

Mike Lewis

Background

July 31 Mike <i>But <u>!</u> say . . .</i>	Subject	Matt	Mark	Luke	John
	Sermon on the Mount (4)	5: 21 - 48			

Preparation: Read Matt 5: 1-48 with a focus on 21-48; 7: 28-29; 21:23-27;
 Also note Ex 20: 12-17; Deut 19: 15-21; Job 29:1; 31 1-12; Deut 24: 1-4; Lev 19:12; Num 30; Deut 17: 7-11; Lev 19:18; 19:2 and Romans 7 - 8.

Questions for discussion

1. What do you notice about the changes in the pronoun as you read through chapter 5? What significance might this have?
2. Are Lev 19:2 (“You shall be sacred / holy, for I the Lord you God am sacred / holy”) and Matt 5:48 (“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”) saying the same thing? If not, what are the differences?
3. Commandments 5-10 promote Honouring Parents and then forbid Murder, Adultery, Theft, False Witness and Covetousness. Despite Jesus stating he was not “abolishing the law”, why do you think he makes no mention of no’s 5, 8, 9 and 10? Why might he have focused only on no’s 3, 6 and 7?
4. Being realistic and practical, how **do** (note, not ‘how **should**’) You/ I / We deal with Matthew 5: 22, 28 – 30, 39-42 and 44. Where does one draw the line between admiring the well-honed body of a Tokyo Olympic Swimmer and breaking the 7th and/or 10th commandment? If one finds oneself on the wrong side of that line, what can / should one do about it?
5. How do think Jesus’ audience reacted when they heard him say “therefore be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect”? What is your reaction to this statement?
6. It seems likely that Matthew’s gospel and Paul’s letter to the Romans would have been written within a decade or so of each other. My gut feeling is that Matthew didn’t know Paul’s letter to the Romans. Paul, however, might well have known Matthew’s gospel. Would a knowledge of Romans 7:1 – 8:17 (esp 7:15 – 8:2) have helped or confused Jesus’ audience sitting on the grass in the province of Galilee on hearing Jesus say “Hey you lot, you gotta be perfect!”?
7. How can we possibly get through all this in just 90 minutes ???