** and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And the door is opened to everyone who knocks. You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.
 - **Discussion:** Describe things that most make us want to give up.
 - **ASKING** indicates things we wish for
 - **SEEKING** indicates things we have lost
 - **KNOCKING** indicates things from which we feel shut out
 - **PERSISTENCE** is always the key to getting an answer from God!
- **THE ULTIMATE ATTITUDE – GOLDEN RULE (Matthew 7:12)**
 - **Matthew 7:12 (MSG)** Here is a simple, rule-of-thumb guide for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you, then grab the initiative and do it for them. Add up God's Law and Prophets and this is what you get.
 - What we call the GOLDEN RULE was cited in negative form in the writings of rabbinic Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, and other religions (i.e. “DON'T do to others what you DON'T WANT them to do to you”), but Jesus was the first to state it in a positive form. His commandment is certainly more difficult to do!
- After Jesus finishes teaching us to GET REAL in our ATTITUDE, He concludes His sermon by teaching us to GET REAL in the matter of OBEDIENCE. Jesus' teachings are powerful, but they do us absolutely no good if we don't put them into practice and GET REAL!
- Remember that Jesus is talking to DISCIPLES (“climbing companions”), not SINNERS. He ends His most famous sermon by contrasting, not the saved and the unsaved, but TWO KINDS OF BELIEVERS. To do so, Jesus uses three comparisons ...
- **TWO ROADS (Matthew 7:13-14)**
 - **Matthew 7:13-14 (NLT)** You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose the easy way. But the gateway to life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few ever find it.

- The Greek word translated "narrow" is "tethlimmene" which means "restricted or confined."
 - The Greek word translated "broad" is "eurychoros" which comes from two words – "eurys" meaning "broad" and "chora" meaning "country."
 - The "broad way" is a word picture describing a wide-open country with no fences or boundaries. With no rules or regulations, its residents may go anywhere they want and live their lives as undisciplined as they choose. They need not worry about getting off the road ... they cannot, for there is no road!
 - BUT JESUS SAYS THAT THIS UNDISCIPLINED WAY OF SO-CALLED "FREEDOM" LEADS TO THEIR DESTRUCTION!
- **TWO TREES (Matthew 7:15-23)**
 - **Matthew 7:15-23 (GW)** Beware of false prophets. They come to you disguised as sheep, but in their hearts they are vicious wolves. You will know them by what they produce. People don't pick grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way every good tree produces good fruit, but a rotten tree produces bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a rotten tree cannot produce good fruit. Any tree that fails to produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into a fire. So you will know them by what they produce. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the person who does what my Father in heaven wants. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name? Didn't we force out demons and do many miracles by the power and authority of your name?' Then I will tell them publicly, 'I've never known you. Get away from me, you evil people.'
 - FALSE PROPHETS are preachers who say what the people want to hear (and not just on doctrinal matters!) But their FRUIT (the practical long term effects of their teaching) identifies them as false ministers.
 - **Jeremiah 23:30-32 (NLT)** "Therefore," says the Lord, "I stand against these prophets who get their messages from each other—these smooth-tongued prophets who say, 'This prophecy is from the Lord!' Their imaginary dreams are flagrant lies that lead my people into sin. I did not send or appoint them, and they have no message at all for my people," says the Lord.
 - Notice that these false prophets could be "apostolic" believers – they preach in Jesus' name and they are filled with the Holy Spirit (they call Him "Lord"). BUT THEY NEVER LET GOD'S SPIRIT LEAD THEM INTO OBEDIENCE!
- **1 Corinthians 12:3 (KJV)** Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.
 - These "disciples" will be utterly astonished at the judgment when they find out that the Lord doesn't recognize them as His children. The Greek language of Matthew 7:23 gives the sense of God saying, "I never approved you; I bore that long enough – now begone!"
- **TWO HOUSES (Matthew 7:24-27)**
 - **Matthew 7:24-27 (MSG)** These words I speak to you are not incidental additions to your life, homeowner improvements to your standard of living. They are foundational words, words to build a life on. If you work these words into your life, you are like a smart carpenter who built his house on solid rock. Rain poured down, the river flooded, a tornado hit—but nothing moved that house. It was fixed to the rock. But if you just use my words in Bible studies and don't work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards.
 - Many so-called disciples today look at the Word of God as an "incidental addition" to their life. They HEAR it preached, but they only OBEY its teachings if they are convenient for them. As a result, the "house" they are building looks good but it has no foundation, because OBEDIENCE is the foundation of the Christian life.
 - The foundation of a building is incredibly important even though it is hidden. Most of the important areas of obedience in the Christian life can be "faked" before others – but we must GET REAL!
 - **CONCLUSION: THIS IS REAL TEACHING! (Matthew 7:28-29)**
 - **Matthew 7:28-29 (MSG)** When Jesus concluded his address, the crowd burst into applause. They had never heard teaching like this. It was apparent that he was living everything he was saying—quite a contrast to their religion teachers! This was the best teaching they had ever heard.