

Matthew

Sermon on the Mount

November 24, 2024

I. Introduction

A. **Matthew 10:40-11:6**, “He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me. [41] He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. [42] And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.” [11:1] When Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. [2] Now when John, while imprisoned, **heard of the works of Christ**, he sent word by his disciples [3] and said to Him, “Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?” [4] Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see: [5] the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. [6] And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.”

B. **Matthew 10**: a summary of Jesus’ words to His disciples, and to us.

1. **Vs 7-10**: We are to intentionally and freely proclaim the gospel. If we need material support, we are to depend on God to provide what we need – which He most often does through people’s care of us.
2. **Vs 11-13**: It is reasonable to expect that whoever we talk to, there will be some (*often a minority*) who will listen and show gratitude for having heard the gospel.
3. **Vs 14-15**: There will be those (*often the majority*) who reject the message and the messenger. This will be their loss, and God will judge them accordingly. However, we are not to let their rejection deter us from speaking and living for God.
4. **Vs 16**: When considering who to evangelize and how to speak about God, His word, and the Christ-like life, we ought to pray often for wisdom in order to be as shrewd as serpents and as innocent as doves.
5. **Vs 17-23**: Resistance and persecution will come, but when possible, move on or flee to safer settings.
6. **Vs 24-25**: We should not expect better treatment from those we interact with than Jesus received during His years of ministry.

7. **Vs 26-31:** Say “no” to fear of what people can do to you, and “yes” to trusting God to take care of you – even though this may lead to enduring the challenges, trials, and sufferings of persecution.
8. **Vs 32-39:** Speaking out for God, the scripture, salvation, reconciliation, and the Christian life makes us worthy of Christ. Denying God and the truths of God’s word in order to avoid rejection, public ridicule or persecution makes us unworthy of Christ. If we are worthy, we may suffer in this life, but we will have eternal life with God. If we are unworthy, we will have an easier life here but suffer for eternity.
9. This brings us to **vs 40-42**, in which Jesus concludes His instructions to His disciples.

C. Pray

II. Progression of acceptance, rewards for service, importance of scripture

- A. **[40]** He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.
 1. What Jesus is presenting here is a progression of acceptance regarding you, Jesus, and God.
 - a. If anyone accepts you and the truths of God you present and represent, then they are by extension accepting Jesus, and in accepting Jesus, they are – in actuality – accepting God.
 - b. The same progression happens with rejection. If anyone rejects you and the truths of God you present and represent, then they are rejecting Jesus, which means they are rejecting God.
 - c. In other words, though you are the recipient of people’s acceptance or rejection, gratitude or persecution for talking to them about biblical truths, Jesus, God and the Christian life, they are actually doing this to God as if He was standing in your place.
 2. This is not a new truth, as the scriptures make clear.
 - a. In **Exodus 16:8**, Moses said to the Israelites when they grumbled against him because they were almost out of food, “...The LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD.”
 - b. In **1 Samuel 8:7**, the LORD said to Samuel in response to Israel asking for a king, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.

- c. As an example of acceptance, in **Mark 9:37**, Jesus said, “Whoever receives one child like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me.”
 - d. And in the parable of the sheep and goats, Jesus said that whenever we show love to the hungry, homeless, naked, sick, and prisoners, we are loving Him (**Matthew 25:31-46**).
 - 3. As Christians, we are God’s ambassadors or emissaries representing Him, His word, and the Christ-like life. Some of us may be mistreated or even killed, yet though those mistreating or killing us see themselves doing this to us, they are in reality doing it to God. The same is true for those who listen, respond accordingly, and as a result, treat us well.
- B. [41] He who receives a **prophet** in the name of a **prophet** shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he who receives a **righteous man** in the name of a **righteous man** shall receive a righteous man’s reward. [42] And whoever in the name of a **disciple** gives to one of these little ones (*one of Jesus’ disciples*) even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward.
- 1. We can discern what it means to receive a prophet and a righteous man from Jesus’ third example of giving a disciple something to drink. In other words, to receive means to care for, to give what is needed so the prophet, or righteous man, or disciple can continue doing the work God has called them to do.
 - 2. Therefore, just as God rewards His servants, so He also rewards those who serve and help His servants do their work.
 - a. What I find interesting in this is that God gives the same reward to those who serve His servants as He gives to His servants.
 - b. In addition, Jesus promises that even if the help is as minor as giving a cup of cold water, the reward will still be given – probably because giving any help to one of God’s workers is risky, especially in those settings where Christians are being persecuted.
- C. [11:1] When Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities.
- 1. Jesus was in or near Capernaum at the time, so it is assumed that He went to the towns and villages in the area.
 - 2. **Matthew 4:13** tells us that Jesus left Nazareth and moved to Capernaum. It seems He made Capernaum one of the main centers of His activity during His public ministry.

- a. For example, Capernaum is on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and it was along the sea coast that He called Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him.
 - b. Also, He performed many miracles in that area, including healing the centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law, the royal official's son (**John 4:46**), and the paralytic.
 - c. Finally, it was in Capernaum's synagogue that Jesus talked about being the Bread of Life (**John 6:48-58**).
3. The point is, Capernaum saw a lot of Jesus' signs and wonders, and heard a lot of His teaching. Yet sadly, as we shall see in **Matthew 11**, they did not respond accordingly.

D. [2] Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples [3] and said to Him, "Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?" [4] Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and report to John what you hear and see: [5] the blind receive sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. [6] And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me."

1. We don't know why John wanted Jesus to affirm He was the Messiah.
 - a. Based on John having recognized Jesus as the Lamb of God, and baptizing Jesus, which included the voice from heaven and the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus, and based on the apparent relationship between John's mother Elisabeth, and Jesus' mother Mary, it seems reasonable to conclude that John should have known that Jesus was the Expected One.
 - b. And yet, John sent his disciples to ask Jesus who He was.
2. For me, the most important part of this story is Jesus' response, because Jesus essentially told John to look into the scriptures (*such as Isaiah 35:5-6, 61:1-3*) and use them to evaluate His behavior, and from that determine who He is.
3. And why is this the most important part to me? Because I find that God's word is an exceedingly rich resource for making sense of the world around us, for gaining wisdom and insight into how we should live, for understanding God and His ways, for learning about the devil, his schemes, and his temptations, for learning about love and how to love God and those around us, for learning about truth and righteousness and how to discern the difference between truth and falsehood, and righteousness and unrighteousness, for learning what is worth valuing and not worth valuing, for discerning where specific

behaviors and habits lead, along with the long-term benefits or destructiveness of those behaviors and habits, for learning about myself – the good and the evil – and what to do with both the good and the evil, for learning which beliefs, values, fears, desires, attitudes, thoughts, words, and deeds lead me toward Christ-likeness and help me grow in godliness and which ones take me in the opposite direction, for learning what I should allow to go on in my mind and what I should not allow, for learning how to be godly as a single adult or a husband and father or a wife and mother, for learning how to parent children, for learning how to run an honest business and be an honest business person, for learning how to treat employees, for learning how to love your enemy and deal with those who have the power to mistreat you, for learning that God blesses and rewards righteousness, love, charity, showing mercy, and being forgiving, along with helping, protecting and defending the weakest among us, for learning that God brings troubles and loss into our life when we are sinful, selfish, uncaring, unmerciful and unforgiving, for learning how a husband is to love his wife and how a wife is to relate to her husband – including the area of physical intimacy, for learning how to put off our old nature and put on God’s godly nature (*new nature*), for learning what God has done, is doing, and will do to help and enable us to grow in godliness, gain strong faith, and mature as a Christian, for learning what we are to do to grow in godliness, gain strong faith, and mature as a Christian, for learning what church life should look like, how those in the church are to behave, where the leadership is supposed to lead us, and who should be in leadership, for learning that God is faithful, trustworthy, patient, and forgiving . . . and this list could go on and on . . . for we can learn as much from the OT as the NT.

4. My purpose here is to remind you that God’s word is a precious resource for getting to know God, for learning to trust God fully, and for living the most-godly life possible.
5. However, gaining all this from the word of God requires more than reading it. We must want to gain all that we can from God’s word. We must continue asking God to speak to us through His word and to show us what we need to know from His word in order to live godly lives in our current circumstances. We must ponder and meditate on portions of God’s word that help us grow and change and draw ever nearer to God. We must study God’s word – which requires reading purposefully, slowly, methodically, and even repetitively, along with using worthy resources that help us understand more than what we

- might currently understand on our own. We must make it our aim to apply what we are learning – in every area necessary and in the most practical ways possible. We must measure our beliefs, values, attitudes, thinking, speaking and behavior by the word of God. And we must share what we have learned with those who need to hear.
- E. Scriptures promoting the word of God for living the Christian life
1. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**, All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; [17] so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
 2. **Psalms 19:7-8**, The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. [8] The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
 3. **Psalms 119:9**, How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word.
 4. **1 Peter 2:2**, Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.
 5. **Joshua 1:8**, This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.
 6. **Psalms 119:11**, Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.
 7. **Matthew 7:24**, Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock.

III. Conclusion

- A. It is our privilege to live for God and speak the truth of God and His word to those who will listen. But living for God and speaking His truth can result in rejection, verbal abuse, public shaming, and painful persecution.
- B. It is our privilege to have the written word available in so many forms. But having it is not the same as living accordingly. May we use what we have to learn what we need to know to live according to God's word.
- C. And may we be active and open in speaking God's truths to those around us – for God's sake and for the sake of those who need to hear.