

Introduction to
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: POWER OVER PRIDE
in GOD'S NEW HUMANITY

A Seminar on Kingdom Principles in Matthew 5-7

I have been greatly blessed by my own reading and study of Christ's Sermon on the Mount recorded in Matthew five through seven and through reading many books in which it is explained and interpreted. I have also learned much as I have taught the interpretation and application of the Sermon as a seminary teacher at the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut, Lebanon, and in classes at East Texas Baptist University in Marshall, Texas, and in churches in various other places.

I do not consider this to be a research project. There are no footnotes, just the meditations of a simple Christian missionary with observations from experiences in service for the King of Kings and LORD of Lords. There are many other fine books on the Sermon. I have read many of them for my own personal growth and benefit. I have attached a list of helpful books at the end of this small seminar for you to use for your own growth and profit. I hope that this brief seminar may become an added reference for your own spiritual growth.

I have, I hope, avoided "sermonizing." I will leave that to those who may read this material. My purpose is to elucidate and explain the meaning of the text as I understand it from the Greek New Testament.

I have called this exposition of the Sermon "Power over Pride" because it seems to me that this is the basic teaching of the whole sermon. I have related it to "God's new humanity" because I see the Sermon as an explanation of the kinds of people (humans) that God has a right to expect us to be after we have been born again (John 3) into His kingdom and into His renewed people. It answers the question posed by Paul's statement in II Cor. 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" The question is, "What kind of person does this new creation become? What are his or her attitudes and how may one expect their character to be like? I think that is what Jesus is telling us in the Sermon on the Mount.

I think the greatest contribution this seminar makes is in the outline divisions and their headings. Understanding the Sermon requires understanding how each section relates to the other sections. Each chapter seems logically divided into two main sections. Within those sections we find both negative and positive teachings related to the main subject. In the Old Testament, righteousness was defined by the keeping of the negative teachings. In the New Testament, under the teachings of Jesus, righteousness is viewed as keeping the positive meanings of the negative (O.T.) commands. The

Old Testaments commands, "You must not," are transformed into "You must, by the power of the Holy Spirit living in you, live as Jesus taught us to live."