

Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Matthew 5.

(2013)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises
But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Matthew 5.

Topics.

- Jesus famous Sermon and rewards in heaven.
- The salt of the earth.
- Going to court and being sued.
- Adultery, divorce and promises.
- An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.
- Giving to those who beg.
- Loving your enemies and being perfect.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter John the Baptist had been arrested and after Jesus had been tempted by the devil in the wilderness he calls Peter, Andrew, James and John. He travels throughout all Galilee teaching in synagogues proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction and his fame spread throughout all Syria.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

Jesus Famous Sermon.

Matthew 5:1 ----- ¹Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²And he opened his mouth and taught them saying: ³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus is speaking primarily to his disciples, but what he is saying in this sermon applies to all those who belong to Christ.

Blessed: (makarios) means to be supremely blest and by extension fortunate, well off and enormously happy.

Poor: (ptochos) literally means a beggar or pauper (it carries the idea of someone who is distressed and who is homeless, (i.e. a wanderer who has no permanent place to live and no money for food), but the primary focus of Jesus words is not those who are materialistically poor, but those who are poor in spirit, meaning those who are humble contrasted to those who are prideful.

Jesus is saying that those of a humble heart are blessed because they are willing to submit and surrender their lives to the King of the kingdom whereas the prideful will never submit or surrender their life to anyone.

Matthew 5:4 ----- ⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Mourn: (pentheo) means to grieve (i.e. to feel sorrow) in this context this applies to the following five types of mourning: -

1. To those suffering personal grief, sorrow and hardships.
2. To those mourning over the grief and destruction that sin worldwide brings upon the innocent of the world.
3. To those who mourn over mankind's greed for money and power in this world and the oppression it brings upon the masses worldwide.

4. To those who mourn over the wars, murder, rape and suffering of the innocent worldwide.

5. To those who mourn over their own sin.

Matthew 5:5 ----- 5" Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Meek: (prau's) means mild humble and gentle, a meek and humble person considers others and follow the way of peace rather than the path of strife and contention. They are not controlled or driven by pride, which at its ultimate end leads to arguments, quarrels and even wars.

Meek does not mean weak, meek and humble are the opposite of pride and forceful (i.e., to dominate). A meek person considers others and seeks for the peaceful way to solve a problem whereas a prideful person only considers self and will do what ever is necessary to get what self wants (even if they have to go to war).

Matthew 5:6 ----- 6" Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
7" Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8" Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Hunger and thirst for righteousness: hungering and thirsting for righteousness is not about strictly adhering to ceremonial rites, holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions, it is about endeavour to do what is right before God. Righteousness embraces justice it is treating other humans with decency. A person who seeks to do what is right before God will not deliberately harm another person, physically, financially, sexually, verbally, emotionally or spiritually. Hunger and thirsting for righteousness is about longing to live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The merciful: applies to people who have a disposition to be compassionate and kind to others and who are willing to show forgiveness, especially to a person they have authority over.

The pure in heart, shall see God: pure (katharos) means clean. Pure in heart carries the idea of seeing people as God sees them and thinking and looking at people in the same way Christ would think and look at them. It embraces the idea of being moral and treating others with respect and with pure, right and honest motives free of deceit and lies.

Matthew 5:9 ----- 9" Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

How amazing is this statement, those who seek the way of peace will be called the sons of God, this does not just apply to global war, but our everyday relationships and conversations with our work colleagues, school friends, family and every other contact we have with other humans. Our minds in every relationship should always be dominated by the thought "What is the way of peace in this situation," to be called sons and daughters of God we should always be thinking "What action can I take or do that will help calm this potentially explosive moment."

Matthew 5:10 ----- 10" Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11" Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

These verses shine a spotlight on the truth that Christianity is a very high calling since these verses call a Christian to everything that is the absolute opposite to self, pride and ego. It should be highlighted that this is not about being persecuted for something we have done wrong, the context is being persecuted for righteousness it is about being persecuted for doing what is right and because of our witnessing and testifying to our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTICE: everything that Jesus says in this famous sermon calls Christians to treat other humans with mercy, forgiveness, justice, dignity and decency whether they belong to his Kingdom or not.

Rewards in Heaven.

Matthew 5:12 ----- ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

These words of Jesus highlight the truth that Christians should not be surprised if they are treated badly when they share the Gospel, but be comforted by the fact that even the great prophets of old received the same response. This does not mean Christians should deliberately set about to upset others by forcing or imposing their faith onto people. The prophets spoke God's word because they loved God and wanted to protect the people from impending destruction, sadly even though their messages were spoken in love the people set about to harm them, the crucifixion of Jesus (an innocent man) is the perfect example of the persecution of a man who always did the right thing toward God and man.

God is keeping rewards in heaven for the faithful who:-

- Are distressed, in sorrow, are humble gentle and care about others.
- Hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- Are merciful, pure in heart and seek after peace.
- Are persecuted reviled and have all kinds of false accusations spoken against them because of their faith in Christ.

NOTICE: the focus is not people are going to heaven, but that there are rewards being kept in heaven for the faithful.

Salt of the Earth.

Matthew 5:13-15 ----- ¹³You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

Salt: (halas) figuratively means prudence, common sense, foresight, forethought, judgement and care, but it also carries the idea of being gentle and caring, hungering for righteousness, being merciful, pure in heart and seeking after peace.

Light: (phos) literally means to shine or make manifest (especially by rays) and figuratively to show or make known one's thoughts by speaking.

Jesus is saying, all who belong to God are His ambassadors on earth, but if they are not full of mercy, kindness, forgiveness and prepared to suffer for their faith they have become useless to Him. They are to be a city of people that proclaim by their speech, actions and behaviour the Gospel to the world setting the example for all those around them. Salt adds flavour to bland food and preserves it, perhaps we should ask ourselves every so often, "Am I salt to those around me," (i.e. am I in some small way enhancing the lives of the people I come in contact with). The disciples of Christ by their words, actions and behaviour were a light to the world of their era and through the Bible their light is still shining. Everyone who belongs to Christ have this same calling.

Matthew 5:16 ----- ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Good works and deeds are what keeps the light shining, meaning are what shows the goodness of God on earth. If those who belong to Christ do what is right, treat others fairly, are merciful and show grace and are quick to forgive then those who observe their speech and behaviour will speak good of God.

Matthew 5:17 ----- ¹⁷"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. ¹⁸For truly, I say to you until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Law: (nomos) means a general regulation, in the context of these verses it refers to the Ten Commandments. We know this because Jesus death and resurrection did abolish the need for all the Old Testament laws concerning ceremonial rites, holy days, the need for human priests and the priesthood etc. The underlying spirit of the Ten Commandments is love because each law concerning mankind protects the innocent from harm.

Jesus' mission was not to destroy the Ten Commandments, but to fulfil them within his own life; he did this by not sinning and showing love, grace and mercy to all who came to him.

The words, "Not an iota will pass from the Law until all is accomplished," means until the Lord returns in glory. While sin exists in the world the Ten Commandments will remain since it is these laws that restrain sin in the world. Without the law sin would be even more rampant, but when God's plans and purposes are completed and love is the dominant power on earth there will be no need for the law to exist.

From the time of Jesus birth to his death and resurrection he fulfilled a multitude of Old Testament prophecies spoken of him from Genesis to Malachi (far too many to list in this study).

Matthew 5:19 ----- 19Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus says if a person wants to be a great disciple they need not only to teach the Ten Commandments but also to keep them, this is because the spirit behind the law is love, because each law protects a human from hurt and harm.

Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote: -

- Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:10).

This highlights the truth that the spirit of the law is to protect from physical, financial, sexual, verbal and emotional and spiritual harm. Those who understand the heart of God endeavour to keep the law because it is the right and loving thing to do. It not only fulfils the Ten Commandments regarding man, but also the Royal law "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:28-31) (James 2:8). Added to this it honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

Christians aim to keep the law not to get saved, but because they are saved. They understand that righteousness is a gift of God that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and cannot be earned by self-effort. Though the law is splendid as a guide to an understanding of God's will, as a means of reunion with God, the God we have sinned against, it is a hopeless failure.

Law and grace go together, the law without the Gospel is diagnosis without remedy, but the Gospel without law is only the Good News of salvation for people who don't believe they need it, because they have never heard the bad news of judgment. The law is not the Gospel, but the Gospel is not lawless (Rom. 3:19-20) (Eph. 2:13-22).

Micah says, what the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God (Micah 6:5-10). Isaiah tells us the LORD loves justice and hates robbery and wrong doing (Isaiah 61:8) and Jeremiah says, those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights (Jer. 9:24).

Added to these in this famous sermon Jesus is showing that the people God loves are those who acknowledge Him and uphold justice and make choices that led to peace. They are people who do not lie, deceive or make promises they do not intend to keep, but speak the truth, do what is right and show respect and give help to others when able, these are the things Jesus and the prophets say the LORD delights in and that brings His favour.

Righteousness that Exceeds the Pharisees.

Matthew 5:20 ----- ²⁰For I tell you (the disciples) unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

The scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites they taught the law, but did not keep it Jesus is telling his disciple they must not be hypocrites (i.e. falsely claiming high principles and imposing them on others when they are not keeping them themselves) and even worse judging and condemning others when they are doing the same things.

You shall not Murder or Say you Fool.

Matthew 5:21 ----- ²¹"You (the disciples) have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' ²²But I say to you (the disciples) that everyone who is angry with his brother (without cause in the KJV) will be liable to judgment; whoever insults (says Raca in KJV) his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.

Murder: literally this applies to those who deliberately set about to kill another human, but by extension it could be applied to those who spiritually destroy another Christian's faith.

Angry: (orgizo) (orge) means to provoke and enrage so that one becomes exasperated and full of wrath (passively or in action). An excitement of the mind expressed in violent passion indignation or vengeance.

Insults: (Rhaka in KJV) it means "O empty one" or, "thou worthless one" it is a term of utter slander deliberately spoken to demean and smear a person. It carries the idea of telling lies about a person for the purpose of degrading them to others.

Fool: (moros) (muserion) means stupid, ignorant, a dunce, nincompoop, goon or an absurd fool.

Jesus in these verses is saying that anyone who deliberately says something to demean or degrade a person or who spreads false rumours that make others think bad of someone else or acts violently in speech or action against another human in anger is in extreme danger of God's judgment.

Be Reconciled or Go to Court.

Matthew 5:23-25 ----- ²³So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. ²⁵Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison. ²⁶Truly, I say to you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

At this time the Jews were still under the law, keeping the Sabbath and offering their sacrifices was the highest priority for a Jew, but Jesus is turning that upside down, he is basically saying it is more important to do everything in their power to repair a broken relationship with a person who has something against them than to go to the Synagogue and offer their gifts (sacrifices) because if the person they have offended takes them to court they will end up paying everything they owe and may even go to prison.

Today: a modern example would be, if a person was in extreme financial debt it is more important for them to come to some form of agreement with the one they owe the debt to (i.e., slowly pay it off week by week, or even to work on a holy day to pay it back) than go to church and give money to the priest. The practical idea behind what Jesus is teaching is that if a person who cannot pay their debt does not come to some agreement with the one they owe the money to they could end up in court bankrupt or in prison and then they will never be able to give to anyone or even attend a church service until the last penny has been paid.

Added to this going to church and appearing righteous while refusing to pay a debt brings a bad testimony to the name of Jesus and to the name of God.

NOTE: though in this example the accused is being taken to court because they owe the accuser a sum of money, the principle Jesus is teaching applies to any situation where a person has committed some offence and given someone good reason for taking them to court.

Adultery an Unlawful Affair.

Matthew 5:27 ----- 27" You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

The King James Bible states verse twenty- eight the following way: -

- But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Adultery: (moicheuo) (moichos) literally means, cheating (i.e. an unlawful love affair), but can also refer to a male boyfriend lover or gigolo meaning a man who receives payments or gifts from a woman in exchange for being her sexual partner. Figuratively it carries the idea of one who is an apostate (i.e., one who is false, disloyal and unfaithful to God).

Lust: (epithumeo) (thumos) means, to set the heart upon and long for (rightfully or otherwise), to covet or crave after (i.e., passion as if breathing hard). The full meaning of lust (i.e. craving) is not limited to sexual craving only it can apply to anything a person longingly craves after (i.e. money, cars, fame, importance or power etc.).

NOTICE: the words, with "lustful intent" and "to lust after her," this is not about a fleeting glance or look, but a continuing longing after in the mind, an example of this would be looking at a woman or man lustfully with the intent to act sexually with her or him.

If your Right Eye causes you to Sin, Tear it Out and Throw it Away.

Matthew 5:29 ----- 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell (geenna). 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell (geenna).

Hell in these verses comes from the Hebrew word (geenna) and means gehenna of fire it refers to the valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem. It had previously been the site of child sacrifice to an Ammonite god called Molech.

- Manasseh burned his sons as an offering in the valley of the son of Hinnom and used fortune-telling and omens and sorcery, and dealt with mediums and with wizards. He did much evil in the sight of the LORD, provoking him to anger (2 Chron. 33:1, 6).

(Jer. 19:1-13) (Jer. 32:35) (2 Chron. 28:32) (2 Chron. 33:62) (Kings 16:3) (Kings 21:6)

Gehenna later became the place where the filth and dead animals of the city of Jerusalem were cast out and burned thus the reason it is used as a symbol of the wicked and their future destruction in the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal death (i.e., total extinction).

Hell: in the Old Testament is the English translation of the Hebrew word Sheol and means the grave and in the New Testament hell is the English translation of the Greek word Hades which also means the grave.

The traditional religious belief that God has created an eternal place called hell were the unbelieving dead go after death not only to be cruelly tortured, by evil eternal spirit creatures called demons for all eternity, but also to be burned in flames of fire all the while being fully conscious of the extreme pain they are

suffering is not only a gross corruption and interpretation of Scripture, but also an extremely gross reflection of God, His heart and His nature. The Bible only two eternal destinations the Bible teaches are eternal life or eternal death (i.e. total extinction).

For further information see the titles: -

- Gehenna and Hell.

In Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Eyes in this context speak of the internal sinful desire going on in the mind while the hand can be seen as the outward action of the internal wrongful desire being carried out.

NOTICE: if your hand or eyes cause you to sin cut it off or tear them out follows on from lusting on a woman and committing adultery, Jesus is saying, if your lusting and craving after a woman is going to cause you to commit adultery do everything in your power to stop that from happening. The Lord is using extreme language to depict the horror of adultery, simply because it is full of deceit, lies, cheating and not only destroys families, but also brings enormous hurt to everyone involved including children.

The eyes can lead one into hell: this is because sin is an outward action of breaking the law, but it starts in the mind, lusting after a man or woman with intent to commit adultery with him or her is how sin begins in the mind, if the lust is strong enough the man or the woman acts on their craving so even though it is the act of adultery that is the sin, it was the eyes that caused them to act unlawfully, thus Jesus is saying if looking is going to cause a man or woman to act sinfully by committing adultery it is better for them to cut their eyes out (meaning do everything in their power to stop (i.e., don't look, keep away from them etc.)), because the end result is pain, hurt and anguish for everyone involved.

Sin and its conception, birth and growth: a sinful temptation comes by the way of sex, money, fame, power etc., that appeals to human desire, the temptation entices, seduces and lures its victim and the mind is overtaken by it. Then the sinful desire begins to outwardly act on its wrongful inward passion and sin is conceived. What began as a desire in the mind is given birth and becomes an outward action which grows until it is full blown sin. When the sinful outward action it is fully-grown it leads to death because a lifestyle of sin leads away from God. This is because it is impossible to live a lifestyle of wrongful outward behaviour and abide in Christ at the same time (James 1:13-5).

NOTE: This does not mean that every time a person has an sinful thought or desire it is going to lead to outward sin and death, if that were the case we would all be doomed for destruction, everyone including Christians have lustful and sinful thoughts at various times, but that does not mean they will act on them.

The apostle James says: -

- If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1 John 1:8-10).

Jesus in saying, "tear out your eyes and cut off your hand" is using deliberate and obvious exaggeration for effect to show how serious adultery and wrongful outward acts of sin are to God.

Divorce and Remarriage.

Matthew 5:31 ----- ³¹"It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' ³²But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery. And whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Sexual immorality: (fornication in KJV) (porneia) literally means, harlotry or to act the harlot (including adultery and incest), to commit fornication i.e. indulge in unlawful lust (of either male or female). Figuratively it carries the idea of worshipping idols and other gods.

Adultery: (moicheuo) (moichos) literally means, cheating (i.e. an unlawful love affair), but can also refer to a male boyfriend lover or gigolo meaning a man who receives payments or gifts from a woman in exchange for being her sexual partner. Figuratively it carries the idea of one who is an apostate (i.e., one who is false, disloyal and unfaithful to God).

Jesus is saying if a man's wife has not committed any sexual immorality and he divorces her, he indirectly makes his ex-wife commit adultery (when she remarries). He is also causing the man marrying his ex-wife to commit adultery, so it is the ex-husband who is held responsible for causing the others to commit adultery, but if the married woman has been involved in sexual immorality outside the marriage she has already made herself an adulterous and broken the marriage vow or contract and therefore she becomes the one that causes others she has relationships with, to be committing adultery.

If the man is divorcing his wife because she has been involved in some sexual immorality then he is not held responsible for breaking the marriage vow or contract, because the woman by her adultery has already broken the marriage vows and not the man, even though he is the one divorcing her.

The Jews believed they could divorce their wives for any reason. Jesus is teaching his disciple how much God values marriage, nevertheless these verses should not be used as legal rods to judge or condemn those who have failed in their relationships or those who have remarried. Divorce brings its own pain and suffering, everyone who is a friend, or part of the family suffers when a marriage fails, this is why God hates divorce it brings pain, financially emotionally and spiritually to all who are affected.

The spirit of what Jesus is saying: is that God loves marriage, so do everything you can to remain true to your vows, don't take your marriage vow lightly, but if after doing everything you can to save your marriage and still fail, there is grace.

Promises and Breaking Them.

Matthew 5:33 ----- 33"Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' 34But I say to you Do not take an oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, 35or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. 36And do not take an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. 37Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil.

Oath: (horkos) means, a sacred restraint or special oath, a promise, affirmation, sworn statement and by extension testimony, thus, to swear falsely means, making a promise and then not keeping it, Jesus is simply saying don't make promises, just do what you tell people you will do, value what you say (i.e. be a person of integrity).

An Eye for an Eye and a Tooth for a Tooth.

Matthew 5:38 ----- 38"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39But I say to you Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Resist: (anthistemi) means, to stand against, oppose and resist.

Evil: (poneros) means, hurtful, injurious and evil, it embraces people who are bad, malicious, wicked and corrupt who inflict grievous harm on others.

The focus of what Jesus is saying is on opposing or standing against a person that is wicked, corrupt and hurtful.

Jesus is saying don't resist them but rather yield, submit and be humble because standing against a wicked or angry person will only enrage the anger. It is important to note this is not about self-protection, but walking away from the situation before it escalates to that.

Laws for Being Sued.

Matthew 5:40 ----- ⁴⁰And if anyone would sue you (the disciples) and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.

For someone to be suing a person, that person must have done something wrong or offended them in some way. Jesus is simply saying if you have done wrong and are being sued because of it fix the problem even if it means doing more than is needed rather than go to court and be sued, (i.e. don't be an offence to anyone, do whatever has to be done to heal the offence and the relationship) (v25).

Matthew 5:41 ----- ⁴¹And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.

Jesus is saying the same thing as he did in verses thirty-eight and thirty-nine, he is reinforcing what he previously said, don't resist strong or powerful people especially if they have authority over you, but rather yield, submit and be humble because standing against a prideful and powerful person will only make them more determined to humble or hurt you.

Once again is important to note that this is not about self-protection, but doing whatever is need so it does not come to that.

Give to those who Beg.

Matthew 5:42 ----- ⁴²Give to the one who begs from you (the disciples) and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

The person in focus here is not a person who is poor because they are lazy and refuse to work, but those who would do everything they could to make their lives better but work is not available or their situation or difficult circumstances prohibit them, these are people who lack the basic things of life to survive. There is a difference to God between a lazy person and a person who is poor because of circumstances beyond their control.

Proverbs says the desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labour. (Prov. 21:25) and Paul, Silvanus and Timothy recommend letting a person who refuses to work starve, (2 Thess. 3:8-12). This is because others have worked hard to earn the money being given away, people are sacrificing their own time and desires to help others, so whatever is given (because it is limited) should go to the deserving poor and not those who are poor because they choose not to work.

It should be noted that a person who wants to work, but is out of work because of circumstances beyond their control is not a lazy person, (this person is deserving of charity). The Bible definition of a lazy person is one who is out of work, because they choose not to work, it is to this type of person Paul, Silvanus and Timothy words, "let them starve they are not worthy of charity" are directed toward.

Love your Enemies.

Matthew 5:43-45 ----- ⁴³"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴But I say to you Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ⁴⁵so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Enemy: (echthros) means, to hate it carries the idea of a person who is passively or actively hateful and hostile toward another.

Love: (agapao) means, loved much, to love in a social or moral sense, thus the focus of love in this context is not an emotional feeling but an action of doing good as opposed to seeking revenge or hating and doing harm.

God is doing-good at the moment for those that are wicked and those who are good (the just and the unjust). Jesus is saying what he has been saying in all the previous verses, his theme has not changed, and that theme is, do everything you can to heal a bad situation. Where you can do good, do it, don't retaliate out of pride, anger or for the satisfaction of revenge.

Today we see nations going to war against other nations to bring peace, when in actual reality it simply stirs more strife anger and hatred. Jesus is saying wherever possible, negotiate, whatever good is in your power to do and do it.

Rewards in Heaven.

Matthew 5:46-48 ----- ⁴⁶if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Jesus is saying everyone in the world loves their friends that is easy whether a person is a Christian or not, but to be perfect, Christians are called to love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them. This does not mean to do away with justice, love does not deny justice in fact administering justice is the loving thing to do, because justice does what is right and fair for the innocent victim and protects others from harm. Love will enforce justice upon the criminal to protect the innocent.

Love your Enemies: the Jews saw themselves as the holy race with God and the Gentiles as an inferior unclean race without God and generally did not mix with them. Jesus is saying do not treat others as enemies, sadly some in Christian churches develop a them and us attitude to such an extent that they (consciously or unconsciously) view those outside the church as enemies.

Christ is saying don't do this, don't show only those who are your friends kindness, treat everyone the same as you would treat those who are your friends. Loving your enemies in practical terms means, be friendly and do-good even to those you dislike or who dislike you, it is basically doing good to all humans contrasted to just doing good for our friends, when we can do this God says, "We are perfect as He is" (v48), thus Christianity is a high calling one self, ego and pride enormously struggle with.

SUMMARY: Jesus Famous Sermon.

The constant theme throughout Jesus message is doing what is right before God by seeking the way of peace in all situations. Jesus does this by focusing on what a Christian's attitude should be toward others. He calls Christians to treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, decency grace compassion, kindness, mercy and to be quick to forgive. It is about doing all we can do to protect people from physical, financial, sexual, verbal and emotional or spiritual harm and being dominated by the thought "What action can I take or do that will help and encourage this person. It is all about doing right to others. This is the reason it is referred to as the Famous Sermon because the principals if followed not only by Christians but all humanity are the only way to peace.

End