

S T U D Y G U I D E



S E R M O N
on the
M O U N T

SINCLAIR B. FERGUSON

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Sermon on the Mount

Sinclair B. Ferguson



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Life in the Kingdom

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ preached with the authority of the promised coming King. In this introductory lesson, Dr. Ferguson places the Sermon on the Mount in the context of Matthew's gospel and summarizes its content and implications.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To provide context for the Sermon on the Mount
2. To outline the major points of the Sermon on the Mount
3. To apply those points to the lives of believers

SCRIPTURE READING

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

—Matthew 4:17

LECTURE OUTLINE

- A. The Sermon on the Mount must be understood in the context of what comes before it in Matthew's gospel.
 1. Jesus presented Himself to be baptized.
 - a. Jesus was baptized at the age of thirty.
 - b. The Father identified Jesus as the Suffering Servant (Isa. 42:1) and the King to whom the Father would say, "Ask of me, and I will give you the nations for your inheritance" (Ps. 2:7–8).
 2. Matthew's gospel begins and ends with the notion that "Jesus is the King."
 - a. Matthew's genealogy tells us that Jesus is a descendant of King David.
 - b. The prophecies about Jesus that Matthew highlights are prophecies about a coming King.

- c. Matthew ends his gospel with the words of Jesus, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18).
 - d. Jesus begins His public ministry by announcing the kingdom of God and the necessity to respond in repentance and faith (Matt. 4:17).
 - 3. Jesus not only announces the presence of the kingdom but also displays the power of the kingdom.
 - a. Jesus gains the power to set men and women free by overcoming the devil’s temptations in the wilderness, and so heals the sick, the blind, and the demon possessed.
 - b. Jesus reveals the power of the kingdom by the way he calls people into it; the first disciples immediately leave their nets to follow Him.
 - c. Jesus has the authority to heal, to call, and to deliver—all allegiance is owed to Him, and diseases and evil spirits flee from His presence.
 - d. The miracles of Jesus are momentary flashes of His final kingdom.
 - 4. Jesus wants to teach His disciples what it is to live in the kingdom of God.
 - a. Jesus has brought His disciples from darkness to light, but because the light is not shining fully and finally, His disciples must learn what it is to live in a fallen world.
- B. The chapters of the Sermon on the Mount can each be summarized with one word.
 - 1. The first chapter of the Sermon on the Mount can be summarized by the word *fulfillment*, as fulfillment comes through Jesus Christ.
 - a. Jesus fulfills the prophecies and promises of the Old Testament.
 - b. Jesus brings fulfillment to broken and bruised lives.
 - c. Jesus fills His people full of life that is lived for the glory of God.
 - 2. Jesus wants to teach us the difference between a life lived with Him and a life lived without Him.
 - a. The blessings of the Christian are altogether different than the blessings of the world and reverse the standards of the world.
 - b. The kingdom transforms people in such a way that they become different from those around them.
 - c. The impact of a transformed life means that—like Jesus in all His compassion, tenderness, and miraculous works—those who follow Him will be persecuted (2 Peter 4:12).
 - d. The righteousness of Christians goes deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, because Jesus teaches us the proper role of the law and enables us to keep it.
 - 3. The next chapter of the Sermon on the Mount can be summarized by the word *Father*.
 - a. Jesus teaches us that by being brought into the kingdom we are brought to know the heavenly Father.
 - b. Knowing the heavenly Father is the key to living in the kingdom of God.

4. The last chapter of the Sermon on the Mount can be summarized by the word *judgment*.
 - a. Jesus teaches His disciples how the transformed life changes the way they make judgments and decisions.
 - b. Disciples' lives must ultimately be built on Jesus Christ.
- C. The Sermon on the Mount ends by underlining the authority with which Jesus preached.
 1. There is a sense that the King has come.
 2. The big question is how will people respond.
 3. The rest of Matthew's gospel continues with some who respond in faith and others who respond in unbelief.
- D. There are four primary applications to draw from this brief introduction to the Sermon on the Mount.
 1. The first application is that the different life that Jesus speaks of must have a supernatural origin.
 - a. Many people claim to love the Sermon on the Mount because they are vaguely familiar with its content but do not truly know Jesus.
 - b. The Sermon on the Mount is often misunderstood and does not drive people to their knees in awareness of their need and inability.
 - c. Many people respond to the new life that Jesus teaches about through the gospel by saying, "I am going to try to do better."
 - d. Jesus makes it plain that we cannot work out a new life for ourselves; we need the supernatural work of God's grace to see, understand, and enter the kingdom (John 3:3).
 2. The second application is that Jesus speaks about a transformation that goes to the very roots of our lives.
 - a. Throughout our lives as Christians, Christ leads us deeper and deeper, exposing the hidden sins of our lives.
 - b. The evangelical church has wrongly emphasized health, wealth, and happiness in order to attract the world to the life that Jesus creates.
 - c. Jesus is rather concerned with deconstructing our lives to reveal the power of the gospel so that we would be different to the point of being like Him, even in the opposition He faced.
 3. The third application is that the transformation that Jesus creates in us is a life-long transformation of repentance.
 - a. The first thesis of Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses: "When our Lord Jesus said, 'Repent,' He meant that the whole of the Christian life should be repentance."
 4. The fourth application is that the transformation of the Christian life only takes place when we bow to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

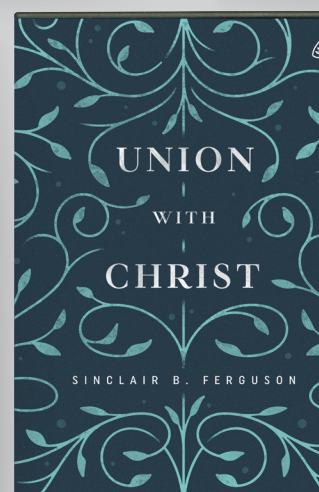
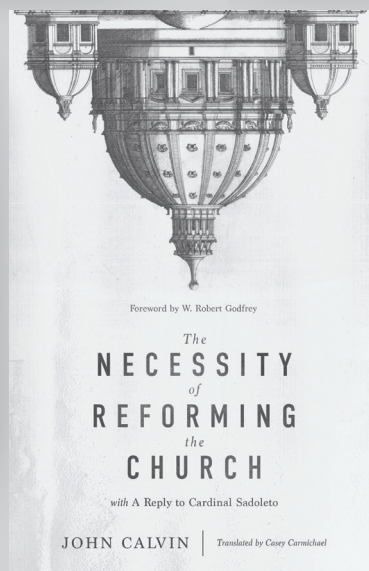
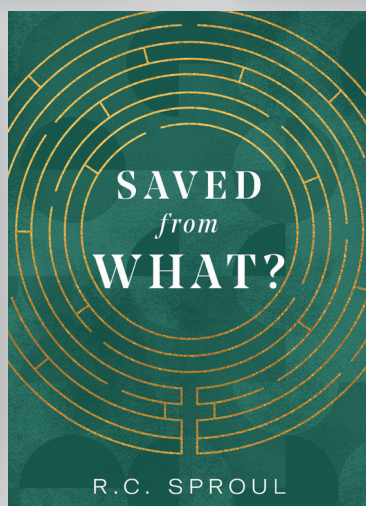
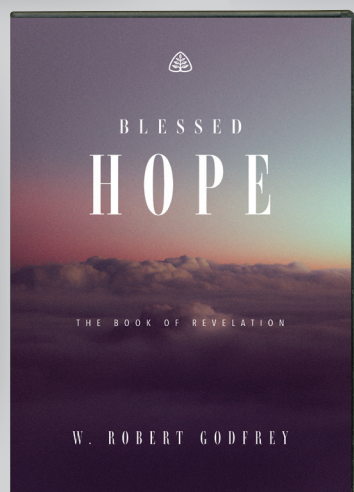
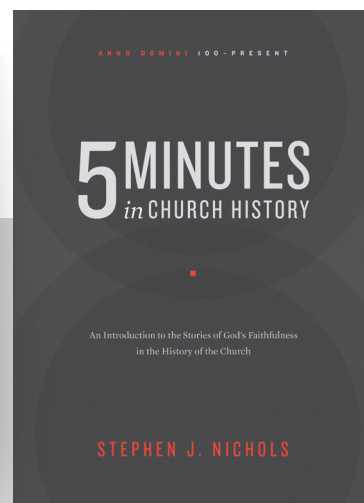
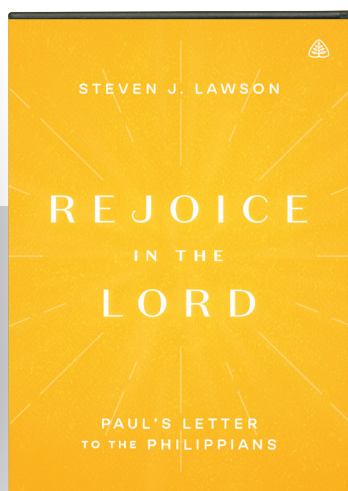
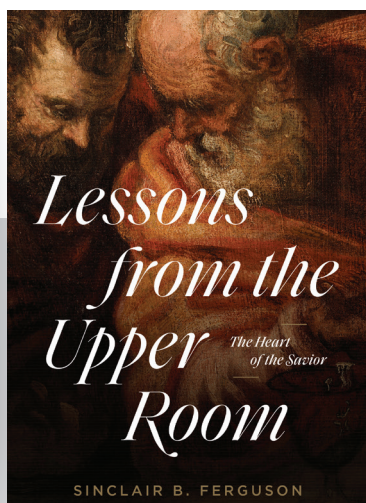
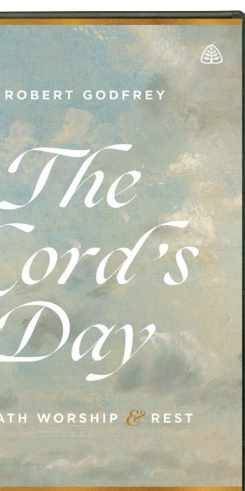
STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Matthew's gospel begins and ends with the notion that Jesus is _____.
 - a. Prophet
 - b. Priest
 - c. King
 - d. All of the above
2. The Father's words that identified Christ at His baptism as the Suffering Servant and King are references to the Psalms and _____.
 - a. Daniel
 - b. Isaiah
 - c. Ezekiel
 - d. Jeremiah
3. Christ's first disciples left their nets because they were smart enough to recognize Christ's authority.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. The first section of the Sermon on the Mount can be summarized by the word _____.
 - a. Father
 - b. Fulfillment
 - c. Judgment
 - d. Transformation
5. Jesus abolishes the role of the law because He has fulfilled the law.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. Jesus teaches us that the Christian life will be _____.
 - a. Supernatural in origin
 - b. Deeply transformative
 - c. Lifelong
 - d. All of the above

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What significance did Christ's temptation in the wilderness have for His public ministry?
2. How does the Sermon on the Mount present the countercultural Christian life?
3. How does a message that only emphasizes health, wealth, and happiness undermine the gospel?
4. In what way is the Sermon on the Mount commonly misread?

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