Research: Sermon on the Mount verses

There are two places in Scripture that record the Sermon on the Mount, one in Matthew 5-7 and the other in Luke 6:17-49. The preaching tours of Jesus included giving this sermon or portions of it all over Palestine to different audiences.

“The great interest of the sermon is that it is a more or less full revelation of Christ’s own character, a kind of autobiography. Every syllable of it he had already written down in deeds; He had only to translate His life into language” (Dummelow 637).

Mrs. Eddy had a very high regard for every word the Master uttered and especially for the Sermon on the Mount. She writes:

My 190:13 Christians who accept our Master as authority, regard his sayings as infallible.

271:22 The Sermon on the Mount is the essence of this Science, and the eternal life, not the death of Jesus, is its outcome.

‘01 11:16-19 To my sense the Sermon on the Mount, read each Sunday without comment and obeyed throughout the week, would be enough for Christian practice.

Notice how all the beatitudes are really spiritual equations. There is a requirement or rule on one side and a promise on the other. If Jesus is teaching us how to be Godlike through the Sermon on the Mount, how to have the mind of Christ, then these qualities of thought are extremely important.

Matt 5:8, 17, 20-22, 27, 28

8Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

24:4 Acquaintance with the original texts, and willingness to give up human beliefs (established by hierarchies, and instigated sometimes by the worst passions of men), open the way for Christian Science to be understood, and make the Bible the chart of life, where the buoys and healing currents of Truth are pointed out.

The original texts in the New Testament were written in the Greek language, and the Old Testament were written in Hebrew. Mrs. Eddy says looking up words in their original language “opens the way for Christian Science to be understood and makes the Bible the chart of life....”

Some of the foundational Greek words in the beatitudes are:

**“Blessed”** is *makarios*: “to be fully satisfied; one who is in the world yet independent of the world; whose satisfaction comes from God and not from favorable circumstances” (Hebrew-Greek Key 1735).

“Blessedness is higher than happiness. Happiness comes from without, and is dependent on circumstances; blessedness is an inward fountain of joy in the soul itself, which no outward circumstances can seriously affect. Blessedness consists in standing in a right relation to God, and so realizing the true law of a man’s being” (Dummelow 639).

The heart stands for a man’s inner most soul, his motives, principles, the center of the inner life, the source of thought. Complete purity of inward thought and desire is required because God looks upon the heart. There can be no mixture of any other substance, no adulteration, no self-seeking, no lust. All our aspirations are to be noble and pure.

*Pure in hea*rt can also mean single-minded, clean and free from pollution and guilt of sin, something that has been cleansed by shaking to and fro as in a sieve or fan. This is transformation at the deepest level of our being, always between God and us, with no other person part of it.

“A man's heart is pure when it loves only the good, when all its motives are right, and when all its aspirations are after the noble and true. Purity here is not synonymous with chastity, but includes it.

“**See God**] Just as the liar does not understand truthfulness, and does not recognize it when he encounters it, so the unholy person does not understand sanctity, and cannot understand the all-holy God” (Dumalelo).

To see God:

Is to discern, to understand. The promise is from Genesis to Revelation to see “God face to face.” To discover our spiritual nature as God’s image and likeness. The impure cannot see or understand the all-holy God. In proportion to our purity are our hearts clean, and we will see God, face to face.

17¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

“Think not that I am come ... - Our Savior was just entering on his work. It was important for him to state what he came to do. By his setting up to be a teacher in opposition to the scribes and Pharisees, some might charge him with an intention to destroy their law, and to abolish the customs of the nation. He therefore told them that he did not come for that end, but really to fulfill or accomplish what was in the law and the prophets.

“To destroy - To abrogate; to deny their divine authority; to set people free from the obligation to obey them. "The law." The five books of Moses called the law.

“The Prophets - The books which the prophets wrote. These two divisions here seem to comprehend the Old Testament, and Jesus says that he came not to do away or destroy the authority of the Old Testament.

“But to fulfil - To complete the design; to fill up what was predicted; to accomplish what was intended in them. The word "fulfill" also means sometimes "to teach" or "to inculcate," [Colossians 1:25](http://biblehub.com/colossians/1-25.htm). The law of Moses contained many sacrifices and rites which were designed to shadow forth the Messiah. These were fulfilled when he came and offered himself a sacrifice to God,

“The prophets contained many predictions respecting his coming and death. These were all to be fulfilled and fully accomplished by his life and his sufferings” (Barnes’ Notes).

“Think not that I am come—that I came.

“to destroy the law, or the prophets—that is, "the authority and principles of the Old Testament” (Jamieson-Faussett-Brown).

20For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

“For I say unto you, ... These words are directed, not to the true disciples of Christ in general, or to his apostles in particular, but to the whole multitude of the people; who had in great esteem and admiration the Scribes and Pharisees, for their seeming righteousness and holiness; concerning which Christ says,

“that except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. He mentions the Scribes, because they were the more learned part of the people, who were employed in writing out, and expounding the law; and the Pharisees, because they were the strictest sect among the Jews for outward religion and righteousness; and yet, it seems, their righteousness was very defective; it lay only in an external observance of the law; did not arise from a purified heart, or the principles of grace; nor was it performed sincerely, and with a view to the glory of God; but for their own applause, and in order to obtain eternal life: besides, they neglected the weightier matters of the law, and contented themselves with the lesser ones; and as they were deficient in their practice, so they were very lax in their doctrines, as appears from the foregoing verse. Wherefore Christ informs his hearers, that they must have a better righteousness than these men had, if ever they expected to enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible).

“The righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Their righteousness consisted in outward observances of the ceremonial and traditional law. They offered sacrifices, fasted often. prayed much, were punctilious about ablutions, and tithes, and the ceremonies of religion, but neglected justice, truth, purity, and holiness of heart. The righteousness that Jesus required in his kingdom was purity, chastity, honesty, temperance, the fear of God, and the love of man. It is pure, eternal, reaching the motives, and making the life holy” (Barnes’ Notes).

21¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

“The Jewish teachers had taught, that nothing except actual murder was forbidden by the sixth commandment. Thus they explained away its spiritual meaning. Christ showed the full meaning of this commandment; according to which we must be judged hereafter, and therefore ought to be ruled now. All rash anger is heart murder. By our brother, here, we are to understand any person, though ever so much below us, for we are all made of one blood. Raca, is a scornful word, and comes from pride: Thou fool, is a spiteful word, and comes from hatred. Malicious slanders and censures are poison that kills secretly and slowly. Christ told them that how light so ever they made of these sins, they would certainly be called into judgment for them” (Matthew Henry’s Commentary).

“By them of old time - This might be translated to the ancients, referring to Moses and the prophets. But it is more probable that Jesus here refers to the interpreters of the law and the prophets. He did not set himself against the law of Moses, but against the false and pernicious interpretations of the law prevalent in his time.

“Thou shalt not kill. This properly denotes taking the life of another with malice, or with an intention to murder him. The Jews understood it as meaning no more. The comment of our Savior shows that it was spiritual, and was designed to extend to the thoughts and feelings as well as the external act” (Barnes’ Notes).

“Christ now shows by a few illustrative examples how the Law is to be understood and practiced by His disciples; in other words, how it is to be 'fulfilled.' The old law punished only the act of murder. The Law of Christ condemns the emotion of anger in its very beginnings. Unreasonable anger is declared a crime in itself, to be punished as such by the local tribunal (**the judgment**).

22But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

“Its mildest expression is in the word (**Raca**) and is to be considered a capital offence, to be dealt with by the supreme Sanhédrin (**the council**). Its more abusive expression (**thou fool**) is worthy of hell-fire. Murder itself is not mentioned as being an impossible act for a disciple of Christ. The language is, of course, rhetorical. Its intention is to mark the immense gulf that separates the morality of the Law from the morality of the Gospel.

“He therefore spoke here and elsewhere as having authority, and not as the scribes. It may be added here that no mere man ever spake as Jesus did, when explaining or enforcing the law.

“What he condemns here is anger without a cause; that is, unjustly, rashly, hastily, where no offence has been given or intended. In that case it is evil; and it is a violation of the sixth commandment, because "he that hateth his brother, is a murderer," [1 John 3:15](http://biblehub.com/1_john/3-15.htm). He has a feeling which would lead him to commit murder, if it were fully acted out. The word "brother" here refers not merely to one to whom we are nearly related, having the same parent or parents, as the word is commonly used, but includes also a neighbor, or perhaps anyone with whom we may be associated. As all people are descended from one Father and are all the creatures of the same God, so they are all brethren: and so every man should be regarded and treated as a brother.

“Raca - This is a Syriac word, expressive of great contempt. It comes from a verb signifying to be empty, vain; and hence, as a word of contempt, denotes senseless, stupid, shallow-brains. Jesus teaches here that to use such words is a violation of the spirit of the sixth commandment, and if indulged, may lead to a more open and dreadful infraction of that law. Children should learn that to use such words is highly offensive to God, for we must give an account for every idle word which we speak in the day of judgment, [Matthew 12:36](http://biblehub.com/matthew/12-36.htm).

“In danger of the council - The word translated "council" is in the original Sanhedrin, and there can be no doubt that the Savior refers to the Jewish tribunal of that name. This was instituted in the time of the Maccabees, probably about 200 years before Christ. It was composed of 72 judges: the high priest was the president of this tribunal.

“Thou fool - This term expressed more than want of wisdom. It was expressive of the highest guilt. It had been commonly used to denote those who were idolaters [Deuteronomy 22:21](http://biblehub.com/deuteronomy/22-21.htm), and also one who is guilty of great crimes,

“After the return of the Jews from captivity, this place was held in such abhorrence that, by the example of Josiah [2 Kings 23:10](http://biblehub.com/2_kings/23-10.htm), it was made the place where to throw all the dead carcasses and filth of the city, and was not unfrequently the place of public executions. It became, therefore, extremely offensive; the sight was terrific; the air was polluted and pestilential; and to preserve it in any manner pure, it was necessary to keep fires continually burning there. The extreme loathsomeness of the place; the filth and putrefaction; the corruption of the atmosphere, and the lurid fires blazing by day and night, made it one of the most appalling and terrific objects with which a Jew was acquainted. It was called the gehenna of fire, and was the image which our Saviour often employed to denote the future punishment of the wicked. (Barnes’ Notes).

27¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Our Savior in these verses explains the seventh commandment. It is probable that the Pharisees had explained this commandment, as they had the sixth, as extending only to the external act; and that they regarded evil thoughts and a wanton imagination as of little consequence, or as not forbidden by the law. Our Savior assures them that the commandment did not regard the external act merely, but the secrets of the heart, and the movements of the eye. He declares that they who indulge a wanton desire, that they who look on a woman to increase their lust, have already, in the sight of God, violated the commandment, and committed adultery in the heart” (Barnes’ Notes).

28But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Our Savior assures them that the commandment did not regard the external act merely, but the secrets of the heart, and the movements of the eye. He declares that they who indulge a wanton desire, that they who look on a woman to increase their lust, have already, in the sight of God, violated the commandment, and committed adultery in the heart” (Barnes’ Notes).

“Jesus expands the Mosaic prohibition of adultery into a law of inward purity of the strictest kind, and gives important counsel to the tempted” (Dummelow).