

# OFF THE MOUNT COURSE

(developed by Michel Larribeau MTh)

## NOTES FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS

Aim: 'to learn how to build life on good foundations'

### COURSE PLAN

(Jesus' commands in the 4 gospels,  
based on the chronological order of Luke's Gospel)

**Title:** OFF THE MOUNT COURSE (23 instructions in Luke 8 to 16)

**Aim:** to learn to build life on solid foundations

*sample below for preview*

**SESSION 1** - built on God's Word  
(Mt 13:18-23 with Lk 8:11-18)

*for the rest of the course contact us*

**SESSION 2** - built away from sin  
(Mk 7:1-23 with Mt 15:1-20)

**SESSION 3** - built on humility  
(Mt 18:1-14 and Mk 9:33-37)

**SESSION 4** - built on reconciliation (Mt 18:15-35)

**SESSION 5** - built away from hypocrisy (Lk 12:1-12)

**SESSION 6** - built away from conceit (Lk 14:1-24)

**SESSION 7** - built on stewardship (Lk 16:1-13)

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## SESSION 1 - built on God's word

① Read Matthew 13:18 to 23 with Lk 8:11-18 & Mk 4:13-25

② **to start**

- **what is the instruction of Jesus in this portion of his ministry in Mt.13:9?**
- this is the conclusion given to his disciple following the first of His many different parables in the Gospels (around 30)
- **what is a parable?**
- astonishing reasons for teaching in parables given in Mt 13:11-17 = a God given privilege (grace) just for disciples !!?
- **what is the parable about?**
- very often this parable used in an evangelistic context (encouraging unbelievers to accept the good news of Jesus the right way)
- Jesus' main purpose for this parable is to warn his disciples (Lk 8:18)
- lasting fruitfulness even of the Word of God is not guaranteed but care and attention must be given to how it is heard, listened to
- let us consider how to make sure that the seed of the Word of God falls in the right kind of soil and is as effective as possible

③ **THE WORD OF GOD**

- from Jesus' words in all 3 Gospels (Mt. 13:23, Mk. 4:20, Lk. 8:15),  
**what are the 4 principles to be aware of and keep paying attention to?**
- 1. from Mt.13:23?**
- **does God speak today?**

④ (the Word of God continued)

- if God speaks even today, **so whom does God speak to?** Helpful questions
  - is it normal
    - . for a child to hear his father? see Jn 1:11-13
    - . for a sheep to hear the shepherd? see John 10
    - . for a disciple to hear his teacher? see John 13:12-17
- God wants to speak to **every** Christian, it is NORMAL for a Christian to hear God, to hear the Word of God: read **John 8:47**
- so **let us expect** God to speak to **us** as soon as becoming a child of God
- 2. still from Mt.13:23?**
  - from these examples, Num.12:1-9, Num.22:21-36, 1 Sam.3:1-10, Dan.7, Act.8:26-35, Act.10:9-23, Act.16:6-10, 1 Thes.2:13, **does God always speak in a personal direct approach and a simple clear way?**
  - let us not limit God and rely on Him for giving understanding if necessary
- 3. from Mk.4:20?**
  - how to know then what we hear from God? See Lk.8:18 & Col.2:16-19
  - what is the other extreme that is also to be avoided? See 1 Thes.5:19-21
  - **what is the solution (avoiding the 2 extremes) proposed in v.21?**
  - **why is Acts 17:10-12 a great example of that is?**
  - **what about when no clear indication one way or the other in Scriptures?**
  - after God has spoken to us and it has been established, He wants us to believe him without reservation, to have faith in what He says
  - examples: Gen.15:6, Jonah 3:5, Luke 1:45, Acts 27:25: Rom. 4:21
  - the definition of faith in **Heb. 11:1** is very good but not quite complete, telling us 'what' (to be sure, certain) but not 'how'
  - the way (how) to be sure and certain is to hear and to believe God's Word, God speaking to us, either about Himself (trust) or our situation (faith)

⑤ (the Word of God continued)

4. from Lk.8:15?

- is it always so simple? see Lk.8:13b

- what kinds of pressure?

- \* see Mt.13:21
- \* see Mt.13:22 and Lk.8:14
- \* others mentioned others elsewhere;
  - . see Luke 9 :23,24 (1 Cor.9 :26-27)
  - . Luke 16:26 with Matt.10:37
  - . Matt.15:2-6 (Rom.12:2)

- is obedience another test?

- \* see James 2:20
- \* also 1 Pet.1:13
- \* see Lk 6:46-49, John 14:23, Rom.1:5 ('the obedience of faith'), James 1:2
  - . *the best proof that we believe what God has told us is to do what he says*

- whatever excuses are put forward that diminish or nullify the notion of obedience for Christians is not from God (Lk 8:15, 'by persevering')
- carefully note and communicate that obedience is ultimately to Jesus and His commandments and not to a human institution, organisation, local church or leadership; Paul could say 'follow me as I follow Jesus' (1 Cor.11:1)
- a normal reaction would be 'Who is equal to the task?'
  - \* see John 14:16 and 16:7 with Eph.1:13, Col.1:9-11
- is repentance always available after failure? [Lk 15:10-32, 1 John 1:9-2:2]
- in the parable Jesus speaks of 'producing & yielding a crop',
  - what 'crop' can be expected? or in other words what benefits?
  - . see Lk 11:28 (with Mt 10:29-30, 40-42, 11:28-29)
  - . Mt 7:24-27
  - . John 8:31-32
  - . Col.1:9-11
  - . last but not least Luke 6:40 [*to be like Him*]

⑥ to sum up: counting on the help of the Holy Spirit to ...

- accept that God wants and does speak to all His children in various ways
- realise our need of being careful, avoiding being gullible and cynical but ready to test everything when it comes to hearing God
- make sure to accept that the Bible is our final authority and to know and refer to it as much as possible
- hold on and persevere in believing what is true and doing what God tells us to do