

The Gospel of Christ: Selections from “The Sermon on the Mount,” from the *Gospel of Matthew*, ca. 90 CE. Translation: New International Version (NIV)

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

⁵ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

- ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
¹⁰ Blessed 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. ¹² Rejoice 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 underfoot.
¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither 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. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify 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. ¹⁸ For truly I tell you, 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. ¹⁹ Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly 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. ²⁰ For 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, ‘You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ ²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’^a is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

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²⁵ “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

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Eye for Eye

³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. ⁴² Give 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.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children 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. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Giving to the Needy

6 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others 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 others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

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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 than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look 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? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow.

^a An Aramaic term for contempt. Aramaic is the language spoken by Jesus and his followers while Greek would have been the language used by Matthew to later write the source.

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³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Judging Others

⁷ "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For 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? ⁴ How 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? ⁵ You 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 turn and tear you to pieces.

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²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

The Dharma of the Buddha: Selections from the <i>Dhammapada</i> as recorded by Buddhaghosa, circa 5 th century CE. Translation: Acharya Buddharakkhita.
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I. The Pairs

³ "He abused me, he struck me, he overpowered me, he robbed me." Those who harbor such thoughts do not still their hatred. ⁴ "He abused me, he struck me, he overpowered me, he robbed me." Those who harbor such thoughts do not still their hatred. ⁵ Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is a law eternal.

...

¹⁹ Much though he recites the sacred texts, but acts not accordingly, that heedless man is like a cowherd who only counts the cows of others — he does not partake of the blessings of the holy life. ²⁰ Little though he recites the sacred texts, but puts the Teaching into practice, forsaking lust, hatred, and delusion, with true wisdom and emancipated mind, clinging to nothing of this or any other world — he indeed partakes of the blessings of a holy life.

III. The Mind

⁴² Whatever harm an enemy may do to an enemy, or a hater to a hater, an ill-directed mind inflicts on oneself a greater harm. ⁴³ Neither mother, father, nor any other relative can do one greater good than one's own well-directed mind.

V. The Fool

⁶²The fool worries, thinking, "I have sons, I have wealth." Indeed, when he himself is not his own, whence are sons, whence is wealth? ⁶³A fool who knows his foolishness is wise at least to that extent, but a fool who thinks himself wise is a fool indeed. ⁶⁴Though all his life a fool associates with a wise man, he no more comprehends the Truth than a spoon tastes the flavor of the soup.

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⁷³The fool seeks undeserved reputation, precedence among monks, authority over monasteries, and honor among householders. ⁷⁴"Let both laymen and monks think that it was done by me. In every work, great and small, let them follow me" — such is the ambition of the fool; thus his desire and pride increase. ⁷⁵One is the quest for worldly gain, and quite another is the path to Nibbana.^b Clearly understanding this, let not the monk, the disciple of the Buddha, be carried away by worldly acclaim, but develop detachment instead.

X. Violence

¹²⁹All tremble at violence; all fear death. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill. ¹³⁰All tremble at violence; life is dear to all. Putting oneself in the place of another, one should not kill nor cause another to kill. ¹³¹One who, while himself seeking happiness, oppresses with violence other beings who also desire happiness, will not attain happiness hereafter. ¹³²One who, while himself seeking happiness, does not oppress with violence other beings who also desire happiness, will find happiness hereafter. ¹³³Speak not harshly to anyone, for those thus spoken to might retort. Indeed, angry speech hurts, and retaliation may overtake you. ¹³⁴If, like a broken gong, you silence yourself, you have approached Nibbana, for vindictiveness is no longer in you.

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¹³⁸⁻¹⁴⁰Sharp pain, or disaster, bodily injury, serious illness, or derangement of mind, trouble from the government, or grave charges, loss of relatives, or loss of wealth, or houses destroyed by ravaging fire; upon dissolution of the body that ignorant man is born in hell. ¹⁴¹Neither going about naked, nor matted locks, nor filth, nor fasting, nor lying on the ground, nor smearing oneself with ashes and dust, nor sitting on the heels (in penance) can purify a mortal who has not overcome doubt.

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¹⁴⁴Like a thoroughbred horse touched by the whip, be strenuous, be filled with spiritual yearning. By faith and moral purity, by effort and meditation, by investigation of the truth, by being rich in knowledge and virtue, and by being mindful, destroy this unlimited suffering. ¹⁴⁵Irrigators regulate the waters, fletchers straighten arrow shafts, carpenters shape wood, and the good control themselves.

XIV. The Buddha

¹⁸³To avoid all evil, to cultivate good, and to cleanse one's mind — this is the teaching of the Buddhas.

¹⁸⁴Enduring patience is the highest austerity. "Nibbana is supreme," say the Buddhas. He is not a true monk who harms another, nor a true renunciate who oppresses others. ¹⁸⁵Not despising, not harming, restraint according to the code of monastic discipline, moderation in food, dwelling in solitude, devotion to meditation — this is the teaching of the Buddhas.

^b A spelling, common in the *Pali Canon* (the main collection of holy texts in Theravada Buddhism) which equates to the more commonly known concept of Nirvana, or a liberation from the cycle of reincarnation.