



# Mountaintop Experience

## Preaching through the Sermon on the Mount

The Sermon on the Mount is more radical than you think, says LUKE TATTERSALL - especially when you hear it from the perspective of the Jews it was first addressed to.

Sometimes, we can be so familiar with a passage from the Bible that we can miss the radical nature of what it says. And that is certainly true when it comes to the Sermon on the Mount. Let me give you a few examples.

In the beatitudes, Jesus defines who the blessed people are. We know them well - blessed are the peace-makers, blessed are those who mourn... but did you notice that as Jesus stands before a group of Jewish people telling them who the blessed people are, he doesn't once mention any of the Jewish categories you might expect? He doesn't say, "Blessed are the descendants of Abraham," or "Blessed are those who have been circumcised," or "Blessed are those who try to keep the law of Moses." Even more radically, he finishes by saying that the really "blessed" people are the ones who suffer for his sake. Another example: In

Jesus is claiming incredible authority for himself at that point. He is effectively saying that he has the authority of God.

Matthew 6:21-48, Jesus uses the expression "You have heard that it was said...But I say to you..." Five times he quotes a passage from the Old Testament and then says "But I say to you...". In effect, he's saying, "The Law told you this. But I'm saying..." In other words, Jesus is claiming incredible authority for himself at that point. He is effectively saying that he has the authority of God.

One more example: At the beginning of chapter 6 Jesus criticises those who pray, fast and give money to the poor. It is not the action that he criticises - it's the attitude they have in doing it. The Sermon on the Mount gets right to the heart of what it means to be a disciple of

Jesus - right to the heart of what it means to be part of God's Kingdom. Jesus has come to bring in the New Covenant that God had promised. What was wrong with the Old Covenant? The hearts of the people involved (Heb 8:7f). God was bringing in a new Covenant that would not depend on the written law, but would be based on people having changed hearts (Jeremiah 31:31f, Ezekiel 36:24f). Jesus is spelling out Kingdom attitudes and values

### Break up

Matthew 5:1-16 - Jesus gives us a radical re-definition of who the blessed people are. In the Salt & Light passage (5:13-16) he presents a rejection of national Israel. It is now those who follow Jesus who are the salt and the light.

Matthew 5:17-48 - Jesus' comment about the Law (5:17) is fleshed out in this section. Jesus hasn't come to abolish the old covenant, but to fulfil it. He is what the old covenant was leading toward. It is helpful to look at OT passages that describe the radical nature of the new covenant God had promised, where the law will no longer be on stone tablets but on our heart (Jeremiah 31:31-34). God also promises he will give us his spirit so that we will obey him from the heart (Ezekiel 36:24-27).

Matthew 6:1-18 - This is a logical unit as Jesus is giving three examples of how it is possible to do the right thing for the wrong reason. We are to live in a personal relationship with God. We are to live a life that is pleasing to him - not superficially obedient.

Matthew 6:19-34 - this section deals with the problem of being caught up in the world - worry about money, storing up treasure on earth, etc

Matthew 7:1-12 - Like the rest of the

Sermon on the Mount, this section deals with what our heart is like. We are not to be judgemental - but we are to be discerning.

Matthew 7:13-28 - The final section is the conclusion of the sermon. It is now choice time. Which road are you going to take? Which teachers are you going to listen to? Which foundation are you going to build your life on? There is a radical choice to be made.

#### Resources

Without a doubt the best commentary I have found is Don Carson's book ***The Sermon on the Mount - An Evangelical Exposition of Matthew 5-7*** (Baker, 1978).

#### Sermon Outlines

Talk 1 - Who are the Blessed?

Matthew 5:1-16

#### **MATTHEW 1-4 - RING ANY BELLS?**

In Matthew 1-4 you notice events that sound just like a repeat of OT stories. Jesus/Jacob and his family go down to Egypt. Herod/Pharaoh putting to death all the baby boys. Jesus/Moses head from Egypt to Canaan. Jesus/Israel spending 40 days/40 years in the wilderness.

Jesus has come as the faithful Israel. Jesus has come to lead God's people. He has come to show how to live faithfully in a relationship with GOD.

And at the beginning of Matthew 5 Jesus has gone on top of a mountain. You would have to think that this is like Moses going up onto Mt Sinai to hear God speak and be given the law.

But now it is Jesus who does the speaking. But rather than Jesus giving the Law he is going to talk about how to live in a heart-felt relationship with God.

If you had to SUM UP what Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount then I think it would be: the Art of being a True Disciple.

What Jesus is talking about in these chapters is the attitudes his disciples should have - what things should characterise the hearts and lives of those who trust and follow him.

#### **WHO ARE THE BLESSED**

Who would you say are the blessed people in the world today? People with the best houses, nicest cars, best jobs, most money, good health, etc. That is who the world thinks is "blessed". And sadly that is who many Christians think are the "blessed" people as well.

Jesus gives us a definition of who the blessed are that you are not expecting.

The word "blessed" has a similar meaning to when we say that someone has their "parents blessing" for their marriage. What they mean is that they have their parents approval.

When Jesus says "blessed" he is talking about those who are approved - approved by God - right with God, having God's approval or acceptance.

These 8 beatitudes are not 8 different people. It is one person - the person who is approved by God.

#### **WHAT ARE THE BLESSED PEOPLE LIKE? (3-6)**

The "blessed" are those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn, those who are humble, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Not what the world would think of as "blessed". The world would think that person was a loser.

Did you notice that Jesus (a Jew) is talking to a crowd (a group of Jews) about who is blessed and he doesn't mention anything about Abraham, circumcision, the Law or Israel.

There is a progression that we see in these first 4 beatitudes. You recognise your spiritual poverty. You mourn that poverty. You humble yourself before God. You hunger and thirst after the righteousness that God can give.

#### **HOW DO THEY ACT? (7-12)**

The next four beatitudes describe how the blessed people act. They are merciful - because they know God's mercy. They are pure in heart - not perfect, but single-mindedly devoted to Jesus. They are peacemakers - they work at bringing about peace between man & God. They are willing to be persecuted for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel.

#### **SALT & LIGHT**

The word salt is used a number of times

in the pages of the OT to refer to the "salt of the covenant". I don't think Jesus is talking about his disciples being a preservative. Salt in the OT was to be a symbol of Israel's faithfulness in her relationship with God. Israel were also called to be a light to the Gentiles.

Now Jesus says that his disciples - those who follow him - are to be the salt and the light.

#### **CONCLUSION**

We can sometimes miss the radical nature of what Jesus is saying in these opening words.

When we think "blessed are those who are financially secure" Jesus says "blessed are the poor in spirit"

When we think "blessed are the happy & content with their lives" Jesus says "blessed are those who mourn their sin"

When we think "blessed are those who are proud of their achievements" Jesus says "blessed are those who are humble before God"

When we think "blessed are those who are confident in their own goodness" Jesus says "blessed are those who hunger after the righteousness that God gives"

Jesus starts the sermon on the Mount by taking us right back to basics. He takes us back and reminds us of who it is that is "blessed" - accepted and approved by God.

#### TALK 2 - The Disciple & The Law

Matthew 5:17-48

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The fastest growing religion in the world today is Islam. One of the things that makes it easy to follow is that there are 5 things to do - 1. Profession of faith 2. Give to the poor 3. Pray 5 times a day 4. Fast - especially at Ramadan and 5. Visit Mecca or help someone else visit.

Man likes religions that are simple - just a few rules or laws to obey. You can do it and know that it is done.

Many people have tried to make Christianity into just a bunch of rules to obey.

What Jesus gives us in this section of the sermon on the Mount is not some New Legalism. Jesus didn't come to give us a

list of rules to obey. He came to make it possible for us to live faithfully in a relationship with God.

Jesus did not come to bring in some kind of new legalism. He didn't come with a list of rules to obey. He came to bring people into a personal relationship with God.

### **JESUS & THE LAW - 5:17-20**

Jesus had already shaken up his listeners by talking about who the "blessed" people are and not mentioning anything about being Jewish.

In response to what Jesus said in 5:1-16 you could expect that Jesus listeners may have been thinking: What about the old ways. What about the Old Covenant? What about what God said through Moses? Jesus pre-empts that question. (5:17)

He has not come to "abolish" the old covenant. He has come to fulfil it. (NB Law and the Prophets was the name that the Jews had for the OT.) Jesus has come as the culmination of all God's promises, plans and purposes. (See also John 5:39-40, John 5:45-47)

God's purpose was to bring in his Kingdom. Jesus has come as the King of that Kingdom. Why would he want to abolish the very thing that points towards? Why would he want to destroy the thing that proves he is the King.

### **RIGHTEOUSNESS EXCEEDING THE PHARISEES - 5:21-48**

Jesus drops another BOMBSHELL in verse 20 when he says that if you want to enter the Kingdom that your righteousness will need to surpass that of the Pharisees. They would have been thought of as the most righteous people in the community.

But the Pharisees legalists. They kept the letter of the law but failed to live faithfully in their relationship with God. They could keep the letter of the law but break the spirit of it.

Righteousness is not about legalistic observance of the law. It never was.

NB Jesus is not presenting some New Legalism. This is a challenge about what your heart is like.

Easy not to murder. Much harder not to hate your brother (5:21-22). Easy not to

commit adultery. Harder not to lust (5:27-30)

NB Jesus is not replacing one set of laws with another. He has come to show how we should live in his kingdom. This is NOT an upgrade of the 10 commandments. These are examples - not an exhaustive list.

NB Also with lust and anger it is impossible for them to be a law. How could you police it? Who knows if you are lusting? No-one - except you and God. And that is the point. This is about living faithfully with God.

### **TWISTERS OF THE LAW**

The Pharisees had become twisters of the law. They had justified divorce for any reason. But Jesus shows them they are wrong (5:32). They had twisted oath taking to make it possible to lie. But Jesus says Let your "Yes" be "Yes" (5:33). They had used a verse limiting revenge as an excuse for pay-back (5:38). They had used the command to "love your neighbours" as an excuse to hate their enemies.

Jesus turns their legalism upside down. True righteousness is not "skin deep" or "letter perfect". Real righteousness goes all the way down to the heart.

If we look at this section and think that Jesus is simply giving a new set of laws then I think we have missed the point. This is not intended to be an exhaustive set of laws. The righteousness of Jesus disciples is to go all the way to the heart.

### **CONCLUSION - 5:48**

Humans like simple religion (Islam) - a few rules or laws to obey. That is what the Pharisees had tried to do. That is what we often try to do. We try to make up our own rules or think that being a Christian is just about obeying the 10 Commandments. We think of GOD like a BOOK KEEPER.

If we can get him to put a tick next to our name then we will be RIGHT for the week.

God wants us to live faithfully in a personal relationship with him - a relationship that goes all the way to the heart.

## **Talk 3 - Its the Attitude that Counts - Matthew 6:1-18**

### **INTRODUCTION - 6:1-2**

Academy Awards are given out for good acting. This is a strange thing. They are giving an award to someone for pretending to be someone they are not. There's also another kind of actors. Jesus calls them hypocrites. They also pretend to be someone they are not to win the favour of men.

Jesus says we are not to do our acts of righteousness just so they will be seen by men (6:1).

Jesus finished the section we looked at last week by saying "Be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect" (5:48). But he starts this section with a warning "be careful." If your motive in doing good things like praying or giving is so that men will think highly of them, Jesus says, God is not impressed.

### **GIVING - 6:2-4**

When the hypocrites give - Jesus says - they like to do it right in the public eye..

Celebrities and large companies love to make donations to charities when they know the TV cameras and the media are around. How do they give? With big "dummy cheques" with their name in big letters beside the amount. Hypocrites love to give when they know something will be named after them or there will be a plaque to acknowledge their generosity. Telethons get more money when they read out the names of the people who have given. People like the world to know they have given.

And there are hypocrites in the church - people who give so that others will think well of them.

How should the disciples of Jesus give? Discreetly.

### **PRAYER - 5:5-6**

Back in Jesus time it was common practice for the men to lead in prayer in the Synagogue.

This responsibility was passed around among the men. There would have been at least some small temptation to simply pray to the audience - try to out do the guy who prayed last week. To sound more godly than the last person who prayed.

Hypocrites pray to the audience.

The disciples of Jesus pray to talk with God - not to impress those around them.

### **AND WHILE WE'RE ON THE SUBJECT OF PRAYER... - 5:7-15**

It is somewhat ironic that the very place that Jesus tells us that we are not to babble on like the pagans do is the place where he gives us a PRAY that has regularly been babbled in churches since then - he gives them what we call the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus is trying to give his disciples a pattern for prayer. The pattern can be broken up into 6 petitions - six things this prayer is asking:

that God's name will be honoured.

that God's Kingdom will come.

that God's will might be done.

that God will provide for our physical needs.

that God will forgive our sins.

that God will guide and protect us.

Jesus is not saying these are the only things we should pray for. Nor is he saying these are exactly the words we should pray. He is saying these are the kind of things we should pray for .

### **FASTING - 5:16-18**

The final example Jesus gives of what the hypocrites might do is that of fasting.

The Jewish Calendar had a number of fasts - a number of times during the year when all members of the community were to be involved in fasting. Individuals would also fast at other times. Fasting may have accompanied special pray requests.

The hypocrites did it so that everyone would know. They were doing it to impress people with their godliness. But it wasn't godliness that motivated it.

How should the disciples of Jesus fast? So that no-one knows except God.

### **CONCLUSION**

Don't be a hypocrite. Don't do things simply to win the praise of men.

When you read through that passage is there anything in there that touches a nerve with you? Do Jesus' words make you feel a bit uncomfortable?

Are there areas where you are looking for

the praises of men rather than acting from a right motive - for the right reasons?

It seems almost unbelievable that Jesus criticises people for giving to the poor, praying and fasting. But, he is not criticising them for what they have done.

He is criticising them for WHY they have done it and the WAY they have done it.

Now Jesus has only mentioned 3 things here - praying fasting & giving - but you could add others to the list - Going to church, putting money in the plate, attending home Group, etc

Jesus says we are to examine our motives and make sure it is God you are living to please.

### **Talk 4 - Keeping the Right Perspective**

Matthew 6:19-34

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is easy to let money dominate your life. There are TV shows about it. Adds to help you handle it, to help you get more. You could spend a lot of time worrying about your money - wondering what to do with it, how to get more or where it is all going.

Non-Christians worry about it. But Christians need money too - to buy food, pay the rent, pay bills, etc

There are a few bits of the Sermon on the Mount that make me feel a little uncomfortable. But without a doubt this is the section that leaves me feeling most uneasy. Now as we hear what Jesus has to say in this section I want you to do one thing: Think about how this applies to you. Don't just think about this passage in abstract terms. Don't think about the general principles involved. Don't bother thinking about how it applies to someone else in the church or how it applies to someone who has more money than you. You need to think about what Jesus is saying to you.

When a person becomes a Christian it is often the wallet and the bank balance that is the last thing to get converted.

### **TREASURES - 5:19-21**

Most people would be able to say that they aren't storing up treasure. That sounds like something a pirate would do.

But ask yourself this question: What is it that is of ultimate importance to you. Is it to earn more money, own a nice new home, move ahead in your chosen profession, drive an impressive car.

The things that are of ultimate importance to you is where your heart is. We can often make our number one priority in life those things that won't last. We can often devote most of our time and effort to things that have no eternal value. But the Disciples of Jesus know what is of ultimate value. They are storing up treasure in heaven.

Jesus doesn't give us any definition of how we store up treasure in heaven. But I am sure it is connected to the passage we looked at last week. (See Matthew 6:4, 6 & 18 ... Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.)

Treasure in heaven is investing in things of eternal value - your relationship with God and seeing others have a relationship with God.

The most valuable thing you have is your relationship with God.

### **EYES - 5:22-23**

Jesus sticks in a rather cryptic verse in the middle of this section. At first glance it is a little difficult to see what it is he is saying. But look at where it fits in. BEFORE IT he talked about storing up treasure in heaven not on earth. AFTER IT he talks about serving God not money.

Your eyes direct your body and you are guided by them. They tell you which way to go. You head toward the thing you focus on.

### **MASTERS - 6:24**

You can have 2 bosses (ie hold down 2 jobs). But you can't have 2 masters. A master wants complete loyalty and devotion. You can't serve God and money. One will dominate.

### **TOTAL TRUST - 5:25-34**

Do you trust God for even the most basic things in life - what we will eat, what we will drink and what we will wear? Or are they things you worry about?

The birds and the flowers don't worry - and God loves you more than that.

Jesus is not saying "quit your day job".

He is saying "don't worry". Worry means you have forgotten that God is in control. Constant worry is the same as saying you don't trust God.

The world worries about and chases after food, drink & clothing. The disciples of Jesus don't.

### **SEEK FIRST... - 5:33**

Here is the verse that sums up this section. Jesus is saying that our guiding priority in life ought to be that we seek first God's Kingdom and His righteousness.

But what does he mean seek God's Kingdom?

It means we want to see God's kingdom grow in number. It means we want to see those in the Kingdom grow in maturity.

It means that everything in your life should fall in place under the number one priority of wanting to see the Kingdom grow. Everything else - your job, money, clothes, car, house, promotion, etc is a lower order priority.

Did you know that the house you live in doesn't matter. Did you know the car you drive is of no eternal importance. Did you know that the size of your bank balance is not that significant. Did you know that the figure you put down on your tax return has no lasting importance.

What matters is God's Kingdom.

### **Talk 5 - Keeping the Right Balance**

Matthew 7:1-12

### **IT'S AN ATTITUDE THING**

The sermon on the mount is about your attitude. It is what is going on in your heart that Jesus is concerned about. That is what dominates this section this morning as well.

### **DON'T BE JUDGMENTAL - 7:1-5**

Jesus says we are not to be judgemental.

NB there is a difference between judging and being judgemental. It is important for disciples to judge. In a few verses ahead of here Jesus talks about not throwing your pearls before dogs. That is going to involve some judgement on your part. In 7:15 he says we need to watch out for false teachers. That is going to involve some judgement on our part.

Judgementalism, however, is when you look down on others and think you're better than them.

Sadly Christians can often be the most judgemental people in the community. They can be worse at taking the moral high ground - worse at looking down on others.

What makes judgementalism ultimately wrong is that it stems from a failure to understand what we are like and it is a failure to understand God's grace.

Speck and the Log is an illustration of judgementalism (7:3-5).

### **DO BE DISCERNING - 7:6**

While Christians are not to be judgemental they are to be discerning.

Jesus' words in 7:6 sounds judgemental. But we have to figure out 2 things: 1. *What are the Pearls that Christians have?* - The pearls we have are the Gospel. (See Matt 13:45 - only other use of the word pearl). 2. *Who are the Pigs and the dogs?* Those who are hostile to the message of the Gospel. Sadly when most Christians read this they think that when Jesus says pigs or dogs he is talking about the people we would not want to associate with - the low-lives and outcasts. If you think that is what he means then you are displaying the exact sort of judgementalism Jesus has condemned just a few verses earlier. Think about Jesus' ministry. Who were the people who were hostile to his ministry. It was the upright and respectable people of the community. And who was it who responded to Jesus ministry in a positive way? It was the low-lives and the outcasts and the undesirable who responded to the Gospel.

### **DO YOU REALLY WANT THESE THINGS? - 7:7-11**

So far the Sermon on the Mount has had so big challenge to us as Disciples of Jesus. It has shown us that being a Disciple is not a simple thing nor is it an easy thing. In fact if we are honest we would have to say that being a true disciple is something that is beyond our ability. We are unable to do it.

None of this can be done apart from God. The true disciple is the one who begins like the very opening words of the Sermon itself - that is, recognising that we

are poor in spirit and totally dependant on God. Try to live as a disciple on our own strength and we are bound to fail.

If we really want to be true disciples then all we need to do is ask, seek & knock. We have a loving father who wants to give what is best to his children.

### **DO UNTO OTHERS... - 7:12**

There is a modern day translation of Jesus words often appear on bumper stickers: DO UNTO OTHERS BEFORE THEY DO UNTO YOU.

Big difference between Jesus' attitude and the attitude of the world today.

We live in a world that is selfish. Jesus says we are to be self-less.

### **CONCLUSION - DON'T BE JUDGMENTAL**

The things that stands out to me in this section is that we are not to be judgemental:

I have a non-Xn mate who has long hair that he wears in a pony tail. He has ear-rings in both ears. He also has tattoos on both his arms and his legs. His mother is a very keen Christian and attends a church regularly in the Blue Mountains. My friend was visiting his mother and somewhat begrudgingly agreed to go to church with her. They arrived at the church early as his mother had a few things to do and people to see before the service. My friend went into the church, sat down and waited. While he sat there and waited for his mother not one person came and spoke to him. There were more and more people arriving at the church in the lead up to the service - but not one of them spoke to him. He could hear the whispers from behind him while he sat there and waited. He wasn't exactly sure what they were saying - but he could guess. They all stayed right away from him. When his mother returned and people saw that it was Mrs Brown's son they changed their tune - they began to speak to him.

This incident made a big impact on my friend. He wondered how Christians could think like that - how could they be SO judgemental. It took him a long time before he was willing to go back inside a church again.

But I wonder what kind of reception he

would have been given if he had come to our church.

What attitude do you think YOU would have toward him?

Would you look down on him because of the ear-rings or the tattoos?

Would you treat him any differently?

Would you be willing to talk to him?

Do you think there might be an element of judgementalism in your thinking?

We need to remember that God has shown great mercy to us in Jesus and we need to show that mercy to others.

Talk 6 - Roads, Trees & Buildings

Matthew 7:13-27

### INTRODUCTION

You see plenty of self improvement programs advertised on TV. Some people think that is what the sermon on the mount is. They think Jesus is saying: Here is a bunch of ideas. Try them out and see if any work for you.

If you get to the end of the sermon on the mount and think Jesus is asking you to tweak a few things in your life to make it better then you haven't understood the radical nature of what Jesus is saying.

This hasn't been tips for self-improvement. Nor has it been a few suggestions for getting the most out of life. This is not some kind of take-it or leave-it message. Matthew 7:13-29 is CRUNCH TIME.

### WHICH ROAD? (7:13-14)

Two roads and it seems like an easy choice - one leads to life and the other to destruction.

But people won't decide on the destination. They will look at the short term: Which is easier to travel? Which has the widest gate? Which has the most people on it?

But it is logical to choose a road for the destination.

When you have to make a choice about which road I am going to take to get around Sydney I will make that decision based on the destination. We figure out where you are headed - what our destination is and then we choose the

road that will take us there. If I need to go to Parramatta from here then it would be stupid to think about taking the M2. It won't go anywhere near Parramatta. Sure it would be a nicer road to go on. But it won't take me where I want to go.

NB There are only two roads - the right one and the wrong one.

### WHICH TREE - 7:15-19

It is amazing how many times the NT talks about false teachers (See Acts 20:18f, 2 Timothy 4:3-4). Jesus says you can pick false teachers by their fruit.

*Do they Preach Christ?* Many false teachers will mix Christ in with their message BUT normally they have other things that they tell you are of equal importance: New paths to spiritual fulfillment. Special techniques they have developed so you can do to be a more fulfilled Christian. Special teaching about end times. Special literature or teachings that you need to follow. A set of rules that you have to obey. Special experiences you need to have. Special gifts you need to have. They may say that you must belong to their group. Those people are wolves in sheep's clothing. Don't listen to what those people say.

*Do they live out Kingdom Values?* Look at their lives. Are they living out kingdom values. Or are they greedy, judgemental, etc.

### (NOT EVERYONE WILL BE THERE) - 7:21-23

7:21-23 - this fits exactly with what Jesus has been saying. There will be those who prophesy who will not be entering heaven. Jesus is going to say to some on the last day: "Away from me. I never knew you".

Why are they shut out of the kingdom. Because they never knew Jesus. Don't misunderstand Jesus here. He is not saying that there was some extra thing that these people didn't do. He is not saying that they were some secret trick to entering the kingdom that these people didn't figure out.

What he is saying is that he never knew them and they never knew him.

They had been misled at a most basic level. They thought that being part of the Kingdom was about what you did. But it

isn't. Entry into the kingdom is about knowing Jesus. (See John 6:28-29, 17:3).

### WHICH HOUSE - 7:24-27

I remember seeing a TV report from California a few years ago during some wild storms they had. Plenty of houses along the coastline were destroyed. The TV reporter was doing his story from a street that had been devastated by the storms. He was standing with a house on either side of him in the background. One house had been completely flattened. The other house hardly looked like it had been touched. He said that the only difference between the 2 houses was that one had drilled down and made sure that the house was built on a firm foundation.

But Jesus is not talking about buildings. His major concern is not the construction method you use for your house. He is talking about our lives.

He is not talking about concrete as opposed to pole homes. He is talking about his word.

### CONCLUSION - 7:28-29

People were amazed by Jesus teaching. He taught with authority. And the people who heard would have walked away knowing they had a choice. The choice is NOT: Am I good enough to enter the kingdom? - because we aren't. Can I work hard enough to please God? - because we can't. Have I got the strength to do all these things? - because we don't.

The choice is about entering the kingdom on Jesus' terms. Is the choice easy? No. Will it get easy once you have decided to enter the kingdom? Probably not. But we are talking ultimately about a choice between eternal life and destruction.

To those on the wide road Jesus says: "Are you sure that is where you want to head?" Jesus is offering eternal life to those who are willing to believe in him.

To those on the narrow road Jesus says: "Are you conscious of the radical nature of the choice you have made?" Jesus wants whole-hearted devotion not mediocrity.

Jesus has eternity in store for those who have accepted the forgiveness he offers.