

Scripturalism *vs* Judaism VIII The Spiritual Message

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Let's bring out a couple of other Scriptures in the way of review that Christ would:

- magnify the Law
- complete it
- make it Holy
- fill it to the full
- bring the fullest meaning and ramification of the laws and commandments of God

I'm going to bring out some prophecies to show that what I brought in #7 (this series) was actually prophesied before it occurred.

Isaiah 42:21: "The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness sake..."

Jesus was totally perfect; His righteousness was the absolute perfection of righteousness in the flesh.

"...He will magnify the Law and make it glorious" (v 21).

Isa. 8:16 tells and prophesies that the Word of God would be finished by the disciples:

Isaiah 8:16: "Bind up the testimony... [that's what we have with the New Testament or the Covenant] ...seal the Law among My disciples." *That means to finish or complete the Law!*

When you stop and think of all that we have in the New Testament, and all that was said and all that was done and all that Christ preached, I wonder what those sermons were really like? Even John said that if everything were written that Jesus had done, the world could not contain the books that would be written. It really makes you wonder about some of these sermons.

The sermons I would really especially like to have heard would have been those sermons from the 40 days after the resurrection, when He really opened the disciples' minds to understand the Law and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Christ. But that would also have to concern everything about not only what He was and did, but what He was going to do. Here's the prophesy of it:

Verse 16: "Bind up the testimony, seal the Law among My disciples." *There's the prophecy that the New Testament would be completed by the disciples!*

Let's take a look at another Scripture that we have looked at and talked about, which we have

based quite a few sermons on, and that is how to understand the Bible. I think this will give us a little better understanding:

Isaiah 28:9: "Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? *Those* who are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts."

In other words, you're not to be a babe living on the milk of the Word. This is saying the way you're going to understand knowledge is to *grow up spiritually*. Here's how it's done:

Verse 10: "For precept *must be* upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; for with stammering lips and foreign tongue He will speak to this people" (vs 10-11).

I've mentioned in the past that I felt that this had to do with the New Testament would be preserved in Greek instead of Hebrew. I still think that is true. However, I think there's another meaning greater and beyond this, and that is that with the other tongue—or language—it's not just another language to write it in, because most of the Jews understood Greek during the time of Jesus, and the New Testament was written in Greek. So, you can't say that it was just the physical language alone. But I think what it is is the *spiritual* message that was given, which they couldn't understand.

Verse 12: "To whom He said, 'This is the rest He gives to the weary'...'—*which is salvation for the soul! This is hope; this is helping you come to the knowledge of the salvation of God*, to have rest from sin.

"...and 'This is the refreshing'..." (v 12)—*from the presence of the Lord; the power of God's Holy Spirit; the ability of the New Testament to:*

- uplift
- give hope
- give understanding
- give love

All of that is contained in it!

"...yet, **they were not willing to hear**. So then, the Word of the LORD was to them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken and snared and taken" (vs 12-13).

- What happened when that occurred?
- What did they do?
- Did they repent?

or

- Did they setup something that was actually against the New Testament

which is part of the whole substance of this series Scripturalism vs Judaism.

Here's a prophecy of what they did, v 14: "Therefore, hear the Word of the LORD, you scornful men who rule this people in Jerusalem." *Let's put this in the time and setting of Jesus Christ, His preachings and His ministry!*

Verse 15: "Because you have said, 'We have made a covenant with death, and we have made an agreement with the grave...'"

When you think about where Jesus said that 'you are of your father the devil,' are you not in covenant with hell and with death? Jesus said, '**You won't come to Me that you may have life.**' There's an awful lot in these Scriptures if we really think about what's going on in the New Testament.

"...when the overwhelming rod shall pass through, it shall not come to us; for we have made lies our refuge, and we have hidden ourselves under falsehood" (v 15).

I think I hold in my hand the fulfillment of that (book): *The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* and we've made lies our refuge.

Now let's see something about this different language that Jesus was going to speak to them in, which was a language that they could hear. ***In hearing they won't hear; in perceiving they won't understand!*** Why? *Because Jesus didn't tell them what they wanted to hear!* Later on we'll come back to this when get further into the series, but I want to cover part of it here.

John 6:41: "Then the Jews were complaining against Him, because He said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.'.... [they didn't understand that] (Look at their answer): ...And they were saying, 'Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? Why then does He say, "I came down from heaven"?''" (vs 41-42).

Verse 43: "For this reason, Jesus answered them and said, 'Do not be complaining among one another. No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God." Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me. No one has seen the Father except He Who is from God; He has seen the Father. Truly,

truly I say to you, the one who believes in Me has eternal life. I AM the Bread of Life. Your fathers ate manna in the desert, but they died. This is the Bread, which comes down from heaven so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I AM the living Bread, which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is even My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world'" (vs 43-51).

They didn't understand this, v 52: "Because of this, the Jews were arguing with one another, saying, 'How is He able to give us *His* flesh to eat?'"

Then Jesus really laid it on them, v 53: "Therefore, Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood...'" *That's even worse!* The Bible says that you're not to drink blood, so this really got them.

"...you do not have life in yourselves. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day; for My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. The one who eats My flesh and drinks My blood is dwelling in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father; so also the one who eats Me shall live by Me. This is the Bread, which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate manna, and died. The one who eats this bread shall live forever.' These things He said in *the* synagogue as He was teaching in Capernaum" (vs 53-59).

Just imagine this in the setting of the synagogue; all these Jews out there in Capernaum. They knew Joseph, Mary, the brothers of Jesus—James, Joseph, Simon and Jude, and His sisters; so, He had a full-fledged family.

Verse 60: "Therefore, after hearing *these words*, many of His disciples said..."

What is a disciple? *One who is a learner; a follower!* Here were those who were following Jesus. They were there in the synagogue when Jesus was preaching. These are pretty tough words.

"...This is a hard saying. Who is able to **hear it?**'.... [meaning *to hear with comprehension*] ...But Jesus, knowing that His disciples were complaining about this, said to them, 'Does this offend you?' (vs 60-61). ***It did!***

What happened to those disciples that turned and didn't follow Him anymore? *They surely didn't die, did they? Of course not!* So, He says that if this offends you, 'I'm going to lay a harder one on you:

Verse 62: "What if you shall see the Son of man ascending up where He was before?"

In just these few Scriptures that we've read, what does that do to the doctrine that Jesus was not God before He became human? That He was not in heaven before He came to the earth? *Totally destroys it!*

"...ascending up where He was before?... [I submit to you that Mary did not give birth to Him in heaven] ...It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you, **they are spirit and they are life**" (vs 62-63).

That, brethren, is the other language, the other tongue that Jesus was speaking to them in, that they wouldn't understand! ***The spiritual language!*** Is that true today? Are there people who can't understand even in English? Plain English? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 64—now He says right to them: "'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from *the* beginning who were the ones... [plural, not just Judas] ...that did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, 'For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father'" (vs 64-65).

That might be something really good to think on for everyone—members, ministers altogether—in our relationship to our calling of God in the Church.

- it is God the Father Who has called us
- it is God the Father Who has opened our mind through the power of the Holy Spirit through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- it is Jesus Christ Who died for us

The whole thing, the whole stake, the whole New Covenant is:

- so much greater than religiosity
- so much greater than who attends where
- so much greater than money
- so much greater than offerings
- so much greater than any organizational things that people go through
- so much greater than a minister preaching himself—*his version*

*It comes from God the Father! We need to think; that ***the greatest Being in the universe has done this for us! God the Father is the One Who has done it!*** Maybe that will help us to understand why all of these other things; just like Jesus said: 'the flesh profits nothing!'*

Now let's take this one step further; let's go to 1-Cor. 13 and see how all of this is to be put together. This is going to help us in our

understanding and perspective—as we go through in *Scripturalism vs Judaism*—as to why we are doing this. We're doing this to understand the Bible. We're not doing this to condemn anyone. We're not doing this to judge anyone. ***But we are doing it to avoid the enemy: Satan the devil and all those who work for him, regardless of who they are, where they may be.*** We're doing this *so we can love God more and love God with a greater appreciation and love God with a greater spirit!*

1-Corinthians 12:31, Paul says: "But earnestly desire the more *edifying* gifts; and yet I show you a way far surpassing *all these*."

I want you to think about what I'm going to talk about here in relationship to what Jesus said, ***'The flesh profits nothing! It is the Spirit that quickens or gives life!'***

1-Corinthians 13:1: "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, **I am nothing**" (vs 1-2). *Those are some pretty powerful statements!*

If I could go over here to a mountain and have all the television crews there and command that mountain or sycamore tree to be cast into the sea:

- Do you realize that a following that anyone could have who could do that?
- Do you realize how many people would come flocking?
- Do you realize how many people would follow you if you were considered the smartest man or woman in the world?
- Having all knowledge?
- Do you realize what following people would have, or could have, if they could actually speak in the languages of an angel?

I don't know what an angel language is like. I couldn't tell you. But it would seem to me that that would be more sacred than what we speak! Think about that for a minute!

Verse 3: "And if I give away all my goods, and if I deliver up my body that I may be burned, but do not have love, **I have gained nothing**."

That's why Solomon wrote: ***'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!'*** After listening to all these preachers every week, the only thing I can say is, 'God help us all that we don't all get carried away in our own vanity.'

I'm going to remind all of us who are

ministers and teachers that James says, ‘Don’t everyone desire to be a teacher. Know you not that you will receive the greater judgment?’ The sterner judgment! The more stringent judgment! I think all of us who are ministers and do teach, we need to really keep that in mind.

In talking about the Church at Ephesus. I just want to mention one thing here: Revelation 2:4—Jesus says: “Nevertheless, I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love.”

*If a minister who is teaching various people, wherever they may be—or whatever part of God’s flock has been committed into his hands to teach and serve—if he loses his love for God, what do you think the people are going to do? They’re going to lose **their** love for God!*

John 6:64: “‘But there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from *the* beginning who were the ones that did not believe, and who would betray Him.”

What does it say about the Word of God?
The Word of God:

- is quick, living
- is sharper than any two-edged sword
- it divides asunder piercing even the spirit and the soul
- it is a discerner and thoughts and intents of the heart

*We may be able to deceive ourselves at whatever level we deceive ourselves, but **God knows!***

(go to the next track)

God knows! God is going to do an absolutely phenomenal thing! Everyone is going to have to be judged standing before the throne of God. When I’m there and you’re there, I want Christ to be the Advocate. I might mention one other thing, too. The whole process of conversion is a process of understanding how great sin is even the least little bit of sin.

Remember when Isaiah was given the vision where he saw God. All the Holiness of God he saw the seraphim saying ‘Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty’ and he saw the vision of God and said, ‘Oh, I’m undone. I’m a man of unclean lips!’ That’s so true in the process of conversion.

Isaiah confronted it instantly! He felt overwhelmed! What God is doing for us now is taking us step-by-step rather than doing it instantly. Therefore, in our growing and our overcoming, we gradually see how evil we are in relationship to God. We gradually comprehend how ‘a little leaven leavens the whole lump.’ The further down in life

we go toward the end—whether that is the return of Christ or our lives individually—the greater the sinner we’re going to see ourselves being, though we are actually sinning less. I know that I’m not talking in an ethereal thing, but the reality of human nature. *That is a tremendous blessing that God does that gradually:*

- to give us all the time to repent
- to give us all the space to see our own foolishness
- to give us all the time to see that the flesh doesn’t profit, but it is the ‘spirit that gives life’

John 6:66: “From that *time*, many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him. Therefore, Jesus said to the twelve, ‘Are you also desiring to go away?’ Then Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed and have known that **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God**” (vs 66-69). *That was a bold statement!*

Verse 70: “Jesus answered them, ‘Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is a devil?’” *He knew who He selected in Judas Iscariot.*

- so much for our own righteousness
- so much for our own thoughts and what we believe

Let’s see what Jesus did to complete, to magnify, to expand—to make the laws, the commandments—the whole thing of God so much greater, so much better, so much more applicable in everything that there is.

Matthew 5:33: “Again, you have heard that it was said to those *in ancient times*, ‘You shall not forswear yourself, but you shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’ But **I say to you**...” (vs 33-34).

Notice that in each case *it’s a higher standard*; it’s an absolutely higher standard than what you find in the Old Testament.

“...do not swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne; nor by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet; nor by Jerusalem, because it is *the city of the great King*” (vs 34-35).

And yet, it is said that if you want your prayers really heard, you fax them to the Jerusalem fax and they’ll run out and stuff them in the western Wailing Wall. Those things are kind of hilarious in light of what Jesus said. Let’s just take this to an extreme: What if you had a most important prayer, and right in the middle of faxing it, the fax broke? And the people at the other end of the line in Jerusalem who get the faxes could not get the prayer

and run out to the western wall and stuff it into the western wall in-between the cracks.

I think they have to clean them out every once in a while. I mean, pretty soon you'd get so much paper in there, because they do. Everyone who wants a prayer heard, it doesn't matter Jew or Gentile, you get it and you stick it in the crack of the wall. How is that wall and that stone that is there going to be able to answer your prayer? As someone said, 'Rickaless!'

God wants it this way, v 36: "Neither shall you swear by your head, because you do not have the power to make one hair white or black. But let your word be *good*, your "Yes" be yes and your "No" be no; for anything that *is* added to these is from the evil one" (vs 36-37).

Why did He say that? It means let your yes be truly yes, and your no be truly no. Anything more that comes of that it comes of evil. In other words, people do it with a duopolistic thought. They do it with the whole process of wanting to mislead people either with their yes or their no.

It's just like some of these elections. In order to get something passed that you want, you would think that you would have to vote yes, but a lot of these slick politicians work it the other way and they have you vote no to get yes. As you come out of the voting booth, you're cross-eyed. Was it yes, or was it no? Was no yes, or yes no? Did I vote no or did vote yes?

Verse 38: "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'"

Go back and read that section there. It was not to gouge out eyes or teeth or to lop off a hand or leg. ***It was to pay for the loss!***

Verse 39: "**But I say to you**, do not resist evil..." *In other words, don't get involved in fighting evil for evil and heaping evil upon evil!*

"...rather, if anyone shall strike you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (v 39).

It's not like the Catholics say, 'When he's done with the other, punch him in the belly.' Just hope you don't get into a situation that is that way. What if you were arrested for being a Christian and here now is your opportunity? Maybe God is going to judge you on your last act. Could you, under the force of being beaten and bludgeoned, do like Jesus said and say, 'Father, forgive them for they no not what they do.'

Verse 40: "And if anyone shall sue you before the law and take your garment, give him your coat also." *The best thing to do is not let get involved in being sued at law if you can avoid it!*

Verse 41: And if anyone shall compel you to go one mile, go with him two." *That was with the mail route and the soldiers at the Roman time!* Nevertheless, the principle is there.

Verse 42: "Give to the one who asks of you; and do not turn away from the one who wishes to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy'" (vs 42-43).

There are some Psalms where David said, 'I hate them with a perfect hatred.' ***We are to hate the works of iniquity!***

Verse 44: "**But I say to you**, love your enemies..."—*which is hard to do!*

I would say that in the flesh that's the hardest thing in the world to do. Why did He say that? *Because of what Christ did!* God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. He gave Him while we were still enemies of God. ***We are to see God's love even toward His enemies in Christ dying for us while we were still enemies!***

Also, there's another lesson: How easy it is that when you're in a spirit of hatred to create more enemies out of those who were not enemies previously. Just think on that for a while.

Let's look at this way: Let's reduce it down to the next level of hate, and that is *anger!* Isn't it easy just to be angry at everything and everyone, even those who don't deserve your anger, because they didn't do anything? *Yes, it is!* I've done that! You've done that!

As James said: How is that we can bless God and curse someone else? It all ties in together. The reason is that ***we've got to use the Spirit of God to really understand the love of God!*** God does not want His Church built upon carnal love—of loving only those who love you; and carnal hatred—hating everything else that there is besides just those that you know.

"...bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you" (v 44).

The next time something comes up where this is part of the thing you may have to do, think about it this way: *maybe this is a trial that God has allowed to come upon you!* What if you go to God and say, 'God, I want to have more love.' *God says, 'All right, I'll answer that prayer.'* What happens? *Your enemies rise up against you!* Those that do you harm come after you! Those that hate you, despitefully use and persecute you! You go to God and say, 'God, I wanted to grow in love.' If He would answer you, He would probably say, 'Well,

what do think I have sent, so that you can grow in love?’ Why?

Verse 45: “So that you yourselves may be *the* children of your Father Who *is* in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *on the* good, and sends rain on *the* just and *on the* unjust.”

Don’t get high and mighty and hoity-toity! God takes care of the whole world. If you live on anger and hatred then pretty soon it gets into bitterness and bitterness leads into the shriveling of the soul, and that lead eventually into rejecting God. It could start out on a fairly decent cause. Someone’s sin!

- Have we seen that? *Yes!*
- Have we seen people get offended at other people’s sins? *Yes!*
- Have we seen them get so mad and angry and bitter that they turn away from God? *Yes!*

Let’s hope that they come to themselves and repent and that God hasn’t given up on them. It does! It just sours everything that you do!

Verse 46: “For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*? And if you salute your brethren only, what have you done *that is* extraordinary? Do not the tax collectors practice the same *thing*?” (vs 46-47).

Yet, have we not had a whole church organization founded upon the opposite principle of this? You hate everyone that is not in the organization and a good many that are in it.

On the other hand, you need to be careful because He says later on, ‘Cast not your pearls before swine.’ On the other hand, there are certain people that the greatest extent of love that you can give to them is say, ‘God, I pray for them and I pray that I don’t fall into their clutches or into their hands.’ That’s praying for them, and that is a loving attitude. You’re not saying, ‘God, destroy them, they’re my enemies.’ If they’re an enemy of God, trust God, He’ll take care of them.

- Cannot God fight His enemies?
- Does not God have the power to fight His enemies?
- Is not God not going to fight His enemies?
- *Yes, He is! Let Him do that!*

Verse 48: “Therefore, **you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect.**” *That’s the whole goal!*

In other words, you go back all the way back, to where it says ‘I say to you, except your

righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of God.’ And He ends up that whole section by saying, ‘Not only must it exceed it, you must strive to “...**be perfect, even as your Father Who is in heaven is perfect.**”

How can that be? *The Jews thought that they would be perfect by doing this:* Draw a small square and label that small square the Word of God—the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms. The Jews thought that in order to get perfection, what we must do is create another law, so you draw another box around that and make the space in between quite wide.

- these are the *traditions* of the Jews
- these are the *laws of the Jews*
- these represent *their righteousness*

Then you draw another square around that and you have in that the *community of Israel*. It doesn’t matter how it’s defined—one tribe, 12 tribes or 2 tribes—because it all gets down to the self-centeredness of one.

Now you can see how hard it is to find God in the middle of this whole thing. What Jesus is doing, He’s stripping away all of this; He’s pointing them to the reality in the completion of the laws and commandments of God; He’s pointing them to God the Father and saying that you must become as ‘perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect.’ The rest of the New Testament shows that the only way that can be done is through the sacrifice of Christ and the Holy Spirit of God.

Now we’re coming into an entirely different section in Matt. 6. This is going to show us that right at the beginning of the preachings of Jesus, ***He was separating the laws and commandments of God and Christianity***—which He was bringing the New Covenant—***from Judaism!*** Also, raising the level of understanding of the laws and commandments of God as contained in the Old Covenant ***to a higher level of expectation and fulfillment and completion and requirement of obedience.*** You have all of those going on here at this time.

Matthew 6:1: “Beware... [watch out] ...*that* you do not bestow your alms... [religious works] ...in the sight of men in order to be seen by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father Who *is* in heaven.”

You may have a lot of people coming around saying what a ‘good guy’ you are; what a ‘good woman’ you are; what a wonderful ‘person’ you are; *but unless God says at the resurrection ‘well done good and faithful servant’ what good is the accolade that someone else gives you?* It might make you feel good in the long run, and that’s the

Achilles' heel to every person!

Every person wants to be thought well of. Every person wants to be loved, to be respected, to be accepted one way or the other! Some people live their lives *to be seen* of people, because they do better when they're seen of people. I mean, just witness baseball: we have one infamous star, so-called, of the Oakland Athletics: Ricky Henderson. He does better when people are watching him. He gets a lot of money. People come up and tell him what a good guy he is. As a matter of fact, if people don't tell him what a good guy he is, he sulks! Gets nasty! Mean! As a matter of fact, gets downright lazy and won't play and won't hustle. Now he's transferred off to the Toronto Blue Jays and he has his reward!

Think of that in relationship to your spirituality. Here Jesus is drawing an absolute swath, sword-cut, separation right through the practices of Judaism, or Catholicism wherever it applies, because He talks about the heathen also.

Verse 2: "Therefore, when you give *your* alms, **do not sound the trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do** in the synagogues and in the streets..."

This reminds me of Robert Schuller, the tinkling 'crystal cathedral' and they get everybody 'oh, how good we are. How good, how wonderful, how nice, how great! All you wonderful people! One of these days there's going to be an earthquake and the 'crystal cathedral' is going to come a shattering end. Don't "**...do as the hypocrites...**"—'hupokrites'—which means *sanctimonious pretenders*. I tell you, 'religion' is filled with *sanctimonious pretenders*!

"...so that they may have glory from men. Truly I say to you, **they have their reward**.... [ain't gonna getting anything later on] ...But *when* you give your alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing" (vs 2-3).

In other words, you're not to do it with a predetermined effect that people are going to say 'what a good guy you are.' *or* 'what a wonderful woman you are. My, that was sweet and nice.' **NO!** You're not to plan it so that people will see it.

Verse 4: "So that your alms may be in secret..."

Whatever you want to do, you go and ask God to help you do what you want to do, and you don't tell anybody what you're doing. You just do it!

"...and your Father Who sees in secret shall Himself reward you openly.... [God is going to take care of you] ...And when you pray, you shall not be

as the hypocrites..." (vs 4-5).

Did Jesus, from the start, call the scribes and Pharisees 'hypocrites'? *Yes, He did!*

"...for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, in order *that* they may be seen by men...." (v 5).

If you want a little extra Bible study, study the prayers of Jesus as recorded in the New Testament. The longest one is John 17, which is actually the Lord's Prayer. Every other prayer is a short prayer or just a reference to Jesus blessing the food. The prayer that He prayed when Lazarus was resurrected out of the tomb, He said, 'Father, I thank You that you always hear Me.' Then He shouted to Lazarus to come forth.

"...Truly I say to you, **they have their reward**" (v 5). *That's their reward. They were seen!* 'Oh, that was a lovely prayer.'

When Gary Shepherd and the first astronauts came back to the earth. They showed it on television and here was the chaplain of the Navy and he got up there and said, 'Let us pray.' Took out his prayer all written up, laid it on the pulpit and bowed his head and read the prayer. *God wants it from the heart!* God doesn't care if you stutter. God doesn't care if you use the wrong word; He knows what you mean.

Verse 6: "But you, when you pray, enter into a private room..."—'closet' (KJV). I literally did that when I started learning of that. I just about got asphyxiated in the closet, between the clothes and the smelly shoes and closing the closet door. You try that for an hour. It means a *quiet private place*. I took it literally and it about overwhelmed me. It took me a while to figure that out.

"...and after shutting the door, pray to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly" (v 6). **God will take care of you!**

Verse 7: "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*; for they think that by multiplying their words they shall be heard."

So much for the rosary. I remember when I was first beginning to understand this, I was turning the dial on the radio and I got the rosary hour, which is 15-minute program—'Hail Mary, mother of God, blessed by the fruit of your womb, Jesus, Amen' (repeated over and over). If you're a good Catholic and you do 250 and you've done your laps around the beads, you're in good shape.

A prayer from the heart, when you really mean it, is what God wants. Look at those poor Tibetans with their prayer wheels and their incense and their prayer flags and all the things that they do.

Verse 8: “Now then, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you have need of before you ask Him.”

I even had one person come up and say, if that’s so, why does God have us pray? *Talk about nit picking! God wants to know:*

- Do you love Him?
- Are you going to be thankful?
- Are you going to pray for the right things?

Maybe you don’t get the things you need because you’re praying for the things that you don’t need. *God knows!* He wants us to pray, and here’s how He wants us to pray:

Verse 9: “Therefore, you are to pray after this manner: “Our Father Who *is* in heaven, hallowed [Holy] be Your name.”

We’re not to start out with ourselves, we’re to start out with God. We start out with the Father because He’s called us. We start out with God because He’s the One Who is going to save us. He’s in heaven. His name is Holy. And you can go right through this whole thing and you can almost outline the Ten Commandments from some of the things that are said here. *Sure you could!*

Verse 10: “Your Kingdom come...” It’s very interesting in the Greek—*Let Your Kingdom come*. In other words, we’re not going to God and demanding that it come.

“...Your will be done on earth, as *it is* in heaven; give us this day our **daily bread**” (vs 10-11). *The Greek is the needed!*

Not like the farmer who got the blessing and said, ‘What am I going to do with all this. I’m going to give myself ease. I’m going to give myself soul. I’m going to sit back and enjoy it. I’ll build greater barns, bigger buildings and store it all up.’ And God says, ‘Fool, your soul is required of you this night.’

Verse 12: “And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors.” *That’s the hardest one to do!*

That’s why it ties right back here to ‘love your enemies.’ Hardest thing to do is forgive your enemy, isn’t it? I know it is! What you want to do when you’re asking forgiveness for them, you almost always bite your tongue. Your human nature says *I don’t want to!* God’s Spirit says, *you need to!* All right, I will ^{grudgingly}—well, you’re making progress. But that’s part of our prayers being answered.

Verse 13: “And lead us not into temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For Yours is the

Kingdom... [there’s no other kingdom] ...and the power... [there is no other power] ...and the glory... [there’s no other glory] ...forever. Amen.”

We don’t want the glory of men. We don’t want the glory of things. ***We want the glory of God!*** What is it that God is going to give us? *That God will fill us with His glory!* The things that God has for us is so absolutely fantastic, it’s amazing!

Verse 14: “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father **will also forgive you.**”

- Do you need forgiveness? *Yes, you do!*
- Do I need forgiveness? *Yes, I do!*
 - ✓ I need it today
 - ✓ I’ll need it tomorrow
 - ✓ I needed it yesterday

Sometimes you’ll have weeks like this past week I had and you come up to sunset on the Sabbath and you sort of just stumble in exhausted and say, ‘Oh, God, thank You for the Sabbath.’ You sort of made it over the finish line for another week. Then on the Sabbath you get refreshed, uplifted, up-built and strengthened so you can charge out tomorrow and start doing what you need to do and hopefully you’ll make it to the next Sabbath. Sometimes there are weeks like that.

‘I want to show you how important this is,’ Christ is saying, ‘that you forgive one another so that God will forgive you:

Verse 15: “But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

Tie that right in here with Matt. 5:43-44 about loving your enemies and forgiveness. Maybe, if you’ve been praying for something and you haven’t gotten the answer, or the answer that you expect—and many times the answer that we expect is not the one that God is going to give—what we need to do is go back and ask: ‘Have I forgiven those who have trespassed against me.’ I’ll tell you the hardest one to do is husband/wife; parents/children; children/parents, and in-laws/out-laws. That’s why God is a family because we have to learn in the family.

That’s a tremendous key: Have you forgiven? Do you want God to forgive you? *Yes, indeed!* What if there are some people who look upon you as an enemy, maybe even some of your former friends. Now because you’re following God you’re viewed as an enemy. Was Jesus viewed as an enemy because He was following God? *Yes!* Jesus didn’t come and become the Messiah *that they wanted* Him to be. They wanted Him to come in

and:

- validate Judaism
- validate *their* 'religion'
- validate that *they* were right
- validate that they could come to Him

That He would be their hero and He would raise up an army and get rid of the Romans!

Since He didn't do that, He became their enemy. The One Who came to save them, they killed and fought against Him.

That's why all this teaching is here in Matt. 5, 6 & 7. When we get through chapter seven we're going to do some rapid surveying through the book of Matthew instead of in detail, because I thought chapters 5-7 was so fundamental and important for Christian living and understanding I thought going through it in a rather detailed way. This is a key, important thing. You can't go to God and say:

- God, bless me; *curse him*
- God, help me; *make him stumble*
- God, love me; *hate him*
- God, forgive me; *don't forgive him*

He can't do it! It won't work!

Verse 16: "And when you fast, do not be as the hypocrites, dejected in countenance; for they disfigure their faces in order that they may appear to men to fast. Truly I say to you, they have their reward." *Just to show you how these things are taken to an extreme!*

Judaism feels this way: Since we are to tremble before God's Word, that there those who go before the Wailing Wall today, when they recite the Word of God make themselves shake all over because we are to tremble at the Word of God. When the fast they dishevel their hair, throw sackcloth on themselves, ashes on themselves. Christ said, 'I don't want anyone knowing that you are fasting. If you're going to fast with someone, together over a joint project, that's okay. If we fast as a church, that's fine. But He says He doesn't want it to be a pain, *because you're fasting to God not to be seen of men!*

Verse 17: "But *when* you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to men to fast, but to your Father Who *is* in secret; and your Father Who sees in secret shall reward you openly" (vs 17-18). *That's the whole key to it; you do it to God!*

What good is it if they know you're fasting? *Not a bit of good!* What is that we do when we fast, when we come to God, that it's more of a problem or we do it to compel God to do what we want? *NO!*

No man is going to compel God to do anything!
Some do that to try and compel God to things for them, but God isn't going to do that.

Fasting is to humble ourselves as we do on Atonement, so that we go before God to show our way, our will, our thoughts, our strength, our abilities really, in the final analysis, *don't count*. Seeking God's will, ***His way and not our own***; God wants us to do it in that humble attitude: 'Is this the fast that I have chosen, that you have your strife for your own things, to make your voice heard on high?' *NO!* We fast because we come to God and admit that we don't have the way, the thought, the ability, the means to accomplish what needs to be done. Furthermore, we can't give ourselves life at all under any circumstances, and we're admitting it to God. That's the whole purpose in it.

Verse 19: "Do not store up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moth and rust spoil, and where **thieves break through and steal.**"

That today are the national banks of every country. That's what they are, "...**thieves break through and steal.**" *Raise the taxes!* 'We're going only get the rich.'

Verse 20: "But store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, where neither moth nor rust spoils, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For **where your treasure is, there will your heart be also**" (vs 20-21). ***IF***

- you set your heart on the Kingdom of God
- you set your heart on God
- you set your heart on Christ

Tie in Matt. 22:37-41—this is why we're to love God. ***That's a great treasure!*** What is the greatest of all? ***Love! Yes, indeed!*** That is the treasure!

How many times have we had this twisted and turned and maligned to say, 'Brethren, heaven is on earth, send it to the Church.' I'm being a little facetious, but it needs to be a little facetious so that we can understand the contrast. We can say, 'Verily, they have their reward.' Those who gave and those who received, because unless you are preaching the love of God and it's from your heart, because we're to love God with all our heart, mind, soul and being. That's what it's talking about here.

Verse 22: "The light of the body is the eye. Therefore, if your eye be sound... [single minded, single purposed, focused toward God] ...your whole body shall be *full of light.*"

I might just mention, you look at some of those politicians on TV, look into their eyes; you're going to see some pretty evil eyes. Let's have our light single, brethren, toward God.

Verse 23: “But if your eye be evil, your whole body shall be *full of* darkness. Therefore, **if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!**” *You can tie in several things here:*

- Who is an angel of light?
- Who is the prince of darkness?
- *Satan!*

Let’s look at this another way: Let’s look at the body as the Church. If the whole Church were single toward Christ and God the Father, then it will have great light. But if the whole Church allow evil into the body, will it not get full of darkness? *Yes, indeed!* “...**Therefore, if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!**”

Then you’re confronted with a problem: If you do not have singleness of mind toward God, then you’re confronted with a problem:

Verse 24: “**No one is able to serve two masters...**”—Greek: *it’s impossible!* No man has the *power*—the ‘dunamis’—to serve two masters, You always end up with problems when you have two bosses.

“...for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to *the* one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” (v 24).

That’s why it is so difficult to try and mix in the things of the world, the doctrines of the world and bring them into the Church and say that this is of God, because it isn’t!

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scriptural References:

- 1) Isaiah 42:21
- 2) Isaiah 8:16
- 3) Isaiah 28:9-15
- 4) John 6:41-66
- 5) 1 Corinthians 12:31
- 6) 1 Corinthians 13:1-3
- 7) Revelation 2:4
- 8) John 6:64, 66-70
- 9) Matthew 5:33-48
- 10) Matthew 6:1-24

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 17
- Matthew 5-7
- Matthew 22:37-41
- Matthew 6:43-44; 22:37-41

Also referenced: Book:

The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion
translated by Victor Marsden (biblebelievers.org)

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