



Bible Study
— w/o —
Borders

Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5-7

Written by:
Jeremy Dehut and Justin Dobbs

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Jeremy Dehut: jeremy.dehut@appianmedia.org

Justin Dobbs: justin.c.dobbs@gmail.com

Stuart Peck: stuart.peck@appianmedia.org

For permission requests or questions, contact the publisher at:

www.appianmedia.org/contact

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Lesson 1: Opportunities to Influence



Matthew 5:13-16

Christians have received a tremendous calling! One dimension of that calling is influence: to impact the world around us. Consider how this one aspect of your calling impacts your perception of your circumstances as we study Matthew 5:13-16.

1. What is significant about Jesus calling his disciples “salt” in Matt. 5:13? How are we to be salt?
2. What stands out to you about Jesus calling his disciples “light” in Matt. 5:14-15? In what ways are we to be light?
3. Based on v. 16, how will the world experience our “salt” and “light”?
4. According to Jesus’ words here, what is our ultimate goal when we do good?

Notes from watching *Bible Study without Borders*:

Have you ever wondered how people can see the same thing so differently? In 2015 a photo of a dress went viral on the internet because people who saw it couldn't agree if the dress was blue or gold (it was later confirmed to be blue). The incident highlighted the difference in the way people perceived color. Our lives as Christians are similar. We live through the same events as non-believers. We live in the same places as non-believers. But we see things differently because we're trying to see things God's way. Think about right now...you may be living through something difficult, scary, or overwhelming. But at the same time we should see opportunity! How might you influence the people around you for God this week? Make a list below and start letting your light shine for God!

Lesson 2: Love Like the Father



Matthew 5:43-48

If you were to poll people on the street for a definition of love, you would receive a variety of answers. The Bible has a clear definition of love (Jn. 15:13) along with instructions about who we are to love (Matt. 22:36-40).

1. Based on Matt. 5:43, who do we tend to think is worthy or unworthy of love?
2. In his sermon who specifically did Jesus teach his disciples to love (Matt. 5:44)?
3. What motivates godly love (Matt. 5:45-48)?
4. What are five things we know about Biblical love?
 - Biblical love _____ (1 Jn. 4:19)
 - Biblical love _____ (Rom. 5:6-11)
 - Biblical love _____ (1 Jn. 3:18)
 - Biblical love _____ (1 Jn. 3:16; Eph. 5:25)
 - Biblical love _____ (Jn. 13:34)

Notes from watching *Bible Study without Borders*:

Someone shared the following story: "I approached a kid and asked, 'What is love?' The kid answered, 'Love is when a puppy licks your face.' I laughed, but he added, 'Even after you left him alone all day.'" This is a silly story, but it has a kernel of truth. I am sure we all know how easy it is to have fond feelings for those we like. On the other hand I am sure we have all experienced the difficulty of showing love toward someone who has been unkind. Jesus' example in Matthew 5 instructs us to love someone who is openly hostile. The only thing that can motivate us to show that kind of love is if we have received the gracious and abundant love of God ourselves (see Matt. 18:21-25). This week take steps to show God's love in 2 or 3 ways to someone you know.

Lesson 3: Discreet Generosity



Matthew 6:1-4

We probably all experience an innate desire to be acknowledged when we do something praiseworthy. Jesus explains that his disciples must learn to seek praise from the one “who sees in secret” (Matt. 6:4).

1. According to Jesus what is one of the goals we can pursue wrongly when we do good (Matt. 6:1)?
2. If we do good in order to reach that wrong goal, what reward will we receive (Matt. 6:2)?
3. What goal will followers of Jesus live for (Matt. 6:4)?
4. What additional temptation does Jesus warn about in Matt. 6:3?
5. Take a moment to read Luke 10:25-37 to see a Biblical example of what this looks like. Note any similarities between Jesus’ teachings on these two occasions.

Notes from watching *Bible Study without Borders*:

One of the shows I thoroughly enjoy watching is called, "Returning the Favor." The host travels the country surprising everyday people who have made a difference in their communities. They are unsung heroes. They don't do it for praise or recognition. They serve out of love. As a recipient of the unfathomable love of God, make a list of three ways you can show love to those around you this week. As you work on completing your list, remember that no one may praise you for what you are doing right now, but your heavenly Father sees you and is pleased! If someone does praise you, make sure to redirect their praise to our loving God.

Lesson 4: Praying with Purpose



Matthew 6:5-15

It is so easy for our routines to become mind-numbingly mundane. We dismissively call them “ruts.” If we’re not careful, our prayer life can become one of those ruts. Let’s see what Jesus taught about prayer in Matthew 6.

1. What kind of praying did Jesus rebuke in Matthew 6:5?
2. Based on Matt. 6:6, how should Christians pray?
3. What “prayer trap” are we to avoid (Matt. 6:7)?
4. What principles of prayer stand out to you in Matt. 6:9-13?
5. What attitudes are essential for praying disciples in Matt. 6:14-15?

Notes from watching *Bible Study without Borders*:

We probably spend the majority of our time in prayer making requests. We certainly need to bring our petitions to God, but there is so much more to prayer than that! There is adoration of God ("hallowed by your name"); there is the process of comparing my desires with God's and learning to align myself with him ("your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"); there is a relational component to prayer in which I am think about others ("forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors"). Maybe it would help us get our prayers out of a rut if we practiced some of these things. This week, choose one or two of these areas of focus, and take steps to practice praying with purpose.

Lesson 5: Treasure of the Heart



Matthew 6:19-24

We're all susceptible to hypocrisy: putting on an act, pretending so that others think well of us. However, our act of deception can blind our own eyes to the truth. Jesus has already addressed the hypocrisy that seeks the earthly reward of the good opinion of others instead of the heavenly reward of our Father. Jesus gets very plain about our heart's desire in this next section about earthly treasure and heavenly treasure.

1. While we do need earthly goods (see 1 Tim. 6:8), the trouble with treasure here is that you can't keep it. How have you seen this to be true?
2. How we see the world—what we prioritize in life—determines so much! Based on what Jesus has taught in this sermon so far, how might you nurture and protect a true view of life so that the “eye is healthy”?
3. List ways we are tempted to treat money in v. 24.
4. While Jesus is focusing in on material wealth—“mammon”—what are other treasures that might captivate our hearts and blind us? Consider Eph. 4:18 and 22.

Notes from watching *Bible Study without Borders*:

The focus of our attention, the treasure we store up—it's the way we look at the world around us. It's the thing we think about, fixate on, and stress. We're bombarded with worldly cares—many of them legitimate concerns—but the kingdom citizen looks to God. It's easy to get distracted, but Jesus' words here give us a chance to evaluate how we're really doing by discovering what it is that we're really treasuring. Whatever it is that commands my love, my loyalty, and my service—that thing is my God (Matt. 6:24). And I can only have one. Who is your master? Spend time this week evaluating your treasure: your time, your resources, your attention, your energy, your relationships. What do they say about where your heart is? Pray for God's help to open your eyes and start making changes.

Lesson 6: Be Not Anxious



Matthew 6:25-34

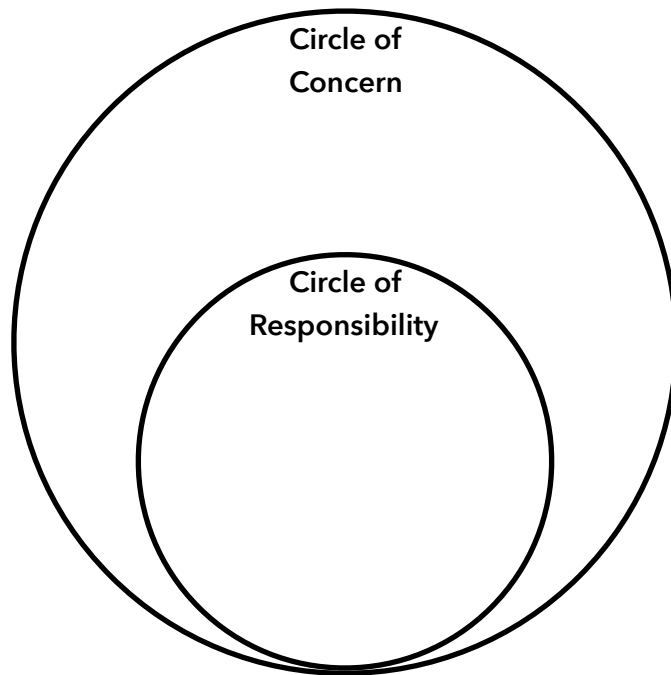
Worry is something that we all experience. We experience concerns about people and places that we love. We experience the desire to do what is within our power to make a difference in the outcome. However, there is a limit to our power and control. Ultimate outcomes are not ours to determine. What are we supposed to do with our concerns?

1. What are some common concerns that everyone has (Matt. 6:25)? How did Jesus put those concerns into perspective?
2. What illustrations did Jesus use in Matt. 6:26-30? Jesus addresses a critical trap in our thinking about God that lies at the heart of worry. What is it?
3. How effective is it to worry about things outside our control (Matt. 6:27)?
4. Ultimately, what should I be focusing on (Matt. 6:31-34)?

Notes for watching *Bible Study without Borders*:

I love a good game of tug-of-war, watching two teams test their strength as they try to avoid being pulled across a line or into a muddy mess! If it were capable of sentient thought, have you ever wondered what the rope might think about the game? It would feel the constant strain and tension of going back and forth until finally breaking or collapsing into a limp tangle after a team won. Well, that's what we're like when we're anxious or worried. We're mentally going back and forth between the concerns outside of our control and the truths we know. What Jesus calls his disciples to do is to trust our caring God with the things beyond our control, and focus on what is within our power, seeking and living for God.

In the inner circle below, list the things that are within your responsibility and control. Prioritize these things, praying for God's help as you work on them. In the outer circle, list the things that you are concerned about, turning them over to your caring God in prayer.





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