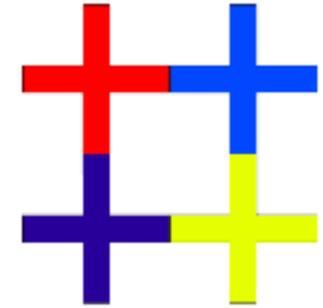


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Lent 2012

The Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5.1-7.29

The Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5-7

| Date | Reference | Notes | Prayer |
|---|----------------|--|---|
| <p>Day 1 22nd Feb</p> | <p>5.1-12</p> | <p>The Beatitudes are one of the most famous passages in the whole of the Bible. Jesus introduces the sermon that follows with these nine blessings. They define the values of the kingdom. These values show a bias towards those who are marginalised or disregarded in the world; they are in many ways the opposite of the world's values. The whole of the Sermon on the Mount needs to be read in the light of these Beatitudes.</p> <p>To think about: Are we among those who are said to be blessed by Jesus or do these words challenge us to change our life and our outlook on life?</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Holy God, your kingdom is open to those who have no place in human society: help us to see people as you see them and to challenge the world to be recreated in the image of the kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.</p> |
| <p>Day 2 23rd Feb</p> | <p>5.13-16</p> | <p>Jesus uses the images of salt and light to say that his followers should be people who make a difference and who challenge the world to change.</p> <p>To think about: What is the point of Christianity? Is it to look towards heaven in the afterlife, or is it to change the world now?</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">O Lord, make us salt in the world, and light shining in the darkness: may we believe that we can make a difference; through Jesus Christ our Lord.</p> |
| <p>Day 3 24th Feb</p> | <p>5.17-20</p> | <p>What Jesus teaches is not new; or at least does not overthrow the Law of Moses. He speaks of completing the Law in the sense of fulfilling its demands completely. It's not that the Law is in any way lacking but it has not had the place it should have had. The scribes and Pharisees talk about the Law a lot but they do not keep it properly. The Law itself is more important to them than serving God. Jesus wants his disciples to keep the Law.</p> <p>To think about: How can we keep God's Law without making an idol of it?</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Heavenly God, you have given your Law to show us how to live: help us to obey your will and to worship you in Spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.</p> |

| Date | Reference | Notes | Prayer |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--|---|
| Day 4 25 th Feb | 5.21-22 | <p>Here Jesus shows that the Law is not just about what we do but about the desires and ideas that might lead to Law breaking. Imagining doing something wrong is as bad as actually doing it.</p> <p>To think about: If we take this seriously can we ever be sin free? It's easy to say we've never murdered, but impossible to say we've never been angry to the point of wishing someone ill.</p> | <p>Holy God, we have all sinned and we all stand in need of your forgiveness: make us new people, through the love of Jesus .</p> |
| Day 5 27 th Feb | 5.23-26 | <p>Jesus understands that we are all sinners, but demands that we be aware of what divides one from another. When we are at odds with someone else we need to put that right in order to be worthy to approach God's presence.</p> <p>To think about: Can we ever be truly unacceptable to God? What do you need to do to be right with him?</p> | <p>Forgiving God, accept us and redeem us through Jesus our Lord: may we be worthy to live in your presence.</p> |
| Day 6 28 th Feb | 5.27-30 | <p>Jesus really does not want his disciples to be complacent about sin. Looking lustfully is as bad as committing adultery. If our eye causes us to sin we would be better off without it.</p> <p>To think about: If sinning is so easy, have we any right to judge those who have committed what we would consider worse sins than us?</p> | <p>Loving Lord, make us more aware of our own sin than the sins of others: give us grace to seek true forgiveness in Jesus your Son.</p> |
| Day 7 29 th Feb | 5.31-32 | <p>Perhaps one of the hardest parts of the Sermon on the Mount for our modern sensibilities are these verses about divorce. It is clear here and elsewhere that Jesus wants his disciples to understand that the demands of the kingdom are greater than the demands of the Law. He wants his disciples to realise that all our actions have consequences. Marriage is a real commitment, and ending it through divorce is about more than personal comfort or fulfilment.</p> <p>To think about: How different was the context in which Jesus spoke these words? Does that make a difference to how we should understand them?</p> | <p>God of love, make us faithful and teach us to value one another: make us understanding and tolerant of those we love; through our Lord Jesus Christ.</p> |

| Date | Reference | Notes | Prayer |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| Day 8 1 st Mar | 5.33-37 | <p>Honesty is everything. Jesus forbids his followers to swear by anything at all – in heaven or on earth. A simple “yes” or “no” should suffice. For that to work honesty is essential. We need to be able to trust our Christian sisters and brothers – and be trustworthy ourselves.</p> <p>To think about: If someone speaks honestly to us what response does that require from us?</p> | <p>Lord God, help us to be open: open in our speaking and open in our listening; and give us grace to be honest with ourselves, in Jesus our Lord.</p> |
| Day 9 2 nd Mar | 5.38-41 | <p>“Turning the other cheek” is a phrase that has entered our language. It means to suffer without complaint – but is usually taken to indicate some degree of folly. Our human society does not put much value on such behaviour. However, this seems to be a key value in Jesus's teaching. Jesus wants us to be people who reject conflict as a means of dealing with disputes.</p> <p>To think about: In what sense did Jesus turn the other cheek? Can we be truly Christlike without following his example?</p> | <p>Lord Jesus, help us to turn conflict into reconciliation: turn our anger into a desire to sow harmony in our relationships; for your name's sake.</p> |
| Day 10 3 rd Mar | 5.42 | <p>Generosity is a mark of Christian discipleship. It goes against the grain to allow ourselves to be taken advantage of – but that is what Jesus demands of us.</p> <p>To think about: How should we respond to a beggar on our streets?</p> | <p>Heavenly Father, show us your love so that we in turn can reveal your love through our actions; through Christ our Lord.</p> |
| Day 11 5 th Mar | 5.43-48 | <p>Jesus constantly sets a higher standard for Christians than for everyone else. The Gentiles love their families and friends; the Christian must go further and love enemies too. Jesus demands this because God loves without condition and so must we too.</p> <p>To think about: Can we love without liking someone?</p> | <p>Lord God, help us to realise that we are loved without condition; give us grace to love as you love us; through Jesus our loving Lord.</p> |
| Day 12 6 th Mar | 6.1-4 | <p>Religion is not about show. We should not seek human approval. Those who look for praise from others already have their reward. Only God's approval matters so our religious duties should be carried out without fanfares.</p> <p>To think about: How costly is our giving? How costly should it be?</p> | <p>Lord, make us generous in giving: may we not count the cost or seek reward, except to know that we do your will; through Christ our Saviour.</p> |

| Date | Reference | Notes | Prayer |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--|--|
| Day 13 7 th Mar | 6.5-8 | <p>Prayer, says Jesus, is something that should be done in private. It is an expression of our personal relationship with God. It should be quiet, attentive and peaceful. God knows what we need. Prayer is as much about listening to God as it is telling him or asking him something.</p> <p>To think about: Why pray? What happens to our faith if we don't pray?</p> | <p>Make us aware of your presence, Lord: help us to know you through prayer so that we can see you in your world; through our Lord Jesus Christ.</p> |
| Day 14 8 th Mar | 6.9-10 | <p>Jesus teaches his disciples how to pray using the Lord's prayer as an example. He begins by asking that God's presence in the world is clear for all to see. The kingdom can be experienced on earth as well as in heaven.</p> <p>To think about: What can we do to make God's kingdom come on earth as in heaven?</p> | <p>Our Father in heaven, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.</p> |
| Day 15 9 th Mar | 6.11 | <p>The Greek word translated as <i>daily</i> is very rare and its meaning uncertain. It probably means something like <i>for tomorrow</i> or <i>for the coming day</i>. Whether that makes much difference to what we understand it to mean is not obvious. Jesus wants us to pray for what we need for each day – one assumes just what we need and no more – and that we should depend on God to provide for us.</p> <p>To think about: What are our physical needs? Are they different today than they were in Jesus's time?</p> | <p>Our Father in heaven, give us today our daily bread.</p> |
| Day 16 10 th Mar | 6.12 | <p>Jesus tells us to pray for forgiveness. But here is a condition attached. We must forgive others in order to be forgiven ourselves. It reminds us that we are not fit to be forgiven if we are unable to allow those who have wronged us to be reconciled with us. Christianity is not just about what God does for us, but about what we do for each other.</p> <p>To think about: Can we forgive someone who is not sorry?</p> | <p>Our Father in heaven, forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us.</p> |

| Date | Reference | Notes | Prayer |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|---|--|
| Day 17 12 th Mar | 6.13 | <p>Jesus tells us to pray not to be put to the test. We all know how easy it is to give in to temptation and so we need God's help to resist. A temptation given in to might be small but every sin opens up a way to a larger one, and so, with God's help, we pray to be saved from the Evil One.</p> <p>To think about: Jesus seems to think of the religious life in terms of a struggle between good and evil (or God and Satan). How do we relate to such ideas?</p> | <p>Our Father in heaven, do not put us to the test, but save us from the Evil One.</p> |
| Day 18 13 th Mar | 6.14-15 | <p>Jesus reinforces the idea that we must be forgiving in order to be forgiven. Being forgiving doesn't just allow us to live at peace with others. It allows us to live at peace with ourselves. Nursing grievances against someone else stops us getting on with our lives. We need to be right with God, right with our neighbours and tight with ourselves.</p> <p>To think about: What prevents you from being at peace with yourself?</p> | <p>God of peace, give us the true peace: the peace that passes human understanding; through Christ our peace.</p> |
| Day 19 14 th Mar | 6.16-18 | <p>Jesus continues the theme of not parading our religious activities. Fast in secret. Fasting is another activity which is between us and God. If it is done for human approval it is not worth it. It is all about making room in our lives for God and getting the relationship with him right.</p> <p>To think about: Going without things makes us aware of our need of God or other people. What, or who do depend on?</p> | <p>God our provider, make us aware of our need of you: make us grateful for that you provide; through Christ our Lord.</p> |
| Day 20 15 th Mar | 6.19-21 | <p>It is very easy to get attached to things. Jesus turns our attention onto the "treasures of heaven." He advises us to be more concerned with our eternal salvation than with our material possessions. We need to recognise what is really important for us.</p> <p>To think about: What do you treasure most in the world?</p> | <p>Help us, O Lord, to put all our trust in you: may we know what our true treasure is; through Jesus our Lord.</p> |
| Day 21 16 th Mar | 6.22-23 | <p>Jesus here speaks metaphorically. Those who are blind to the light, the truth in God, live in darkness cut off from all that is good and true.</p> <p>To think about: What, in our lives, shuts out the light of God?</p> | <p>God our light, shine in our lives: that we might reveal your glory; through Christ our Lord.</p> |

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| Day 22 17 th Mar | 6.24 | <p>We need to get our priorities right. Will we serve God or money (meaning possessions or material things)?</p> <p>To think about: What other masters might we have apart from God and money?</p> | <p>God, give us grace to put you first: make us aware that you provide all we need; through Christ your Son.</p> |
| Day 23 19 th Mar | 6.25-27 | <p>If we look around us we will see that God provides for all of his creation. He will provide for us too. We should not worry about our lives.</p> <p>To think about: How do we reconcile this with the knowledge that people are starving in the world?</p> | <p>Lord, give us grace to put our trust in you: help us to know the difference between want and need; through Jesus our Lord.</p> |
| Day 24 20 th Mar | 6.28-32 | <p>Worrying about things will never help. Underlying what Jesus says here is a sense of the need to be content with what we have. God provides, we must trust him.</p> <p>To think about: Is it possible not to worry about the “basics” of life?</p> | <p>Holy Father, help us to know your care: make us reliant on you for everything; through Jesus Christ our Lord.</p> |
| Day 25 21 st Mar | 6.33-34 | <p>Jesus says that all our concern should be on God's kingdom and his justice. If we do that everything we need will be provided. God knows our needs and has set up the world to provide for them.</p> <p>To think about: Is God's kingdom present now, or still to come?</p> | <p>Help us, Lord, to put your kingdom above all else: that we might know your forgiveness and love; in Christ Jesus our Lord.</p> |
| Day 26 22 nd Mar | 7.1-2 | <p>Jesus warns his disciples against being judgemental. We will be judged in the way that we ourselves judge. It sounds so simple but is, perhaps, one of Jesus's most difficult commands to us.</p> <p>To think about: Could we tolerate a society in which there were no judgements made?</p> | <p>Lord Jesus, you taught us not to judge: make us more tolerant of those around us; for your holy name's sake.</p> |
| Day 27 23 rd Mar | 7.3-5 | <p>Using a parable Jesus explains that we are not worthy to judge because we ourselves stand in fear of judgement. We must first put our own lives right before we presume to advise others.</p> <p>To think about: Sometimes it is a bigger problem for us that we see our own faults too clearly, than that we are ignorant of them.</p> | <p>Make aware, O Lord, of all that separates us from you; through Christ who has opened a way for us into your presence.</p> |

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| Day 28 24 th Mar | 7.6 | <p>This verse is difficult for us. It probably means that we should proclaim the gospel only to those who are ready for it. We need to be open about our faith and ready to witness, but never “pushy.”</p> <p>To think about: How can we help people to be ready to hear the good news?</p> | <p>Lord, make us ready to witness, but patient for the right moment; through Jesus Christ the Lord.</p> |
| Day 29 26 th Mar | 7.7-8 | <p>When we are ready to respond to God, he is ready to pour out his blessings on us. This passage means more than that God answers prayer. It means that when we come to him he reaches out to us.</p> <p>To think about: God is always waiting for us. We need to be looking for him.</p> | <p>God, answer us when we call upon: pour out your blessings on us; through Jesus the Saviour.</p> |
| Day 30 27 th Mar | 7.9-11 | <p>God loves us and longs to give us good things – just as even the most mean-spirited of us knows how to provide for those we love.</p> <p>To think about: In what ways is our love a reflection God's love?</p> | <p>Lord, you give us good things: grant that we seek the best for those we love; for Jesus' sake.</p> |
| Day 31 28 th Mar | 7.12 | <p>The golden rule. We have no right to expect to be treated better than we treat others. We should treat all people with respect and generosity.</p> <p>To think about: Can we change the attitude of others by the way we behave?</p> | <p>Heavenly Father, make us respectful to all: that we may reveal your love to them by the way we treat them; through Jesus our King.</p> |
| Day 32 29 th Mar | 7.13-14 | <p>Choosing the way of Christ is not choosing the easy path. The rewards though are great.</p> <p>To think about: In what ways do you find being a Christian difficult or challenging?</p> | <p>Holy Lord, be present with us when the going is hard; through Jesus our Lord.</p> |
| Day 33 30 th Mar | 7.15-20 | <p>Things are not always what they seem. Those who seem to proclaim the word of God may sometimes lead us astray. We need to be able to assess their authority. “You will be able to tell them by their fruits.”</p> <p>To think about: Those who make the Christian life sound easy are probably not proclaiming the gospel.</p> | <p>Lord, help us to walk in the right path, and to follow the right leader; Jesus Christ our Lord.</p> |

| Date | Reference | Notes | Prayer |
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| Day 34 31 st Mar | 7.21 | Doing God's will is the only way into the kingdom. Appealing won't work – it is in our own hands whether we are admitted into the kingdom or not. To think about: Is living a good life enough? | O Lord, make us yours: reveal your will to us and help us to fulfil it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. |
| Day 35 2 nd Apr | 7.22-23 | Using the Lord's name is not enough. We need to be sure that we are doing his will and working for his glory – and not for our own. To think about: How can we be sure that we are doing God's will? | Lord, let us never take your name in vain: may all we do be done for your glory; through Christ our Lord. |
| Day 36 3 rd Apr | 7.24-27 | Jesus tells a parable that shows that we must be sure that our faith makes a real difference in our lives. Hear the words of Jesus and act on them. To think about: What are the foundations of the Christian life? | Heavenly Father, build our faith of firm foundations: that they may withstand the storms of life; through Jesus the Lord. |
| Day 37 4 th Apr | 7.28-29 | Jesus taught with authority, such that his teaching made a deep impression on those who heard it. To think about: Are Jesus's words as startling today as they clearly were for those who first heard them? | Lord, may we hear your teaching with fresh ears; in Christ our Lord. |
| Day 38 5 th Apr | 5.1-48 | The first chapter of the Sermon on the Mount is largely concerned with how different the standards expected of those in the kingdom are from the world's standards. To think about: Can we live up to the standards of the kingdom? How does God help us to do so? | Lord, pour out your grace upon us, that we might be found acceptable in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. |
| Day 39 6 th Apr | 6.1-34 | The second chapter of the Sermon on the Mount is largely concerned with how we observe our religious duties. Religion is not for show, but is about our relationship with God. To think about: Prayer is at the heart of the Christian life. | Lord, help us to pray; through our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. |

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|-------------------------------|-----------|---|---|
| Day 40 7 th Apr | 7.1-29 | <p>The final chapter of the Sermon on the Mount shows us that our faith will affect every aspect of our life. We need always to be aware of the need to take responsibility for our own relationship with God.</p> <p>To think about: Faith is a gift from God. But unless we respond it is worthless.</p> | <p>Lord, make us faithful: that we may live for ever in your love; through Jesus the Saviour.</p> |

Matthew 5.1-7.29 (New Revised Standard Version)

The Beatitudes

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

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 receive 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 for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ ‘Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

¹³ ‘You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴ ‘You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

The Law and the Prophets

¹⁷ ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfil.

¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore, whoever

breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Concerning Anger

²¹ ‘You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not murder”; and “whoever murders shall be liable to judgement.” ²²But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgement; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, “You fool”, you will be liable to the hell of fire. ²³So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are on the way to court with him, or your accuser may hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

Concerning Adultery

²⁷ ‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.” ²⁸But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to go into hell.

Concerning Divorce

³¹ ‘It was also said, “Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.” ³²But I say to you that anyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Concerning Oaths

³³ ‘Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, “You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.” ³⁴But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, ³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. ³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. ³⁷Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No”; anything more than this comes from the evil one.

Concerning Retaliation

³⁸ ‘You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye

and a tooth for a tooth.” ³⁹But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; ⁴⁰and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; ⁴¹and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. ⁴²Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

Love for Enemies

⁴³ ‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.” ⁴⁴But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. ⁴⁶For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax-collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Concerning Almsgiving

6 ‘Beware of practising your piety before others in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

² ‘So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ³But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Concerning Prayer

⁵ ‘And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁷ ‘When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹ ‘Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.

¹⁰ Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And do not bring us to the time of trial,
but rescue us from the evil one.

¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Concerning Fasting

¹⁶ ‘And whenever you fast, do not look dismal, like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so as to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on

your head and wash your face, ¹⁸so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Concerning Treasures

¹⁹ ‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The Sound Eye

²² ‘The eye is the lamp of the body. So, if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light; ²³but if your eye is unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

Serving Two Masters

²⁴ ‘No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

Do Not Worry

²⁵ ‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁸And why do you worry about clothing?

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. ³⁰But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

³¹Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” ³²For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

³⁴ ‘So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Judging Others

7 ‘Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ²For with the judgement you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³Why do you see the speck in your neighbour’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your neighbour, “Let me take the speck out of your eye”, while the log is in your own eye? ⁵You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour’s eye.

Profaning the Holy

⁶ ‘Do not give what is holy to dogs; and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them

under foot and turn and maul you.

Ask, Search, Knock

⁷ ‘Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ⁸For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for bread, will give a stone? ¹⁰Or if the child asks for a fish, will give a snake? ¹¹If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

The Golden Rule

¹² ‘In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.

The Narrow Gate

¹³ ‘Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. ¹⁴For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

A Tree and Its Fruit

¹⁵ ‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷In the same way, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown

into the fire. ²⁰Thus you will know them by their fruits.

Concerning Self-Deception

²¹ ‘Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord”, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only one who does the will of my Father in heaven. ²²On that day many will say to me, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do

many deeds of power in your name?” ²³Then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; go away from me, you evildoers.”

Hearers and Doers

²⁴ ‘Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall,

because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!’

²⁸ Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, ²⁹for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.