

Following Jesus

in the Sermon on the Mount

A Two-Week Discipleship Experience in Matthew 5-7,
inspired by Chapters 6-20 in
Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *The Cost of Discipleship*

Monday, April 29 to Sunday, May 13

"Revival of church life always brings in its train a richer understanding of the Scriptures...a more determined quest for him who is the sole object of it all, for Jesus Christ himself. What did Jesus mean to say to us? What is his will for us today? How can he help us to be good Christians in the modern world? In the last resort, what we want to know is not, what would this or that man, or this or that Church, have of us, but what Jesus Christ himself wants of us."

(The Cost of Discipleship, Introduction, p. 35)

"It is no use taking refuge in abstract discussion, or trying to make excuses, so let us get back to the Scriptures, to the word and call of Jesus Christ himself."

(The Cost of Discipleship, Introduction, p. 36)

**Jesus is speaking.
Let's listen.
And follow.**

All scripture passages are from the New International Version.

Each daily reading corresponds to a chapter in *Cost of Discipleship*, except for Matthew 5:13-20 (spanning two chapters)

	Week 1: April 30 – May 6 THE EXTRAORDINARY	Week 2: May 7 – May 13 THE HIDDEN & DISTINCT
Monday	Matthew 5:1-12 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 6	Matthew 6:1-4 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 14
Tuesday	Matthew 5:13-20 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , chs. 7-8	Matthew 6:5-15 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 15
Wednesday	Matthew 5:21-26 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 9	Matthew 6:16-18 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 16
Thursday	Matthew 5:27-32 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 10	Matthew 6:19-34 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 17
Friday	Matthew 5:33-37 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 11	Matthew 7:1-12 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 18
Saturday	Matthew 5:38-42 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 12	Matthew 7:13-23 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 19
Sunday	Matthew 5:43-48 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 13	Matthew 7:24-29 <i>Cost of Discipleship</i> , ch. 20

Jesus is Speaking. Let's Listen. And Follow.

The first two verses of chapter 5 and the last verse of chapter 7 are the only words NOT spoken by Jesus. Some versions of the Bible have Jesus' words printed in red. The Sermon on the Mount is a virtual sea of red letters – a pure flow of Jesus' original teaching to his disciples.

For each reading, you are invited to reflect on the following questions:

1. Jesus, what **comforting or hopeful word** are you offering me?
2. Jesus, what **challenging word** are you confronting me with? (*risk, repentance, obedience, submission, etc.*)
3. Jesus, what do I **need from you** in order to follow? (*example: grace, strength, presence, guidance, etc.*)

Monday, April 30, 2018

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes (5:3–12; see Luke 6:20–23)

He said:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus' challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Tuesday, May 1, 2018

Salt and Light

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

The Fulfillment of the Law

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Wednesday, May 2, 2018

Murder (5:25,26; see Luke 12:58,59)

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘You shall not murder,^e and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ ²² But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister^f will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.

²³ “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, ²⁴ leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

²⁵ “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Thursday, May 3, 2018

Adultery

²⁷ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’^j ²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ If your right eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Divorce

³¹ “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ⁿ ³² But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Friday, May 4, 2018

Oaths

³³ “Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.’ ³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; ³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. ³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. ³⁷ All you need to say is simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. ^v

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Saturday, May 5, 2018

Eye for Eye

³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ ^w ³⁹ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. ⁴¹ If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. ⁴² Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Sunday, May 6, 2018

Love for Enemies

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor ² and hate your enemy.’
⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Monday, May 7, 2018

Giving to the Needy

6 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

² “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Tuesday, May 8, 2018

Prayer (6:9–13; see Luke 11:2–4)

⁵“And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ⁶But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. ⁷And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. ⁸Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹“This, then, is how you should pray:

“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation, ^s
but deliver us from the evil one.’

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Wednesday, May 9, 2018

Fasting

¹⁶ “When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Jesus’ challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Thursday, May 10, 2018

Treasures in Heaven (6:22,23; see Luke 11:34–36)

¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴ “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Do Not Worry (6:25–33; see Luke 12:22–31)

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus' message of comfort and hope:

Jesus' challenge to me:

What I need from Jesus in order to step up to the challenge (ask for it in prayer):

Friday, May 11, 2018

Judging Others (7:3–5; see Luke 6:41,42)

7 “Do not judge, or you too will be judged. ² For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

³ “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? ⁴ How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

⁶ “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock (7:7–11; see Luke 11:9–13)

⁷ “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹ “Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? ¹¹ If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! ¹² So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:

Saturday, May 12, 2018

The Narrow and Wide Gates

¹³ “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

True and False Prophets

¹⁵ “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

True and False Disciples

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’

Reflection & Prayer

Jesus’ message of comfort and hope:
