The Words of Jesus

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The Words of Jesus

☐ Lots of variety:
  ■ Short "sound-bites"
  ■ Long discourses
  ■ Dialogues
  ■ Parables

☐ Jesus' words often have a poetic or rhetorical character
  ■ Parallelisms
  ■ Word-play
Short "sound bites"

- Proverb: "physician, heal yourself"
- Metaphor: "you are the salt of the earth"
- Paradox: "the first shall be last"
- Hyperbole: "easier for camel..."
Long discourses

- Matthew:
  - Sermon on mount (5-7)
  - Sending the twelve (10)
  - Parables of the kingdom (13)
  - Living as disciples (18)
  - Woes to the scribes & Pharisees (23)
  - Olivet discourse (24-25)

- Luke: mostly medium-length discourses
  - Sermon on plain (6)
  - Sending the 72 (10)
  - Coming of the kingdom (17)
  - Signs of the end (21)
Long discourses

☐ John:
  - The new birth (3)
  - Jesus' work & credentials (5)
  - The bread of life (6)
  - The good shepherd (10)
  - Upper room discourse (14-17)
The Sermon on the Mount

- The beatitudes (5:1-16)
  - Compare with blessings/woes in Luke 6
  - How is salt used?
  - How does light function?

- Real righteousness (5:17-48)
  - Doesn't change
  - Characterizes kingdom people
  - Murder vs hate
  - Adultery vs lust
  - Oaths vs truth-telling
  - Retaliation vs non-resistance
  - Love friends vs enemies
The Sermon on the Mount

- Wealth & anxiety (6:19-34)
  - Earthly wealth vs heavenly
  - Serving the right master
  - Anxiety & priorities

- Judgment (7:1-5)
  - Where does right judgment start?
  - Meaning of "it will be measured to you"?

- Obedience (7:24-29)
  - Wise and foolish builders
Jesus in Dialogue

- With his disciples
  - Sample: who is Jesus?
- With seekers
  - Sample: the rich young ruler
- With opponents
  - Sample: paying taxes to Caesar
Jesus' Parables

- Most fall in category "earthly story with a heavenly meaning"
- Jesus' parables are some of the earliest that have survived.
  - About 1500 rabbinic parables
  - Only 324 predate AD 200
  - Only 3 predate Jesus' ministry
  - We have about 60-75 parables of Jesus
Why did Jesus use parables?

- To mystify opponents while enlightening followers
  - Parables of kingdom (Matt 13)
- To teach truth vividly & memorably
  - Lost sheep, coin, son (Luke 15)
- To sneak by defenses of audience to get them to make a true judgment
  - Nathan's ewe lamb parable (2 Sam 12)
  - Jesus' two-debtor parable (Luke 7)
Jesus' parables categorized by type

- **Story parables** – a brief story with characters, action and plot
  - Lost Son

- **Similitudes** – very short, no real plot
  - Woman and leaven

- **Sample parables** – like story parables, but make their points by giving a sample rather than an analogy
  - Pharisee & tax collector

- **Acted parables** – acted rather than spoken
  - Cursing fig tree
Jesus' parables by topic

- Christological (5)
- Lost & found (3)
- Forgiveness & mercy (4)
- On prayer (3)
- Transformation (2)
- Stewardship (7)
- Invitation & rejection (4)
- Second coming (6)
- Warning & judgment (16)
- Parables of kingdom (7)
- Sample parables (6)
- Acted parables (10)
Parable of the Sower

- Seed
  - What does the seed represent?

- Soils
  - What do the different kinds of soil mean?

- Making grain
  - What is the significance of producing grain, and the differing amounts?
Parables of Treasure & Pearl

- Both very similar, about finding & giving up everything to possess
- Who is the finder?
- What is the treasure/pearl?
- What does "spending all" mean?
- What is a great bargain?
- Who has the joy?
Pharisee & Tax Collector

- A sample parable, not "an earthly story w/ a heavenly meaning"
- Background on Pharisees
- Pharisee's prayer
- Background on Tax collectors
- Tax collector's prayer
- Jesus' verdict
The End ...

... of this study; but studying Jesus' words is a life-long occupation for the follower of Jesus