

Sermon or Lesson: How Jesus Interacted With His Disciples, Part 2b (NIV based)
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Initial Job Functions or Activities - *Teaching To Define And Reshape Their New Role In Life*

PASSAGE: Matthew 5:13-7:27

INTRO: For those of you who are parents, you initiate those impromptu or situational conversations with your child in order to pass on an aspect of your philosophy of life that you know is important to shape or reshape his/her perspective of life. Another goal you have in doing this is to help prepare him/her for life by defining, shaping, and perhaps reshaping his/her role in life.

In this next passage, Jesus is presenting teaching to His disciples that is intended to define and reshape their new role in life as His disciples, which is significantly different than their previous roles in life they are just coming from, such as fishermen, tax collector, and etc.

BACKGROUND: Jesus recently started His ministry (Matthew 4:17), had just called ordinary fishermen Peter, Andrew, James, and John to follow Him and become His disciples (vv.4:18-22), and is now initially teaching them and the crowds (vv.5:1-2).

READ: Matthew 5:13-16

[Lesson Question: What is Jesus saying the disciples' new role in life is to be characterized by?]

SECTION POINT: Jesus is teaching the disciples that their new role in life is to be characterized by godliness, both inner and outer.

- - There should be distinct and noticeable moral differences in their lives from society. (v.5:13)
- - They are to let their faith show to people around them. (v.5:14,16)

[Lesson Question: Are there any conditions under which a disciple should not let his/her faith show?]

However, there is an exception to letting their faith show:

- - READ: Matthew 6:1-2
 - - The disciples are to be careful **not** to show their "acts of righteousness before men" (v.6:1) in order to avoid losing their eternal rewards because otherwise they will have already received their rewards in the form of accolades from men (v.6:2). Examples: when giving to the needy - vv.6:2-4; when praying - vv.6:5-6; when fasting - vv.6:16-18.
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READ: Matthew 5:17-20

[Lesson Question: In regard to the disciples' new role in life, why is Jesus making a distinction about the Old Testament Law and Prophets?]

SECTION POINT: Jesus is making a distinction about the validity, interpretation, and keeping of the Old Testament Law and Prophets as the standard for forming the disciples' new role in life.

- - Jesus intends that the Old Testament be interpreted and lived out in a way different than what the Pharisees and the teachers of the law have been promoting. (v.5:20)
 - - So, Jesus is clarifying and precluding a potential misunderstanding about the validity, interpretation, and keeping of the Old Testament Law and Prophets.
 - - And He is working on redefining and reshaping their religious thinking, training, doctrines, and beliefs to properly conform to the Old Testament Law and Prophets.
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READ: Matthew 5:21-22, 27-28, 31-32, 33-35, 38-39, 43-44

[Lesson Question: What is the pattern in these passages, and from this pattern, what can be concluded that Jesus is doing here in His teaching to the disciples and to the crowds?]

SECTION POINT: In these verses, Jesus is working to correct or adjust their previously learned religious teachings and cultural values that hinder the deployment of a new role in life.

- - There is a pattern in which Jesus repeatedly is saying "You have heard that it was said ... But I tell you ...".
 - - In His teaching, Jesus brings up a religious teaching or cultural value that His audience has previously heard and been taught.
 - - Then He either corrects or elaborates or expands on the religious teaching or cultural value, clarifying how God intends for the principles to be interpreted, believed, applied, and followed.
 - - Essentially, Jesus is working to correct their faulty or defective thinking in how they believe and follow the principles, i.e. reshaping their theological beliefs that dictate their roles in life.
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READ: Matthew 6:19-21, then read vv. 6:25, 33

[Lesson Question: In what way is Jesus trying to reshape their thinking and value system?]

SECTION POINT: Also, Jesus is trying to reshape their thinking and value system to be dominated by a long-term and eternal perspective, which will provide the basis for their new role in life.

- - Part of Jesus' teaching is aimed at changing their value system to a long-term and eternal perspective of life, which is to then be the perimeter and guide of their pursuit of a new role in life. (vv.6:19-21)

- - He is advocating that they should pursue God's kingdom and righteousness now, have faith God will provide for them along the way, and one day in the future God will compensate them accordingly. (vv.6:25,33)

READ: Matthew 7:12 as a summary of vv.7:1-11;
READ: the first sentence in Matthew 7:13 and 15;
READ: Matthew 7:24 as a summary of vv.7:24-27

[Lesson Question: What teaching approach is Jesus using here and what is the main principle He is promoting?]

SECTION POINT: Jesus' teaching approach further includes two principles of dynamics that advisably warn the disciples as they pursue this new role in life.

Jesus advisably warns His disciples:

- - 1. How the disciples treat others along the way through life is important to God. (vv.7:11-12)
 - - 2. What the disciples believe along the way through life is likewise important to God. (vv.7:13-14,15)
 - - To get these two dynamics correct in God's sight, both need to be occurring simultaneously, and either one by itself without the other is insufficient. (vv.7:24,26)
 - - Jesus wants His disciples to be mindful of and mentally carry these principles long-term - throughout their lives of being a disciple.
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BIG IDEA: Becoming a disciple involves reshaping to conform to a new life role that God wants, in areas such as godly thinking, beliefs, and actions, with a long-term and eternal perspective.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Do you hold some religious beliefs or doctrines that are contrary to what God says in His Word for being His disciple?
- - Do you engage in behaviors that are contrary to being an appropriate disciple?
- - Do you hold a God-oriented long-term and eternal perspective of life, letting it influence and determine how you live your life - your role in life?
- - Are you willing to be reshaped in all of the areas God wants to change you? When?
- - What steps are you going to start taking right now, today, and this week to bring your religious beliefs, doctrines, and behaviors into conformity to what God says in His Word?

Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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