

Overwhelmed by Jesus

Matthew 5-7: Review Part 1

Main Idea

The righteousness Jesus requires is the righteousness Jesus provides.

Overview

- **A Major Theme in the Sermon on the Mount is Righteousness**
 - Over and over again Jesus talks about righteousness; this is the idea of being pure and blameless and upright and justified and finding favor in God's sight.
 - Matthew 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33
 - Righteousness has at least two aspect:
 - First there's the position/kind of righteousness, our legal standing before God,
 - This leads to the practice/degree of righteousness, a certain type of behavior because we belong to the family of God.
- **The Righteousness Jesus Requires is Overwhelming**
 - 6 times in Matthew 5 Jesus says, "You have heard it was said, but I say to you..."
 - Jesus is focusing not just on our actions, but heart level motivations
 - It's not enough to refrain from murder or adultery, but we must not get sinfully angry or have lust in our hearts
 - It's not enough to simply say truthful words in a technical way; our character must be one of integrity
 - It's not enough to not payback those who wrong us, but we must love and serve and pray for them
 - Jesus focuses on our religious hypocrisy (6:1-18), sinfully divided hearts (6:19-34) and condemningly judging others not treating them as we'd like to be treat (7:1-12)
 - In fact, Jesus says we must be perfect God is perfect (Mt. 5:48)
- **The Righteousness Jesus Provides is Overwhelming**
 - The Sermon on the Mount is not about us; like all of Scripture it's about Jesus (Mt. 5:17)
 - Jesus exposes the darkness in our hearts so that his grace might shine that much brighter
 - What Jesus requires, Jesus provides; Jesus is not only tough, he's tender. He's uncompromising, but he's compassionate.
 - Jesus is not just the preacher, but the point of the Sermon on the Mount; he fulfilled every command perfectly
 - Jesus fulfills where we fail;
 - He forgives sin when we forsake it;
 - He perfectly observed the law and has mercy on lawbreakers;
 - He was defiled that he might identify with our dirtiness and deliver us from it.
 - He was stripped of his clothes that we might be covered in his righteousness.
 - Jesus is preaching to those who "ARE" his disciples
 - "Blessed are..." not "Blessed if..."
 - Jesus is declaring what's true about those who trust in him
 - He starts with "Blessed are the poor in Spirit" because he knows what he calls us to is beyond what we can do by ourselves; we must rely upon Jesus

Questions

Discussion Starter: *Why do you think the pursuit of perfection results in pride/self-righteousness for some and shame/despair for others?*

1. Read Matthew 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33. What do we learn about righteousness from these verses?
2. In Matthew 5:20, what does Jesus mean when he says our righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees?
3. Why is it important to understand the various aspects of righteousness (i.e. righteousness is a position and a practice)? What's the danger in focusing on one verses the other? How do we have an appropriate focus?
4. Read Matthew 5:21-6:1. Why does Jesus give us the "But I say to you" statements and the warning of "Beware of practicing our righteousness before other people to be seen"?
5. How does the righteousness Jesus requires overwhelm you? Why is it loving for Jesus to overwhelm us by saying we "must be perfect"?
6. In Matthew 5:17, Jesus says he came to fulfill the Law. How does the Sermon on the Mount point to Jesus? How does this humble the self-righteous? How does this give hope to the ashamed?
7. What's the connection between understanding the righteousness Jesus requires and the righteousness Jesus provides in relation to our worship?
8. Why is it important to remember Jesus starts with the Beatitudes, specifically "Blessed are the poor in spirit"?