

Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus

A Discipleship Journey



Sermon on the Mount

Week 34

Getting to "Yes"

Matthew 7:28 - 29

Opening Prayer:

I Praise You for this Resurrection Madness

Lord of such amazing surprises
has put a catch in my breath
and wings on my heart,
I praise you for this joy,
too great for words,
but not for tears and songs and sharing;
for this mercy
that blots out my betrayals
and bids me begin again,
to limp on,
to hop-skip-and-jump on,
to mend what is broken
in and around me,
and to forgive the breakers;
for this YES
to life and laughter
to love and lovers,
and to my unwinding self;

for this kingdom
unleashed in me and I in it forever,
and no dead ends to growing,
to choices,
to chances,
to calls to be just;
no dead ends to living,
to making peace,
to dreaming dreams,
to being glad of heart;
for this resurrection madness
which is wiser than I
and in which I see
how great you are,
how full of grace.
Alleluia!

Reflection

Throughout this year, the teachings in the Sermon on the Mount have drawn us inward and have encouraged our transformation. We are now invited to reflect on what kind of impact this awakening will have on our life.

When Jesus finished these words, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

Matthew 7:28 - 29

Last week we reflected on the *crowd's* response to Jesus' teaching and considered the question of Who Jesus is to us. This week, the question for us to grapple with as we come to the end of the teaching is: what is *our* reaction to it all? Why should we pay attention to this Sermon? And what kind of impact, if any, will this teaching have on our lives?

To start, perhaps it would be helpful to reflect on Jesus' motive behind this teaching. In other words, why did He preach the Sermon? Jesus wasn't necessarily interested in teaching people how to live – the Jewish community had the 613 Laws of the Torah and multitudes of interpretations by the Pharisees to guide them in that respect. Given their struggle with keeping the law, how would they possibly obey the teachings in the Sermon, which are infinitely more impossible to practice?

So, if Jesus wasn't going for obedience, what, then, is His message?

Jesus understood that, in spite of our best efforts, we still fall short of living fully His teachings. We cannot do it on our own. We need a new birth, a new nature, and a new life. The teachings of the Sermon on the Mount help us move in the direction of this new birth, this new life and, as we gradually incorporate its teachings into our life, we are transformed more and more until eventually "yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me." (Gal 2:20)

And the amazing thing is that we are not alone in this work; Jesus promises to help make that transformation possible. What He is saying in this Sermon is that He has come in order to give us this new life. He has come to make it possible! All we have to do is say "Yes!" And with our "Yes", Christ, Who already dwells in our hearts, becomes a living presence in us and through us so that we, in turn, bring Christ's light into the world! **Alleluia!!**

Closing Prayer

Speak to Jesus about what is on your heart, then rest in silence for a few moments listening for His response.