



## DEVOTIONAL WEEK #1 - INTRO

### Intro Question:

How do you feel about doing a series around tables at church as opposed to the traditional seating?

*"I CAN SAY WITH COMPLETE SELF-CONFIDENCE that we are subtle creatures capable of infinite modes of self-deception ... You learn who you are only by making yourself accountable to the judgment of others." Stanley Hauerwas*

Is this Sermon an actual sermon?

While the title in our Bibles says "Sermon on the Mount" to refer to Matthew 5-7 it's likely that all of these teachings were not given in one message on a hill. This amount of teaching from Jesus at one location in one sermon was not the norm for him. This would be a major overload for the disciples if it were to happen in one sitting. Many scholars believe the Sermon on the Mount is likely a compilation of Jesus' teachings from various occasions, rather than a single sermon delivered at one time. Matthew most likely collected and organized these teachings.

### Questions:

Would a long winded sermon like this hold your attention?

How do you feel when you find out about things like this in scripture? (what we read may not be literally what happened)

### VIDEO

Watch this video from ["The Chosen"](#) - Season 2, Episode 8 - Jesus Prepares for the Sermon on the Mount. (Stop video at 2:05)

This obviously is a retelling with some creative license of Jesus and Matthew preparing for Jesus' sermon. The video does a great job of showing us how radical and essential this message is. Jesus contrasts the current living situation of the world to the kingdom of heaven that he will call us toward in the sermon.

### Questions:

Do you think Jesus planned the sermon out as the video displays?

What does this video show us about the heart of Jesus toward humanity?

Why do we sometimes need to communicate hard truths (in a loving way)?

What do you think were the major issues then (biblical times), and now, that Jesus was concerned about?

The writers of “The Chosen” tell us that the sermon was something that would inspire a major shift, a revolution. Do you agree or disagree?

## CONTEXT

Matthew tells us in chapter 4 that Jesus had quite the following at this time in his ministry. Matthew 4:23-25 says,

***23 And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. 25 And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. Matthew 4:23-25***

Then chapter 5 begins by saying, ***“Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on the Mountain-side and sat down. His disciples came to him and he began to teach them.” Matthew 5:1-2***

This passage is similar to another part of scripture. Can you think of the passage? (Don't look below!)

Moses as he shared the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai is what most theologians refer to as the link. So Jesus is then referred to as the new Moses.

*“Throughout the biblical story, God instructs people in many ways, but two teachers—Moses and Jesus—become primary human instructors. Moses was the only one who experienced God face-to-face (Exod. 33:11), and Jesus is God himself in the flesh. In Matthew’s Sermon on the Mount, through Jesus, God shows up like a new Moses, arriving to rescue not only all of Israel but all of humanity.”*  
-The Bible Project

## Questions:

Do you think Jesus had planned this Sermon based on the crowds that were following him (as the video showed)?

How is Jesus similar to Moses? How is Jesus different than Moses?

What do we see in the sermon that shows Jesus connecting Israel’s story to this new interpretation?

## BIG PICTURE

In Matthew’s Gospel, we read,

***Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” Matthew 9:17***

Richard Rohr reflects on this passage in light of the Sermon on the Mount and says,

***“Jesus’ image is this: “I’m going to give you a new vision of the world that you will taste like new wine, but it isn’t going to make a bit of difference unless you have some new wineskins. If there are not new structure structures that reflect the new attitude, then even the attitude will be lost. Both container and contents must be renewed - or they both will be lost.”***

**Questions:**

What do you think Rohr is getting at in his reflection?

How is the Sermon on the Mount “a new vision of the world”?

How are you holding the new vision in your wineskin?