

DEALING WITH CHANGE

Growing Disciples to Build the Kingdom

Matthew's Account of Jesus' Ministry

Chapter 4:

- **Tempted by the devil.** [Passed where Adam failed]
- **Moved to Capernaum.** [Village of comfort or consolation. Good place from which to travel. Jesus was the first Comforter]
- **Message:** “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” [4:17]
 - “*change your mind for the better*” [AMP]
 - The verb **is at hand** means “has come,” “has arrived,” or “is here,” and suggests the inauguration of the reign of God, which still awaits its consummation. [SFL Bible Note]
- **Begins to call disciples:** “*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.*” [4:19]
- **Message in the synagogues:** [NLT] *Jesus traveled throughout Galilee teaching in the synagogues, preaching everywhere the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed people who had every kind of sickness and disease. ²⁴ News about him spread far beyond the borders of Galilee so that the sick were soon coming to be healed from as far away as Syria. And whatever their illness and pain, or if they were possessed by demons, or were epileptics, or were paralyzed—he healed them all. ²⁵ Large crowds followed him wherever he went—people from Galilee, the Ten Towns, Jerusalem, from all over Judea, and from east of the Jordan River. 4:23-25 [NLT]*

Jesus is coming into:

- An established society with their set of life-governing rules.
- They would need a major change of mind & heart.
- **The healings and deliverances did two things:**
 - Got their attention.
 - Demonstrated God's will.

Chapters 5-7 – The Sermon on the Mount.

- **Note 1:** [5:1] it probably began as a discourse to the 12, but the multitude came and sat in. As such, the sermon is directed to DISCIPLES!
- **Note 2:** it was the custom of rabbis to sit to teach, and would involve discussion.
- **Message:** To be like Jesus means to commit ourselves to changed thinking and behavior.

- **The Sermon on the Mount** was not given as the way of salvation for the lost, but as the way of life for true children of the kingdom. It was instruction for those who had responded to Jesus' invitation to "re-pent" (4:17). These disciples were probably confused as to the true nature of righteousness and God's kingdom.

5:17-20 – *Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.* ¹⁸*For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.* ¹⁹*Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* ²⁰*For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

- **Nelson Study Bible Note:** *The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees* was essentially external adherence to rules. God demands more than this. Jesus' words must have shaken His disciples, since the meticulously righteous deeds of the scribes and Pharisees were regarded as being far above those of the average person. However the only righteousness that satisfies God's standard is faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Romans 3:21, 22 [NLT]** – *But now God has shown us a different way of being right in his sight—not by obeying the law but by the way promised in the Scriptures long ago.* ²² *We are made right in God's sight when we trust in Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, no matter who we are or what we have done.*

See in 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38 & 43 – ***"You have heard it said..."***

- Refers to the teaching of various rabbis that added to Moses' teaching.
- Jesus contrasted it to what He said.

Chapter 6:

- Attitude in giving.
- Right and wrong ways to pray.
- Fasting.
- Attitudes about what we treasure.
- Serve God not mammon. [Can refer to anything we put our trust in]

6:25-34 [NLT] – *So I tell you, don't worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food, drink, and clothes. Doesn't life consist of more than food and clothing?* ²⁶ *Look at the birds. They don't need to plant or harvest or*

put food in barns because your heavenly Father feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than they are. ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? Of course not.

²⁸ And why worry about your clothes? Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰ And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and gone tomorrow, won't he more surely care for you? You have so little faith!

³¹ So don't worry about having enough food or drink or clothing. ³² Why be like the pagans who are so deeply concerned about these things? Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs, ³³ and he will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern. ³⁴ So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

The teachings of Jesus brought radical change to a religious society that had drifted far from God's original intent for them.

Simplifying the message:

- Repent.
- Follow Jesus.
- Expect change.
- Don't worry.
- Seek first the kingdom and His righteousness.

Believers Fellowship Center change – community, small groups.