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Pastor's Bible Study
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MATTHEW
The Sermon on the Mount - 2.0
Matthew 5-7
www.thesacramentaljourney.org

I have been influenced by the insights offered by 3 scholars in my understanding of the Sermon on the Mount:

Herschel Hobbs, An Exposition of the Gospel of Matthew
Michael J. Wilkins, The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew
Jonathan T. Pennington, The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary

The Sermon on the Mount has often been interpreted in the following ways:

- 1. How to gain entry into the Kingdom of Heaven.**
- 2. An ideal that cannot be attained.**
- 3. Life in the age to come.**
- 4. A sermon for "elite" Christians, not really available to normal, everyday believers.**

The Sermon on the Mount should be viewed as a description of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in any age!

The Sermon on the Mount can be understood as the explanation of what it means to *flourish* as a follower of Jesus.

Two Major Considerations for Understanding the Sermon on the Mount:

- Greek word/concept of *makarios* – the idea of "blessing" or "happiness" or "flourishing" is crucial to understanding the teaching of Jesus in this sermon.**
- Greek word/concept of *telios* – the idea of "perfection" or "wholeness" is crucial to understanding the teaching of Jesus in this sermon.**

Other Concepts and Considerations:

- **Righteousness** – Jesus refers to righteousness at least 6 times in the Sermon on the Mount. The emphasis seems to be on the actions of believers that are right and just.
- **Heart** – there are 3 references to heart in the sermon.
- **Gentiles** – Matthew adopts the view that the Gentiles are those who are outside of the new covenantal community of the followers of Jesus.
- **Father in Heaven** – there are at least 17 references in the sermon to God as Father.
- **Kingdom of Heaven** – there are at least 8 references to the Kingdom of Heaven in the sermon.
- **Hypocrites** – in the Sermon on the Mount, hypocrisy is connected to the concept of people engaged in right behavior, without the inner reality of purity. Actions without true transformation!
- **Treasure/Reward** – Jesus has much to say about treasures and rewards in the sermon.

The Sermon on the Mount is the message from the King, delivered with Kingly authority, about true life in His Kingdom!