**Survey New Testament**

**Matthew 6**

This chapter deals with true righteousness practiced in the believer’s life. This section actually continues through 7:12, and contains three sections: worship (6:1–18), wealth (6:19–34), and the walk (7:1–12).

**The Believer and Worship Matthew 6:1–18**

1. Christ puts worship first since one’s relationship to God determines his or her relationship to the world and other people. The main thought is that our relationship to God must be between us and the Lord, for God to see and not for people to applaud.
2. **Giving** (vv. 2–4). The Pharisees loved to advertise their giving (Mark 12:38–40). How people today love to tell others how much they have given! If this is their motive for giving, then they have their reward—the praise of people.
3. **Praying** (vv. 5–15). Jesus says, “When you pray”. He expects us to pray. Jesus emphasizes that it is a sin to pray to be seen and heard by others. Prayer is secret fellowship with God, although public prayer is certainly authorized in the Bible. However, nobody should pray in public who does not pray in private; for that would be hypocrisy. Jesus points out three common errors concerning prayer: (1) praying to be heard by others (vv. 5–6); (2) praying mere words, empty repetition (vv. 7–8); and (3) praying with sin in the heart (vv. 14–15). God does not forgive us because we forgive others but on the basis of the blood of Christ (1 John 1:9). However, an unforgiving spirit will hinder a prayer life.
4. **Fasting** (vv. 16–18). True fasting is of the heart, not just the body (see Joel 2:13; Isa. 58:5). Fasting for the Christian is preparation for praying and other spiritual exercises. It means giving up a lesser thing to gain a greater, and this could involve food, something you like doing, social media, games, TV programs, etc.

**The Believer and Wealth Matthew 6:19–34**

The key in this section is v. 33, “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (NKJV). Put God first and material things will be taken care of by God.

1. The basic principle (vv. 19–24).  Christ states several reasons why living for material things is foolish. For one thing, material things do not last. But treasure used for God’s glory is invested in heaven where it lasts eternally. The way people use wealth is an indication of the condition of their hearts. The eye here speaks of the outlook of the heart. A single eye means one that is fixed on the spiritual. “Evil” in v. 23 means the opposite of single; it suggests a sinful outlook, a double vision. In v. 24 Jesus clearly tells us that we cannot look in two directions at one time, serve two masters, and live for God and material wealth.
2. The daily practice (vv. 25–34). Christ shows that worrying about material things is foolish because it accomplishes nothing! He reminds us to have our values straight—life consists of far more than food and clothing. Christ also points to God’s care of nature—the flowers, grass, and birds. “You are of more value than they. Certainly God will care for you!” The Father knows our needs, and if we put Him first, He will meet every need.
3. How do believers today practice Matt. 6:33? We will start with our time, and put God first in every day. This means time for prayer and reading the Word. We will put God first in every week, attending the house of God faithfully. We will put God first every payday, giving our tithe to the Lord. We will put God first in our choices, making no decision that would leave God out. Lot left God out of his decisions and ended up in the darkness of a cave, practicing terrible sin!

**Matthew 7**

The first part of chapter 7 completes the second section of the Sermon on the Mount-“True Righteousness Practiced by the Believer” (6:1–7:12). The final section of the Sermon on the Mount (7:13–29) is titled “True Righteousness Proved by Tests”.

**The Believer’s Walk Matthew 7:1–12**

The key verse for this section is 12, “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” (NIV). This is the Golden Rule that governs a believer’s relationship to other people.

1. Judging (7:1–5). Christ is not telling us to avoid evaluating people (see 1 John 4:1–6). The world is full of false Christians and even ministers of Satan (2 Cor. 11:13–15). As never before, Christians must be alert and must “try the spirits” (1 John 4:1). What Christ is condemning is harsh judgment and unjust criticism of others’ motives. Every believer has the obligation to test others by their fruits (vv. 15–20), but no Christian should ever judge motives (see Rom. 14 and 1 Cor. 4:5). This command of Christ does not prohibit church discipline. He tells us to face disobedient Christians honestly and humbly, examine the evidence, and deal with sin decisively (see 18:15–18; 1 Cor. 5). He did not say that it was wrong for you to help your brothers or sisters get rid of their sins; but He did say that first you should take care of your own sin.
2. Praying (7:7–12). Why does Christ include this exhortation on prayer at this point in the sermon? The believer who seeks to obey the Word of God must constantly ask for strength, seek wisdom, and knock at God’s door for the supply of grace needed. Note that Christ bases prayer on the fatherhood of God (vv. 9–11).

**True Righteousness Proved by Tests Matthew 7:13–29**

Christ outlines three tests that will prove our righteousness is truly from God. False Christianity, a counterfeit, will fail these tests.

1. The test of self-denial (vv. 13–14).  The two ways refer to two types of life-style: the easy, comfortable, popular life, or the difficult way of self-denial. These ways are entered by two gates: a narrow gate of surrender or a broad gate of self-sufficiency. True righteousness leads to self-denial.
2. The test of spiritual fruit (vv. 15–23). They call Christ “Lord” and even do religious deeds, but they have not been saved or they are backslid! “You will know them by their fruits” (v. 16, NKJV). What fruits does Christ seek? He seeks: (1) the fruit of the Spirit, or Christian character as described in the Beatitudes and Gal. 5:22–23; (2) the fruit of the lips, testimony and praise to God (Heb. 13:15); (3) holy living (Rom. 6:22); (4) good works (Col. 1:10); (5) lost souls won to Christ (Rom. 1:13).
3. The test of obedience (vv. 24–29). The two builders represent two men in this life. But when the storm comes—the time of testing—the house not founded on the rock crumbles and falls. The true Christian is founded on the Rock, Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 3:11). A child of God is proven by lasting through the storms that test him or her. A true Christian is proven by obeying Christ. One is not merely a hearer of the Word, but is also a doer (James 1:22–25).

**Matthew 8**

We move now into a new section of Matthew, in which the King reveals His power (chaps. 8–10). Matthew groups together ten miracles to prove to his readers that Jesus Christ possessed the powers of the King that the OT promised the Messiah would have. These miracles were Christ’s credentials, proving that He was sent of God.

**Power over Disease Matthew 8:1–17**

1. Leprosy (vv. 1–4). This was the most dreaded disease in Jesus’ day, a disease for which there was no cure. Jesus touched the leper, thus defiling Himself; yet His touch meant healing. He also healed through His word, “Be clean!” (v. 3, NIV) Leviticus 13 describes the priests’ test for leprosy and shows how leprosy is a picture of sin: it lies deeper than the skin (v. 3); it spreads (v. 7); it defiles (vv. 44–45); it isolates from God and man (v. 46). The nation of Israel was pictured as defiled with leprosy (Isa. 1:5–6).
2. Palsy (vv. 5–13). Here we have a Gentile coming to Christ for help. There are two instances in Matthew of Gentiles coming to Christ, here and in 15:21–28. Note that in both cases Christ healed at a distance. This parallels Eph. 2:12–13 where the Gentiles are said to be “far off” spiritually speaking. In both cases it was faith that Christ honored, and it was by the power of His word that the miracles took place. Christ offers a stern warning to the Jews (vv. 10–12) that because of their unbelief, they will lose the kingdom and the Gentiles will receive it instead.
3. Fever (vv. 14–17). Peter was married (1 Cor. 9:5). Peter’s mother-in-law served Christ after He healed her, which shows how complete the cure was, and how grateful she was for what He had done. We should do likewise. Note that Matthew quotes Isa. 53:4 to give scriptural proof for Christ’s ministry.

**Power over Nature Matthew 8:18–27**

1. Verses 19–22 show why Jesus was not impressed with the great crowds: the people were not willing to forsake all to follow Christ. They were interested in seeing the miracles, but not interested in giving their all for Christ.
2. We do know that sudden storms are common on the Sea of Galilee. See the peace Christ displayed—able to sleep in a dangerous storm. This is the peace we can have when we know we are in the center of God’s will. Again, by His word He controls the wind and the sea, and there is an immediate calm. We go from a “great tempest” (v. 24) to a “great calm” (v. 26) because of a great Savior! How thankful we should be that Christ calms the storms of life (see Ps. 107:23–31).

**Power over Satan Matthew 8:28–34**

1. Christ now meets His enemy again, this time in a graveyard. What an illustration this is of Eph. 2:1–3! We see death (the graveyard), satanic possession, and the filthiness of the flesh. While Matthew speaks of two men, the other Gospels speak of one, perhaps the one who was the most prominent. Matthew does not contradict Mark and Luke; he supplements their account. We must admit the reality of demonic powers in our world today (Eph. 6:12) and the desire of Satan to destroy human bodies and condemn their souls to hell.
2. The fear of the demons that Christ would torment them “before the time” (v. 29) indicates that there is a future judgment for Satan and his armies. Demons must have bodies to do their work in this world, just as the Spirit needs the Christian’s body (Rom. 12:1–2). Demons must obey His Word, and His one word “Go!” expelled them from the men.
3. How foolish the citizens were to ask Jesus to leave. If you compare this with the Gospels of Luke and Mark, you discover that there were three “prayers” in that graveyard: the demons prayed for permission to enter the swine; one of the healed men prayed for the privilege of following Jesus; and the citizens prayed that Jesus would leave them.

**Matthew 9**

This chapter continues in the presentation of the power of the King (chaps. 8–10).

**Power over Sin Matthew 9:1–17**

1. The miracle (vv. 1–8). Palsy was a type of paralysis, leaving the man helpless. He was brought to Jesus by believing friends, and Christ answered their faith by healing the man. But He did far more: He also forgave his sins! “The Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins” (v. 6). Christ’s critics accused Him of blasphemy, thus proving they did not accept His kingship and His sonship.
2. The results (vv. 9–17). The scribes and Pharisees were starting to look for reasons to accuse and oppose Christ (see vv. 3, 11, 34). Thus when Matthew held a dinner for Christ and invited his “sinner friends,” the Pharisees attended to cause trouble. In this passage, Christ pictures Himself as a physician to heal sinful hearts (v. 12) and a bridegroom to bring joy to people’s lives (v. 15).
3. John was in prison and his disciples were confused. Jesus’ ministry was different from that of the Pharisees, who fasted often (Luke 18:12), and they wanted an explanation. Jesus told them He was introducing a new thing, and He spoke of new cloth and new wine. You cannot pour the new message of the Gospel into the old container of the law. To mix law and grace is to cause confusion and destroy both. The new life in Christ must take new forms.

**Power over Death (9:18–26)**

1. **The desire** (9:18–19). This man came by faith seeking Jesus to heal his daughter.
2. **The delay** (9:20–22). The woman with the issue of blood had faith and was willing to humble herself at His feet. The physicians of the world could not heal her (Mark 5:26) so she came to the Great Physician. But this delayed the Lord as He went to the home of Jairus, and how Jairus must have fretted! Yet, Christ’s delays always lead to greater blessing. Instead of merely healing the girl, He raised her from the dead!
3. **The derision** (9:23–24). Imagine, sinners laughing at Jesus! We can expect the world to laugh at us as we seek to raise sinners from the dead (Eph. 2:1–10).
4. **The demonstration** (9:25–26). He touches and speaks to her and she comes back to life. Christ raised three people from the dead, about whom we have full accounts in the Bible: a little girl (here), a young man (Luke 7:11–16), and an older man (John 11). Death is a picture of spiritual death (Eph. 2:1; John 5:24–25). Jesus forgives us and raises us up from the powers of sin and death.

**Power over Darkness Matthew 9:27–31**

1. How these men came to be blind, we do not know. They acknowledged Jesus as the Son of David and followed Him into the house. Jesus asked if they had faith, and because they did, He healed them. Note how faith shows up in chapters 8 and 9. The centurion had great faith (8:10), but the disciples in the storm had little faith (8:26). The faith of his friends helped the palsied man (9:2), and the faith of the woman healed her (9:22). Jairus’ faith was tested by the delay along the road, and the blind men had their faith rewarded.

**Power over Demons Matthew 9:32–38**

1. This miracle caused a great stir: “It was never so seen in Israel!” (v. 33) Thus, Christ proved His kingship. Yet, the religious leaders rejected Him and even accused Him of getting His power from Satan!
2. Note that Jesus did not argue with people, but rather went to help those who would receive Him. He preached “the Gospel of the kingdom” (v. 35), which means He was still offering Himself to the nation as their King.
3. The multitudes today are still in need of the Shepherd. Only Christ can lead them and feed them (see Ezek. 34). Christ pictures Himself as a shepherd and as a harvester, the Lord of the Harvest. The harvest is His (v. 38) and we must obey Him if souls are going to be won.