

Working With The Voice Transcript

WWTV Episode 018

Sermon on the Mount: Part 6: The Road and The Rock

November 17, 2018

Hello Listeners! This is Juliet Mee, your host of the Working With the Voice podcast. This is a course to learn to speak directly with the Holy Spirit, and so it's best to listen to the episodes in order so you can understand the skills that are being taught and why they are being taught in the order that I have chosen. Today we are finishing the Sermon on the Mount, the longest sermon of Jesus's that we have recorded. It begins with the Book of Matthew Chapter 5 and ends with Matthew Chapter 7. Today's episode will cover Matthew 7 Verses 7-29 and then we will conclude with a listening of the full Sermon on the Mount, read start to finish by JoDee Herschend. When we began this section in Episode 11 I spoke about JoDee and how much she means to me as a friend and spiritual mentor. JoDee is the perfect person to read the Sermon on the Mount because it is where Jesus lays down all the basic philosophies that today we call Christianity. He tells us today about the true path, the path of doing what he asks. JoDee has shown me how to implement his teachings, and I know she has been perfect for me. In the last episode Jesus spoke about how not every person is the right person to help someone else change, and that also, some people aren't worth your help. I am so glad that JoDee was the right person to help me, and that she didn't give up on me just because I trampled her pearls before I knew what was happening. When I was in ignorance, I wanted less time with her. Now that I understand, all I want is more. May God Bless you in every stage of your journey, JoDee. You are a blessing in mine, the best gift that God has to offer us in this world, a supernatural connection with a truly good friend.

Ask, Seek, Knock

7 Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

8 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

9"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 11Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

11If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

12So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Earlier in the sermon, Jesus spoke of prayer as a commanded duty, by which God is honored and which if done properly, is rewarded. Here he speaks of prayer as the designated method of obtaining what we need. "Ask seek knock" is actually pray, pray often, and pray with sincerity. In addition, we must support our prayers with our actions and be serious about accomplishing them. We must not only ask, but knock; we must come to God's door, must ask persistently; not only pray, but realize that sometimes we need to plead and wrestle with God meaning that we must sometimes continue knocking; and must persevere in our prayers so that we knock down difficult walls and fulfill our duties.

If indeed we do this, it is promised here that it will not be in vain. This is a precept, a general rule. He repeats the promise. Ask, seek, knock, and it will be given to you, not lent to you, not sold to you, but given to you as a free gift. Seek and you will find. This is tough to believe sometimes because when you apply yourself diligently in the world, many times things will not work out. But again, we are promised

that the work we do in our prayers to God we will not lose our labor. Doors are made to be shut so that people that don't wish us well are kept out, but God says, Knock and it shall be opened to you as friends and children. Think of how you knock at a friend's door. If your friend doesn't show up instantly you don't go away, you wait, and then knock again. If he asks who it is, you answer with proof that you are a friend if necessary. It is reasonable that at first he may ask, "Who is at the door?" not because he doesn't know, but so that you can ask ***yourself*** if you are really be a friend and a believer. If you are only going to God to see what you can get from Him, he might take his time answering to make you wonder why he hasn't opening the door yet. If you are friend and believer, you can come to him as a child, just knock and when the door is opened, go in without hesitation. It is reasonable if you are in a situation where you see your role as being one of a student to say in your prayers that you acknowledge that He is God and that you believe scripture and scripture says, "You told me if I knocked you would open". If you are in a situation where you see yourself as a child, it is reasonable to say in your prayers, "Father, it is me." Nothing else needs to be said, and Jesus will expand on this in a moment.

We talked in the last episode about vicious cycles and transforming initiatives, the things we can do to change our situation. Prayer is the major transforming initiative. Ask seek knock. This is more than praying. We ask God. God asks us. We seek God. God seeks us. We ask. We knock and ask to be let in. So does God. You must persevere. Back up our prayers with our endeavors. The promise is that God will give you what you're looking for, even if it doesn't come in the way you expect. This has been a problem for me in the past because I really didn't understand. Although I felt that in one way or another, I have always been taken care of appropriately, I saw people who I truly believed he didn't provide for, even if they prayed and asked. What I have learned is that the only situation I can judge is my own. Only I know what I asked for. Only I know what I heard and did or did not do. Only I can find out if the situation is fully completed or if I am still midstream.

Does this mean that all prayers will be answered with the things I ask for in the way we want? There are situations like the one country song where a man asked for a certain woman and then he addresses the outcome by saying "Sometimes I thank God for unanswered prayers". I do not mean to be facetious because so many important things that we pray for don't receive the answers that we want, and it doesn't seem to make sense. People do die, and there are many other things we suffer through. Jesus will address some of those situations shortly, and I do think it's important to think about this in our contemplation of getting what we want. Just before he was arrested, Jesus prayed to God and asked three times if it was possible to have the suffering he saw coming by being crucified pass from him. We know how that ended up for him, and for the world.

Transition

Next, we are told something that is another promise. He says,

For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

This is a repeated message of the first promise. Jesus is clear that not only the disciples shall receive what they pray for but ***everyone*** who asks, receives, whether Jew or Gentile, young or old, rich or poor, they are all alike. Have faith in this promise. It is regularly said "***God is no respecter of persons***". What that means is that God won't something for another person that he won't do for another. He says, I promise you that if you come looking for me, you will find me. But he doesn't say he will come looking for you and then give you everything. The level of faith that you have in this promise is important because if you are an active believer, when he answers, you won't go in the door tentatively, you will enter immediately and makes the blessings God promised your own. You have to understand the

promises of God to have faith in them, and it is faith that makes the promise come faster. But here's a different section that presents a bit of a hitch to some of us.

"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

So there is a simple message here hidden in an interesting illustration. He doesn't say that no parent would give their child a stone or a snake when he asked for food. He says "***which of you would do that***", and he knows that most would not. I may do a whole episode later on how people whose parents were not good parents respond to the concept of a totally loving God as a parent, but suffice to say for this episode, for some it drives them away permanently, and for some it makes them finally feel they are at home.

God knows, as we do, that there are many parents who do terrible things to their children, even though they ***every one of them*** knows how to give good gifts. Jesus identifies that God will only give good gifts to his children. This means also that parents, like God, have to evaluate the gift. If a child asks for a knife to play with or unripe fruit to eat, hopefully the parent wouldn't grant that request, but we see many parents giving their children things they ask for that are disastrous for their wellbeing in the name of it being a good gift. We also see parents who are ostracized for using that discretion. How can we know? We can know that God is the Father of all of us, and he knows what is best. We often ask things of God which would do us harm if we had it; he knows this and therefore does not give it to us. Denying something in love is better than granting it in anger or as an exasperated response to being badgered. Sometimes we are repeating a request that we have persisted in because we haven't received it yet. If we trust his discretion, many times he will give us something better than we asked for. In your prayers, it is always good to ask for "this or something better, your will be done", which doesn't change the outcome, but it does help us to understand in every moment of our prayer time, that God does know what is best for us, and this type of prayer will change you at depth when you have a manifestation of the fact that God's loving and caring, tenderness, goodness, as well as the riches he owns surpasses even the best earthly parents.

When I search myself, I know that persisting and badgering do not have the same energy or intention, and I find myself going to God in both. I also find myself not receiving until I stop badgering. Once I was really griping at the Holy Spirit due to a significant amount of money not coming in that was available but not being released to me. I was so frustrated and angry one day I told the Holy Spirit that since it was going this way, I guessed that his message to me was just to raise a ruckus, complain and cause a commotion for the people involved in the hold up. He said clearly, "You can either do this on your own or you can take your hands off the situation and watch me handle it. But you have to choose one. Which do you choose?" Of course I chose to let him handle it, even though I had emergency bills to pay. The next message I received was that there would be another two week delay. The outcome was that it took the full two weeks, the people I was supposed to pay understood, and there was no damage done. But there was a twist, a synchronicity that I can only say stunned me. Although I cannot give the particulars due to other people's privacy, the day ***after*** I received the money, I received a letter in the mail that would have changed many things if it was delivered ***before*** I received the money. The timing was one of those incredible instances of things being put together in a mind blowing way that no human being could have arranged. And it changed me significantly.

We can use the phrase “Ask Seek Knock” from this verse to:

1. Direct our prayers and expectations.
2. To encourage our prayers and expectations. The world often gives stones for bread and serpents for fish, but God never does. His love and tenderness and goodness far excel that of any earthly parent and therefore it is argued and is grounded on this truth; God is an infinitely better parent than any earthly parents are. God is more knowing, God is more kind. God is richer and more ready to give to his children than our earthly parents could ever hope to be.

Transition

The next thing that is said is what has been called “The Golden Rule”

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

In the episode 016 The Context of Jesus’s Teachings, we learned that the term “the law and the prophets” means the written and oral Torah, the directions and rules that the Jewish people followed. Here Jesus says that the golden rule sums up the law and the prophets which identifies that this is a long standing Jewish teaching. It is said here in a positive form “Do to others what you would have them to you” In Judaism it is said a couple of ways, “Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you.” “Do not do the evil in return that was done to you” and “What you hate, do to no one” All of it means the same thing. This is the personal rule of justice, the way we are to deal with each other, human to human. In the Old Testament the people are told, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord." In both of these, or any of these teachings, there is an acknowledgement that the entire Torah is contained in the message.

We cannot expect to receive good things from God if we do not fair things, and those things that are honest, and that people respect in one another or else we are just hypocrites. There is a path we are following, and we are given a visual example of it here.

The Narrow and Wide Gates

¹³"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

¹⁴But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

Everyone who loves a good story knows that when a character is given a choice between a road that looks smooth and a road that looks hard, the readers have a decision to make. Are we seeing reality clearly or is this an illusion? Is the person who chooses the easy road smart or just easy to fool? Is the person who chooses the hard road foolish or wise? In real life, it's not so easy. We can definitely choose the wrong spouse or the wrong job, and what makes it “wrong” is that it can lead us to vicious cycles.

Jesus tells us here that the primary path we must choose is our path to God, and he clearly says to choose the road that not many choose. You get to choose which way, but one is filled with the vicious cycles that don't work out and one is filled with happiness and joy.

The Matthew Henry Commentary will give us a great description of both roads. First, Matthew Henry says that lots of people go into the wide road, and this road is one we are familiar with because we have seen it so many times, and unless we are unusually smart, we have entered there ourselves. You can enter it over and over, where the other road you will only have to enter once. The worst road is the one that allures multitudes into it and keeps them in it. There are many travelers on that way. You don't

have just lots of freedom, it's said that you have an ***abundance of liberty*** on that way. The gate is wide and stands wide open to tempt those that go right in. You can go in with all your bodily lusts or what we call today the seven deadly sins of lust, gluttony, greed, laziness, wrath, envy and pride with you, no restraints to your appetites or passions. People wander endlessly on this road because there are many paths in it. There is a choice of ways that are all contrary to each other, there is no consistency. You will have an abundance of company here because it is natural for humans who don't really know any better to choose this road. This path leads to destruction. It will be our ruin if we do not notice the patterns and rethink our choice.

Next Matthew Henry gives us a lot more detail about the narrow road than the wide one, and I have also found what he says to be totally accurate.

It's harder to find and harder to get onto this road, and it's difficult to travel on too, so fewer people go this way. It is the way of the Holy Spirit, the way of finding Holiness, and it is definitely the way to go. If you are ready to choose this road or chose it a while ago and feel that you are still on it, here's the information you need to know to make it easier to find.

You are going to hear this many times in the description. It is said that the gate is 'strait' spelled s-t-r-a-i-t, and this word means narrow, cramped, and describes a situation with a trouble and difficulty, one that creates what we would call a predicament. I always thought it was "straight" s-t-r-a-i-g-h-t meaning direct, level, and uncurving. Nope. It's exactly the opposite. Matthew Henry says that the word "Conversion" (which means change, transformation, or metamorphosis) is written on one post of the gate and "Regeneration" (being created again, born again) is on the other post. These are the two things you must agree to be willing to do to enter, but most people don't really know what those two terms mean until after it's happened. This strait gate is hard to find, and hard to get through; like a passage between two rocks. There must be a new heart, and a new spirit and old things must pass away. The direction of the soul must be changed, corrupt habits and customs broken off, what we have been doing all our life must be undone for good. It is also a strait gate because we must stoop or we cannot go in at all, we must become small, like little children. Our high and lofty ideals of how we thought this life was going to be must be brought down to the place that we understand we don't know how to do this. We also must ***be willing*** to give up everything we carry if we are to complete the journey efficiently. Many people have found that right before they find this gate, they have a situation that does both of those things for them. I sure did. In the first episode, I told you all of my story, about the situation that removed every bit of what I thought was true about myself, as well as a removed a bunch of my physical possessions and money. This does NOT happen to everyone, but you have to be willing to have it happen if it is deemed necessary by the Holy Spirit. The gate is strait to all but to some it is straiter than others specifically the people with lots of money who can't imagine living without wealth, titles, and possessions, and also to some that have been prejudiced against religion. Although those two categories are just examples, there are more, and we have to know that it is a ***strait*** gate, not one that is locked against us.

After you have decided to go through this difficult gate, the road is tough too. I am the type of person who does much better if I understand a bit about what is going to happen. Matthew Henry tells us some characteristics about the path. Although we are headed to a very good place, a place that for me has been like heaven on earth, we are not there just because we entered the gate. We must go through a wilderness, we must at times travel a long and narrow way that has rock solid boundaries of the way of the Holy Spirit, which will stay on either side of us. Initially we will see these boundaries as being

difficulties, then after we have been on the road for a bit, we will see these divine laws as being full protections.

You will have constraints because of the fact that you agreed to leave your “stuff” before you entered the gate. These constraints are a good thing. They make you focus faster and limit your options. They force you to prioritize.

Depending on our own natural inclinations and the physical and emotional disciplines we have developed or failed to develop in the past, certain places within our own psychology must be denied if they tell us immaturely that we shouldn't have to go through this, that there is no value in persevering. Duties that are against your inclination have to be done.

Temptations have to be resisted. If we aren't a physically disciplined person when we enter the road, we will have to deal with our body's demands and urges until we learn that if we don't give in, those urges die down.

We must endure hardness, must wrestle and be in agony, and must be more careful than we have had to be before. We must go through some suffering and trouble. This is what has been called an afflicted way, a way hedged about by thorns, but we have to always understand that it is not ever a way that is closed off to us. The bodies we carry about with us, and the corruptions remaining in us make the way of our duty difficult because we fight it; but as the ***understanding and will*** grow more and more sound, the path will open and enlarge and grow more and more pleasant. We can make the time longer by fighting the process, or we can make it faster by giving in, but either way you can be assured that it will take longer than you'd prefer.

Finally, Matthew Henry says that the way is so strait and narrow it is not unusual that few find it and even fewer choose it. Many pass by it from carelessness simply because they think that they are doing just fine as they are and see no need to look for any change in their way. Others who don't like to be restrained or limited will find it but then look at its reality and recoil. For others, they won't choose the road because they hate to be by themselves and would rather stick with their current crowd. But for some, they will have a need that is so great that they will take pains to find the road. Why would anyone choose this road, what is there in choosing this way? This way leads to life, and the surprising and delightful prizes and synchronicities that we find on the road will make all the difficulties and inconveniences we find worth it. Life and godliness are put together on this road.

The gate is strait and the way narrow and up hill, but once we have spent one hour in the heaven on earth that we find will make us know it was worth the trip.

Today, choose which road you will walk on, because if you are in troubles, this is the easiest way to the solution, and if you choose without a huge difficulty forcing the issue, you will find that you may avert a disruption. No person in their right mind would go to the executioner's gallows because it is a smooth pleasant path, nor would they refuse the offer of a throne and a palace because there is a rough and dirty way to it; yet most of us find that we have made this absurd choice previously, and see other people do it every day. Don't delay to enter in at the strait gate, knock at it by sincere and constant prayers and endeavors and it ***will*** be opened. We can't do this without the assistance of the Holy Spirit; and this is what is said to be the application of the process of our prayers and our endeavors.

In the next section, Jesus lets us know that just like there is a good road and a bad road, there are good teachers and bad ones and he gives us ways to determine which is which.

True and False Prophets

¹⁵"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?

¹⁷Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

²⁰Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Prophets are people who are spiritually gifted to tell people what is going to happen in the future and they also teach people what their spiritual duties are. Many false prophets are active today. They aren't hard to find. What they say does not resemble anything Jesus stood for, and what they preach causes bad outcomes for the people who follow. This is why you want to first understand how to find the voice and direction of the Holy Spirit, and then listen to what he wants to tell you. He can help you clearly figure out about what Jesus's life example is supposed to teach us and He can also help you understand about the motives and intentions of those people professing to personify it.

Jesus was a prophet and a teacher who came from God and in his teachings, he creates other teachers under him, and he specifically gives warning to take heed of counterfeits who instead of helping people align with God and heal, they poison them. Jesus says to beware of them, suspect them, try them, and when you have discovered their falsehood, avoid them, have nothing to do with them.

In this example false prophets look like sheep but they're wolves. Jesus is warning us to be careful not to accept at face value what people say just because of their clothing and their look. Some of the people will look exactly like honest and upstanding teachers, but their intentions are malicious. Every hypocrite is this way, and they are considered goats in comparison to the sheep. But this situation Jesus is pointing to is a bit different. The wolf who comes to tear, devour and scatter the sheep is the worst enemy the sheep has. For a false prophet to do what they want with a disciple of God, they will have to drive them from God, from one another, and from the teachings that Jesus is clear with us about in the gospels.

Jesus says you can also think of them as bad trees who can be understood by their fruit. Good tree, good fruit. Bad tree, bad fruit. In this example, you might not know what kind of tree you are looking around, but once you see that it produces a certain type of fruit, than you can be sure of its type. The tree bears the fruit that matches it. You don't get grapes from thorn bushes, and you don't get figs from weeds. There is a mirroring implication in this example where the tree can be understood by the type and quality of fruit that is produced, and people can be understood by the outcomes of following their instructions. Good works with good outcomes are good fruit. If you see good fruit, it comes from a good tree. If you see bad fruit, it comes from a bad tree. The type and quality of the fruit will match the tree and you will know what to expect.

Here is a good rule to go by in this caution; it is not only right, but it is good to wait and watch for outcomes before you give your trust to a teacher. True teachers will encourage this, and false teachers will be annoyed by it. It's impossible to judge the total character of a teacher by one thing, but when you see a pattern, you can begin the process of truly understanding who they are. Follow them only if their

teachings produce good fruit, and get away from them if they produce bad fruit. Jesus says that God will take care of the bad prophets by using them for firewood.

Jesus has shown us how to distinguish the good road from the bad road, and the good prophets from the bad. Now he speaks to us about true and false disciples.

True and False Disciples

²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Jesus is now identifying that there are people listening to him who he separates into two sorts; some that hear, and do what they hear; others that hear and do not. These are what he calls true and false disciples. He isn't asking people to keep score of their own good deeds. The outward profession of religion is not what God is looking for. The inward condition is what is important. Do the will of God. Create what he brought you here to create. Hypocrisy is involved with thinking that this is just too hard, and then offering other things. Instead, do what he says.

The religion he came to establish has a power that accompanies it, a power to change the world. , It is not just a grouping of words that sound good. There is an expectation that his true followers understand this power to change things, and that it is a power that is worth learning how to use it, then using it. It will not suffice to just look like you did things as a Christian, you have to truly produce results. This is our part in bringing the kingdom of heaven to earth. We are to use the light of God to guide our feet and hands, not just the path. We are to do the will of God, not offer other things instead. We are not just to have a seed sown in us by learning what Jesus said, we are to work to insure that the seed grows within us and produces its result. Those who only *hear* Christ's *sayings*, and *do them not*, sit down in the midway to heaven, and that will never bring them to their journey's end.

This last section will complete the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus tells us what happens for those who put their faith in his teachings, and what happens for those who don't.

The Wise and Foolish Builders

²⁴"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

²⁸When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching,

²⁹because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

These two sorts of hearers are here represented in their true characters, and what happens to each of them. One builder was wise, and built upon a rock, and his building stood in a storm; the other was foolish, and built upon the sand, and his building fell.

This well known parable teaches us that the only way to make sure that we weather life's storms well is to hear and do the what Jesus teaches in this sermon. Although some of it seems hard we create a

good foundation for the times that humans can expect. Every one of us has a house to build, and that house is our stability in this life. For many people it is the furthest thing from their thoughts; they are building for this world, as if they already know what will happen and will be prepared. They build in the way the world teaches because they haven't yet realized that God is all, and all belongs to him. He is a rock and everything else is sand.

We have to go on this road so we can practice the skills over and over again until we can use them easily when we really truly need to be able to. If there is one thing that life teaches, it is that there is undoubtedly a storm coming in every person's life that will push us into places we aren't prepared.

The lesson in this parable is that the house built upon the Rock stood when the storm came; but the house built on sand fell in the storm, when the builder needed it most, and expected it would be a shelter to him. It fell when it was too late to build another:

Transition

In the two last verses of the Sermon on the Mount, we are told what impressions this message had upon the listeners:

"When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law."

Now that we have completed the commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, let's listen to it in its entirety with a new understanding of the power of these instructions.

Chapter 5 Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ²and he began to teach.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

¹³"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

¹⁴"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

The Fulfillment of the Law

¹⁷"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

¹⁸I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

¹⁹Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

²⁰For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

²¹"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'

²²But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca, ' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

²³"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you,

²⁴leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵"Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison.

²⁶I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Adultery

²⁷"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.'

²⁸But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Divorce

³¹"It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'

³²But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery.

³³"Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.'

Oaths

³⁴But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne;

³⁵or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.

³⁶And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

³⁷Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Eye for Eye

³⁸"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'

³⁹But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.

⁴¹If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

⁴²Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Love For Enemies

⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

⁴⁴But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

⁴⁵that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?

⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Chapter 6 Giving to the Needy

"Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

²"So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

³But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

⁴so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

⁵"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹"This, then, is how you should pray: " 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us today our daily bread.

¹²Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. '

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Fasting

¹⁶"When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

¹⁷But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,

¹⁸so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Treasures in Heaven

¹⁹"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²²"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.

²³But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Do Not Worry

²⁵"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?

²⁶Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

²⁷Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life ?

²⁸"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

²⁹Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

³⁰If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

³¹So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

³²For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

³⁴Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Chapter 7 Judging Others

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

²For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

⁴How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?

⁵You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

⁶"Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

⁷"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

⁸For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

¹¹If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

¹²So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

The Narrow and Wide Gates

¹³"Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it.

¹⁴But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

True and False Prophets

¹⁵"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

¹⁶By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

¹⁷Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

²⁰Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

True and False Disciples

²¹"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?'

²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

The Wise and Foolish Builders

²⁴"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

²⁸When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching,

²⁹because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

Thank you again for listening. I hope that you have enjoyed the commentary on the Sermon on the Mount and understand it better than you previously did. In the next episode we will go into Matthew Chapter 8 where Jesus goes out into the world, performing miracles that prove that he is a teacher who comes from God, and the great healer of a world who needs him. I'm Juliet Mee, and this is Working With The Voice.