

# 23 Strong March – Foundations, Matthew 5:13-20



## 23 STRONG

### March Day 1 Intro to Matthew 5:13-20... 4 Foundational Truths

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Our focus for March will be Matthew 5:13-20, a powerful and foundational section of this sermon from Jesus. Finding a pattern or structure in a passage of Scripture can help us set the words into our minds and hearts so that we can meditate on them in rich ways. So... the pattern we will use for Matthew 5:13-20 could be titled 4 Foundational Truths, because in these verses Jesus discusses 4 Truths that really build the foundation for all that He has yet to say. Our starting point today will be to establish these 4 Truths in our thinking. So:

- REVIEW Matthew 5:1-12... to remind yourself that Jesus' first Truth for us was His desire to bless us!
- READ and COPY Matthew 5:13-20 leaving extra margin on the left side of your copying.
- In the extra margin, WRITE these 4 Foundational Truths titles beside the corresponding verses:

5:13-16 – Who You Are      5:17 – Who I Am  
5:18-19 – How I Want You to Handle My Word      5:20 – Where I Want to Take You

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Concerning these 4 Truths:

- Go back through your COPY and TAKE NOTE of how/what Jesus' words speak into each of these 4 Truths. \*if there are things you are not sure about or don't fully understand, that is ok, we are just getting started
- In regard to these 4 Truths, PRAY the words from Psalm 119 at the top of this image.

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 2 Intro to Matthew 5:13-20... Truth Stings, But It Sets Free!

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday we began Matthew 5:13-20 by introducing the idea of 4 Foundational Truths found in these verses. Today we'll continue that introduction by also considering both the sting, and freedom found in Jesus' words. See we know Jesus' desire is to bless people and set them free to live in His kingdom... He established that first in the Beatitudes. But now, He must also address the brokenness He sees in the multitudes to whom He is speaking. Truth stings, but when received, it will also set free. So let's ponder that in these verses...

- REVIEW Matthew 5:13-20 and the 4 Foundational Truths we identified yesterday.
- As you review each Truth, WRITE down any of Jesus' words that hold a sting. What is the sting? And why?
- WATCH the brief video titled, Truth Stings, But It Sets Free and take notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Concerning the sting of Truth and the way it sets free:

- CONSIDER the sting and freedom of these Truths to you personally.
- JOURNAL your thoughts.

MEMORIZATION... Choose to either memorize all of verses 13-20, or a specific section/verse in it. Then make an action plan, dividing out whatever you chose into 22 days of memorizing. Get started with the first one now.

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 3 The Imagery of Salt

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today and tomorrow our focus will be Jesus' words in Matthew 5:13. In this verse, He tells us that He created us with a certain purpose... to be *"the salt of the earth."* When we were surveying this sermon, we made an Imagery List and *"salt"* was the first image on it. As we study each image, we will see how the image speaks in the verse(s) where Jesus mentions it, but it also relates to the whole sermon too. So, let's look closer...

- COPY each of the following functions of *"salt"* leaving space beside each one. Salt is useful for: many health benefits flavor preservation melting ice healing cleaning binding/stabilizing
- Using these functions, PONDER what Jesus meant when He said of people, *"you are the salt of the earth."*
- As you ponder, WRITE your thoughts beside each function.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

So let's take Jesus' statement, *"you are the salt of the earth"* personally. CONSIDER how Jesus may want to use your life in these functions of *"salt."* JOURNAL your thoughts and PRAY about what you discover.

MEMORIZATION... yesterday you determined what you would memorize from verses 13-20, and you made an action plan. Having that plan can diffuse feelings of being overwhelmed by the process. So... work your plan by accomplishing your memorization goal for today!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 4 The Revelation and Conviction of Salt

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday Jesus revealed our purpose as *"salt"* in the earth, and today we will see the conviction that Jesus' words can bring. See as Jesus looked at the people, He said what He did because they were not living out their purpose. They had literally *"become tasteless and good for nothing anymore except to be thrown out and trampled by men."* Jesus was speaking to mostly Jewish people that day, and at this point in their history as a nation, what He said revealed the reality of their lives... because they had lost their homeland and were literally being *"trampled"* under men in the authority of Roman rule. It was never supposed to be this way. So...

- READ Jesus' words in Matthew 5:13. They may hold that sting we talked about, but knowing of Jesus' heart to bless and draw people into His kingdom, CONSIDER why He spoke them. JOURNAL your thoughts.
- Remembering Jesus' heart, CONSIDER what His words also speak to you. Do they reveal things about your life as well? JOURNAL your thoughts.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Following up on what you just personally considered, ASK the Holy Spirit to lead you in committing to at least one way you will specifically live out your purpose of being *"salt in the earth"*. WRITE out your commitment.

MEMORIZATION... work your plan, and remember to always review, review, review. If you need additional tips for memorization success, reach out to us!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 5 The Imagery of Light

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Just as Jesus spoke of the imagery of "salt" in verse 13, He speaks of the imagery of "light" in verses 14-16, and there is much to discover. See within the scope of both images, I believe He is calling the listeners to step into a kind of living elevated far above their current lifestyle. He is calling them to kingdom living, where people have great purpose... to be "salt" and "light" in this world. So, just as we did with "salt" let's look closer...

- COPY each of the following functions of "light" leaving space beside each one. "Light" is useful for:  
sight/vision    energy    healing    growth    heat/warmth    food formation
- Using these functions, PONDER what Jesus meant when He said of people, "you are the light of the world."
- As you ponder, WRITE your thoughts beside each function.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

So let's take Jesus' statement, "you are the light of the world" personally. CONSIDER how Jesus may want to use your life in these functions of "light". JOURNAL your thoughts and PRAY about what you discover.

MEMORIZATION... day by day, you are giving attention to hiding God's Word in your heart. Don't quit, is so worth it!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 6 The Revelation and Conviction of Light

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday Jesus revealed our purpose in verses 14-16 as "light" in the earth, and today we will see the conviction that Jesus' words can bring. See as Jesus looked at the people, He said what He did because they were not living out their purpose. They had literally "hidden their light" as the people of God. Remember, Jesus was speaking to mostly Jewish people that day, and at this point in their history as a nation, what He said revealed the reality of their lives... because they had literally taken the light of God within them and hidden it away. It was never supposed to be this way. So...

- READ Jesus' words in Matthew 5:14-16. They may hold that sting we talked about, but knowing of Jesus' heart to bless and draw people into His kingdom, CONSIDER why He spoke them. JOURNAL your thoughts.
- Remembering Jesus' heart, CONSIDER what His words also speak to you. Do they reveal things about your life as well... places where your light is hidden? JOURNAL your thoughts.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Following up on what you just personally considered, ASK the Holy Spirit to lead you in committing to at least one way you will specifically live out your purpose of being "light in the world". WRITE out your commitment.

MEMORIZATION... make sure you are adding on a little more each day, and then reviewing!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 7 Salt in the Beatitudes

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

For the last four days our focus has been Jesus' words to us about living as *"salt and light."* And, earlier in our study of this sermon, we recognized how foundational Jesus' statements of blessings (Beatitudes) found in verses 3-12 are to the whole sermon. See, all that Jesus will go on to say will be built upon these attitudes of living. So first, let's look back at the Beatitudes to see how His words about being *"salt"* in vs. 13-16 are built upon them.

- REVIEW Matthew 5:3-12. (if you memorized them, try to say them out loud from memory)
- REVIEW Mathew 5:13, remembering your time in this verse on days 3 and 4, especially the functions of *"salt."*
- PRAY and ask the Lord to help you make the connection between living in the Beatitudes, and your purpose of being *"the salt of the earth."*

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Following up on what you know about the functions of *"salt,"* and the prayer you just prayed...

- LOOK individually at each Beatitude and consider how that posture of heart would position you to live out your purpose to be *"salt"* in the earth?
- JOURNAL your thoughts, noting ones on which the Holy Spirit specifically prompts your heart to act.

MEMORIZATION... reviewing your verses multiple times throughout the day can be especially helpful. Try it!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 8 Light in the Beatitudes

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday we began looking at the connection between Jesus' words about being *"salt and light"* to His earlier words in verses 3-12 known as the Beatitudes. These statements of blessing are foundational to the rest of His sermon, so we want to be intentional to continually make the connection. So, we'll continue doing that today with Jesus' words about light in verses 14-16.

- REVIEW Matthew 5:3-12. (if you memorized them, try to say them out loud again today from memory)
- REVIEW Mathew 5:14-16, remembering your time in this verse on days 5 and 6, especially the functions of *"light."*
- PRAY and ask the Lord to help you make the connection between living in the Beatitudes, and your purpose of being *"the light of the world."*

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Following up on what you know about the functions of *"light,"* and the prayer you just prayed...

- LOOK individually at each Beatitude and consider how that posture of heart would position you to live out your purpose to shine your *"light"* in the world?
- JOURNAL your thoughts, noting ones on which the Holy Spirit specifically prompts your heart to act.

MEMORIZATION... writing out your verses as you memorize can be especially helpful. Try it!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 9 Jesus – Who I Am

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

For the last 6 days we have focused on the first foundational Truth of this section and heard Jesus speaking to us, Who You Are. And now, He wants us to know WHO HE IS! So for the next 3 days we will focus on the second foundational Truth Jesus speaks in this section, which is... Who I Am, found in Matthew 5:17. See Jesus was introducing Himself here... not as a new man on the scene in God's story, no not at all. In fact, God's whole story was held together in Him; Jesus was the story, and He would be the fulfillment of every part!

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:17.
- Watch the video titled, This is Who I Am, taking notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After pondering Matthew 5:17, and watching the video:

- CONSIDER things about Jesus that may cause you to wonder/question who He is... JOURNAL your thoughts.
- CONSIDER your own knowledge of Jesus and what you might be missing. JOURNAL your thoughts.
- PRAY and ask God to open your eyes to the wonder of WHO JESUS IS!

MEMORIZATION... hearing what you are memorizing can be very helpful to the process. Record yourself saying the verses, and then listen multiple times. (An easy to use free recording app is called Voice Record)

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 10 Jesus – Fulfilling the Law and Prophets Part 1

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we will continue our focus in Matthew 5:17, where we hear Jesus revealing His identity. In this verse He says, *"Do not think I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets, I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill."* This is a very bold statement for Jesus to make to this mostly Jewish crowd, as their faith in God and expression of it totally rested upon the *"Law and the Prophets."* But Jesus clearly said it, and He clearly fulfilled it! Over the next two days, we will give attention to four ways He specifically did so.

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:17.
- Watch the video titled, Jesus – Fulfilling the Law and Prophets Part 1, taking notes as you do.
- Highlight the notes that mean the most to you.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Considering vs. 17 along with the video, JOURNAL and PRAY about what it means to you personally that Jesus:

- Fulfilled the ethical demands of the Law and Prophets.
- Fulfilled the Messianic prophecies of the Law and Prophets.

MEMORIZATION... Review your verses today, adding in more if you can. Then check in with the memorization plan you created on Day 2 and make sure you are on track!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 11 Jesus – Fulfilling the Law and Prophets Part 2

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today will be our last day in Matthew 5:17... there is so much to consider in this one little verse! I like to think of what Jesus said in verse 17 as a hub for everything in Scripture, because really the whole Bible is the story of Jesus! Yesterday we looked closely at two ways Jesus *"fulfilled the Law and the Prophets,"* and now today we will consider two more... all the while keeping in mind, there is still so much more to see.

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:17.
- Watch the video titled, Jesus – Fulfilling the Law and Prophets Part 2, taking notes as you do.
- Highlight the notes that mean the most to you.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Considering vs. 17 along with the video, JOURNAL and PRAY about what it means to you personally that Jesus:

- Fulfilled the Messianic types of the Law and Prophets.
- Fulfilled the wisdom of the Law and Prophets.

MEMORIZATION... The process of memorizing can be messy; we don't always get it just right, and sometimes it takes a lot of practice to get it even halfway right. That is why we go over it, and over it, and over it, and over it, again, and again, and again. It might be messy, but it is so worth it. Don't give up!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 12 God's Word is Eternal

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

We are moving on to the third foundational Truth found in Matthew 5:18-19 today where Jesus will address How I Want You To Handle My Word. We'll be here for quite a while, so let's plan to settle in. First of all, before we consider our role with His Word, we want to consider what Jesus says about God's Word in verse 18. See in this verse, He clearly addresses the eternal nature of God's Word!

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:18-19.
- In light of its Truth, CONSIDER the following and JOURNAL your thoughts about them:
  - The far reaching word pictures Jesus uses to make His point? Why do you think He spoke like that?
  - Are there parts of God's Word that you or others might tend to think are smaller or larger? Or that certain parts of His Word have faded in importance as the times have changed? Why?
  - How does knowing God's Word is eternal speak to the importance of every word in it?

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

- Knowing the Word of God is eternal... MAKE A LIST of at least 10 things from God's Word that hold great meaning your life.
- CONSIDER each one and the assurance you have for all of eternity that God's Word will be accomplished.
- THANK GOD for His Word that is eternal!

MEMORIZATION... Review. Add on. Review some more. That's it. Just do it!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 13 Annulling God's Word

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we continue in Matthew 5:18-19 where Jesus is addressing this third Foundational Truth, How I Want You To Handle My Word. The first thing Jesus says in verse 19 is, *"Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments..."* (NASB). The word, "annuls" is a pretty potent word and it really holds a sting that probably describes all of us at some point. But we can humbly accept the Truth, and let it bring us into a new way of handling God's Word in our lives. See the word "annuls" can be defined as... *minimizing value, doing away with, reducing to nothing*. The reality is, down throughout the ages, people have done that with many things God has spoken. Even though His Word is eternal, people pridefully dismiss what God has said in these ways.

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:19. Underline the word "annuls." (found in NASB, other versions might read differently)
- WATCH the video titled, Annulling God's Word, and take notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After pondering "annuls" in vs. 19, and watching the video, CONSIDER/JOURNAL/PRAY about the following:

- ASK the Holy Spirit to search your life and reveal any places you may be annulling His Word.
- CONFESS as needed.
- ASK God to strengthen you to be a "keeper" His Word. We'll dig into that word more tomorrow!

MEMORIZATION... Challenge for today: quote the verses you are memorizing to someone else!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 14 Keeping God's Word

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

We will continue in Matthew 5:18-19 today with a focus on the word, "keep." See Jesus describes two actions one can take with His Word... one is to "annul" and one is to "keep." Yesterday we saw how foolish it would be to choose to "annul" God's Word, and today we will see the benefit of "keeping" it. *And please note, we are just getting started in these power words from verses 18-19... there is so much to take in!*

The original word translated as "keep" in verse 19 can be defined as... to make or to do. Understanding that, reveals layer upon layer of ways we can and should handle God's Word in our lives. So, let's explore that more!

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:19. Underline the word "keeps." (found in NASB, other versions might read differently)
- WATCH the video titled, Keeping God's Word, and take notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After pondering "keep" in vs. 19, and watching the video, CONSIDER/JOURNAL/PRAY about the following:

- ASK the Holy Spirit to search your life and reveal ways that you are "keeping" His Word.
- ASK the Holy Spirit bring to mind additional ways that you can "keep" His Word.
- JOURNAL your thoughts about what He reveals.

MEMORIZATION... Check your plan! Are you on track? Keep moving forward each day!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 15 Keeping God's Word Part 2

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

We are going to take in another portion of the word, *"keep"* today. Some things just deserve extra attention, and I believe this word is one of them. One reason I believe that is because of how often the Bible speaks of being a *"keeper."* To get a taste of this, complete the following, and as you do, make sure to remember the definition of the word *"keep."* You will also want to use the NASB version (find on Bible Gateway if needed)

- READ through Psalm 119, which is all about the value of God's Word.
- Every time you see the word *"keep"* in reference to God's Word, WRITE DOWN the reference and phrase.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Now that you have surveyed through Psalm 119 to find the word *"keep,"* ANSWER the following:

- Between what Jesus said in Matthew 5:19, and what you have seen in Psalm 119, how committed should you be to *"keeping"* God's Word? Why?
- Which phrases from Psalm 119 about *"keeping"* resonate the most in your heart? Pick 3 that mean the most to you and PRAY those 3 phrases over your life.

MEMORIZATION... One way to *"keep"* God's Word is to memorize it. As you memorize, you are DOING the work to MAKE God's Word a part of who you are. MAKING + DOING = KEEPING! That's awesome!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 16 Teaching God's Word

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

In Matthew 5:19 Jesus is surely unloading power words of wisdom about how to handle God's Word. We've listened in carefully to His instructions about both *"annulling"* and *"keeping"* God's Word... and now today we want to zoom in on what He says about *"teaching,"* God's Word.

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:19. Underline both times that Jesus says *"teach."* (found in NASB, other versions might read differently)
- WATCH the video titled, Teaching God's Word, taking notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After pondering *"teach"* in vs. 19, and watching the video, CONSIDER/JOURNAL/PRAY about the following:

- THINK of someone who has taught you the value/Truth of God's Word by how they handled it. Connect with them in some way today and thank them for their faithfulness.
- ASK the Holy Spirit to show you what you are *"teaching"* about God's Word by the ways you handle it.
- ASK God to strengthen you to be a wise *"keeper"* and *"teacher"* of His Word.

MEMORIZATION... Dedicating your time, energy and effort into memorizing God's Word surely teaches others around you about the value of God's Word in your life. Keep teaching!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 17 Least and Great Part 1

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

We've closely considered three of Jesus' words in Matthew 5:19, but there are still two more which will speak so much to us, and also challenge us in regard to this third foundational Truth of How We Handle God's Word. So let's dig into these two words... "*least*" and "*great*" ...

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:19. Highlight the words "*least*" and "*great*".
- Write the following statements in your journal filling in the blanks...
  - *ANNULLING* God's Word = \_\_\_\_\_ in the kingdom of heaven.
  - *KEEPING* God's Word = \_\_\_\_\_ in the kingdom of heaven.
- WATCH the video titled, Least and Great Part 1, taking notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

After pondering these 2 words/watching the video, CONSIDER/JOURNAL/PRAY about the following questions:

- If Jesus were to currently rank me in the Kingdom of Heaven as "*least*" or "*great*" which would it be? Why?
- If I could hear Jesus cheering me on today to greatness in the kingdom, what might I hear Him saying?

MEMORIZATION... Could it be that memorization of God's Word increases the likelihood of your "*greatness*" in the kingdom? More than likely it does, so, keep at it!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 18 Least and Great Part 2

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Yesterday we zoomed in on two powerful words that Jesus spoke found in Matthew 5:19, "*least*" and "*great*," but we are not done. Today we will continue to take in what Jesus speaks to us through these words. So...

- READ Matthew 5:19 out loud like this... as if Jesus was speaking directly to you... because He is!
 

*"If you then annul one of the least of these commandments and so teach others,  
you will be called least in the kingdom of heaven,  
but if you keep and teach them, you shall be called great in My kingdom."*
- REVIEW your notes from yesterday's video.
- WATCH the video titled, Least and Great Part 2, taking notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

In response to your continued pondering of "*least*" and "*great*"... CONSIDER/JOURNAL/PRAY about the following:

- What specific benefits of Gods Kingdom do I want to experience in great ways? Why?
- What specific benefits of Gods Kingdom do I want those I influence to experience in great ways? Why?
- What is one very practical way that I can I raise up my "*keeping*" of God's Word? Will I do it?

MEMORIZATION... Memorization is definitely a practical way to "*keep*" God's Word. Don't do life without it!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 19 Surpassing Righteousness

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Thus far in Matthew 5:13-20, we have heard Jesus speak three of the four foundational Truths we identified when we began. And now today, we will be in verse 20 and hear the last one which is Jesus telling us, Where I Want to Take You. At first listen, Jesus' Words may not sound like a destination discussion, but as we listen closely, we will definitely hear it. His words in Matthew 5:20 are also incredibly bold, and they set a standard that sounds close to impossible. To learn more, complete the following:

- READ and COPY Matthew 5:20. Circle the word *"surpasses"* (from NASB, other versions might read differently)
- WATCH the video titled, Surpassing Righteousness, taking notes as you do.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

In response to your pondering of *"surpassing righteousness"* ...

- READ... COPY... and JOURNAL about these few of many verses that speak of Jesus being our righteousness.  
Jeremiah 33:16    I Corinthians 1:30    II Corinthians 5:21
- Even though you know Jesus is your righteousness, do you ever find yourself striving to meet His standard of righteousness your own? How so? JOURNAL your thoughts.
- PRAY, laying down striving... thanking Jesus for His righteousness.... asking God to nurture you in His Truth of being your righteousness... and humbly accepting His goodness with a *"poor in spirit"* attitude.

MEMORIZATION... By now, you should have your verse(s) mostly memorized. If so, are you reviewing daily? Reviewing is what takes memorization from good to great!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 20 Living in Righteousness

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

Today we'll spend more time in Matthew 5:20. Yesterday we were reminded that Jesus is our righteousness... that we don't have to strive to find a way into the Kingdom ourselves. He became righteousness for us, praise the Lord! So amazing, and yet questions arise from that knowing... questions like, What should be our response to such a generous gift? How should we aspire toward righteous living? If our righteousness is already found in Christ, why does Jesus go on to teach us about living in righteousness in the Sermon on the Mount? So...

- COPY each of these three questions, leaving space beside each one.
- ASK the Lord to give you understanding as you LOOK at the following Scriptures to consider answers to the three questions. (Ephesians 1:3-4, Ephesians 2:8-10, Romans 12:1-2, I Thessalonians 5:23-24, Matthew 6:33)
- Considering the verses, JOURNAL any answers and insights you receive beside each question.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Hopefully you gained some clarity today about why we continue to pursue righteous living, even though Christ is already our righteousness. And hopefully that clarity will go with you as we continue to study the Sermon on the Mount and hear Jesus calling us to some extreme expressions of righteousness in our lives. In order to be ready for what He will speak, based on the Scriptures you just studied, JOURNAL a prayer of personal commitment to Jesus about your willingness to live in righteousness.

MEMORIZATION... REVIEW! REVIEW! REVIEW!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 21 Kingdom Review

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

We have noted several times that the Sermon on the Mount is all about living in God's Kingdom! During this first quarter of January, February and March, the first 20 verses of this sermon have gotten our attention, and I would call these twenty verses the Introduction of the Sermon on the Mount. So, as they form the introduction, and as they contain such an emphasis upon God's Kingdom, it would be fitting for us to look over them again for what I would call a "Kingdom Review." To get started on that review, complete the following:

- READ through Matthew 5:1-20. Any of it that you memorized, pause to say it out loud.
- As you read, each time you encounter words or implication about the Kingdom, JOURNAL a note of it.

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Now that you have completed your Kingdom review...

- WATCH the video titled *Kingdom Review*, taking notes as you do.
- PRAY in response to all you have seen today!

MEMORIZATION... From memory, try to WRITE out the verse(s) you memorized this month. Once you are done, check it for accuracy.

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 22 Foundational Truth Review

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### SPIRITUAL FOOD

At the beginning of this month, we identified four Foundational Truths that Jesus would discuss in this small section of Matthew 5:13-20. Now that we have covered each of them, I believe it would be wise to review them once more before we move on to the rest of the sermon. So, to do that, complete the following:

- READ through Matthew 5:13-20.
- From memory, try to CATEGORIZE and TITLE each of the four Foundational Truths in connection to its respective verses. Check Day 1 to make sure you are correct. (Leave a good amount of space beside each one)

#### SPIRITUAL FITNESS

Now, go back to each Foundational Truth, and in the space you left beside it, do the following:

- JOURNAL your main takeaway(s) from it.
- JOURNAL a prayer reflecting your takeaway(s)... including any personal commitments you have made
- regarding that Foundational Truth.

MEMORIZATION... Review your verses... and make sure to mentally connect whatever verse(s) you have Memorized, to its corresponding Foundational Truth!

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## 23 STRONG

### March Day 23 Introduction Review

*"Teach me Thy statutes, Make me understand the way of Thy precepts so I will meditate on Thy wonders."* Psalm 119:26b-27

#### **SPIRITUAL FOOD**

Day 23! What a great time in this small, yet very BIG section of Matthew 5. As we have noted before, this section is part of what I would call Jesus' Introduction of the Sermon on the Mount. Every good sermon has an introduction, and I believe Matthew 5:1-20 contains it here. A couple of days ago we reviewed the introduction regarding the Kingdom, but today, to finish out this month, and this quarter well, we want to pause and review the introduction as a whole. So, READ Matthew 5:1-20... any of it you memorized, pause to SAY IT OUT LOUD.

#### **SPIRITUAL FITNESS**

The purpose of our review is two fold... 1. we want to solidly set the contents and flow of the sermon in our mind before we move on 2. we want to reflect on specific things we've gleaned from the Lord as we have feasted on these verses. So:

- CREATE AN OUTLINE of Matthew 5:1-20
- HIGHLIGHT anything in your outline that represents places in vs. 1-20 where the Lord has spoken to you, or moved in your heart in some way. Make notes on your outline to help you remember those things.
- PRAY and thank God for His Word, and the privilege you have to know Him through it!

MEMORIZATION... Look at what you have hidden in your heart! Take a moment to thank God, asking Him to help you remember His Words forever... and that He would continually use them to nourish your soul!

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