A scenic view of a mountain landscape. In the foreground, there are large, light-colored rocks. The middle ground features a deep, rugged canyon with steep, rocky walls and green vegetation. In the background, a wide valley stretches out, with a small town visible in the distance under a clear sky.

Heart Matters: Introduction to The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew Chapters 5-7)

Hypocrisy

- 72% of Americans believe the Christian church is “full of hypocrites”
- 85% of those under 30 say Christians are hypocritical
- “The biggest surprise for researchers was the extent to which respondents say Christians are no longer like Jesus.”

Belief → Action

No action = No Belief

Freud:

“He does not believe, who does not live according to his belief.”

James:

“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.” (James 2:14–17)

HOW THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY REPRESENTS JESUS

● ALL CHRISTIANS
 ● EVANGELICAL
 ● NON-EVANGELICAL BORN AGAIN CHRISTIANS
 ● NOTIONAL
 ● PRACTICING CATHOLIC
 ● PRACTICING PROTESTANT

PHARISAICAL ATTITUDES / CHRIST-LIKE ACTIONS



CHRIST-LIKE ATTITUDES & ACTIONS



51%

38%

51%

53%

44%

48%

PHARISAICAL ATTITUDES & ACTIONS

21%

15%

23%

20%

31%

21%

CHRIST-LIKE ATTITUDES / PHARISAICAL ACTIONS

Christ-like Attitudes

What We Say





What They See



CHRISTIANS AREN'T PERFECT

the **Real Housewives**
OF ORANGE COUNTY



Pastor suspended

A STENOGRAPHER HAS BEEN SUSPENDED FROM CHURCH DUTIES FOLLOWING A DISCOVERED COURT CASE THAT SHE WAS SEXUALLY ABUSED BY THE PASTOR.

The incident has caused a church split, with some members wanting to disown the pastor and others wanting to keep him. The church is now in a state of confusion.

Church upset over court case evidence



Does Christianity Make a Difference In Peoples' Lives?

The #1 reason millennials are leaving the church is the belief that Christians are hypocritical and judgmental

- “If their faith didn’t have the power to change *them*, it can’t help me, either.”
- “There’s no victory over sin. A lot of them are worse than me.”

Jesus Thought So...

- So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.”(Matthew 7:17–20)
- Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. (Matthew 7:24–25)

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

- **The setting:**
 - Matthew 1-2: Jesus' genealogy and birth
 - Matthew 3: Baptism
 - Matthew 4: 1-11: Temptation in the desert
 - Matthew 4: 12-25: Begins ministry, calls disciples
 - Matthew 5: The Sermon

The Kingdom of Heaven (KOH)

- **Jesus begins his ministry preaching the KOH**
 - From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matthew 4:17)
 - And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. (Matthew 4:23)
- **The Kingdom of Heaven/God was *the* central message of Jesus’ teaching**
 - ...but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well; for I was sent for this purpose.” (Luke 4:43)

Kingdom Scripture

Mt 3:1-2: John the Baptist: Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.

Mt 10:1-7: Jesus sends the 12 to preach the Kingdom

Mt 12: 25-28: But if I drive out demons...then the kingdom of God has come

Mt 13:24, 31, 33, 44: The Kingdom of Heaven is like...

Mk 1:14-15: The time has come... The kingdom of God is near.

Mk 4:11-12: The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you

Mk 9:1: ...some who are standing here will...see the kingdom of God come

Mk 10:13-15: ...for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these (children)

Mk 10:24-25: how hard it is to enter...easier for a camel...than for a rich man to enter

Mk 14:24-25: ...when I drink it anew in the kingdom

Lk 1:33: ...his kingdom will never end

Lk 7:28: yet the one who is least in the kingdom is greater than (John the Baptist)

Lk 10:8-12: Kingdom is near; comes with judgment

Lk 17:20-21: the kingdom of God is within you.

Jn 3:3-5: no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again

Jn 18:36: my kingdom is not of this world

Acts 1:1-3: he appeared to them over 40 days and spoke about the kingdom

Acts 8:12: Philip preached the good news of the kingdom of God

Acts 19:8: Paul spoke boldly for 3 months about the kingdom of God

Rom 14:17: For the kingdom is (a matter of) righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit

Rev 12:10: Now have come salvation and power and the kingdom of God

KOH: “Already... but Not Yet” Here



Christ's
First Coming

“Already”

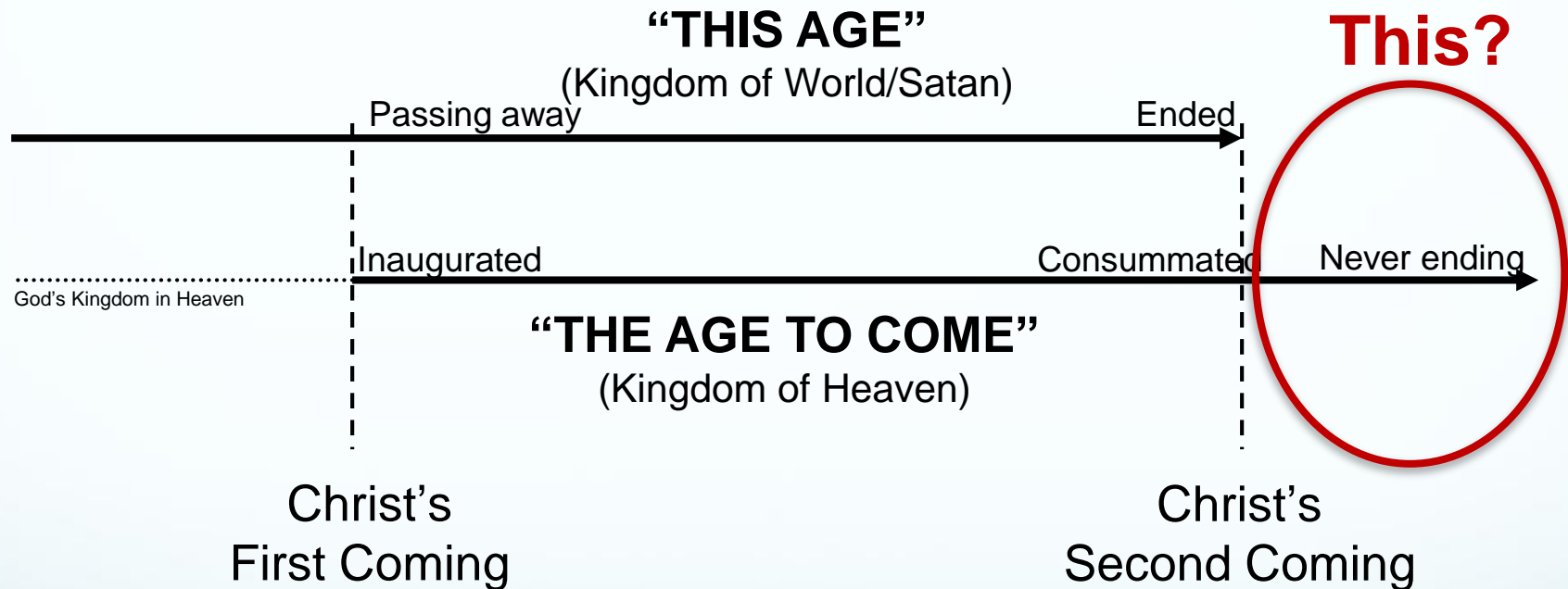
- Righteousness (Imputed)
- Peace with God
- Victory over death, some healing
- God present in us (Spirit)
- Power over sin/Satan/Kings

Christ's
Second Coming

“Not Yet”

- Completed righteousness
- Full peace
- No sickness or death
- In God's presence
- Sin/Satan destroyed

“The Gospel of the Kingdom”



And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom ... (Matthew 4:23)

...but he said to them, “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns as well...” (Luke 4:43)

“The Gospel of the Kingdom”



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The Good News (Gospel) of the Kingdom of Heaven

Life now and forever in God's Kingdom is available to us through relationship with God

“And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

(John 17:3)

Sermon on the Mount

- **An invitation to live in the Kingdom now and forever**
 - An encouragement to live in relationship with the king
- **Sermon Outline:**
 1. The blessings of the kingdom are available to everyone (Matt 5:3-20)
 2. The heart that pleases the King (5:21-48)
 3. Warnings: things that undermine relationship with the King (6:1 – 7:11)
 4. Those in obedient relationship with the King enter the KOH (7:12-27)
- **The kingdom message permeates the sermon, from beginning to end**

Jesus' Focus: The Heart

- **Mistake: viewing Jesus' sermon as a series of rules**
 - “Don't be angry, lust, retaliate, judge, etc.
- **We can't obey the law by attempting to obey the law**
 - Law *is not* the source of righteousness (ref. Romans 3)
 - However, law *is* the course of righteousness
- **Become the kind of person (heart) from whom righteousness naturally flows**

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean”.

(Matthew 23:25–26)

Live in the Kingdom Now

- **Integration of Life and Faith**
 - Action vs attitude; acts vs beliefs; works vs faith
- **Do we emphasize faith at the expense of works?**
 - Want to avoid works-gospel, pharisaic Law emphasis
- **But the gospel integrates both**
 - Salvation & sanctification; justification & regeneration
- **What Would Jesus Do?**
- **Blessings Now!**
 - Blessed are the...
 - ...and all these things will be added to you
 - ...how much more will your Father give good things



Live For Eternity With the King

- **Mantle: “If I had only known how long I was going to live, I’d have taken better care of myself.”**
- **We are living in an eternal relationship with God**
 - Yet, are we living like we believe it?
 - Are we taking God’s grace for granted?
 - Do our lives reflect our love for God?
- **Jesus’ sermon describes the kind of heart that can sustain an eternal, loving relationship with God**

“If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone’s work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.”

(1 Corinthians 3:14–15)

Live To Invite Others Into the Kingdom

- **We are the aroma of Christ (2 Cor 2:14-16)**
 - Pleasant or foul?
- **The world is watching**
 - “The biggest surprise for researchers was the extent to which respondents say Christians are no longer like Jesus.”
- **Imagine the impact on the world of a church that was not “Just Saved”, but also looked like Jesus**
 - The Gospel has the power to change lives
 - It is what our world needs, but often doesn’t see in us

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

(Matthew 5:14–16)



Transformation of the Heart

Pre-requisites: Born-again; Holy Spirit

1. Saturation in God's Word

- **Challenge: Read Matt 5-7 weekly for next 6 months**

2. Relationship with God through continual prayer

3. Reliance on other believers

4. Reflection and correction

Recommended Reading: "Renovation of the Heart" by Dallas Willard

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

(Romans 12:2)

He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

(Acts 1:3)