



General Topics :: The Sermon On The Mount Option, Continued ~ Ken Miller

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THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT OPTION, CONT.

THE CHOICES WE FACE

We have a choice to make. Either we "make a decisive leap into a truly counter-cultural Christianity," or we do nothing and doom our children and grandchildren to assimilation.

So says Rod Dreher just two pages into The Benedict Option.

I couldn't agree more.

The Great American Assimilation Machine was recently described as an "Expansive, diverse, open form of life that is nevertheless distinctive, alluring and absorptive,---so much so that those from other cultures worry that they will be overrun by (American) mores, sensibilities, and ways of life."

"Tell someone in France, or Japan, or Uganda that America is a multicultural nation---and they'll laugh."

"We have an aggressive, invasive monoculture that most of the world sees as imperialistic." (R.R. Reno, First Things, May 2017, p. 66)

This cultural imperialism forces everyone to bow down to the Golden American Image---or pay the consequences.

The music is playing--mesmerizing, deceptive, deadly. All around us people are falling to their knees, worshipping the gods of American society.

"Hail to naturalistic Scientific Discovery!" "Hail to Inclusiveness and Diversity!" "Hail to the holy trinity of Technology, Media and Internet!" "Hail to Business, Wealth, Possessions!" "Hail to Pleasure, Entertainment, Sports!" Hail to the Human Body!"

"Hail to ME!"

And we who are still standing must decide what we will do.

How do God's people resist bowing to the idols of American culture?

How do they raise their families in an imperialistic culture hostile to Christian values?

Can we learn from the three young Hebrews who resisted bowing to the golden image? What made them strong?

Isn't it clear these young men must have been taught and shaped by a remnant countercultural society?

Dreher's solution in *The Benedict Option* is to make a "decisive leap" into a new kind of family monasticism patterned after the order of St. Benedict, a sixth-century monk.

But shouldn't we "leap" further---all the way back to the first-century order established by the Nazarene, Jesus the Son of God--- and His Sermon on the Mount?

Recovering the Sermon on the Mount as the pattern for daily life will give families of believers everywhere the opportunity to enter into joyful persecution for righteousness' sake.

Then we will be Salt and Light to the world with works that glorify God-- just as Jesus promised right there in the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 5:9-12)

This is the way to resist and penetrate the godless cultural imperialism surrounding us.

Believers living the Sermon on the Mount by faith won't bow down to the gods of this age.

And the believer who builds his house on the rock of Jesus' unshakeable Kingdom will be able to weather the storm, just as He promises at the end of the Sermon. (Matt. 7:24-27)

WHO IS THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT FOR?

One of the biggest mistakes the Church ever made is to teach that the Sermon on the Mount was for a select group of cloistered saints.

Mainstream Christianity has lost its potency because it has lost this teaching.

The Sermon isn't an impossible ideal, to be lived out in some future age.

The Sermon isn't a "law" revealing human sinfulness.

And it isn't for the half-hearted, those who would serve both God and mammon.

The Sermon was originally for the disciples, those who left their loved ones and their vocations to follow the Master. Two thousand years later, the Sermon is still for those who have left all for His sake, right here in America---in 2017.

The Sermon is for those who have been completely taken by the Savior's love as were those first disciples.

We see Him now as Risen Ruler and King of the universe, an all-benevolent, yet absolute Sovereign for whom we choose

e to give up everything.

We embrace the the Sermon-- not only as His gracious commands--but as the "Transforming Initiatives"* of the New Humanity for which He died.

BY FAITH

We can embrace the Sermon with the kind of faith described in a confessional statement 490 years ago:

"Saving faith is not a useless, hidden, unborn thing in a man. It doesn't consist of merely historical knowledge derived from the Scriptures--something to be talked about without having the real substance.

True faith which counts with God is a sure knowledge of the heart; a sure confidence which we get from God---not through our own power, will or ability.

We receive this faith through hearing the Word of God, which---as it is illuminated by the Holy Spirit---is written in and imprinted on the heart. This Word works so effectively in us that we are drawn away by it from all visible and perishable things to the invisible, living God.

By it, we acquire a new spiritual taste for that which is heavenly and not for that which is earthly. For saving faith, accompanied with hope and love, is of such a nature that it conforms to things not seen.

Hence all true believers gladly and obediently submit themselves to all the commandments of God contained in the Holy Scriptures..." (Confession of Faith According to the Word of God, attributed to the congregation of Peter Twisck at Hoorn The Netherlands, 1627, Martyrs Mirror p. 383, revised slightly.)

I suggest all of His disciples should come apart, gather around the Master once again to hear His teaching by faith.

I plan to read through the Sermon for the next 30 days, taking notes.

Anyone wish to join me?

Ken Miller
May 17, 2017

Re: The Sermon On The Mount Option, Continued ~ Ken Miller - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2017/6/20 18:19

Thanks for posting this, Mary.

Sandra