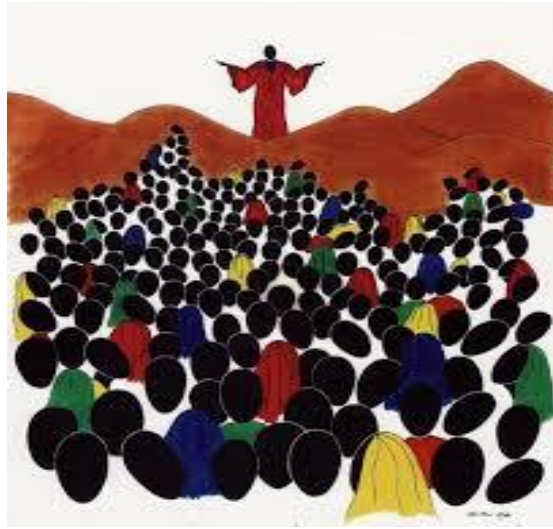


NT 3XM3 - The Sermon on the Mount

Due to the uncertainty of the extent of the ongoing COVID-19 situation, McMaster Divinity College is transferring all Spring 2020 courses ONLINE. Current syllabi will be modified regarding delivery model and timelines. However, you can consult the syllabi for content. Updated, revised ONLINE syllabi will be posted as soon as possible. We will notify students when the final syllabi have been posted. Your patience is greatly appreciated.



Programs: MDiv, MTS, Cert CS

Specializations: Biblical Studies (BS),
Church & Culture (CC),
Christian Thought & History (CTH),
Pastoral Studies (PS)

Instructor: Phil Strickland, PhD

Email: strickpd@mcmaster.ca

Office Hours: By appointment

Spring, 2020

June 22–26

Mon: 11:30–4:00, Tues–Thur: 9:00–4:00, Fri: 9:00–12:00

Room: TBA

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.

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.

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

Choose One:

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

Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998.

** All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. 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. Access to the website will be given upon registration in the course.

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.

Bauman, Clarence. *The Sermon on the Mount: The Modern Quest for Its Meaning*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1985.

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 in all class periods is mandatory. Students are expected to come prepared and ready to engage in class discussion and activities. 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 either Dallas Willard's *Divine Conspiracy* or 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 (5–6 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 (5–6 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.

Church & Culture (CC) / Christian Thought & History (CTH) – 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 CTH papers:

Augustine	John Calvin	Pacifism vs. Just War readings
John Chrysostom	John Wesley	Dispensationalist readings
Thomas Aquinas	Dietrich Bonhoeffer*	Catholic readings (e.g., John Paul II)
Martin Luther	John Stott	Liberation Theology

V. Course Schedule:

Format

One-week intensive courses are administered accordingly: 11:30am—4:00pm on Monday; 9:00am—4:00pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday (with lunch from 12:00pm—1:00pm); and 9:00am—12:00pm on Friday. The College will provide students with a free lunch on Monday, and a short chapel will take place on Wednesday as well. After the in-class meeting dates are concluded, course assignments will be due on scheduled dates during the following four-week period.

Schedule of Assignments

Date	Topic	Assignment Due
22-Jun	Intro to Matthew and the SoM / Reading in Context: Jesus, Judaism, and Empire	Allison, 1-40; Pennington, 1-40
23-Jun	The SoM in Matthew and Luke / The SoM in Christian History / Interpreting the SoM	Allison, 41-57; Pennington, 41-104
24-Jun	The Torah of the Messiah, the Beatitudes 5:1-12; 5:13-16 / Jesus and the Law 5:17-32; 5:33-48	Allison, 58-106; Pennington, 105-168
25-Jun	Real Faith and the Lord's Prayer 6:1-18 / Trusting God 6:19-34	Allison, 107-152; Pennington, 169-252
26-Jun	Hypocrisy 7:1-12/ The Narrow Road to Life 7:13-23; 7:24-29 / Concluding thoughts	Allison, 152-176; Pennington, 253-310
03-Jul		Context Paper Due / Journal Entries 1-2 Due
10-Jul		Literary Paper Due / Journal Entries 3-4 Due
17-Jul		Journal Entries 5-6 Due
24-Jul		Final Projects Due / Book Review Due / Reading Reports Due

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 <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuide.pdf>. Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

Attendance

Attendance in all class periods is mandatory. Students are expected to come 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 in the Classroom

Students are encouraged to bring their laptops or tablets to class for the purpose of taking notes and interacting with course materials as needed. However, the use of social media, or of anything not related to the course, is prohibited. Additionally, out of respect for others, cell phones must either be placed on vibrate, silent, or turned off.