

LESSON 9
“Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God”
Matthew 6-7

OVERVIEW:

Sermon on the Mount- continued. ”What can I do for you?” If we would take advantage of the gospel and its teachings, we must turn the focus of our lives away from ourselves. How to get your calling and election: Forget yourself right into it.

SCRIPTURES:

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO
ST MATTHEW
CHAPTER 6

Jesus continues the Sermon on the Mount—He teaches the disciples the Lord’s Prayer—They are commanded to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. 3 Nephi 13. The Book of Mormon is most like the KJV.

1 (And it came to pass that, as Jesus taught his disciples, he said unto them,) ^aTAKE heed that ye do not your ^balms (Gr righteousness, acts of religious devotion) before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father ~~which~~ (who) is in heaven. 1 ^aVERILY, verily, I say that I would that ye should do alms unto the poor; but take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven.

2 Therefore when thou doest ~~thine~~ alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the ^ahypocrites (Gr pretenders; the Greek word means a play actor, or one who feigns, represents dramatically, or exaggerates a part) (actor, mask of religious life, role playing but not genuine) do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have ^bglory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. (We only get paid once for giving alms, or fasting, or praying.) 2 Therefore, when ye shall do your alms do not sound a trumpet before you, as will hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have ^aglory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let ~~not thy left hand know~~ (it be unto thee as thy left hand not knowing) what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine ^aalms may be in secret: and thy Father ~~which~~ (who) seeth in secret himself shall ^breward thee openly. (According to Jewish custom: “To give one tenth of one’s wealth to charity is considered to be a middling virtue, to give a 20th or less is to be mean; but the rabbis decided that one should not give more than a fifth lest he become impoverished himself and dependent on charity.” Encyclopedia Judaica, Jr.)

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the ^ahypocrites ~~are~~: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. (For) Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy ^acloset, (our prayers should generally be private) and when thou hast ^bshut thy (the) door, ^cpray to thy Father ~~which~~ (who) is in ^dsecret; and thy Father ~~which~~ (who) ^eseeth in secret shall ^freward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain ^arepetitions, as the ^bheathen (hypocrites) do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. (The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one converses with another.” TPJS, p. 345. No deed motivated by self-enhancement is acceptable to the

Lord, for it does not have the power to enlarge the soul. Looking good and being important is a full-time job, draining our energies for other concerns like serving God and our fellows. Only deeds motivated by an eye single to God can fill our souls with light to overflowing. Maurine Jensen Procter, Meridian Magazine, Lesson 9, p.1)

8 ~~Be not ye therefore~~ (Therefore be ye not) like unto them: for your Father ^aknoweth what things ye have ^bneed of, before ye ask him. (Our purpose in prayer is not to get his attention, but for him to get ours. It is the process of prayer that gets us ready to hear his answers.)

9 (Therefore) ^aAfter this manner (It is in this way that you ought to pray) ~~therefore~~ ^bpray ye (shall ye pray, saying): Our ^cFather ~~which~~ (who) art in heaven, ^dHallowed (Let thy name be sanctified) (reverential) be thy ^ename. (According to Elder Talmage: "This is the earliest Biblical scripture giving instruction, permission, or warrant, for addressing God directly as "Our Father." Therein is expressed the reconciliation which the human family, estranged through sin, may attain by the means provided through the well beloved Son. This instruction is equally definite in demonstrating the brotherhood between Christ and humanity. As He prayed so pray we to the same Father, we as brethren and Christ as our Elder Brother." Jesus the Christ, p. 223)

10 Thy ^akingdom come. Thy ^bwill be done ^cin (on) earth, as *it is* (done) in heaven. 10 Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (God's will will be done, when His children choose, willingly, to obey Him.)

11 Give us this day our daily ^abread. (Not in the BofM.) (Talmage: "We are taught to pray day by day for the food we need, not for a great store to be laid by for the distant future. Israel in the desert received manna as a daily supply, and were kept in mind of their reliance upon Him who gave. The man with much finds it easier to forget his dependence than he who must ask with each succeeding day of need." Jesus the Christ, p. 224)

12 And forgive us our ^adebts, (trespasses) (Gr debts, offenses, faults, or sins) as we ^bforgive our debtors. (those who trespass against us.) (Talmage: "If others owe us, either in actual money or goods as suggested by debts and debtors, or though some infringement as a trespass, our mode of dealing with them will be taken into righteous account in the judgment of our own offenses." Jesus the Christ, p. 224)

13 ^aAnd ^blead (suffer) us not (to be led) into ^ctemptation, (Syriac: do not let us enter into temptation) ^dbut deliver us from evil: (Gr but protect us from the evil one) (Talmage: "The intent of the supplication appears to be that we be preserved from temptation beyond our weak powers to withstand; that we be not abandoned to temptation without the divine support that shall be as full a measure of protection as our exercise of choice will allow." Jesus the Christ, p. 225) For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the ^eglory, for (ever) and ever. Amen.

14 For if ye ^aforgive men their trespasses, (who trespass against you,) your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye ^aforgive not men their trespasses, neither will your (heavenly) Father forgive (you) your trespasses. (Ye ought to forgive one another; for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses standeth condemned before the Lord; for there remaineth in him the greater sin. D&C 64:1-14)

16 ¶ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to ^afast. Verily I say unto you, They ^bhave (Gr receive) their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou appear not unto men to ^afast, but unto thy Father ~~which~~ (who) is in secret: and thy Father, ~~which~~ (who) seeth in secret, shall ^breward thee openly. ("There is no limit to the good that you can do, if you don't care who gets the credit." Antoine Ivins, CR, April 1946, p. 42)

19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves ^atreasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves ^bbreak through (Gr dig through (as an earthen wall)) and steal:

20 But lay up for yourselves ^atreasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor ^bsteal: (President Charles W. Penrose said: "Oh my brethren and sisters, why waste your time, your talents, your means, your influence in following something that will

perish and pass away, when you could devote yourselves to a thing that will stand forever? For this Church and kingdom, to which you belong, will abide and continue in time, in eternity, while endless ages roll along, and you with it will become mightier and more powerful, while the things of this world will pass away and perish, and will not abide in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord our God.” CR, 1919, p. 36-37)

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. (What is your greatest treasure on earth? Your family.)

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine ^aeye be ^bsingle, (Gr healthy, sincere, without guile) (to the glory of God,) thy whole body shall be full of ^clight.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light ~~that~~ (which) is in thee be darkness, how great ~~is~~ (shall) that ^adarkness (be)!

24 ¶ ^aNo man can ^bserve two ^cmasters: for either he will ^dhate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and ^emammon. (Worldly goods, riches.)

25 (He turns to the 12 and the 70.) (And again, I say unto you, go ye into the world, and care not for the world; for the world will hate you, and will persecute you, and will turn you out of their synagogues. Nevertheless, ye shall go forth from house to house, teaching the people; and I will go before you. And your heavenly Father will provide for you, whatsoever things ye need for food, what ye shall eat; and for raiment, what ye shall wear or put on. ^aTherefore I say unto you, Take no ^bthought (Gr anxious concern)

(don't be anxious about – He invites us to sacrifice our anxiety over the many elements of our lives that are beyond our control.) for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? 25 **And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words he looked upon the ^atwelve whom he had chosen, and said unto them:** Remember the words which I have spoken. For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to ^bminister unto this people. Therefore I say unto you, ^ctake no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than ^draiment? (McConkie: “This portion of the Sermon on the Mount was delivered to the apostles and such of the disciples as were called to forsake their temporal pursuits and carry the message of salvation to the world. There is not now and never has been a call to the saints generally to “sell that ye have,” give alms to the poor, and then to take no thought for the temporal needs of the present or future... Those called into missionary service are to have no concern about business enterprises or temporal pursuits. They are to be free of the encumbering obligations that always attend those who manage temporal affairs. Their whole attention and all of their strength and talents are to be centered on the work of the ministry, and they have the Father’s promise that he will look after their daily needs.” DNTC, 1:243)

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? (How much more will he not feed you? Wherefore, take no thought for these things, but keep my commandments wherewith I have commanded you.)

27 (For) Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? ^aConsider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 ~~Wherefore~~ (Therefore), if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, ^a~~shall he not much more clothe you~~ (how much more will he not provide for you,) ~~Ye~~ (if ye are not) of little ^bfaith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 ~~For~~ (Why is it that ye murmur among yourselves, saying, We cannot obey thy word because ye have not all these things, and seek to excuse yourselves, saying that,) after all these things do the Gentiles

seek:). (Behold I say unto you that) ~~for~~ your heavenly Father ^aknoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 (Wherefore, seek not the things of this world) ^aBut ^bseek ye first (to build up) the ^ckingdom of God, and (to establish) his ^drighteousness; and all these ^ethings shall be ^fadded unto you. (This does not designate order in time – first seek God and then you can seek worldliness. It designates the complete focus of the soul; worldliness with its burdens is abandoned, and God’s way embraced.)

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take ^athought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day ~~is~~-(shall be) the evil thereof.

CHAPTER 7

Jesus concludes the Sermon on the Mount—He commands: Judge not; ask of God; beware of false prophets—He promises salvation to those who do the will of the Father. 3 Nephi 14 – The Book of Mormon is most like the KJV.

1 (Now these are the words which Jesus taught his disciples that they should say unto the people.)

^aJUDGE not (unrighteously), that ye be not ^bjudged. (but judge righteous judgment.) 1 ^aAND now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words **he turned again to the multitude**, and did open his mouth unto them again, saying: Verily, verily, I say unto you, Judge not, that ye be not judged. (Condemn not – a final judgment.)

2 For with what ^ajudgment ye (shall) judge, ye shall be judged: and with what ^bmeasure ye mete, it shall be ^cmeasured to you again. (We will be judged according to our standard of judging others. **Moroni 7: 14** Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is ^aevil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil. 15 For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to ^ajudge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night. 16 For behold, the ^aSpirit of Christ is given to every ^bman, that he may ^cknow good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. 17 But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do ^aevil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him. 18 And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the ^alight by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same ^bjudgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged. **D&C 1:10** - Unto the ^aday when the Lord shall come to ^brecompense unto every man according to his ^cwork, and ^dmeasure to every man according to the measure which he has measured to his fellow man.)

3 ^aAnd (again, ye shall say unto them,) why (is it that thou) beholdest ~~thou~~ the ^bmote (Gr speck, chip or splinter) (a splinter, or a small dry twig or stalk, here used to mean a lesser fault as contrasted with a beam. The Greek word means a stick, chip or straw.) that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the ^cbeam (The Greek word refers to a wooden beam used in constructing houses) that is in thine own eye? (a roof-beam, a piece of timber so large that it holds up the whole house, here used to signify a grievous offense. DNTC, 1:246)

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, ~~behold~~, (canst not behold) a beam ~~is~~ in thine own eye? (And Jesus said unto his disciples, Behold thou the scribes, and the Pharisees, and the Priests, and the Levites? They teach in their synagogues, but do not observe the law, nor the commandments; and all have gone out of the way, and are under sin. Go thou and say unto them, Why teach ye men the law and the commandments, when ye yourselves are the children of corruption?)

5 ~~Thou~~ ^ahypocrite, (Say unto them, Ye hypocrites,) first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then

shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ ^aGive not (Go ye into the world, saying unto all, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come nigh unto you. And the mysteries of the kingdom (sacred teachings, covenants, temple ordinances) ye shall keep within yourselves; for it is not meet to give) that which is ^bholy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your ^cpearls before (unto) swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and (. For the world cannot receive that which ye, yourselves, are not able to bear; wherefore ye shall not give your pearls unto them, lest they) turn again and rend you. (Be led by the Spirit as you teach the Gospel to others. Missionary discussions are systematic but don't give everything, just the basics. After they have been baptized and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, then they can understand the deeper things pertaining to exaltation.)

7 ¶ (Say unto them, Ask of God;) ^aAsk, and it shall be ^bgiven you; ^cseek, and ye shall find; ^dknock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that ^aseeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 (And then said his disciples unto him, they will say unto us, We ourselves are righteous, and need not that any man should teach us. God, we know, heard Moses and some of the prophets; but as he will not hear, and they will say, We have the law for our salvation, and that is sufficient for us. Then Jesus answered, and said unto his disciples, thus shall ye say unto them, What man among you, having a son, and he shall be standing out, and shall say Father, open thy house that I may come in and sup with thee, will not say, Come in, my son; for mine is thine, and thine is mine?) Or what man is there of (among) you, whom if his son ask ^abread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then, ^abeing evil, (Gr although you are wicked) know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father ~~which~~ (who) is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? (God is an abundant giver. Luke 6:38 - 38 ^aGive, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same ^bmeasure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.)

12 Therefore all things ^awhatsoever ye would that ^bmen should ^cdo to you, ^ddo ye even so to them: for this is the ^elaw and the prophets. (“The golden rule is treating others not only as we would be treated, but as the Father himself would treat them. If we assume that our desire always correspond to the desires of others, we have simply used a mechanical form of the Golden Rule to avoid empathy, instead of using empathy as a necessary step in understanding others' special needs. Everyone has the deepest desire to be understood on his own level. Reaching out to envision another's situation is the first step in applying the Golden Rule. This means giving serious attention and committed listening – thinking beyond your own sex, beyond your own age group, beyond your geographical area, beyond your family and social background, and even beyond your religious views... So Jesus asks you to treat others righteously before you can expect them to do the same. In other words, take the first responsibility and set the example for the way others should treat you.” Richard Lloyd Anderson, Guide to the Life of Christ, p. 46)

13 ¶ (Repent, therefore, and) Enter ye in at the ^astrait (narrow) ^bgate (baptism): for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to ^cdestruction, (McConkie: “The destruction of the soul consists in the inheritance of spiritual death in hell and not in the annihilation of the spirit. There is no such thing in all the economy of God as a soul or spirit ceasing to exist as such.” MD, 178) and many there be ~~which~~ (who) go in thereat:

14 Because ^astrait *is* the ^bgate, and narrow *is* the way, ~~which~~ (that) leadeth unto ^clife, and few there be that find it. (Exaltation)

15 ¶ (And, again,) Beware of ^afalse prophets, (there will be true prophets among you) ~~which~~ (who) come to you in ^bsheep's clothing, but ^cinwardly they are ravening ^dwolves. (These are commanded to judge carefully.)

16 Ye shall ^aknow (Gr recognize, detect) them by their ^bfruits. (For) Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth ^agood ^bfruit; (The Greek wording carries the meaning of beautiful, precious fruit without blemish) but a ^ccorrupt (Gr decayed, rotten, stale) tree bringeth forth ^devil (Gr bad, spoiled, degenerate) fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good ^afruit is ^bhewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their ^afruits ye shall know them. (McConkie: “Nothing more than the testimony of Jesus is needed to make a person a prophet; and if this revealed knowledge has not been received, a person is not a prophet, no matter how many other talents or gifts he may have. But when a person has received revelation from the Spirit certifying to the divinity of Christ, he is then in a position to press forward in righteousness and gain other revelations including those which foretell future events. On this basis, should the necessity arise, those who are prophets are in a position where they could prophesy of all things...The mission of the prophets is not alone to foretell the future. Even more important is the witness they bear to the living of the divinity of Christ, the teachings they give of the plan of salvation, and the ordinances which they perform for their fellowmen. **All of the great prophets are possessors of the Melchizedek Priesthood; (This includes John the Baptist.)** as legal administrators some have possessed keys enabling them to administer the fullness of gospel ordinances.” MD, p. 544-547 The Prophet Joseph Smith said: “Any man who says he is a teacher or preacher of righteousness, and denies the spirit of prophecy, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; and by this key false teachers and imposters may be detected. TPJS, p. 269)

21 ¶ (Verily I say unto you, it is) Not every one that ^asaith unto me, ^bLord, Lord, (that) shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that ^cdoeth the ^dwill of my Father ~~which~~ (who) is in ^eheaven. (For the day soon cometh, that men shall come before me to judgment, to be judged according to their works.)

22 (And) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not ^aprophesied in thy name? and in thy ^bname have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? (McConkie: These are false ministers and, “Those of the elders of Israel who are true ministers and prophets; who have been on missions for the Church, for instance; who have healed the sick and performed great miracles; but who did not magnify their callings all their lives and thereby endure in righteousness to the end. DNTC 1:255 John Taylor said: “You say, that means the outsiders. No, it does not. Do they do many wonderful works in the name of Jesus? This means you, Latter-day Saints, who heal the sick, cast out devils...that become careless...yet they think they are going...into the Kingdom of God. But I tell you, unless they are righteous and keep their covenants they will never go there.” Journal of Discourses 20:120)

23 And then will I (say) ~~profess unto them, I never~~ ^aknew you (Ye never knew me) (not just being active, but knowing Jesus.): ^bdepart from me, ye that work ^ciniquity. (Gr lawlessness) (“Ye never knew me so fully as to be sealed up unto eternal life with your callings and elections made sure, and since you did not magnify your callings in the priesthood, you shall be cast out and be as though I never knew you.: DNTC 1:255)

24 ¶ Therefore whosoever ^aheareth these sayings of mine, and ^bdoeth them, ^cI will liken him (Gr he will resemble) unto a ^dwise man, ~~which~~ (who) ^ebuilt his house upon ^fa rock: (Gr the rock)

25 And the ^arain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and ^bbeat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a ^crock. (Those that are inwardly righteous, cannot fall. “Keep the commandments so as to be able to withstand the trials and tests that are ahead.” MM 2:171)

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a ^afoolish man, ~~which~~ (who) built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that ^ahouse; and it ^bfell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended ^athese sayings (with his disciples), the people were ^bastonished at his ^cdoctrine:

29 For he taught them as *one* having ^aauthority, (from God,) and not as (having authority from) ^bthe scribes. (Gr their scribes)