

**Week Five:** March 14, 2018 – March 20, 2018



**HIS TEACHINGS** I am learning the teachings of Jesus.

While Jesus did not leave any writings, his teaching was captured by his early followers and has been faithfully transmitted down to our day in the Bible. While the rest of the Bible is not to be ignored when considering the teachings of Jesus, the gospels serve as a primary source for his teachings during the period of his earthly ministry.

Jesus' teachings are typically categorized by: where they were delivered, the style of teaching, or the subject matter. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) is one of the familiar examples of the first type. The Olivet Discourse (Matthew 23-25) is another. Stylistically Jesus' teaching ranged from that of a storyteller to an instructor.

Jesus did proclaim the new birth to Nicodemus but his message should not be limited in scope to that of the revivalists of the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century. His message was not only about how you can be saved and go to heaven although he did present himself as the way. Jesus' teaching included the proclamation of the kingdom and teaching relating to what that means for the world. Jesus teaching including preparing his followers for what was going to come in Jesus' death and resurrection and also the fact that Jesus will not always be with them. Jesus also taught his followers about his return.

Needless to say, this week will not exhaust the teachings of Jesus. It will however give us a little opportunity to reflect on this part of his ministry.



**HIS TEACHINGS** I am learning the teachings of Jesus.

The ENTIRE Bible contains the teachings of Jesus. During the days of Jesus' earthly sojourn he put his seal of approval on Scripture as the very Word of God. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is just as much the Author of Scripture as is the Father or the Spirit.

The teaching of Jesus is not only to be found in the words that he said. We are clearly told in John 1:14-18 that Jesus revealed the Father. What that means is that Jesus' actions and attitudes demonstrated throughout his life also taught us about the Father.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Mark 2:1-12

Matthew 19:13-15

**Let's Get Personal:**

Have you ever used Jesus' attitude and actions as a guide for your life? If you have worn a WWJD bracelet then the answer should probably be yes. What are some things that you wish you would have first asked, 'What Would Jesus Do.' Do you have some things that definitely worked out better because you chose to follow Jesus in this practical way? What are you going to do with the decisions before you this week?

## My Reflections

LISTEN – What did God say to me?

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TRUST – What do I have to believe in order to act on this?

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OBEY – What are some ways that I should act on this?

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Jesus' teaching often touched on the law of God. The occasion for this teaching was typically a result of the questioning of the Jewish leaders. While the questions were usually set as a trap, the outcome was that his hearers were amazed by his authority. A well-known example is the account of the woman caught in adultery. One of the things that you notice in this passage is that Jesus did not reject the law but was gracious in the application of the law. Jesus' teaching did not only inform but it regularly challenged the attitudes of his hearers.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

John 8:1-11

Matthew 5:17-18

**Let's Get Personal:**

Do you find yourself to be somewhat Pharisaical in your estimation of how the law should be applied to other people? What do you think has contributed to that? What do you think that means for you personally as you say of yourself that you are learning the teachings of Jesus?

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Jesus' teaching pointed to himself. This set Jesus apart from all the prophets of God who came before him. One of the prime illustrations of this is the series of "I Am" statements that John recorded. With one exception these are taken from the Gospel of John.

I Am He	John 4:1-26
I Am the Bread of Life	John 6:25-51
I Am the Light	John 8:12-30
I Am the Good Shepherd	John 10:1-21
I Am the Resurrection	John 11:1-27
I Am the Way Peace	John 14:1-14
I Am the True Vine	John 15:1-8
I Am the Alpha and Omega	Revelation 1:8; 22:12-16

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Matthew 11:25-27

John 1:14-18

Matthew 16:13-21

**Let's Get Personal:**

There is a considerable difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus. Think about how you came to know about Jesus. Are there people who introduced you to Jesus that you should thank? Think about the circumstances when you personally came to know Jesus. Take time this week to write out a brief testimony of how that occurred in your life. Tell someone else about it.

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Jesus was a master teacher who used things that were part of the experience of his audience to teach eternal truths. Other followers of Jesus have copied that style. Patrick, a missionary to Ireland, is remembered for using the three leaf clover for teaching about the trinity.

Jesus' teaching frequently included parables. We might think he was trying to be clear but when Jesus was asked why he taught in parables he suggested that they brought understanding to those who followed him but not to those who did not. (Matthew 13:10-17)

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Matthew 13:1-30

**Let's Get Personal:**

What are some ways that you have found that the teaching of Jesus has had a profound impact on how you live your life? Is there a particular teaching of Jesus that has guided your actions? Have you ever been surprised by people that just don't care to hear about what Jesus taught?

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Jesus said of himself that he did not come to abolish the Law or the prophets but to fulfill them (Matthew 5:17-18). While the fulfillment of which he speaks is a rich topic to be considered, it will be sufficient here to underscore that Jesus did not see his teaching as a replacement for the Old Testament. This is a corrective for those who believe that there is a major break between the teaching of Jesus and the teaching of the Old Testament.

The teaching of Jesus that argued against the law was aimed at the interpretation that the Jewish leaders had given the law. Therefore, Jesus' teaching provides a much richer understanding of the intention of the law and not only a repetition of the letter of the law.

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Matthew 5:17-48

**Let's Get Personal:**

Have you found following Jesus has given you a whole new respect for God's law? If it hasn't then you need to be careful about the teaching that you are listening to. What are some ways that you have experienced fulfillment of God's law instead of a rigid "keeping" of God's law in your own life?

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Jesus' teaching frequently spoke of the kingdom. We have looked at parables that are called parables of the kingdom. Yet, Jesus was clear that his kingdom is not of this world. In his temptation he did not yield to the temptation of an earthly kingdom and in his trial he told Pilate clearly that his kingdom is from another place. We have come to think of kingdom as a particular domain but the most important thing about the kingdom is that the king rules. As we come under the teaching of Jesus – the king – we in fact live as kingdom people.

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

John 19:1-16

**Let's Get Personal:**

Have you had any experiences of spiritual warfare? The victory in such warfare is found by fleeing to the king. Do you have some challenges going on in your life? Flee to the king. After all, he is the one of whom the Father himself said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" (Matthew 17:5)

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