

Praying the Scriptures: The Sermon on the Mount

(Part 1)

The Psalmist prayed, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24).

One of the most searching portions of God’s Word is the “Sermon on the Mount.” Allow God to search your heart as you:

- 1. Get alone*
- 2. Read through each Scripture*
- 3. Work through the questions*
- 4. Confess every sin to God*

It would probably be best to pray out loud as you work through this soul-searching exercise. Take your time and thoroughly pray through each passage.

Matthew 5:3 —Do you recognize your absolute dependency upon God?
—Do you realize that it is because of the Lord’s mercy we are not all consumed?
—Do you sense that everything you have is the direct result of grace?
—Are you empty of pride?
—Have you abandoned all hope in self?

Matthew 5:4 —Have you ever mourned and grieved over your sin?
—Has Godly sorrow led you to repentance?
—Does your heart ever grieve over the lost?

Matthew 5:5 —Do you walk humbly with your God?
—Does your demeanor communicate meekness to others?
—Is there a calmness of strength in your soul?

Matthew 5:6 —Do you hate every false way?
—Do you long to be right before God and man in all your dealings?
—Do you find your satisfaction in Christ alone?

Matthew 5:7 —Does “merciful” aptly describe the character of your soul?
—Are you quick to forgive?
—Do you forgive others as Christ hath forgiven you?

Matthew 5:8 —Are your innermost thoughts pure?
—Are your motives clean?
—Do you need to be cleansed from any defilement?

Matthew 5:9 —Have you done all within your power to live peaceably with all men?
—Have you in any way been a part in sowing discord among the brethren?
—When opportunity avails do you seek immediate reconciliation?

Matthew 5:10-12 —Do you grieve or rejoice when persecuted?
—Are you Godly enough to draw criticism for your Christ-likeness?
—When did someone last take aim at you, not for your sin, but for your righteousness?
—Are you able to rejoice in the face of adversity?

- Matthew 5:13 —Do you have such vital reality with God that you make an impact on the surrounding world?
—Does your life bring conviction on those around you who sin?
—Is your testimony worthless, like savourless salt?
- Matthew 5:14-16 —Does your life show forth light in the darkness of this world?
—Are you ashamed of Jesus Christ?
—Are you diligent to maintain good works?
—Does your example provoke others to good works?
- Matthew 5:17-20 —The Bible teaches that the Spirit-filled believer actually fulfills the righteousness that is in the law (see Rom 8:3-4).
—Does your life exhibit Spirit-wrought rightliving?
—Does your righteousness go deeper than external appearance?
—Is your heart right in the sight of God?
- Matthew 5:21-22 —Are you unjustly angry with your brother?
—Have you allowed the sun to go down upon your wrath?
—Have you allowed your seething anger to boil over in unkind words and insults?
—Has a murderous spirit caused you to make severe statements to or about others?
- Matthew 5:23-26 —Can you think of anyone who is holding something against you and you have not attempted to put it right?
—Is there someone that you need to go to and seek reconciliation?
—Have you gone the “extra mile” in seeking to live peaceably with all men?
- Matthew 5:27-30 —Do you have a problem with immoral fantasies?
—Have you made provision for the lust of the flesh by allowing sensual material access to you via television?
—Do you need to cleanse your home of magazines, videos, cable T.V., and internet access to lewd material?
—Are you willing to deal radically with the sin of lust by taking the needed preventative measures?
- Matthew 5:31-32 —Have you broken your marriage vow?
—If you have, have you sought God’s forgiveness for this sin?
- Matthew 5:33-37 —Are you guilty of swearing?
—Are you reliable?
—Do you fulfill your verbal commitments?
—Are you honest in your communications?
—Make a list of those from whom you need to ask forgiveness or to whom you need to make restitution.
- Matthew 5:38-42 —Are you harboring revenge in your heart against someone?
—Are you responding with Christ-likeness toward your enemies?
—Is there someone to whom you need to show special kindness?
- Matthew 5:43-48 —Do you love your enemies?
—Are you able to bless those who curse you?
—Is there an act of kindness that you need to bestow on someone who does not like you?
—Spend some time right now praying for those who have misused you and persecuted you.

Praying the Scriptures: The Sermon on the Mount (Part 2)

- Matthew 6:1-4 —Have you lost your heavenly reward by broadcasting your giving record?
—Have you sought to impress men by telling how much you have given to the cause of Christ?
—Will you purpose in your heart to do your giving in the sight of God only?
- Matthew 6:5-6 —Would you be satisfied to be a man of prayer without being known as a man of prayer?
—Do you spend more time in personal prayer than public prayer?
—Do you seek to impress men with your spiritual devotion?
—Are you more concerned about what men think or about what God knows?
- Matthew 6:7-8 —Have you been guilty of repeating words in prayer that do not come from your heart?
—Have you prayed like the pagans by reducing prayer to a mere ritual or formula?
—Do you “think” before you speak to the majestic, holy Creator?
—Do you lack confidence in God’s knowledge of your needs?
—Do you doubt God’s promise to supply all your need?
—Does your self-absorbed prayer life reveal a lack of experiential knowledge of God?
- Matthew 6:9-13 —Have you patterned your prayer life according to the pattern that Jesus taught?
—Is your primary motive in prayer the exaltation of God’s name?
—Are you anxious for the King of the universe to take His throne?
—Are you fully cooperating with God that His perfect will might be done in your life?
—Do you share with your heavenly Father your every need?
—Do you keep a “current account” with God in the confession of your sin?
—Are you looking ahead and praying preventatively that God would deliver you from evil?
—Are you ascribing to God the honor, power, and glory due unto His holy name?
- Matthew 6:14-15 —Have you experienced God’s forgiveness personally?
—Have you been tenderhearted, forgiving others, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you?
—Do you realize that unforgiveness is unforgiveable?
—Do you realize that your forgiveness of men has a bearing on God’s forgiveness of you?
—Do you need to forgive anyone right now by cancelling out the debt you are owed?
- Matthew 6:16-18 —Do you practice the spiritual discipline of fasting?
—Do you fast in secret or do you advertise your self-denial?
—Have you lost your reward by hypocritically letting others know of your self-abasement?
- Matthew 6:19-21 —Are you consumed with material possessions?
—Are you more pre-occupied with the temporal than the eternal?
—Are you investing more in the things of earth than in the things of heaven?
—Are you investing your treasure in the work of God?
—Do you enjoy giving to others the things God has given you?
—Do you spend more time pondering your possessions than contemplating the eternal?
- Matthew 6:22-23 —Does your spiritual eyesight allow the light of God to shine deep into your soul and conscience?
—Do you have a conscience void of offense before God and man?
—Are you focused on the right things?

- Matthew 6:24 —Are you attempting to live with a divided allegiance?
- Matthew 6:25-32 —Are you guilty of being earthly-minded?
—Do you waste time thinking about the same things that unsaved people think about?
—Are you over-concerned with peripheral issues such as dress, food, and shelter?
—Are you failing to enjoy the life and health God has given you by greedily coveting after other things?
—Do you doubt God's concern for you and His ability to provide?
- Matthew 6:33-34 —Does your life demonstrate that you are a pilgrim in search of a city whose builder is God?
—Do you long for practical, personal righteousness?
—Have you set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth?
—Do you worry about the future?
—Are you obsessed with things, concerns, and fears rather than God?

Praying the Scriptures: The Sermon on the Mount (Part 3)

- Matthew 7:1-5 —Are you a critical person?
—Do you recognize that you will be held to the same standard to which you hold others?
—Are you more concerned about others' wrong actions than your own wrong attitude?
—Do you need to repent of a fault-finding, condemning spirit?
—Have you played the hypocrite by attempting to straighten others out, instead of setting your own house in order?
- Matthew 7:6 —Do you have a good testimony in the eyes of the watching world?
—Has your behavior given the enemies of God reason to ridicule holy things?
- Matthew 7:7-11 —Are you a praying person?
—Are you seeking the right things?
—Do you aggressively cooperate with God in fulfilling His will?
—Does God answer your prayers?
—Take time right now to ask God in faith for the things that you desire the most.
- Matthew 7:12 —Are you loving your neighbor as yourself?
—Do you treat others as you would like for them to treat you?
—Is the love of God evident in your life by the way you treat others?
- Matthew 7:13-14 —Have you consciously departed from the broad way and deliberately entered the narrow gate which is Christ?
—Does your lifestyle demonstrate that you are indeed on the narrow way?
—If you have never deliberately trusted Christ as Lord and Savior, are you willing to cry out to God right now and tell Him that you are trusting in His Son for your salvation.
- Matthew 7:15-20 —Do you seek to scripturally evaluate the ministries with which you affiliate?
—Do you exercise spiritual discernment in all your religious associations?
—Does your local church seek to abide by the principles and practices laid down in the Word of God?
- Matthew 7:21-23 —Is it your habit to daily “do” the will of God?
—According to Jesus there will be many professing Christians in hell. Do you have more than outward service to validate the genuineness of your conversion?
—Do you have the inner witness of the Holy Spirit? (see Rom. 8:16)
- Matthew 7:24-27 —Have you wisely chosen to build your life and stake your destiny on following the commands of Christ?
—Are the “foundations of your soul” strong enough to withstand the storms of life?
—In light of these verses, would you describe yourself as wise or foolish?