

# JESUS' TEACHINGS: THE NARROW PATH

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Jesus was known for His healing presence and for His teachings, which had unsurpassed authority (*Matthew 7:28-29*). In Luke's introduction to *The Sermon on the Mount* he mentions that crowds came to be healed and to hear Jesus. The scene described in *Luke*, chapter 6, is astounding. People were getting close to Jesus, trying to touch Him, and power was coming from Him that healed them all. Perhaps some of us believe that was exceptional. Just the opposite is suggested. There are many instances in which we can see His transforming power coming into the picture. There was a woman with a blood disease, who simply touched Him and was cured. There were the many people with leprosy who were healed, and many who were demonized. Do not forget the Samaritan woman, whose life was transformed instantaneously, and then led Jesus to her village, which turned to Him as well. And Jesus told the disciples not to stop children from coming to Him. They were eager to be near Him, which suggests that they could feel the goodness too, and were not hesitant to approach this unknown person. An invitation to be in His healing presence comes from Jesus Himself. "Come to me all of you who are overworked and burdened, and I will give you rest" (*Matthew 11:28-30*). Here Jesus offers us His healing presence. When we come to Him we will find rest for our soul. When we are around Jesus, we are in the presence of the divine. There can be no mistake about that. People are transformed, delivered, healed and prepared to live a far better life.

The astounding authority of Jesus' teachings have their start in one central idea, namely, that no matter how dire your condition, the Father is right by your side, available to help you turn your life around. That was His first sermon (*Matthew 4:17*). This beginning point was soon expanded in Jesus' defining message, *The Sermon on the Mount*. Following are five essential points in that sermon. As we will see, the remainder of Jesus' teachings continue to develop these essential points. Each of them propels people along a path from brokenness to a far better life. Taken singly, they are important boosts along that path. Working together, they enable people to stay on the path, even though it is difficult. As you incorporate these teachings you will learn to face your problems, and the Father's presence will transform you. And, as He leads, you will transform the world.

## THE ESSENTIALS FROM *THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT*

1. You can begin anew. Welcome the Father into your deepest struggle. His guidance and power will transform you. He will help you overcome your brokenness. Welcoming Him gets you through the narrow gate.
2. Healing is available. Invite the Father into every area of your life, particularly into your wounds like hopelessness, contempt, lust, dishonesty, retaliation and false righteousness. These can jeopardize the *family of God* relationships that you will need to stay on the narrow path.
3. Talk everything over with the Father. He is always near. Count on His generosity and care to help with any problem that could block your progress.
4. You can become a better person. Build your life on these teachings. The Father will help you produce the *family of God* characteristics that are seen in His children, like forgiveness, genuineness, peacefulness, loving relationships and sincerity. Growth in these areas point to His presence in your life.
5. You will transform the world. When you invite Him into your life, He will establish His kingdom wherever you are. The Father's light will be the agent of change. Every accomplishment will point to His goodness.

Jesus' teachings pertain to every person in any stage of life. The essential points are not intended to be worked through in a sequential fashion, even though it is possible to think of them in that way – starting with a new beginning, then seeking healing and eventually being ready to transform the world. Jesus presents a more realistic picture. At any time your brokenness may re-emerge and you may need a new beginning, a painful wound may resurface, your relationship with the Father may falter, you may stop growing, or your passion to change the world may wane. This is a very tough road, and we need all of the divine help we can get. Christ followers who maintain their focus on all of these essentials will avoid destruction, and thrive. The narrow path leads to a far better life.

*The Sermon on the Mount* is set up in a way that emphasizes the centrality of *The Lord's Prayer*. It appears in the sermon's center, which, in Jesus' culture, showed it to be the most important point. And, appearing in the center, all of the points, before and after, were best understood in the light of the central point. Here is how that approach draws the essential points together in this amazing sermon. Talking it all over with the Father goes hand-in-hand with the other main points – talking over a new beginning with the Father (1 and 3), talking with the Father about healing your wounds (2 and 3), talking with the Father about your growth (4 and 3), and talking with the Father about having Him help you to change the world (5 and 3). This is the gist of Jesus' teachings. If you, somehow, miss out on talking it all over with the Father, the other points will fall flat. His divine presence, His guidance, and His assistance at each point of your day will be available because of your continuing dialogue with the Father. In this way, you will be building your house on a solid rock, one that will withstand any storm.

## JESUS' FIRST MESSAGE – YOU CAN TURN YOUR LIFE AROUND (Matthew 4:17)

“You can turn your life around (you can be transformed). The Father’s Kingdom is in your living space, and He is ready to help you with any problem that comes up.” This is a particular kind of good news – the Gospel, a word reserved for news of an historic event, like, “There is a new king”, or “The Berlin wall has been taken down.”

Translators have used the word, “repent”, to begin this verse. That Greek word is also translated “metamorphosis.” Transformation is what Jesus had in mind. This first message is about turning your life around. A second helpful point in translating this verse comes up when we find that the Greek word in Matthew 4:17 is “heavens,” not “heaven.” That makes quite a difference. The pleural form of “heaven”, in that time, referred to the air around you. “Heavens” means “your living space.” Jesus’ presented an idea in this verse that His followers must enthusiastically embrace – “The Father’s Presence is all around you, so what are you waiting for? Talk to Him!” Please do not miss how Jesus’ first point – you can begin anew – works together in this wording with “talking it all over with the Father.” Pick up a Greek translation and find out for yourself, that to begin *The Lord’s Prayer* we read, “Our Father in the heavens”, and in the next verse we read, “May your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” There was no mistake in His using the singular and the pleural forms of “heaven” just as He did. Jesus was describing a Father who is as near as the air we breathe, not far away in heaven. “The Father is in your living space,” is the Gospel. It completely changes history. He can help you turn your life around, and His teachings will help you to stay on the narrow path. In this way, Jesus makes His central point at the very start of His ministry.

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT – THE NARROW PATH (Matthew 5 – 7)

*The Sermon on the Mount* (SOM) expands Jesus’ First Message, giving details about how to turn your life around and how to stay on the narrow path.

### AN OVERVIEW OF THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT <sup>1</sup>

Essential point 1: INTRODUCTION <i>The Beatitudes/</i> Our brokenness	→	Essential point 2: THE FIRST HALF Fractured Hearts/ Healing our Hurts	→	Essential point 3: THE CENTER <i>The Lord’s Prayer/</i> Talking with The Father	→	Essential point 4: THE SECOND HALF Unified Hearts/ Living in His family	→	Essential point 5: THE CLOSING Building on The Rock/ Ready for Anything
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<sup>1</sup> A reader-friendly version of this sermon is on my web page, [jamesgfriesen.com](http://jamesgfriesen.com). Click on *The Sermon on the Mount*.

- The main point comes in the center – *The Lord's Prayer*. In that prayer we find the predominant themes of SOM, including living according to His will, and seeking His help in battles with worry, forgiveness and lust. Talk all of these problem areas over with the Father, who is always near. Welcome Him into every area of your life. He will help you to rely on His generosity, to overcome relationship problems and to live in purity.
- The SOM introduction, *The Beatitudes*, is the first step toward turning your life around. The Father promises to help you start anew, working with eight kinds of brokenness. Please note that in the first and final *Beatitude*, Jesus mentions “the kingdom of the heavens.” This is an exclamation point from Jesus, indicating that the *Beatitudes* lead to improvement only because of the Father's presence. This phrasing is Jesus' unique message, never used by anyone earlier. (“The kingdom of the heavens” is wherever His people are, if they have invited Him to reign in their life. The Father will be glad to extend His love into new territory.)
- The first half of SOM is about recognizing the ways that brokenness has fractured your heart – hopelessness, contempt, lust, dishonesty, retaliation and false righteousness. The Father is ready to provide healing for each of them.
- The second half is about healing those wounds and unifying those fractures, and about turning them into the traits displayed by people in His family – forgiveness, genuineness, peacefulness, loving relationships and sincerity.
- The closing – building life on the solid rock – shows that the introduction's promised transformation has happened. His presence changes everything. The Father can turn your brokenness into a life that will withstand any storm.
- Harkening back to *Jesus' First Message*, we are to always turn to the Father. He will help you with your brokenness, recognizing your wounds and fractures, unifying your heart, and increasing your strength. That welcomes Him into every area of your life, turning it around. You will be ready to change the world.

## JESUS' OTHER TEACHINGS – *LIFE ON THE NARROW PATH* (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John)

Below is a list of His teachings, organized according to His essential points. Keep in mind that some of the teachings may be about more than one of the points. By comparing each teaching with excerpts from SOM, we can see below that they are splendid elaborations of what He taught in SOM. Why is this important?

- It strongly signals that SOM covers all of the fundamentals in Jesus' teachings.
- We can rest assured that there is no obscure or hidden idea in one of Jesus' other teachings, that may take us in a different direction.

- We are awakened by the sublime simplicity of His words. We are challenged and we are humbled. We are defenseless. We are awe-struck. We can begin anew. No chasm is too deep, no mountain too high and no human condition too complicated. Talk it all over with the Father. Your life can be turned around. Transformation is underway.
- We will be eager to pour over Jesus' other nourishing teachings. If SOM is an early rendition, we can hardly wait to soak up later lavish additions, knowing they are applications and elaborations of SOM.

<u>POINT</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>	<u>TEACHING</u>	<u>SOM REFERENCE</u>	<u>TEACHING</u>
1.	<i>Matt 8:18-22</i>	The cost of following Jesus	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	May His name receive highest honor
1.	<i>Matt 9:17-17</i>	Old garments, wineskins	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Beatitude</i>	He makes everything new
5.	<i>Matt 9:37-38</i>	Jesus' compassion & workers	<i>Matt 5:14-16</i>	You will change the world
5.	<i>Matt 10:5-42</i>	Sending out the disciples	<i>Matt 5:14-16</i>	You will change the world
1.	<i>Matt 10:21-2</i>	Broken families, persecution	<i>8<sup>th</sup> Beatitude &amp; vs 11-12</i>	God blesses during persecution
2.	<i>Matt 10:26-31</i>	Fear and worry	<i>Matt 6:25-34</i>	Birds of the air, the Father's generosity
5.	<i>Matt 10:34-39</i>	Persecution	<i>8<sup>th</sup> Beatitude</i>	God blesses during persecution
4.	<i>Matt 10:40-42</i>	Generosity	<i>Matt 5:43-48</i>	Love your neighbor like family
			<i>Matt 6:19-21</i>	Treasures in heaven
1.	<i>Matt 11:28-30</i>	Come to me, weary	<i>Matt 4:17</i>	The Father is near, ready to help
4.	<i>Matt 12:1-14</i>	Accusations, legalism	<i>Matt 5:17-26</i>	Jesus' approach is not a "rules approach"
4.	<i>Matt 12:33-37</i>	Hearts and words	<i>Matt 7:15-20</i>	Words come from your heart
4.	<i>Matt 12:38-42</i>	Don't look for a "sign"	<i>Matt 7:24-27</i>	Build your life on Jesus' teaching
3.	<i>Matt 12:43-45</i>	"Empty house" and spirits	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	Take control of every area in my life
4.	<i>Matt 12:46-50</i>	"Who is my family?"	<i>Matt 5:43-48</i>	People in His family model after The Father
4.	<i>Matt 13:3-23</i>	Parable of the farmer	<i>Matt 7:24-27</i>	Build your life on Jesus' teaching
4.	<i>Matt 13</i>	Parable of the weeds	<i>Matt 7:21-23</i>	Pretenders will face judgment
3.	<i>Matt 13</i>	Mustard seed, yeast, pearls	<i>The Beatitudes</i>	It is wonderful to be with the Father
1.	<i>Matt 13:47-50</i>	Parable of the net	<i>Matt 7:21-23</i>	Pretenders will face judgment
3.	<i>Matt 13:51-52</i>	Old and new teachings	<i>Matt 5:17-20</i>	I have come to fulfill the law
			<i>Matt 5:17</i>	He came to fulfill the law, not destroy it
3.	<i>Matt 15:1-20</i>	Traditions, hearts and lips	<i>Matt 5:17-37</i>	Where rules go wrong – listen to the Father
5.	<i>Matt 16:5-12</i>	Entitlement – Yeast of Pharisee	<i>Matt 5:14-16</i>	You will change the world
4.	<i>Matt 16:24-28</i>	Lose your life to find it	<i>Matt 7:13-14</i>	The narrow gate, 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Beatitudes
5.	<i>Matt 17:14-20</i>	Healing, moving mountains	<i>Matt 5:14-16</i>	You will change the world

3. <i>Matt 17:24-27</i>	Peter and the temple tax	<i>Matt 6:25-34</i>	The Father will surprise you with His generosity
4. <i>Matt 18:1-6, 10-14</i>	Children, entering His Kingdom	<i>Matt 6:1-6</i> <i>Matt 7:9-12</i>	The Father sees; you cannot hide abuse Loving relationships, "do unto others"
2. <i>Matt 18:7</i>	Woe to people who cause sin	<i>Matt 7:15-20</i>	Corrupt trees will be burned
3. <i>Matt 18:8-9</i>	Avoid sin, enter life	<i>Matt 5:27-32</i>	Lust vs the Father's guidance
4. <i>Matt 18:15-20</i>	Solving interpersonal problems	<i>Matt 7:7-11</i>	Be authentic, don't manipulate
4. <i>Matt 18:21-35</i>	Extent of forgiveness	<i>Matt 6:12,14-15</i>	Forgiveness is from your heart
3. <i>Matt 19:3-12</i>	Divorce	<i>Matt 5:31-32</i>	Lust is the problem, seek the Father's guidance
4. <i>Matt 19:13-14</i>	Treating children well	<i>Matt 7:9-12</i>	Treat everyone well
3. <i>Matt 19:16-24</i>	What is required? (treasures in heaven)	<i>Matt 7:13-14</i> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> &amp; 8<sup>th</sup> Beatitudes</i>	The narrow gate, The Father will be with you to the end
3. <i>Matt 19:25-30</i>	Leaving all?	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Beatitude</i>	He will help you win in the end
3. <i>Matt 20:1-16</i>	Parable of the workers	<i>Matt 5:43-45</i>	The generosity of the Father
1. <i>Matt 21:28-32</i>	Parable of the two sons	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Beatitude</i>	The spiritually broken can start anew
1. <i>Matt 21:33-46</i>	Parable of the wicked tenants	<i>Matt 7:21-23</i>	Your actions will determine your destiny
1. <i>Matt 22:1-14</i>	Parable of the wedding	<i>Matt 7:21-23</i>	Not accepting His invitation means destruction
4. <i>Matt 22:34-40</i>	The greatest commandment	<i>Matt 7:12</i>	Treat others as you would like to be treated
2. <i>Matt 23:1-36</i>	Diatribes against false teachers	<i>Matt 7:21-23</i>	Lives show everyone where a heart is
2. <i>Matt 24:4-28</i>	Watch out for false teachers	<i>Matt 7:21-23</i>	False teachers will have false actions
4. <i>Matt 24:29-51</i>	Only the Father knows when	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Beatitudes</i>	Do not give up even during persecution
2. <i>Matt 25:1-13</i>	Parable of the brides to be	<i>Matt 6:22-23</i> <i>6<sup>th</sup> Beatitude</i>	Devotion in every area of your life Keep your eyes on the Father
2. <i>Matt 25:14-30</i>	Parable of the talents	<i>Matt 7:16-20</i>	You know a tree by its fruit
4. <i>Matt 25:31-46</i>	Heaven or hell	<i>Matt 5:46-47</i>	Generosity to all defines your family identity
5. <i>Matt 28:18-20</i>	Make disciples of all nations	<i>Matt 5:14-16</i>	You will change the world

Toward the end of *Matthew*, Jesus works a little harder to prepare His followers for persecution, for false teaching and for the agonizing wait until He returns in His glory. SOM begins to prepare people for these problems, and we see Jesus dealing more thoroughly with them as we get closer to the end of *Matthew*, just before He departs. Persecution, hard times and waiting for Jesus' return will be pretty important topics for His followers when those days arrive.

The Gospel According to Mark's "first message" is from John the Baptist, and it is very similar to Matthew's version. In Matthew, John the Baptist and Jesus gave the same first message, word for word. John must have heard it from his cousin, Jesus, and it completely changed John's life. So he became devoted to spreading Jesus' message. In Mark, John's message was, "The Kingdom of God has drawn near to you. You can turn your life around and believe this gospel because it changes everything." Mark's account does not include that Jesus taught this, but suggests that this first message directly points to Jesus and to His teachings. Mark is mostly about Jesus' life and how he spoke with people. Teachings are not the primary feature in his book. Mark emphasizes how Jesus spoke with people, the struggles of disciples and seekers, and how His movement spread.

<u>POINT</u>	<u>REFERENCE</u>	<u>TEACHING</u>	<u>SOM REFERENCE</u>	<u>TEACHING</u>
4.	Mark 2:18-20	Fasting or celebrating	Matt 7:24-27	Building a solid life, not fasting is His urging
1.	Mark 2:20-22	Old garments and wineskins	1 <sup>st</sup> Beatitude Matt 5:17	He makes everything new He came to fulfill the law, not destroy it
2.	Mark 2:23-3:6	Sabbath laws	Matt 5:17-20	Added rules are the problem, not God's law
4.	Mark 4:3-20	Parable of the farmer	Matt 7:24-27	Build your life on Jesus' teaching
5.	Mark 4:21-22	Lamp hidden	Matt 5:14-16	You will be the light of the world
4.	Mark 4:24-25	You will receive what you give	Matt 7:12	Treat others as you would like to be treated
4.	Mark 4:26-28	The parable of seed growing	Matt 4:17	The Father will be in charge of change
3.	Mark 4:30-32	The mustard seed	The Beatitudes	It is wonderful to be with the Father
3.	Mark 7:1-23	Following laws	Matt 5:17-20	Jesus came to fulfill laws
4.	Mark 8:12	Pharisees want a "sign"	Matt 7:24-27	Build your life on Jesus' teaching
2.	Mark 8:15-21	Entitlement	Matt 5:14-16	You will change the world
2.	Mark 8:34-37	Lose everything to follow me	3 <sup>rd</sup> Beatitude	He will help you win in the end
3.	Mark 8:38-9:1	Prepare for His coming	6 <sup>th</sup> Beatitude	Keep your eyes on the Father
3.	Mark 9:33-35	Who is the greatest?	The Lord's Prayer	May your name receive highest honor
4.	Mark 9:36-37,42	Treating children well	Matt 7:9-12	Treat everyone like you would like to be treated
4.	Mark 9:41	A cup of cold water	Matt 5:43-48	Treat everyone like family
2.	Mark 9:43-48	Avoid sin at all cost	Matt 5:27-30	Take lust seriously
4.	Mark 9:49-50	Be at peace with each other	7 <sup>th</sup> Beatitude	The Father helps us with peacemaking
2.	Mark 10:2-12	Divorce	Matt 5:31-32	Lust is the problem, seek the Father's guidance
4.	Mark 10:13-16	Treating children well	Matt 6:1-6 Matt 5:43-38	The Father sees; you cannot hide abuse Be generous with everyone
4.	Mark 10:17-31	Who can be saved?	Matt 7:13-14	Narrow gate

4. Mark 10:41-44	Ruling as a servant	3 <sup>rd</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> Beatitudes The Lord's Prayer Matt 5:43-48	The Father will always be with you May your name receive highest honor Treat everyone like family
3. Mark 11:22-26	Faith, prayer & mountains	Matt 4:17, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Beatitude	The Father will help you with everything
4. Mark 12:1-11	Parable of the tenants	Matt 6:16-24 Matt 7:21-23	External treasures or eternal treasures Your actions will determine your destiny Their actions will reveal their hearts
2. Mark 12:38-40	Beware teachers of the law	Matt 7:15-20	Treat others as you would like to be treated
4. Mark 12:28-31	The greatest commandment	Matt 7:12	Religious teachers' actions will expose them
2. Mark 12:38-40	Beware of religious teachers	Matt 7:17-23	The dangers of false righteousness
2. Mark 12:43-44	The widow's offering	Matt 6:1-6	False teachers will have false actions
2. Mark 13:5-13	Beware of deceivers	Matt 7:21-23	Do not give up even during persecution
2. Mark 13:14-37	Wait for the end times	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Beatitudes	You will change the world
5. Mark 16:15-18	Go into all of the world	Matt 5:14-16 Matt 4:17	The Father will help you with everything

As you can see, the gospels are not identical. They cover Jesus' life and teachings, with differing emphases. We next look at *The Gospel According to Luke*. Its sources are listed in the first four verses. Dr. Luke, the very excellent researcher, writes that there were "many accounts" about Jesus among the early Christ followers at that time. His account is drawn from eyewitnesses who handed down their stories to him. We find sections of SOM interspersed throughout *Luke*, instead of being listed at one place, as is the case in *Matthew*. I love who this book is written to – Theophilus. Who is that? The word is translated "Lover of God." If you are a lover of God, *Luke's* account is to you.

<u>POINT REFERENCE</u>	<u>TEACHING</u>	<u>SOM REFERENCE</u>	<u>TEACHING</u>
4. Luke 5:34-35	Fasting	Matt 7:24-27	Building a solid life, not fasting is his urging
1. Luke 5:36-39	Old garments and wineskins	1 <sup>st</sup> Beatitude Matt 5:17	He makes everything new He came to fulfill the law, not destroy it
2. Luke 6:3-11	Following senseless rules	Matt 5:17-20	Added rules are the problem, not God's law
3. Luke 6:20-23	A different set of Beatitudes	Matthew's Beatitudes	God will be with you in hard times
4. Luke 6:24-26	A set of warnings	Matt 6:1-6	Beware of those with false righteousness
4. Luke 6:27-36	Love your enemies	Matt 5:43-48	Love everyone, treat enemies like family
4. Luke 6:37-42	Judging others	Matt 7:1-5	Judging others
2. Luke 6:43-45	A tree and its fruit	Matt 7:16-20	A tree and its fruit
4. Luke 6:46-49	Build your life on His teachings	Matt 7:24-27	Build your life on His teachings

4. Luke 7:36-50	Alabaster jar, forgiveness, love	Matt 5:43-45	The generosity of the Father
4. Luke 8:1-15	Parable of the farmer	Matt 7:24-27	Build your life on Jesus' teaching
5. Luke 8:16	Shine your light	Matt 5:14-15	You will change the world
2. Luke 8:17-18	Nothing will be hidden	Matt 6:1-6	Watch out for false righteousness
3. Luke 9:23-27	Deny yourself and follow me	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	May His name always receive highest honor
4. Luke 9:47-48	Welcome little children	Matt 5:43-48	Be generous with everyone
1. Luke 9:57-62	The cost of following Jesus	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	May His name always receive highest honor
5. Luke 10:2-16	Jesus' compassion & workers	Matt 5:14-16	You will change the world
4. Luke 10:25-37	Parable of the Samaritan	Matt 5:43-48	Love everyone, treat enemies like family
3. Luke 11:2-4	An example of how to pray	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	There is more here, including "in the heavens"
4. Luke 11:5-13	Loving relationships	Matt 7:7-12	Loving relationships
2. Luke 11:14-26	Spiritual warfare	Matt 7:13-23	Turn every area of your life over to the Father--
			He knows who is pretending, and will judge
4. Luke 11:29-32	Give us a sign	Matt 7:24-27	Build your life on Jesus' teaching
5. Luke 11:33-36	Shine your light	Matt 5:14-15	You will change the world
2. Luke 11:39-12:12	Diatribes, warnings of Pharisees	Matt 7:21-23	Lives show everyone where a heart is
2. Luke 12:13-21	Greed and possessions	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	Help us to rely on your generosity
		Matt 6:19-21	Treasures on earth
2. Luke 12:22-34	Worry, birds & lilies	Matt 6:25-34	Worry, birds & lilies
2. Luke 12:35-48	Make your choice, be ready	Matt 6:22-23	Devotion in every area of your life
		6 <sup>th</sup> Beatitude	Keep your eyes on the Father
3. Luke 12:49-53	Divisions in families	Matt 5:16-42	The law brings divisions with Jesus' followers
1. Luke 13:1-9	Turn your life around or die	Matt 4:17	You can turn your life around
		1 <sup>st</sup> Beatitude	The kingdom of the heavens makes all new
3. Luke 13:15-16	Sabbath laws & healing	Matt 5:17-20	Laws can take you in the wrong direction
1. Luke 13:18-21	Mustard seed and yeast	1 <sup>st</sup> Beatitude	The kingdom makes everything new
1. Luke 13:24-30	Actions & judgment	Matt 7:21-23	Actions determine your destiny
2. Luke 14:7-14	First, last and generosity	Matt 6:19-21	Treasures on earth
4. Luke 14:16-24	Parable of the great banquet	Matt 6:16-24	External treasures or eternal treasures
		Matt 5:14-15	You will change the world
2. Luke 14:26-35	The cost of discipleship	Matt 6:16-24	External treasures or eternal treasures
2. Luke 15	The lost sheep, coin & son	Matt 6:7-8	The Father knows what you need
		Matt 6:25-34	No worries because of the Father's generosity

2. <i>Luke</i> 16:1-12	Parable of the manager	<i>Matt</i> 6:16-24	External treasures or eternal treasures
2. <i>Luke</i> 16:13	Serving two masters	<i>Matt</i> 6:16-24	External treasures or eternal treasures
1. <i>Luke</i> 16:19-31	The rich man and Lazarus	<i>Matt</i> 7:21-23	Actions determine your destiny
2. <i>Luke</i> 17:1-2	Causing others to sin	<i>Matt</i> 7:15-20	Watch out for false teachers
3. <i>Luke</i> 17:3-4	Forgiveness	<i>The Lord's Prayer</i>	Forgive us in the same way we forgive others
1. <i>Luke</i> 17:6	Faith like a mustard seed	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Beatitude</i>	The kingdom makes everything new
4. <i>Luke</i> 17:7-10	Servanthood	<i>Matt</i> 5:46-48	Treat everyone, even enemies, like family
3. <i>Luke</i> 17:20-21	Kingdom of God is within you	<i>The Beatitudes</i>	Father will join you
2. <i>Luke</i> 17:22-35	Waiting for the end days	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Beatitudes</i>	Do not give up even during persecution
3. <i>Luke</i> 18:1-8	Prayer & waiting in faith	<i>Matt</i> 6:7-8	The Father knows your needs, so talk to Him
2. <i>Luke</i> 18:10-14	Pharisee & the tax collector	<i>Matt</i> 6:1-6	Watch out for false righteousness
4. <i>Luke</i> 18:15-17	Jesus and little children	<i>Matt</i> 7:9-12	Loving relationships, "do unto others"
2. <i>Luke</i> 18:18-30	Cost & benefit of following Him	<i>Matt</i> 6:16-24	External treasures or eternal treasures
4. <i>Luke</i> 19:11-27	Parable of the worthy servants	<i>Matt</i> 5:46-48	Treat everyone, even enemies, like family
		<i>Matt</i> 7:13-14	Broad or narrow gate
2. <i>Luke</i> 20:9-18	Parable of the tenants	<i>Matt</i> 7:15-20	Watch out for false teachers
		<i>Matt</i> 7:13-14	Broad or narrow gate
2. <i>Luke</i> 20:46-47	Watch out for false teachers	<i>Matt</i> 7:15-23	False teachers are known by their actions
2. <i>Luke</i> 21:1-35	Signs of the last times	<i>Matt</i> 7:15-20	Watch out for false teachers
		<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Beatitude</i>	You will win in the end

And so we come to the end of our journey through Jesus' teachings. He remained on target, staying close to what He introduced in His first sermon. In *SOM The Beatitudes* pierce our outer defenses; we find that we all struggle and need the Father's on-going assistance or we will surely crumple. That fact impels us to pay very close attention to the rest of His message. He helps us with our brokenness, recognizing the wounds and fractures in our hearts, and enjoying His presence as He shapes us into members of His family. That turns our life around, as was promised in Jesus' first sermon, and it prepares us to change the world. *SOM* is followed by teachings that develop His ideas further, showing how these seeds of truth can mature in our lives. On the hillside that day, Jesus covered exactly what the people needed to hear. They did not have to wait for the next series of sermons. He was God. Jesus could fit His five essential areas of teaching into one sermon.

Great scholars' books lie on their desks, gathering dust. This message is not complicated. High profile preachers' words echo in empty auditoriums. We have heard the unpretentious words from Jesus that can turn a life around. Children brim with gleeful smiles, sensing that this grand message is spoken to them.

And yet, such simple wisdom does not stop calling us to attention. "I've never seen this in *The Sermon on the Mount*." Linking SOM with His other teachings brings Jesus' material into a comprehensive, yet understandable framework. This approach is intended to keep us all on a fruitful pathway, encountering Him more authentically and realistically, even though it will bring us face-to-face with our problems.

Those who examine *The Gospel According to John* will find no parables, nor any of the teachings that we have seen in the first three Gospels. *John* is splendid in other ways – depicting miracles, portraying the growing discord with Jewish leaders of the day, recording some of His life-giving conversations with the disciples, including Jesus' teachings about Himself, and describing how Jesus' movement began. As John put it in 20:30-31, there was too much to write about Jesus. John chose to share some of the compelling stories about Jesus that help us believe that He is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His name. The new beginning that Jesus talked about in *John* 3:16 is completely consistent with SOM. "You can begin anew." The rest of His teachings show how to navigate along the narrow path that lies ahead. You will need The Father's help.

Here is how Jesus explained the exceedingly difficult the task ahead.

*Accept my challenge to invite the Father into every area of your life. If you live according to these teachings you will be on the right path. Follow me by entering through the narrow gate and staying on my pathway, even though it is difficult. Most people take the easy path. They enter through the wide gate, and coast toward destruction. You must not miss the narrow gate because it puts you on the road that leads to a far better life. Not many people follow my teachings about beginning anew, about dealing with the wounds that can lead them to growth, and about talking it all over with the Father. That requires determination. If you stay steadily attuned to the Father's voice, He will lead you. Your destination is a transformed life. (This is paraphrased from Matthew 7:13-14, as the "Narrow Path" teaching crescendos SOM to the "Solid Rock" conclusion.)*

## IMPLICATIONS FOR PEOPLE, PASTORS AND COUNSELORS

People will either grow or stop growing. If they keep Jesus' five essential points in focus – through study, through on-going participation in groups based on the essentials, and by incorporating the teachings into their life – they will grow. Or they could coast toward destruction.

People, pastors and counselors will do well to keep in mind that a relationship with God – talking everything over with the Father – is essential. If that is not in place, none of Jesus' teachings will be beneficial. With that approach in mind, you, your church and your counseling practice can thrive by talking these five essential points over with the Father.

People. Do not give up. It is a narrow gate, and you will need the Father's help to stay on the right path. While seeking healing, find help from the family of God, and keep asking the Father for direction, no matter how extensive your woundedness is.

Pastors. A new beginning, personal growth and changing the world will be your domain. But do not forget that there are wounds to work on, as part of the growth process. Find resources for your folks to address their need for healing.

Counselors. Do not be secular. If you do not bring the presence of the Father into every aspect of the session, it will not be Christian Counseling. Seek His assistance in uncovering and in healing wounds, in moving ahead in growth, and do not overlook the importance of changing the world, even when there are wounds not yet healed.

Here are a few closing reminders.

- The road is difficult because there can be setbacks in any of the essential areas. Particularly when people forge ahead on their own, apart from the Father's guidance, destruction will lie ahead.
- It is helpful to keep in mind that His input makes new beginnings successful. Do not limit this to one new beginning or even to a few. Recharging, renewing and beginning anew, all address the same problem. Be ready to start over each day, if needed.

- Woundedness can be turned into growth when the Father is guiding. This is, perhaps, the most difficult section of the path – letting the Father turn our weaknesses into strength. People often require much time and effort to go from woundedness to growth.
- People underestimate the joy and the deep satisfaction that come from changing the world. Jesus said that giving someone a cup of water is like giving Him a cup of water. Try it. Do something nice for people, and you will feel great. That will impel you to do more and more, and soon you will be changing the world. The power of this can be missed if people are too focused on their woundedness.

I have been astounded at times, when people who are stuck in the middle of some deep pain, still are led to change the world in small, yet beautiful ways. In classrooms, volunteers can work wonders in children's lives, even if volunteers are not finished working on their woundedness. Similarly, people with tremendous pain in their lives, can work together, and bring this *Gospel* to new areas of the world. That has happened because of people in my Life Group. Changing the world is not something that is meant for other people. It is for you. Ask the Father how He wishes to help you change the world, even if you are not doing very well right now.

Jesus' divine, healing presence is needed, in order to lay the foundation of His teachings in your life. Ask the Father for direction, as you seek to dwell on His teachings. He is eager to bless you with new beginnings, with much healing and in developing a life that declares you are in His family.