

Sermon on the Mount choral reading

By Kathy Applebee

CHARACTERS: A and B (solo/leader voices) and ALL

RUN TIME: 18 minutes total

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Matthew 5-7

FK Reading Level 3.9

The Beatitudes (chapter 5)

LEADER: Blessed are the poor in spirit

ALL: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

LEADER: Blessed are those who mourn

ALL: for they will be comforted.

LEADER: Blessed are the meek

ALL: for they will inherit the earth.

LEADER: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

ALL: for they will be filled.

LEADER: Blessed are the merciful

ALL: for they will be shown mercy.

LEADER: Blessed are the pure in heart

ALL: for they will see God.

LEADER: Blessed are the peacemakers

ALL: for they will be called children of God.

LEADER: Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness

ALL: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

LEADER: Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Jesus.

ALL: Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

LEADER: You are the salt of the earth.

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

LEADER: It is no longer good for anything

ALL: except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

LEADER: You are the light of the world.

ALL: A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.

LEADER: Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.

ALL: Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

LEADER: In the same way, let your light shine before others

ALL: that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

LEADER: Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

ALL: Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Murder

A: Long ago it was said

ALL: You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment

JESUS: But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment.

A: Anyone who speaks with contempt and disrespect, calling a brother or sister, 'Raca,'

ALL: Must answer for rash words in court.

JESUS: Anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.

A: Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court.

ALL: Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge

A: The judge may hand you over to the officer

ALL: and you may be thrown into prison.

A: You will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Adultery

A: Long ago it was said

ALL: You shall not commit adultery

JESUS: But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

A: If your right eye causes you to stumble

ALL: gouge it out and throw it away.

A: It is better for you to lose one part of your body

ALL: than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

A: If your right hand causes you to stumble

ALL: cut it off and throw it away.

A: It is better for you to lose one part of your body

ALL: than for your whole body to go into hell.

Divorce

A: Long ago it was said

ALL: Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce

JESUS: But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery

ALL: Anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Oaths

A: Long ago it was said

ALL: Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.

JESUS: But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne

ALL: Or by the earth, for it is his footstool

A: Or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.

ALL: Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

A: All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'

ALL: Anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Eye for Eye

A: Long ago it was said

ALL: Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth

JESUS: But I tell you, do not resist an evil person.

A: If anyone slaps you on the right cheek

ALL: turn to them the other cheek also.

A: If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt

ALL: hand over your coat as well.

A: If anyone forces you to go one mile

ALL: Go with them two miles.

A: Give to the one who asks you

ALL: Do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

A: Long ago it was said

ALL: Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

JESUS: But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven.

A: God causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

ALL: If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?

A: Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

ALL: If you greet only your own people

A: what are you doing more than others?

ALL: Do not even pagans do that?

JESUS: Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Giving to the Needy (chapter 6)

A: Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them.

ALL: If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

B: When you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others.

ALL: Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

B: When you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

ALL: So that your giving may be in secret.

A: Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

A: When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others.

ALL: Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

B: When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen.

ALL: Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

A: When you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

ALL: Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

B: This, then, is how you should pray:

ALL: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

A: your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

B: Give us today our daily bread.

ALL: Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

A: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

B: For if you forgive other people when they sin against you

ALL: your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

A: But if you do not forgive others their sins

ALL: your Father will not forgive your sins.

Fasting

A: When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do

ALL: for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting.

B: Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

A: But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face

ALL: so that it will not be obvious to others that you are fasting

A: but only to your Father, who is unseen

ALL: and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Treasures in Heaven

A: Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth

ALL: where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

A: But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven

ALL: where moths and vermin do not destroy

A: and where thieves do not break in and steal.

ALL: For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

B: The eye is the lamp of the body.

ALL: If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light.

B: But if your eyes are unhealthy your whole body will be full of darkness.

ALL: If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

A: No one can serve two masters.

ALL: Either you will hate the one and love the other

B: or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other.

ALL: You cannot serve both God and money.

Do Not Worry

A: Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink

ALL: or about your body, what you will wear.

A: Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?

AL: Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns

A: and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

ALL: Are you not much more valuable than they?

A: Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

B: Why do you worry about clothes?

ALL: See how the flowers of the field grow.

B: They do not labor or spin.

ALL: Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.

B: If that is how God clothes the grass of the field

ALL: which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire,

B: will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?

A: So do not worry, saying

ALL: What shall we eat?

B: or what shall we drink?

ALL: or what shall we wear?

B: For the pagans run after all these things

ALL: and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

A: But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness

ALL: and all these things will be given to you as well.

B: Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.

ALL: Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Judging Others (chapter 7)

A: Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

ALL: For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged

A: and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

B: Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

ALL: How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?

B: You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye

ALL: and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

A: Do not give dogs what is sacred

B: do not throw your pearls to pigs.

ALL: If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

Ask, Seek, Knock

A: Ask and it will be given to you

ALL: seek and you will find

B: knock and the door will be opened to you.

ALL: For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds

B: and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

A: Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

ALL: Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

B: If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children

ALL: how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

A: So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you

ALL: for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

The Narrow and Wide Gates

A: Enter through the narrow gate.

ALL: For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction

A: and many enter through it.

B: But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life

ALL: and only a few find it.

True and False Prophets

A: Watch out for false prophets.

B: They come to you in sheep's clothing

ALL: but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

A: By their fruit you will recognize them.

ALL: Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?

B: Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit

ALL: but a bad tree bears bad fruit.

A: A good tree cannot bear bad fruit

ALL: and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

B: Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

ALL: Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

True and False Disciples

A: Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven

ALL: but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

B: Many will say to me on that day

ALL: Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?

B: Then I will tell them plainly

A: I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!

The Wise and Foolish Builders

A: Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

ALL: The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house

B: yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

A: But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

ALL: The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house

B: and it fell with a great crash.

ALL: When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching

A: because he taught as one who had authority

B: and not as their teachers of the law.

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