



## The Teachings of Jesus: The Sermon on the Mount

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**Text:** Matthew 7:28-29, 5:17-22

**Series Overview:** “Dead man walking.” It’s a phrase that has been used over the years to describe a person who has committed a capital offense walking to their impending death. Of course, the person is not literally dead (in contrast to your favorite zombie movie, dead people can’t actually walk), but the death the criminal is facing is so imminent, so certain, so real that it looms over every step they take toward their execution.

“Dead man walking” is a poignant way to describe the incarnate life and ministry of Jesus. His death was so imminent, so certain, so real that it loomed over every step he took toward Jerusalem and the cross. As the time drew closer, Jesus spoke about it with his disciples.

**Overview:** Jesus’ journey to the cross was not just about providing a context for his crucifixion and resurrection. It wasn’t just an opening act that was preparing everyone for the main attraction. Every step he took, every word he spoke, everything he did was a visible manifestation of the kingdom he had come to establish.

Jesus’ teachings are found throughout the gospels but none are more intensely comprehensive than those that are commonly referred to as the beatitudes. They are not merely lofty and aspirational, intended only to inspire. They are a totally countercultural way to live where humility and sorrow and even persecution can lead to profound happiness. The way of the cross may be hard sometimes but it is also filled with joy. Mourning is turned into laughter and the cross becomes a gift rather than a burden.

**Resources:** Check out <https://thebibleproject.com/explore/matthew/> for more information on the book of Matthew.

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### WELCOME

### DISCUSSION

#### A. Getting Warmed Up

- What were the “house rules” in your home growing up as a child? How did you know what they were? (Were they written down? Taught about often? Changed frequently? Lovingly applied? Or were there no house rules?)



## B. Diggin In

- Read aloud Matthew 7:28-29.
- We see the people were “amazed” by the teachings and they were “blown away”. Why did Jesus set his words above those in the law while still embracing the fulfillment of the law found in the Torah?
- Read aloud Matthew 5:17-20.
- The example of an iceberg is used. We can see the tip of the iceberg, representing our behaviors but we cannot see what is below the surface that are the root causes of our behaviors. With the law, we can poke at the behaviors above the surface but Jesus teaches us to get to the root cause of the behaviors that keep us from becoming like him. Why is getting at the root cause of a behavior beneficial?

## C. Bringing It Home

- Read aloud Matthew 5:21-22.
- There is a focus on this one passage in the Sermon on the Mount that describes murder very differently than we know it. Jesus says, “If you haven’t murdered anyone, congratulations!” But he also says that making fun of someone, belittling, elevating yourself, name calling and marginalizing others is also destructive and out of line with what Jesus taught. Yet our world is filled with believers (like us) who don’t seem to get it. Where is the disconnect for us?
- If we believe that Christ’s death conquered the iceberg (behaviors that keep us from being like Christ), how should we then live?

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Check out Matthew 5:1-12. These are the beatitudes or nine blessings. Pray these blessings over the group. You can end your prayer time by reading these verses and ask God to help you see yourselves as the blessed and favored ones.

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Talk about this...

- Here’s the information if needed for the group about challenging your group to reading the book of Matthew during this series. Here’s all the info you need:
  - ◆ Challenge them to read the book of Matthew using the 27 chapters as a backdrop to the weekend message and study in our group. Ask them to read four chapters a week. It won’t work out evenly and the readings we will be doing won’t always line up exactly with the study for the week. But we’ll be reading together and sharing fresh insights as we read from the gospel of Matthew.



Week of March 9/10	Chapters 1-4
Week of March 16/17	Chapters 5-9
Week of March 23/24	Chapters 10-14
Week of March 30/31	Chapters 15-19
Week of April 6/7	Chapters 20-24
Week of April 13/14	Chapters 25-27

Resource: the [bibleproject.com/explore/matthew](https://bibleproject.com/explore/matthew)