

Easter: Better Than the Best

Matthew 5; Coast Community Church; Pastor Earl Miles; 4-3-2022

The Title

What we need to see in this text this morning:

To be 'better than the best' is what is required of us all.
'Better than the best' is what only Jesus truly is.
This highlights an important part of the good news of Easter.

The Kingdom of Heaven: The Blessed (1-12)

Blessed = truly happy; fully and forever joyful or happy in God

The Lord Jesus begins his most famous sermon with a discussion of true happiness.

The Beggars (3)

Interestingly enough, the Lord Jesus says that the place to start for being truly happy is not found in seeing what you have, but in seeing what you don't have.

Poor = poor like a beggar who lacks what he needs and cannot provide for himself
Poor in spirit = humble in heart (we know that we lack what they need or should have)

To depend on the mercy of God alone is to be poor in spirit. (Luke 18:9-14)

The Hungry (6)

So, true happiness begins with seeing what you don't have and it also includes desiring what you should have.

Hunger and thirst for righteousness (6) = desire to be rid of sin (its penalty, power and presence)

Repentance sees that I am not better than others and that I am just as needy as others and it desires to be free from sin and all that that means and to live to do the will of God. (Luke 13:1-9)

The Standard (13-19)

But we have to define 'sin' in order to repent of it and that has become a real challenge in our day when the Word and Law of God have been abandoned.

We can find it easy to apply the ‘standard’ to others and be quick to condemn them when they fail, but slow to apply the standard to ourselves and to see that, in principle, we are no different from the worst of sinners. (Romans 2:1-6)

The Best the World Can Offer (20)

This verse highlights the fact that the best ‘sinners’ and the worst ‘sinners’ are still sinners in need of a Savior.

Jesus is an able and willing Savior for sinners. He has nothing to offer those who are ‘righteous’ (in their own minds). (Matthew 9:9-13)

You Have Heard: The Depth and Breadth of the Standard (21-47)

This section is intended to expose our need and to deliver us from the illusion that we are righteous and have kept the Law of God sufficiently.

- You Shall Not Murder (21-26) = the heart issue of sinful anger and condemning words
- You Shall Not Commit Adultery (27-30) = the heart issue of sinful desire
- You Shall Not Commit Adultery through Divorce (31-32) = the issue of the practice of sinful divorce as adultery
- You Shall Not Make False Vows (33-37) = the issue of solemn lying
- An Eye for an Eye (38-42) = the issue of personal revenge
- Love Your Neighbor (43-47) = the issue of selective love

Question: Should a lying, adulterous, murderer who hurts those who hurt him/her and only does good to those who do good to him/her go to heaven?

We tend to see other people’s sin easily (even the small things like a speck or splinter) and ignore the huge things (like a log) in our own lives. (Matthew 7:1-6)

Be Perfect: The Requirement (48)

Perfect = loving and living in perfect obedience to God’s Law and therefore, being perfect like God (Matthew 19:16-22)

The Good News: Jesus Lived the Life We Could Never Live (17)

I did not come to abolish but to fulfill (17) = the Lord Jesus lived the life we could never live: perfect love to God and man in complete obedience to God’s Law, in inner thought and desire and in outward words and actions, every second of his life

Do you need Jesus? (Romans 3:10; Romans 6:23; Matthew 22:1-14; Zechariah 3:1-5; Isaiah 61:10)