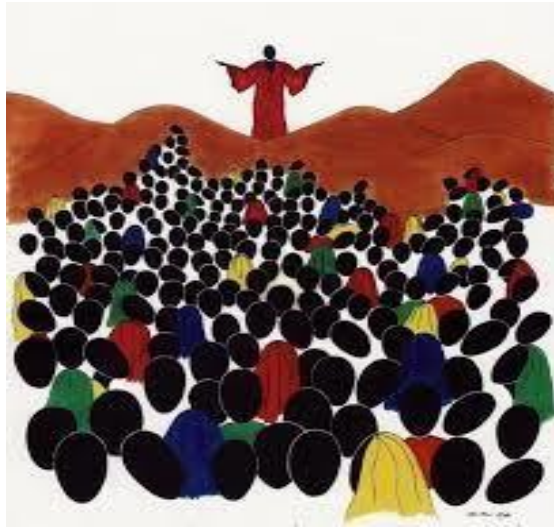


NT 3XM3 - The Sermon on the Mount



Term: Spring/Summer 2020

Dates: June 22 – July 24

Programs: MDiv, MTS, Cert CS

Specializations: BS, CC, CW, PS

Instructor: Phil Strickland, PhD

Email: strickpd@mcmaster.ca

Office: 213

Office Hours: By appointment
(virtual meetings only)

Format: Online

Monday (live stream)

9:00 AM – 10:50 AM

Wednesday, Friday

(prerecorded)

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- I. Description:** Many biblical scholars consider the Sermon on the Mount to be the crown jewel of Jesus' teachings recorded in the Gospels. Throughout the Sermon, Jesus addresses several issues that are fundamental to human experience, such as wealth and poverty, marriage and divorce, joy and suffering, anger and forgiveness, friends and enemies, authenticity and hypocrisy, and what it really means to have faith in God. This course aims to provide an in-depth study of this most famous of Jesus' sermons. We will examine how this material from Jesus' preaching fits into the narrative of the Gospel of Matthew and how it finds expression also in the Gospel of Luke (Matt 5–7; Luke 6:20–49). Emphasis will be placed on understanding the Sermon as it would have been heard in its original Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts. We will also explore ways in which the Sermon has been heard in subsequent Christian tradition, and how it can and should be heard by the church today. *(This course may also serve as a Greek Exegesis course for MDiv and MTS students, though this is not required).*

II. Objectives:

Knowing

- Have a good grasp of the content of the Sermon on the Mount.
- Understand the Sermon in its historical context and its relevance for the church today.
- Gain awareness of important exegetical and theological issues related to the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount.

Being

- Be shaped intellectually and spiritually by a deeper encounter with Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount.
- Become more adept at interpreting and applying biblical texts.

Doing

- Master the content of the Sermon on the Mount.
- Identify and explain important literary themes of the Sermon in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.
- Learn about how the Sermon on the Mount has been interpreted in Christian tradition.
- Develop a greater competency in reading and expositing texts from the New Testament.

III. Course Requirements:

Required Texts

Allison, Dale C., Jr. *The Sermon on the Mount: Inspiring the Moral Imagination*. New York: Herder, 1999.

Pennington, Jonathan T. *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2017.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship* (any edition).

The Holy Bible (any standard English translation [e.g., CEB, TNIV, NRSV]).

Required for Greek Exegesis Student ONLY:

A standard critical edition of the Greek New Testament; either *Novum Testamentum Graece* by Nestle-Aland (27th or 28th ed.) or *The Greek New Testament* by United Bible Societies (4th or 5th ed.).

** All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, McMaster Divinity College. For advance purchase, you may contact: READ On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

*** Other course materials will be posted on the course website on Avenue2Learn. Online access to the course will be given upon registration.

Recommended for Further Reading (Not Required)

Allen, Lloyd. "The Sermon on the Mount in the History of the Church." *Review and Expositor* 89 (1992) 245–62.

Allison, Dale C., Jr. *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005.

Betz, Hans Dieter. *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.

Blomberg, Craig L. "The Most Often Abused Verses in the Sermon on the Mount: And How to Treat Them Right." *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 46.3 (2004) 1–17.

Carson, D. A. *Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and His Confrontation with The World: An Exposition of Matthew 5–10*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004.

Carter, Warren. *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001.

_____. *What Are They Saying about Matthew's Sermon on the Mount?* New York: Paulist Press, 1994.

Davies, W. D. *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

France, R.T. *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher*. Exeter: Paternoster, 1989.

_____. *The Gospel of Matthew*. New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

Geulich, Robert A. *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982.

Greenman, Jeffrey P., Timothy Larsen, and Stephen R. Spencer, eds. *The Sermon on the Mount through the Centuries: From the Early Church to John Paul II*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2007.

Hagner, Donald A. *Matthew*. WBC 33a-b. Dallas: Word, 1993, 1995.

- Jeremias, Joachim. *The Sermon on the Mount*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1963.
- Keener, Craig S. *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Kingsbury, Jack D. *Matthew as Story*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.
- Matera, Frank J. *The Sermon on the Mount: The Perfect Measure of the Christian Life*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013.
- McKnight, Scot. *Sermon on the Mount*. Story of God Commentary. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013.
- Nolland, John. *The Gospel of Matthew*. New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Divine Rhetoric: The Sermon on the Mount as Message and as Model in Augustine, Chrysostom, and Luther*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.
- Pennington, Jonathan. *Heaven and Earth in the Gospel of Matthew*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009.
- Runesson, Anders. *Divine Wrath and Salvation in Matthew: The Narrative World of the First Gospel*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016.
- Stanton, Graham N. "Sermon on the Mount/Plain." In *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, edited by Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall, 735–44. Downers Grove: IVP, 1992.
- Stott, John. *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1978.
- Talbert, Charles H. *Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Ethical Decision Making in Matthew 5–7*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2006.
- Wenham, David. "The Rock on Which to Build: Some Mainly Pauline Observations about the Sermon on the Mount." In *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, edited by Daniel Gurtner and John Nolland, 187–206. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

IV. Assignments:

Participation and Reading – Attendance of online sessions is mandatory. Students are expected to be prepared and ready to engage in class discussion. Readings are also a significant part of course participation. Students must have completed all required course readings and will be asked to provide a report on the percentage of readings they have done. *DUE July 24. Value: 10%*

Journal – To encourage intellectual and spiritual formation, students will keep a journal of their own personal insights from, and reflections on, the Sermon on the Mount. How do Jesus' words have relevance for your personal situation, for your church, or your community? How are the readings for the course impacting how you hear the Sermon? What sorts of radical acts of faith and discipleship might Jesus be calling you to do, and how might the Sermon speak to that? These and other relevant questions should be explored. Thoughtful interaction is key. There should be a journal entry of at least 200 words (i.e., 3 or 4 paragraphs) for each major section of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel (6 entries total: 5:1–16, 5:17–48; 6:1–18, 6:19–34; 7:1–12, 7:13–29). *DUE: July 03 (Entries 1–2), July 10 (Entries 3–4), July 17 (Entries 5–6). Value 10%*

Book Review – Students will read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Cost of Discipleship* and write a book review. Reviews should be 5–7 pages in length. A good review will include 1–2 pages of summary, 2–3 pages of thoughtful interaction (and critique where necessary), and 1–2 pages of concluding thoughts. *DUE July 24. Value 20%*

Mini Papers

Context Paper – Write a short paper (5–7 pages, double-spaced) on a significant socio-cultural issue from either the Greco-Roman world or Second Temple Judaism and how this issue relates directly to how we read and understand the Sermon on the Mount in its historical context. Papers should interact with a minimum of 5 scholarly sources (books and articles). Topics will be selected during the first class meeting. *DUE July 03. Value 15%*

Potential topics (others may be suggested):

Poverty and Wealth	Marriage	Jewish ideas of "Kingdom"
Slavery	Prayer	First-century Galilee
The OT Law	Wisdom	Alms giving
Jewish sects	Synagogue	Roman occupation

Literary Paper – Write a short paper (5–7 pages, double-spaced) on a significant literary theme in the Sermon on the Mount and how this theme connects to other parts of Matthew’s Gospel. Another option is to select a theme that is found in both versions of the Sermon as recorded in Matthew and Luke and discuss how this theme is appropriated in each of those Gospels, noting points of similarity and contrast. Papers should interact with a minimum of 5 scholarly sources (books and articles). *DUE July 10. Value 15%*

Final Project – Students will do a major project in line with their chosen specialization. More details on the assignment will be provided by the instructor. *DUE July 24. Value 30%*

Pastoral Studies (PS) – Students in this stream will prepare and deliver a 15-minute sermon on a selected pericope (a defined textual unit, usually about 5–10 verses) from the Sermon on the Mount. Students must provide a sermon outline and manuscript, exegetical notes, and a video recording of their sermon. Students must also show how their sermon would fit within a larger plan for a preaching series on the Sermon on the Mount. All elements of the assignment (outline, manuscript, exegetical notes [with bibliography], preaching plan, and video) should be uploaded to the course Dropbox.

Biblical Studies (BS) – Students in this stream will write a 10 to 15-page exegetical paper on a select pericope (a defined textual unit, usually about 5–10 verses) from the Sermon on the Mount. This paper should address relevant historical, interpretive, text-critical, and linguistic facets of the text. Completed papers should be uploaded to the course Dropbox. **(This assignment is also required for students taking the course as Greek Exegesis)**

Church & Culture (CC) / Christian History & Worldview (CW) – Students in these streams will write a 10 to 15-page research paper on a significant appropriation of the Sermon on the Mount (in whole or in part) in Christian interpretive tradition. *Students doing this assignment cannot duplicate their work from the Book Review assignment and must choose a different topic. Completed papers should be uploaded to the course Dropbox.

Potential Topics for CC and CW papers (other topics may be suggested):

Augustine	John Wesley	Pacifism vs. Just War readings
John Chrysostom	Karl Barth	Dispensationalist readings
Thomas Aquinas	John Stott	Catholic readings (e.g., John Paul II)
Martin Luther	Global readings	Liberation Theology

Exegetical Worksheets (Greek Exegesis Students ONLY / Assignments to be done INSTEAD OF the Mini Papers assignments) – Students will analyze and translate the Greek text of the Sermon on the Mount. Students must use appropriate tools (lexicons, reference grammars, relevant published works, commentaries, and old-fashioned hard work) and NOT rely on parsing information from Bible software (e.g., Accordance, Logos, BibleWorks). The course instructor will provide additional instructions about the procedures for successfully completing these assignments. **Value: 30%**

Choose 8 of the following passages to study and translate:

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Matt 5:1–12 | Matt 5:43–6:4 | Matt 7:1–14 |
| Matt 5:13–20 | Matt 6:5–15 | Matt 7:15–23 |
| Matt 5:21–30 | Matt 6:16–24 | Matt 7:24–29 |
| Matt 5:31–42 | Matt 6:25–34 | |

V. Course Schedule:

Format – This class will be delivered online, featuring both synchronous (live streaming) lecture/discussion and asynchronous (prerecorded) material. Each week we will have 1 live session on WebEx (Mondays), and 2 pre-recorded sessions uploaded on Avenue to Learn (Wednesdays and Fridays). **WebEx sessions will meet on Mondays, 9:00 AM–10:50 AM.** Students must attend all live sessions and watch all pre-recorded sessions. The instructor will send the invites to the class prior to each WebEx meeting. *Greek Exegesis students will have additional meetings for Greek reading and discussion.* Below is a schedule of topics to be covered in these sessions:

Dates	Topic
June 22-26	Intro to Matthew and the SoM / Context: Jesus, Judaism, and Empire
June 29-July 3	The SoM in Matthew (and Luke) / The SoM in Christian History
July 6-10	Interpreting the SoM / The Beatitudes 5:1-12; 5:13-16 / Jesus and the Law 5:17-32; 5:33-48
July 13-17	Real Faith and the Lord's Prayer 6:1-18 / Trusting God 6:19-34
July 20-24	Hypocrisy 7:1-12 / The Narrow Road to Life 7:13-23; 7:24-29 / Concluding thoughts

Schedule of Assignments

Date	Assignment Due
22-Jun	Allison, 1–40; Pennington, 1–40
23-Jun	Allison, 41–57; Pennington, 41–104
24-Jun	Allison, 58–106; Pennington, 105–168
25-Jun	Allison, 107–152; Pennington, 169–252
26-Jun	Allison, 152–176; Pennington, 253–310 / Greek Exegetical sheets 1–2 Due
03-Jul	Context Paper Due / Journal Entries 1–2 Due / Greek Exegetical sheets 3–4
10-Jul	Literary Paper Due / Journal Entries 3–4 Due / Greek Exegetical sheets 5–6 Due
17-Jul	Journal Entries 5–6 Due / Greek Exegetical sheets 7–8 Due
24-Jul	Final Projects Due / Book Review Due / Reading Reports Due

Grade Summary

10% - Participation/Reading
10% - Journal
20% - Book Review
30% - Mini Papers OR Greek Exegetical worksheets
+ 30% - Final Project
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= 100% - Final Grade

Disclaimer: This syllabus is the property of the course instructor, who reserves the right to make changes and revisions to assignments until, and including, the first day of class.

VI. Rules and Regulations:

Academic Honesty

McMaster Divinity College is a religious community of people training for and engaged in Christian ministry. As part of their commitment to Christian faithfulness, members of the Divinity College community are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in all fields. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including: plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences (e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College). Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty: <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

Inclusive Language

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

Style

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses, which can conveniently be found online at <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for livestream sessions. Students are expected to be prepared and ready to engage. In the event of an emergency (e.g., serious health issue, family emergency), please be sure to contact the course instructor who will help to make appropriate arrangements for making up assignments.

Technology

This is an online course. Students are expected to have access to the technology necessary to successfully complete the course. Students are expected to use their McMaster email accounts and Avenue to Learn. For IT information, see <https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/educational-technology-help-page/>.