

UPPER ROOM SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE
Living the Life of the Beloved/Belonging: Matthew 5-7
Pastor Jim Otte
Spring-Summer, 2018

Lesson 2 – (March 25, 2018) Matthew 4:1-5:3

1. From Last Session:

- a. To be “loved” is the willingness of another to make sacrifices on your behalf.
- b. To “belong” is to be welcomed and to have a place at the table.
- c. Jesus demonstrated “agapy” love by accepting people where they were...but not leaving them where He found them!
- d. In our Baptism, we were “clothed” with the same promises God gave to Jesus in His Baptism:
 - “You are My child” (Identity and Belonging)
 - “whom I love” (Unconditionally loved)
 - “with you I AM” (never-ending presence)
 - “well-pleased” (being cherished/chosen)

2. In our Baptism, God lays claim to us as His “Beloved” who “Belong” to Him, just as He laid claim to Jesus as His “beloved Son.”

- a. The threats, to our confidence in that claim, come in the form of:
 - i. Our sinful flesh – our impulsive instinct to disobey God; our self-centered choices in life; our conscious decisions to sin.
 - 1. ***Galatians 5:19-21.*** *The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*
 - a. Each of these carries the potential of becoming addictive offering an escape from the pain of not belonging, not being loved or disappointments in life.
 - b. Each of these pulls you away from God by demanding full attention to them – to the possibility of rejecting God or shifting Him to a second-class status in your life.
 - ii. The “world” – the popular culture which is opposed to God’s Word
 - 1. ***Ephesians 6:12.*** *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

- iii. The Devil – temptations which are intended to cast doubt that we are beloved and belong.
 1. **Matthew 4:1-3.** *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted^[a] by the devil. ² After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”*
 - a. **“If”** – Satan’s intent to cast doubt.
 - b. **“you are the Son”** – recalling Jesus’ identity as God’s “beloved Son,” Satan attempts to erode Jesus’ confidence that He is loved.
 - c. **The Beloved Life Principle #4:** At the core of Satan’s temptations is for you to **doubt** that God loves you: “If God really loves you, why are you hungry, why don’t you have enough followers, and why do you have to do without all the resources you need?”
 2. **John 8:44.** *You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*
 - a. **“liar”** – the true nature of the devil is in his opposition to God’s truth
- 3. **After His temptations in the wilderness, Jesus began His earthly ministry.**
 - a. Preaching & teaching (Matthew 4:12-17)
 - b. Calling His first disciples and inviting them to become “fishers of men.” (Matthew 4:18-22)
 - c. Healing the sick (Matthew 4:23-25)
- 4. **Matthew 5:1-12.** **Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them. He said:**
 - a. **“His disciples...teach them.”** – Jesus drew His disciples apart from “the crowds” to begin their instruction as “fishers of men” who would
 - i. Grow in their confidence of being loved and belonging with Jesus, and (in reach focus)
 - ii. Draw other people, who witnessed the beloved life in them, to Jesus (outreach focus)

³ **“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

- a. **“Blessed”** – (“makarios”) – a godly joy, which cannot be taken away in this life. Contentment based on a beloved relationship with God, independent of whatever life handed out; serenity; security. Could be interpreted: **“Beloved are the...”**
- b. **“poor in spirit”** – when you realize your own utter helplessness and need for God, and you trust that He loves you (in spite of how you might feel/think in reaction to hardships).
 - a. The realization of utter helplessness ought to trigger a despair.
 - b. The realization of God’s saving grace rescues you with relief from despair in the joy of forgiveness.
- c. **The Beloved Life Principle #5:** Being “poor in spirit” enables you to detach the certainty of your security from the things of this world: control, predicting the future, etc. & reconnect it to God.
- d. **“theirs is the kingdom”** – God’s kingdom is in your heart through faith in Jesus. It is the kingdom of the loved!