

LIVING THE LIVING WORD
Bible-Based Bible Study and Application

Grace Chapel
Orange, CA

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JESUS

1. INTRODUCTION

We have looked at the utter necessity of beginning with God's word. We have seen how starting with God's word profits us, and what happens when we fail to do this. We have explored how David, Solomon and Malachi applied the Scriptures to themselves and others. And now, in our continuing study of how to live the Bible out in our lives, we have come to the life of Jesus. Jesus is our first and best example of how to live in accord with the Scriptures—He wrote them.

2. JESUS AND THE LAW

The Temptation of Jesus

When Jesus faces temptation from the Devil himself, He responds by quoting Scripture. In fact, all three Scriptures He quotes come from the book of Deuteronomy. A number of Christian preachers like to ask their congregations at this point: "If your ability to resist temptation rested entirely on your grasp of the book of Deuteronomy, how would you do?" Go back and look at the quotes Jesus uses in their original contexts.¹ Take a lesson in how to apply based on Jesus' application.

The Sermon on the Mount

For more extended meditation on the commands of God, take a look at the Sermon on the Mount. The thinking here is much like the thinking in Matthew 4:7; there is more depth and thought in the extended application. See, for example, Matthew 5:21-30. Note that this is *not* the same thing as building a legalistic fence around the Law. Rather than building up a hedge of outward observances, Jesus is urging his hearers to be shaped by God's word in their hearts.

Detailed Attention to the Whole Text

The next portion of the Sermon on the Mount moves on to discuss marriage, but there is another passage that explains Jesus' thinking on the subject more fully: Matthew 19:3-9. Notice that here Jesus actually calls for more than the Law of Moses requires, but where does He go for precedent? To Genesis—which is part of the Law of Moses. The creation account demonstrates God's design for marriage,

¹ Matthew 4:4 and Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:7 and Deuteronomy 6:16, Matthew 4:10 and Deuteronomy 6:13. Satan in Matthew 4:6 is quoting Psalm 91:11-12.

and Jesus calls on His audience to fulfill that design. When they balk, He explains the reason why the Mosaic command is somewhat lax by comparison, but He doesn't give them any ground. Just in passing, note that Jesus treats the Creation account as a real, historical event.

Probably the best demonstration of the sort of attention Jesus paid to the text is in Matthew 22:31-33. In Exodus 3:6, God introduces Himself to Moses as the "God of Abraham." Abraham died some 400+ years earlier. If God is *still* the God of Abraham, Jesus reasons, then Abraham is *still* alive.

3. THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGES

Your Daily Walk

In your own Bible reading, do you give the kind of attention to the text that Jesus shows us in Matthew? Do you give the sort of deep reflection to the commands that Jesus gives to the Law in the Sermon on the Mount? Over the coming week, take a particular command, and ask yourself: what sort of person is it who keeps this command with his whole heart? Seek to become that person.

Honing Your Skills (30-60 min.)

Since our first attempt at memorizing the psalm, we've struggled through a preliminary interpretation and some personal applications. Now we need to come back around for a second pass at memorizing the psalm. Again, it is not necessary at this point to memorize the entire thing word-for-word, but try to learn it thought-by-thought. Challenge yourself to be able to give the psalm in your own words so that someone who listens to you will hear every verse.

Reading (1-2 hrs.)

This week we go back and pick up the chapters we skipped last week. Read chapters 35-38 in Hendricks.

Heavy-Duty Homework (2-3 hrs.)

We've looked this week at Jesus' interpretation of the Law. Another common sticking point for interpreters is the parables of Jesus. Matthew 13 is the tutorial on interpreting parables: here, Jesus gives a number of parables, but He also gives interpretations for two of them, so a reader will be able to get started. Taking Jesus' own interpretation of the parables of the sower and the wheat and tares as your template, interpret the other parables in Matthew 13.

4. LAST WEEK'S CHALLENGES

Your Daily Walk

Last week I encouraged you to form a mental picture based on Malachi's depiction of a crooked priest offering diseased sheep on God's altar, and to use that mental picture to remind yourself to offer God your best—including your best effort at applying His Word. Did that mental picture help you?

Honing Your Skills (30-60 min.)

So what applications did you generate from the psalm? Which parts did you find most applicable?

Reading (1-2 hrs.)

How did Hendricks help you to form applications of Psalm 139?

Heavy-Duty Homework (2-3 hrs.)

If you took the time to chart out 2 Chronicles, what patterns did you see in the history?