

The Sermon On The Mount

Building For Eternity

Matt 6.19-23

[Matthew 6:19-23 ¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. ²² The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. ²³ But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!]

[There are five crowns and seven privileges revealed in the Bible that may be won or set up for one's self in heaven to come. There are other rewards that may be set up as well, but these crowns and privileges are clearly available.]

[The crowns include,]

- [The Incorruptible Crown won for mastering this Christian Life (1 Cor 9.25-27)]
- [The Crown of Life won for enduring persecution (Rev 2.10)]
- The Crown of Glory won for being an example for God's people (1 Pet 5.2-4)
- [The Crown of Righteousness won for loving and longing for Christ's appearing (2 Tim 4.8)]
- [The Crown of Rejoicing won for witnessing and win the lost to Christ (1 Thess 2.19-20)]

[The privileges are awarded to the overcomers and include,]

- [A privilege awarded for loving Christ's appearing (Rev 2.7)]
- [A privilege awarded for maintaining a sound witness (Rev 2.11)]
- [A privilege awarded for maintaining your integrity (Rev 2.17)]
- [A privilege awarded for keeping yourself spiritually pure (Rev 2.26-29)]
- [A privilege awarded for being faithful (Rev 3.5)]
- [A privilege awarded for cleaving to God's Word (Rev 3.12)]
- [A privilege awarded for holding a fervent and pure heart (Rev 3.21)]

[By building for eternity I am asking you, What have you done to work for these eternal rewards? Are you setting up your treasures and rewards in heaven? When thinking about these rewards, there aren't really all that many of them, but I thought maybe there is a simplified way to think about living our Christian life so that we can maximize our eternal rewards.]

[So, Just what must you really do to build toward eternity?]

If you will build toward eternity, you must,

- A. **Develop A Planned Discipline** [– By discipline I do not mean abrasive correction. Instead I am thinking about **training and conditioning**. Planned discipline deals with Mastering The Christian Life. In considering the eternal rewards listed with the crowns and privileges one discovers that there are at least **seven** out of these twelve rewards that are connected to your spiritual discipline. Therefore, you should become keenly aware of how important being spiritually disciplined is for you as a child of God. You absolutely must learn what it means to be a Christian and then train yourself to live accordingly.]

[In thinking about this planned discipline the first thing that comes to mind is that every Christian characteristic is connected to spiritual discipline and any kind of spiritual discipline is connected to a love for God and a love for others.]

[There are two important disciplines that must be worked into every child of God.]

1. **Be Disciplined In Your Desires (2 Cor 10.5-6; 2 Pet 2.7-8)** [– In thinking about our desires I am thinking about,]

- a. **[The way you think** – It seems in our day that Christians think more and more like the world. The way the world thinks about immorality and sensuality is very different than how God thinks about these same issues.]

[God is undeniably clear about,]

[Fornication – Fornication is sexual immorality and includes premarital sex, homosexuality, and any other obscene sexuality.]

[Adultery – Adultery is any kind of extra marital sexual activity and anything that leads up to it. Pornography, sensuality, and inappropriate relationships.]

[The question is, what do you think about those things that matter to God. Do you think more like the world or do you think like God. God has told us in the Bible that the way we think matters, it makes all of the difference in the world.]

[The bible reminds us,]

*[2 Corinthians 10:5-6⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, **and bringing into captivity every thought** to the obedience of Christ; ⁶ And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.]*

[Philippians 4:8⁸ Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.]

[The way you think matters and it is the starting point for everything else in your life. If you will prepare and build yourself for eternity then you must get the way you think under control and right with God.]

- b. **[The desires you have** – We all wrestle with our desires. Some people might say, “I really struggle with the way I think because of the things I want or desire.” Many feel that their desires control their thinking and that they cannot help what they are thinking about because of what they want.]

[Without any doubt our thinking is connected to our desires. But your thinking guides your heart or your desires. Think rightly about any issue and your desires will fall into place.]

- c. **[The Influences that affect you** - Those things you allow into your life. The television shows and movies you watch will influence your thinking. The music you listen to will influence your thinking. The people who are your friends will influence your thinking. The Word of God will influence your thinking. Now, movies, music, and people are a part of our lives. But are these things influencing you toward godliness, righteousness and morality, **or are they vexing your soul?**]

[What do I mean by vexing your souls?]

[2 Peter 2:7-8⁷ And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked:⁸ (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)]

[Vexed (vs 7) – καταπονούμενον (Gk) - contracted *kataponó̄*, fut. *kataponé̄sō*, from *katá* (2596), an intens., and *ponéō* (n.f.), to labor, which is from *pónos* (4192), pain, toil. **To wear out or down by labor.** In the pass. *kataponéomai*, to be vexed, weary, oppressed, afflicted (Acts 7:24; 2 Pet. 2:7).^{1[1]}]

[Vexed (vs 8) - ἐβασάνιζεν (Gk) - *basanísō*; from *básanos* (931), an examination by torture, torment. **To torture, afflict with pain, vex, harass** (2 Pet. 2:8); used metaphorically meaning to examine, scrutinize, either by words or physical torment (Rev. 9:5); vex physically with toil (Mark 6:48); of a vessel tossed by the waves (Matt. 14:24); spoken of disease (Matt. 8:6); of the pains of giving birth (Rev. 12:2); of punishment (Matt. 8:29; Mark 5:7; Luke 8:28; Rev. 11:10 [see also Rev. 11:6; 14:10; 20:10]).^{2[2]}]

^{1[1]}Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). *The complete word study dictionary : New Testament* (electronic ed.) (G2669). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

^{2[2]}ibid.

[This wicked world will wear at you day by day to tear you down and wear you out spiritually and morally. The influences that are around you will pick at your beliefs and the Word of God within you.]

[Now, will you be like Lot who willingly allowed the world to wear him down or will you be like Abraham who protected himself from the world and actually walked with God?]

- d. [**Vexed by Choice** – Lot was wore down or vexed because of his thinking and desires. He wanted and went after things that tore him away form God. Hence, we need to discipline ourselves or train ourselves to master this Christian life and establish the kind of love for God and righteousness that will lead us to set up at least seven eternal rewards in our heavenly home.]

2. **Be Disciplined In Your Decisions (Matt 7.15-20)** [– Your decisions direct your actions. Your decisions are linked to your desires. What you think about and the way you think about things direct those things that you decide to do. **Your decision are reflected in your actions.** What is it that you actually do? Jesus said,]

[Matthew 7:15-20 ¹⁵ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil 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 fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. ²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.]

[I am astounded by the number of young adults who were raised in good Bible believing Churches, who, upon reaching adulthood, leave home and walk away from their Church roots. Is it the Churches fault? No, the preachers and teachers taught their hearts out, and their hearts are torn out by the rejections of these young adults. Is it the parents fault? These parents are crying out for the apparent lostness of their children who have wandered from from their lovely Savior.]

[It is the evidence of their lacking personal discipline and faltering if not lacking relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Are they saved? Only they and God know? I will tell you this, parents don't defend their childhood profession of faith, you had better let God, His Word, and the preacher dig into the very depths of their souls or you may lose them for all eternity. One thing is absolutely certain, there is no discipline in their desires or decisions and that is a serious lack in their spiritual character.]

- B. **Display A Purposeful Discipleship** [– Purposeful discipleship will help you secure at least **five** eternal crowns and privileges. Discipleship is therefore incredibly important for your eternal standing in our Heavenly Home. By discipleship I am talking about at least two different things.]

1. **Evangelism (Matt 28.18-20; Jude 1.21-23)** [– Reaching out to the lost with the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. That we must be reaching out to the lost in our world is undeniable. The Bible records,

[Matthew 28:18-20¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.]

[Jude 1:21-23²¹ Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.²² And of some have compassion, making a difference:²³ And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.]

[There is no greater purpose for God's redeemed than knowing that they are left in this mortal world after their salvation to bring the wayward and lost to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.]

2. **Edification (Eph 4.8-16)** [– To edify means to build up. There are two type of edification Christians need to think about,]

- a. **[Personal Edification – You grow spiritually through,]**

- (1) **[The Church, The Body of Christ (Eph 4.11-12,14; cf. 1 Cor 12.12-27) -**

Don't allow yourself to just go to Church, but go to Church on purpose and with purpose. Determine that when you go to Church you are going to learn and grow. Pay attention on purpose and personally participate. **The Church must be,]**

- a) **[A Fortress For You (Eph 4.14) –** The Church must be a harbor of hope and rest and a fortress of strength and security for your life.]

- b) **[A Fellowship For You (Eph 4.15) –** If the Church is less than a fellowship for you then you must ask yourself why. The most likely reason will be that you have erected some hindrances within yourself.]

- (2) **[Christ, Meeting With God Personally –** Have a personal and purposeful God and I time. Holding a morning and evening meeting with God and do it with purpose and passion. Use a spiritual journal to help guide your heart and mind. Take persuasive responsibility for your time with God.]

- b. **[Purposeful Edification (Eph 4.16) –** As you grow personally, know also that God has put you in this life where you are to touch and be touched by others. Understand that you are and should nourish others through your friendship and fellowship.]

[Ephesians 4:16 ¹⁶ From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.]

[Christians must resist the tendency of minimizing the importance of the Church in their life, and more importantly their ministry within the Church. You have more to offer than you will admit.]

[Mentoring – Is modeled throughout the Bible is a dynamic contributor to edification. The most common example of effective mentoring is one-on-one discipleship.]

[Take seriously what you are doing for yourself and others through discipleship. There are at least five eternal rewards outlined in the Bible for those who will build for eternity through Discipleship]

C. Endure with Persistent Determination [- This deals with standing fast, overcoming, and enduring to the end. It refers to losing this life for Christ if necessary and gaining eternal glory through such sacrifice. There are at least four crowns and privileges associated with persistent determination. This unwavering determination is often known as,]

1. Persecution (Matt 5.10-12) [- Jesus said,]

[Matthew 5:10-12 ¹⁰ Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. ¹² Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.]

[Persecution takes on at least three forms. There is,

- a. [Reviling – this mockery and ridicule.]
- b. [Persecution – This is physical abuse.]
- c. [False Witness – Or the lies and gossip told about you.]

[Persecution is tough to handle and it is always the result of living a pure and honest life for Christ. If you are suffering for some wrong you have done, then you are not suffering persecution.]

[There are great rewards for those who endure while under the heavy hand of worldly persecution.]

2. Martyrdom (Matt 10.28-39) [- This is the extreme result of persecution. It is when one actually gives this mortal life for the cause of Christ. Many Christians have endured through martyrdom.]

[Matthew 10:28-39²⁸ And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.³⁰ But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.³¹ Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.³² Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.³³ But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.³⁴ Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.³⁵ For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.³⁶ And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.³⁷ He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.³⁸ And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.³⁹ He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.]

[Three things that will help you to build toward eternity.]

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