

Episode 8: Beyond Mountains

The big moment is approaching, and everyone is preparing for the Sermon on the Mount. Little James, Nathanael and Thaddaeus look for the land to hold the sermon, while the women prepare flyers to tell everyone about the event. Jesus and Matthew continue to prepare the sermon, and we run into the last disciple, Judas. All of this builds up to the most famous sermon to ever be given!

The episode opens with Judas and his business partner negotiating a land deal with a Jewish landowner. They are trying to purchase his land and work out a very favorable deal for themselves as they believe the land is on a salt mine and the landowner has no idea. They lie and say they plan to make graves out of the stone and withhold the information about salt being on the land and very profitable. Judas later feels guilty that he cheated the landowner out of money and made an unfair deal.

Although the negotiation skills that Judas and his partner have were just used for deceit, they are able to use those same skills for good. They help James, Nathanael and Thaddaeus convince the landowner of the field that they want to use for the Sermon on the Mount to allow them to use the land for free. They finally use their skills of persuasion for good. We all have skills that can be used for bad or for good. What are your skills and how can you use them to glorify the Lord?

Jesus prepares for the Sermon on the Mount with Matthew and asks for his feedback. Jesus explains that he is going to be talking about a radical shift, but Matthew explains that he doesn't understand some of the things that Jesus is saying and they seem harsh. Read through the verses below and circle the one that is hardest for you to comprehend. Underline the verse that is hardest for you to follow.

- **Matthew 5:27-29 (ESV)** – 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. 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.”
- **Matthew 5:40 (ESV)** – “And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well.”
- **Matthew 7:13-14 (ESV)** – ¹³ “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those

Bible Reference

As Ramah is learning to read with Mary, she is reading from the book of Psalm. Psalm 139 was written by King David. See the scripture below.

Psalm 139:15-16 (ESV) – ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

DID YOU KNOW??

This passage is just a few verses after the scripture Matthew, Mary and Ramah were memorizing from earlier in the season, Psalm 139:8.

who enter by it are many. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”

- **Matthew 5:43-44 (ESV)** - ⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

Matthew also specifically questions what the salt of the earth means. Jesus explains the purpose of salt and what qualities he wants in his followers. As this explanation is not from scripture, Jesus does talk in parables and metaphors to help connect with the listener. Read Matthew 5:13 below and fill in the blank:

Matthew 5:13 (ESV) – “You are the _____ 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.

Salt was and is an important commodity back in Jesus’ time and in this day and age. We use salt not only on our food, but to melt ice and snow in the winter to keep us safe, stain removal, and as a cleaning element. See what Jesus said in The Chosen about salt below:

- Salt slows decay – his followers should hold back the evil of this world.
- Salt enhances flavor – his followers should renew the world and be part of the solution.
- Salt when combined with honey is healing – his followers should heal the world and not destroy it.

Which use of salt speaks to you? What can you do to be the salt of the earth?

Many parts of Jesus’ sermon are hard to understand as they are radically different than the ten commandments. Jesus also talks about how he talks in parables so it would speak to some, but not others. He wants strong followers, not passive followers. Jesus explains in Mark why he talks in parables.

Mark 4:10-12 (ESV) – ¹⁰ And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables. ¹¹ And he said to them, “To you has been given the secret of the kingdom of God, but for those outside everything is in parables, ¹² so that “they may indeed see but not perceive, and may indeed hear but not understand, lest they should turn and be forgiven.”

Jesus wants us to try to understand. He doesn’t want a passive follower, he wants a follower that wants to learn, seek answers and not just comprehend what he is saying, but act on it. Do you feel like you are a passive follower or are you seeking to learn more? What can you do to not be passive in your faith?

If you struggle to understand something, I challenge you to research it and look up creditable interpretations. I recommend Gotquestions.org as they have a lot of answers to common questions.

Jesus has finished preparing his sermon! Yay! He let Matthew know first thing that morning that he has finalized the beginning of the sermon to create a map. A map of where to find him as he will be among these types of people.

Read the passage below and circle the attributes that Jesus is calling out in each verse.

Matthew 5:3 (ESV) - *3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 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. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 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. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

Which attribute that Jesus calls out resonates with you the most?

People are starting to arrive; they are excited to hear Jesus' message! Judas arrives and gets a backstage pass to meet some of the disciples and be there as Jesus prepares to go out. Over 3,000 people have arrived and Jesus is ready! As he walks out to the stage he passes each of his disciples and you can see the excitement and love for Jesus on their faces. Right as he steps onto the stage the screen goes black and the season is over. It gets you so excited for Season 3 and the delivery of Jesus' famous sermon!

I don't know about you, but I am so excited to see Jesus give the Sermon on the Mount. Next season is going to be so good and I can't wait to have you join me in the next study of Season 3.

The Chosen shows Matthew working with Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount. This famous speech is only recorded in the gospel of Matthew. While Jesus doesn't need help from a disciple to write the speech, the creators might have included this to show that Matthew captured the sermon word for word in his gospel. See Matthew 5:1-7:28

Appendix

We have finally met all of the disciples! When you compare the three gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and the book of Acts, it is interesting that the order of the disciples is listed differently in each one. The order may not have any significance, but there is a pattern in how each one starts and ends. This may or may not be in the order in which the disciples started following Jesus, maybe it is in order of their importance in Jesus' ministry. Either way, the names are all the same, but the order is different. See the chart below:

<u>Matthew 10</u>	<u>Mark 3</u>	<u>Luke 6</u>	<u>Acts 1</u>
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter
Andrew	James (son of Zebedee)	Andrew	John (son of Zebedee)
James (son of Zebedee)	John (son of Zebedee)	James (son of Zebedee)	James (son of Zebedee)
John (son of Zebedee)	Andrew	John (son of Zebedee)	Andrew
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew (Nathanael)	Bartholomew (Nathanael)	Bartholomew (Nathanael)	Thomas
Thomas	Matthew (Levi)	Matthew (Levi)	Bartholomew (Nathanael)
Matthew (Levi)	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew (Levi)
James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus	James the son of Alphaeus
Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
Simon the Zealot (Cananean)	Simon the Zealot (Cananean)	Judas son of James (Thaddaeus)	Judas son of James (Thaddaeus)
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot

Appendix - References

This study is based on The Chosen show. Quotes and material from the show are included in this study.

The Chosen Season 2. Directed by Dallas Jenkins, Out of Order Studios and Loaves & Fishes Productions, 2021.

Bible verses are referenced from the (ESV) English Standard Version of the bible.

The ESV Bible. (2001). English Standard Version [Online Version]. Crossway.