

Questions Jesus Asked in the Gospels

*Jesus The King-come-Rabbi questions his followers.
How do we answer Him?
Matthew 5-7*



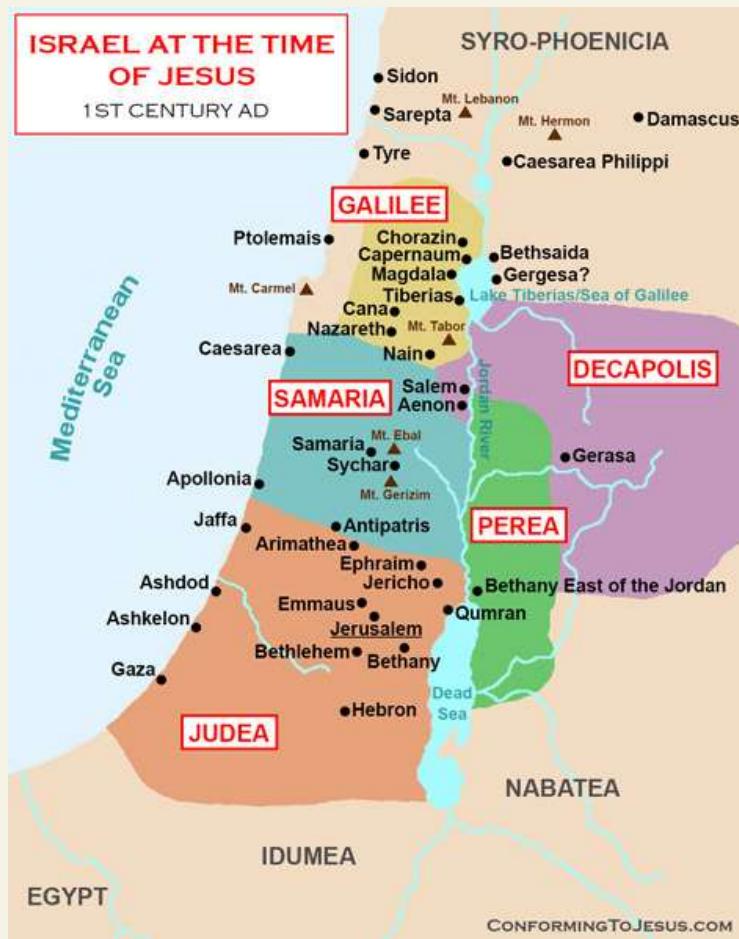
Jesus Questions within the Sermon on the Mount



• *What has happened so far..*

- *Been baptized (Matt 3)*
- *Faced temptation in the wilderness (Matt 4:1-11)*
- *Moved His ministry base to Capernaum (Matt 4:13)*
- *Proclaimed: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." (Matt 4:17)*
- *Called disciples (Peter, Andrew, James, John)*
- *Began healing and casting out demons, drawing growing crowds (Matt 4:23-25)*

Jesus Questions within the Sermon on the Mount



• His audience

- *Galilee*
- *Decapolis*
- *Jerusalem*
- *Judea*
- *Beyond the Jordan*
- *Disciples, seekers, curious, concerned leadership*

Jesus starts with Blessings

- ***Jesus presents Himself***
 - *With the signs of power over natural law*
 - *As the prophet like Moses*
 - *As the promised Son of God*
 - *As the one ushering in a new phase of the Kingdom of God*

Jesus teaches the new dimensions of His Kingdom

- *A portrait of who are blessed*
- *Jesus' call to witness in the world (Matt 5: 13-16)*
 - "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.
 - "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.
 - Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.
 - In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.



But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?

- **Question begins with a local and engaging metaphor**
 - *It is not a chemistry question!*
 - *Salt was an abundant supply item used for preservation and taste*
 - *And it was more: a covenant requirement*
 - *Le 2:13 Season all your grain offerings with salt. Do not leave the salt of the covenant of your God out of your grain offerings; add salt to all your offerings.*
 - *Nu 18:19 Whatever is set aside from the holy offerings the Israelites present to the LORD I give to you and your sons and daughters as your regular share. It is an everlasting covenant of salt before the LORD for both you and your offspring.*"



But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?

- The pedagogy of Jesus (His method of teaching and learning)
- He was not entering a debate, He was teaching and warning would be Kingdom dwellers
- He did not expect an answer out loud, He expected a heart response
- It is a rhetorical wisdom question. Jesus is primarily setting out the simple situation that when salt loses its saltiness, it cannot be restored, it is no longer useful to its purpose, and is thrown onto the nearby paths to be trampled on.
- He uses this to reveal the folly of starting off following Him and then walking away
- The consequences are not trivial, they have dire consequences
- Speaking to seeking disciples, but also it serves as a diagnosis of what the Jerusalem leadership of God's covenant has become through them
- Once you lose identifying with Me, you choose loss of calling, loss of fruitbearing, and loss of worth as compared to what I came to offer



Jesus teaches the new dimensions of His Kingdom

- *A portrait of those who are blessed*
- *Jesus' call to witness in the world*
- *Jesus fulfills the Law, & sets out the higher and deeper standard of the righteous heart*

Matthew 5	Current practice	My expectation	In the area of...
V 20		For I tell you	Superior righteousness
V 21	You have heard	But I tell you	Anger
V 27	You have heard	But I tell you	Lust
V 31	It has been said	But I tell you	Desire
V 33	Again you have heard	But I tell you	Vows
V 38	You have heard	But I tell you	Retaliation
V 43	You have heard	But I tell you	Loving enemies
	Total 6	Total 7	

4 Kingdom facts, 4 comparative questions, 1 must be model

- "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.
- If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?
- Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Are you true disciples of your Father in Heaven?

Backgrounder		
Current culture	Torah	Summary
Love your neighbour	Leviticus 19:18	Neighbour covenant circle Torah followers, local Jewish,..
Hate your enemy	Not found in Torah, interpretive practice	Enemies:Romans, tax collectors; Samaritans, rival Jewish groups..

Are you true disciples of your Father in Heaven?

Do you really think you are sons of your Father in Heaven?			
Current culture	Kingdom culture	The Father	Current culture
Love your neighbour	Pray for those who persecute you	He sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous	If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?
			And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others?
Hate your enemy	Love your enemies	He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good	Are not even the tax collectors doing that?
			Do not even pagans do that?
Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect			

Jesus teaches the new dimensions of His Kingdom

- *A portrait of those who are blessed*
- *Jesus' call to witness in the world*
- *Jesus fulfills the Law, & sets out the higher and deeper standard of the righteous heart*
- *Motives that are pure & flow from our relationship with the Father*
 - *Giving, prayer, fasting (ch 6:1-18)*
- *Priorities rooted in our commitment to Jesus*
 - *Treasures in heaven, living in the light, loyalty, trust (v 19-25)*
 - *5 questions to train true followers to rely on God's provision*

Are our priorities rooted in our commitment to Jesus?

- .."do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. **Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?**"
- A challenging duo question to prompt an honest examination of where values are now
- They are designed to move us from current values to kingdom
 - Jesus is looking for honest examination to prompt by comparison a modification

Are our priorities rooted in our commitment to Jesus?

- 26 *Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?*
- ***Observation on the Father's providential care***
 - The birds are fed by the Father-but you value sowing reaping and storing food in barns which plague you with worries
 - The antidote is for us to value faith in the Father's caring
 - This is not a minor adjustment; Jesus is calling for a total overhaul
 - Jesus is looking for honest examination to prompt by comparison a modification
 - *Again a challenging question to help us move from current to kingdom*

Are our priorities rooted in our commitment to Jesus?

- 27 **Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?**
 - Rhetorical question- answer not one of you
 - Jesus: replace anxiety with the trust in the Father
- **"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.**
 - Question WHY?, observation with comparison (lesser to greater)
 - Trust in the Father to do His work in you, and He will!

Are our priorities rooted in our commitment to Jesus?

30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

- 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
- A build on the lilies of the field, but catches attention with an allusion to the short time and then fire
- Rhetorical, comparative, tag question designed to evoke self evaluation
- Will God not provide for you?

*Jesus The King-come-Rabbi questions his followers.
How do we answer Him?*

- *Am I living living so that others may see God shining through me?*
- *Am I seeking the righteous standard by following Jesus daily?*
- *Am I moving from anxiety through trust with the result of a growing faith in God's providence?*
- *Are we seeking first His kingdom?*
- *And is our mind set each day reflecting His model prayer*
 - *Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven..*