

## I. Review of SOTM Series

- A. Fullness of Life – The Sermon on the Mount is the invitation of Jesus to know His bridegroom heart and encounter the fullness of the life and love He desires for us to experience. Walking in the reality of the fullness of Jesus is the inheritance of all believers and the reason for the consistent exhortation of the scriptures calling us to maturity, holiness, and transformation.
- B. Beholding the King and His Kingdom – Through the death and resurrection of Jesus we have been given grace through our faith in Him and His redemptive work to become partakers of His nature and the nature of His coming Kingdom. It is imperative we understand the way forward into the realities of the King and His Kingdom is through beholding Him, by the power of the Holy Spirit. (2 Cor. 3:1-4:6; Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 2:6-3:11; 2 Pet. 1:3-4)
  1. We are called to live out something divine, and any attempt to live divine realities devoid of the way of divine growth will result in frustration, disillusionment, hypocrisy, and dead legalism. (Jhn. 16:14, 17:3,26; Eph. 1:15-21, 3:14-19; Col. 1:9-12, 2:1-2; 2 Pet.3:17-18)
- C. Simple Outline of the SOTM (Mat. 5-7)
  1. Eight Fruits – We are given an invitation to share in eight beatitudes of bridal love and aspects of the Heart of Jesus.
  2. Six Weeds – We are exhorted to war against six aspects of the fallen or sinful heart, which invite death and hinder love and life in our hearts.
  3. Four Cultivators – Jesus gives us four activities which position us to encounter His transformational revelation that invites life and renews our hearts.
  4. Six Encouragements - Jesus addresses the challenges of pursuing of the SOTM lifestyle and establishes the wisdom of the SOTM lifestyle. To anchor us in our pursuit and intentionality to go for the fullness of life and love He has for us.
- D. Beatitudes - Eight aspects of the Heart of Jesus that are planted and growing in the garden of our hearts by the power of new birth through the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Mat. 5:1-20)
  1. Poor in Spirit (Full Dependence upon God)
  2. Mourning (Longing for the Kingdom)
  3. Meekness (Divine Power tempered by Gentleness)
  4. Hungering for Righteousness (Longing for Intimacy with God)
  5. Merciful (Walking in the degree of mercy that you have been shown)
  6. Pure in Heart (Loving Without Offense)
  7. Peacemaker (Personal Peace and Bringing Peace as an Intercessor)
  8. Persecuted (Embracing Persecution that Results from Righteousness)

## II. Righteousness that Exceeds the Pharisees

- A. Before Jesus transitions His teaching to address the six primary weeds of death that grow in the garden of our fallen hearts. He makes it clear that He is here to fulfill the law and the prophets.
1. Fulfill – The original Greek word translated fulfill is “pleroo” which particularly in Matthew’s gospel means *to carry into effect, bring to realization, or to realize*. Nowhere does this word mean to bring something to an end, as many have taught. Jesus is not saying He came to end or abolish the law, but rather to bring it into full realization.
  2. Righteousness that Exceeds – The full realization of the law and prophets Jesus has been putting forward in this sermon and what He will continue to put forward is a total transformation of the heart into His likeness. The righteousness that exceeds the outward action of obedience is the obedience that comes from the transformed heart empowered by the indwelling Spirit as a result of the resurrection. (Rom. 8:1-6, 13:8-10; Gal. 5:11-14)
- B. Jesus not only fulfills the law and prophets by teaching their clear meaning but also to give us a new heart through His death and resurrection in order for us to walk it out. Forgiveness of sin and the gift of living eternally is not the premier glory of the new covenant. His desire in establishing the new covenant with humanity was to give them the ability to actually love God and others with the same love that God has, and to walk in holiness from the heart like God does.
1. God’s desire and the human condition – (Jer. 5:1-3, 7:28, 32:2; Is. 1:1-6; 9:13; Dan. 9:8-11)
  2. God’s promise of a new covenant – (Jer. 31:31-34; Ez. 11:19-20; 36:25-28; Luke 22:14-20)
  3. God’s promised new covenant exhorted – (Rom. 6:1-23; 2 Cor. 3:1-6)
  4. Walking in the process of the promise – (2 Cor. 3:1-4:6, 4:16; Eph. 4:17-24; Col. 3:1-11; 2 Pet. 1:3-4)

## III. Three Principles of the Letter and the Spirit

- A. When we speak about the spirit of the law and the letter of the law we are not talking about a supernatural being such as an angel or demon as in some cases where the word “spirit” is used to describe them. Rather, we are talking about the heart posture of the inner man.
- B. Jesus is about to lay out six statements concerning certain aspects of the law God gave to His people on Mt. Sinai when He brought them out of Egypt. Each statement carries the same three principles, which build upon one another. It is my opinion He is more concerned we understand these principles than He is with us understanding the statements. In other words, He lays down a main principal “righteousness that exceeds the Pharisees” and then illustrates it with clear statements regarding aspects of the law.

***“Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1 Sam. 16:7) But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God” Rom. 2:29***

1. The spirit of the law holds the primary value – Humanity is ever concerned with the form of a thing rather than the content of a thing. We are highly concerned with the outward and tangible rather than the inward and intangible. The whole purpose of the letter of the righteous laws of God are to give outward expression to the spirit of inward righteousness He wants humanity to walk in. Jesus's entire emphasis in the SOTM is upon the primary importance of living in the inward spirit righteousness in our hearts rather than simply walking in obedience to the letter. (Rom. 2:17-29; 6:15-7:6; 2 Cor. 3:1-6)
2. The law is primarily an encouragement of life, not primarily a preventative of death – Legalism sees the law as primarily given for us to obey as does and don'ts. "I must not commit adultery, I must not steal, I must not...etc." Jesus makes it clear He desires for us to hunger for more the fullness of righteousness rather than merely avoiding that which is wrong. (Lk 16:15)
3. The laws of God must never be seen as an end in and of themselves – We should not go to bed at night thinking to ourselves that if we were not guilty of breaking any of the 10 commandments that day, then we have arrived. If you and I think of the morality and ethics of God's laws as something that narrows us and is restrictive then we have never understood them rightly. The demanding of a life of holiness is not a demanding of grievous obedience to servitude. Rather it is the insistence of God holding us to our glorious inheritance and destiny of coming into the fullness of Christ. (Ps. 119:7-11, 45-48, 103; 1 John 5:1-5)

#### **IV. Closing doors to death: Confronting Six Weeds (Mat. 5:21-48)**

- A. Six Weeds – Jesus puts forward six particular aspects of the law in which the outward action of obedience was being walked out by the scribes and Pharisees, but the death within the heart still remained. In our day the same expectation of outward obedience to these six aspects is insisted upon not just in the church but even in our culture at large. In general, the death that grows in the heart is viewed as a cavalier problem at best. Whereas the action that results from the death in the heart is viewed as a serious problem.
  1. Do not murder
  2. Do not commit adultery
  3. Do not divorce your spouse
  4. Do not lie
  5. Do not take revenge
  6. Do not be consumed by selfishness
- B. The incarnation, death, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior is a clear and alarming statement about how serious and grave the death that exists in our hearts is from His vantage point, and how dedicated He is to eradicate it from our lives. (Rom 8:1-6; Heb. 9:1-14)
  1. In His kindness the great Shepard of our hearts (Pastor) refuses to ignore the weeds of death in the garden of our hearts. In His relentless pursuit of the fullness of love, not only did He die and rise again on our behalf to free us from the death within, but continues to expose areas of death in our heart in order to bring us to fullness of life. (Heb. 12:25-29; Rev. 1:14)