



Raise the Bar

Summary and Goal

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus didn't lower the bar when it came to the Law; He raised it. By making it clear that He came to fulfill the Law, He clarified that we are called toward wholeness and maturity in faith. If we are to be the light of the world, then what darkness do we need to confess and put under the lordship of Jesus?

Main Passages

Matthew 5:13-37

Session Outline

1. Where There's Fire, There's Smoke (Matthew 5:13-16)
2. God's Word Shows the Way (Matthew 5:17-20)
3. Not Just Hands, but Heart (Matthew 5:21-37)

Theological Theme

God's Law has everything to do with people's lives today. For followers of Jesus, it is the blueprint to a life that pleases their Creator and Father. For those who do not follow Jesus, it is a mirror that reveals their desperate need of a Savior.

Christ Connection

Those who are in Christ see God's Law as a blessing because it helps them know how to walk in joyful obedience to the one who saved them. For those who are not in Christ, the Law sends them running to Christ because they realize that they are unable to keep the commandments of God.

Missional Application

When Christians read God's Law, they respond in obedience with joy and thanksgiving because they remember that they were hell-bound, ruined people. Christians desire for others to share that joy, peace, and hope.

Historical Context of Matthew

Purpose

Matthew probably wrote his Gospel in order to preserve written eyewitness testimony about the ministry of Jesus. Matthew's Gospel emphasizes certain theological truths. First, Jesus is the Messiah, the long-awaited King of God's people. Second, Jesus is the new Abraham, the founder of a new spiritual Israel consisting of all people who choose to follow him. This new Israel will consist of both Jews and Gentiles. Third, Jesus is the new Moses, the deliverer and instructor of God's people. Fourth, Jesus is the Immanuel, the virgin-born Son of God who fulfills the promises of the OT.

Author

The author did not identify himself in the text. However, the title that ascribes this Gospel to Matthew appears in the earliest manuscripts and is possibly original. Titles became necessary to distinguish one Gospel from another when the four Gospels began to circulate as a single collection. Many early church fathers (Papias, Irenaeus, Pantaeus, and Origen) acknowledged Matthew as the author. Papias also contended that Matthew first wrote in Hebrew, implying that this Gospel was later translated into Greek.

Setting

Determining the date of composition of Matthew's Gospel depends largely on the relationship of the Gospels to one another. Most scholars believe that Matthew utilized Mark's Gospel in writing his own gospel. If this is correct, Matthew's Gospel must postdate Mark's. However, the date of Mark's Gospel is also shrouded in mystery. Irenaeus (ca AD 180) seems to claim that Mark wrote his Gospel after Peter's death in the mid-60s. However, Clement of Alexandria, who wrote only twenty years after Irenaeus, claimed that Mark wrote his Gospel while Peter was still alive. Given the ambiguity of the historical evidence, a decision must be based on other factors.

Special Features

This Gospel was written from a strong Jewish perspective to show that Jesus is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.

2

Session Plan

Raising the Bar

Introduction

- ? What comes to mind when you think of God's Law?
- ? How has your view of God's Law changed throughout your walk with Christ?

Matthew 5:13-37 is a section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' longest recorded sermon. In the first section of this sermon, known as the Beatitudes, Jesus encouraged His followers by affirming their current blessed state and assuring them of a future hope. Jesus was careful to identify who His true followers were by naming them by their fruit (meek, humble, etc.). In essence, Jesus said that His followers are blessed because all of God's promises to them will be kept. In today's passage, Jesus turned His attention to what it means to live as His followers. This message isn't just for Christians. It's also a powerful message to those who are outside of Christ. Jesus' standard here was impossibly high for people operating in their own strength and depending on their self-righteousness. The right response to this insurmountable task is to trust in Him.

1. Where There's Fire, There's Smoke (Matthew 5:13-16)

These two metaphors for the Christian are appropriate for several reasons. First, both provide a great service to humanity. They are useful and undeniably good for mankind. Salt's preserving quality was invaluable in the ancient world. And it goes without saying that light was essential, as it is today. Christians are to be a blessing to those around them by being witnesses both in word and deed of the one true and living God.

- ? When are light and salt useful? What do these two images teach you about being a Christian?
- ? Application: Does your outward living reflect an inward transformation? Have you been saved by the power of the gospel message? If so, what is your testimony of salvation?

2. God's Word Shows the Way (Matthew 5:17-20)

God's Law is joy and life for the follower of Jesus, but it is misery and death for the unbeliever. The reason for the vast chasm between the two is the position of each (remember our illustration of the mountain from the introduction). God's Law no longer condemns Christians because Christ has redeemed them from the punishment for breaking God's Law. Those who are not Christians, however, must keep God's Law perfectly and perpetually or they will be found guilty. Of course, all people are already guilty, and even if they weren't, it is impossible for sinful people to obey God's Law.

- ❓ What did Jesus indicate was His relationship to God's Law? What did He say about people's relationship to God's Law? What does this mean for the Christian? What does it mean for the non-Christian?
- ❓ Application: Which do you see when you look at God's Law—an impossible, condemning standard or a joyful blueprint for obedience? Explain your thoughts.

3. Not Just Hands, but Heart (Matthew 5:21-37)

Jesus revealed that the sort of obedience God expected was more robust than what the religious leaders had come to believe. Obedience wasn't meant to be only external actions, but also an internal perspective, not only their hands but also their hearts. They were not only to obey the letter of the law with their hands, but also the spirit of the law by submitting their hearts.

- ❓ What was Jesus' overarching message to His followers concerning these specific commands? What did these commands express to those who were not in Christ and depended on their own righteousness for salvation? What did these commands say about Jesus, the one who came to fulfill God's Law?
- ❓ Application: If you are a Christian, then which of these commandments are you struggling with the most? What are some strategies you can enact to fight against sin? If you are not a Christian, what will you do about your inability to obey God's law? What will you do with your sin?

Conclusion

- ❓ Do you understand the concept of Jesus' righteousness being applied to the Christian's account? If not, talk with your pastor about this essential Christian doctrine.
- ❓ How might joyfully following God's Law enable Christians to point others to the truth about Jesus?

❓ For Further Discussion

What do you see when you look at God's Law? What does that indicate about the state of your soul? Which of the commandments that Jesus commented on do you find the most applicable to your current situation?



Expanded Session Content

Raising the Bar

Introduction

The flight between the two Ecuadorian cities of Quito and Lago Agrio is amazing. It only lasts about 45 minutes, but during that time the airplane weaves its way between multiple snow-capped peaks in the Andes Mountains. You may find yourself glancing out the window to see a magnificent mountain peak at eye level. It is surreal. You fly miles above sea-level and face a mountain that you hope the pilot doesn't veer toward on the return trip.

From that vantage point, the views are breath taking and awe-inspiring. Passengers pull out their cellphones to take pictures and videos. People smile and chat about what they see as they sip on ginger ale and eat pretzels. In a few short minutes, they are on the ground in the sweltering jungle.

From the airplane, the view of the mountains is exhilarating. However, if you were at the base of one of them knowing that you had to summit the peak, exhilaration would immediately give way to desperation. As you look up an impossibly steep grade that goes on forever, you would quickly determine that getting over the mountain is above your pay grade.

Our position or vantage point determine our feelings and perspectives. The same mountain looks very different from an airplane window and a basecamp.

God's Law is like that. For those who are not in Christ, God's Law is a desolate, lonely, and impossible place. But for Christians, God's Law is good and helpful and a sign of God's lovingkindness toward them. How does God's Law look to you?

- ❓ What comes to mind when you think of God's Law?
- ❓ How has your view of God's Law changed throughout your walk with Christ?

Session Summary



Matthew 5:13-37 is a section of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' longest recorded sermon. In the first section of this sermon, known as the Beatitudes, Jesus encouraged His followers by affirming their current blessed state and assuring them of a future hope. Jesus was careful to identify who His true followers were by naming them by their fruit (meek, humble, etc.). In essence, Jesus said that His followers are blessed because all of God's promises to them will be kept. In today's passage, Jesus turned His attention to what it means to live as His followers. This message isn't just for Christians. It's also a powerful message to those who are outside of Christ. Jesus' standard here was impossibly high for people operating in their own strength and depending on their self-righteousness. The right response to this insurmountable task is to trust in Him.

1. Where There's Fire, There's Smoke (Matthew 5:13-16)

In verses 13 and 14, Jesus said to His disciples, "You are the salt of the earth . . . You are the light of the world." It is clear that He was talking to His disciples because of the context of the passage and also because of the meaning of these words. Only those who love and fear the Lord will inherit the kingdom of God, and only those who fear and love the Lord can be salt and light in a sin-soaked world.

These two metaphors for the Christian are appropriate for several reasons. First, both provide a great service to humanity. They are useful and undeniably good for mankind. Salt's preserving quality was invaluable in the ancient world. And it goes without saying that light was essential, as it is today. Christians are to be a blessing to those around them by being witnesses both in word and deed of the one true and living God.

But there is another lesson we learn from these two metaphors. Both salt and light are naturally useful and good. You don't have to do anything to light or salt in order to make them useful. Christians, having been transformed by the power of the gospel, are naturally useful. They aren't perfect, but they are a new creation, indwelt by God's Spirit, and meant for good works (2 Cor. 5:17, Eph. 2:10).

-  When are light and salt useful? What do these two images teach you about being a Christian?
-  Application: Does your outward living reflect an inward transformation? Have you been saved by the power of the gospel message? If so, what is your testimony of salvation?

The Fruit of a Changed Life

Whenever the gospel fire has been lit in someone's heart, the smoke of works will be seen, without exception. A rescue as glorious and wonderful as the gospel can only result in a person who is totally committed to the Rescuer. This response consists of nothing less than joyful, humble, and faithful obedience to Jesus.

Jesus said that if salt loses its saltiness, then it's no longer good for anything but to be thrown out. Further, Jesus asked who would light a lamp to put under a basket. Salt that isn't salty and a light that is smothered under a basket make as much sense as a Christian who doesn't do good works.

True Christians are humble, repentant, meek, merciful and the like because God made them that way by the power of the gospel. That's the inward reality of a follower of Jesus. The outward reality will follow and can no more be detained than a candle giving off light or salt being salty.

2. God's Word Shows the Way (Matthew 5:17-20)

We cannot overemphasize the importance of context when we read the Bible. We must resist the temptation to lift out a verse or two and formulate a lesson or doctrine on those words alone. Each verse relates to the verses around it. Specific people wrote these words to specific people with a specific intention.

Jesus told His followers that they should be salt and light and let their good works be seen so that God would get glory. The next logical question is this: What works are the works of God? We may be tempted to stop reading there and start brainstorming. We could probably come up with a long list of ways to be salt and light in our homes, schools, and workplaces. But Jesus didn't intend for His followers to put their heads together to come up with ways to obey God. In the very next verse, He said: "Don't think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets." Here is the meaning plain and simple: those who have been saved will read and obey God's Word.

Jesus said, "Don't think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill." Jesus came to uphold the Law of God. Furthermore, He said, "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven." Later in the sermon, Jesus said: "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (5:48).

Jesus said plainly that He would uphold the Law. Further, Jesus said that those who want eternal life must be found blameless in relationship to God's Law. In other words, if a person is imperfect in his or her obedience to God's Law, then he or she is unfit for the Kingdom.



What did Jesus indicate was His relationship to God's Law? What did He say about people's relationship to God's Law? What does this mean for the Christian? What does it mean for the non-Christian?



Application: Which do you see when you look at God's Law—an impossible, condemning standard or a joyful blueprint for obedience? Explain your thoughts.

God's Law is joy and life for the follower of Jesus, but it is misery and death for the unbeliever. The reason for the vast chasm between the two is the position of each (remember our illustration of the mountain from the introduction). God's Law no longer condemns Christians because Christ has redeemed them from the punishment for breaking God's Law. Those who are not Christians, however, must keep God's Law perfectly and perpetually or they will be found guilty. Of course, all people are already guilty, and even if they weren't, it is impossible for sinful people to obey God's Law.

For Christians, the Law is like a blueprint or a roadmap. It shows them how to walk in obedience to their heavenly Father. It shows them how to please their Father. This isn't drudgery for true Christians; it is a joy. Christians are people who have experienced the salvation of God in Jesus Christ. They long to worship God, desire to obey Him, and crave fellowship with Him. The Law of God for non-Christians is a mirror that reveals a corrupted, sin-sick heart. They see transgression on top of transgression and eternal punishment that will be justly administered.

God accomplishes His purposes by applying His Word to both believers and unbelievers. For Christians God's purpose is to give clarity about how to live as children of God. For non-Christians, God's purpose is to show them their desperate need of a Savior.


3. Not Just Hands, but Heart (Matthew 5:21-37)


In the next section, Jesus explained specific examples of having a righteousness that supersedes the scribes and the Pharisees. In these examples, Jesus communicated three primary truths. Let's take them one by one.

Jesus revealed that the sort of obedience God expected was more robust than what the religious leaders had come to believe. Obedience wasn't meant to be only external actions, but also an internal perspective, not only their hands but also their hearts. They were not only to obey the letter of the law with their hands, but also the spirit of the law by submitting their hearts. It isn't enough to simply not murder. Rather, love your neighbor. It's not sufficient to just avoid adultery, but guard your heart against even thinking about it. Don't just fend off a divorce, but esteem marriage the way that God esteems it. Finally, let your speech be the overflow of a heart that fears, loves, and worships the Lord.

Jesus expressed this same sentiment negatively when He called the Pharisees whitewashed tombs. “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of the bones of the dead and every kind of impurity” (Matt. 23:27).

Thus, these commands help the Christian know how to walk in obedience and how to repent. Christians aren't to view the Law as a means to make themselves right with God, but as a means to live in accordance with their new position in Christ as a child of God.

-  What was Jesus' overarching message to His followers concerning these specific commands? What did these commands express to those who were not in Christ and depended on their own righteousness for salvation? What did these commands say about Jesus, the one who came to fulfill God's Law?

-  Application: If you are a Christian, then which of these commandments are you struggling with the most? What are some strategies you can enact to fight against sin? If you are not a Christian, what will you do about your inability to obey God's law? What will you do with your sin?

Jesus' words showed the impossibly high standard of God's Law for those who want to be justified by it. God is holy, and He demands holiness. If a person seeks to be right with God by his or her own merits, then this is the standard that they must reach. Yet, every person is born in sin and is bent toward sin from birth. No one is righteous, not even one (Rom. 3:10). Nowhere are unbelievers confronted with their spiritual inability more forcibly than when reading the Law of God.

Jesus didn't come to abolish God's Law, He came to keep it perfectly. The writer of Hebrews described Jesus this way: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in every way as we are, yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). In living a life of perfect obedience to God, Jesus proved that He was the Son of God. No mere man with a sinful nature could perfectly and perpetually obey God, but Jesus did. Jesus wasn't a mere man; He was the God-man, fully God and fully man.

Further, when Jesus lived a life of perfect obedience, He earned God's righteousness and made Himself to be a sufficient and effective substitute sacrifice. The righteousness that Jesus earned through perfect obedience was applied to the account of all who trust in Him, while their sin was applied to Jesus' account.

Conclusion

God's Law is good. It is good for both believers and unbelievers. For Christians, the Law of God provides a blueprint by which they can joyfully and worshipfully obey their Heavenly Father. For non-Christians, God graciously reveals to them their need for a Savior by exposing their spiritual inability when they compare their lives to His Law.

Christians will produce the fruit of obedience because they are new creations in Christ. The fire of gospel transformation will produce the smoke of joyful obedience and humble repentance. If there is no smoke, then there can be no assurance of fire.

Finally, Jesus fulfilled the Law of God perfectly. He was tempted in all the ways that we are, but He never sinned. Jesus always did what God commanded, and He never did what God forbade. This very same righteousness that Jesus exhibited is what is applied to the account of those who respond to the gospel message with faith and repentance.

- ❓ Do you understand the concept of Jesus' righteousness being applied to the Christian's account? If not, talk with your pastor about this essential Christian doctrine.
- ❓ What do you see when you look at God's Law? What does that indicate about the state of your soul?
- ❓ Which of the commandments that Jesus commented on do you find the most applicable to your current situation?
- ❓ How might joyfully following God's Law enable Christians to point others to the truth about Jesus?

Prayer of Response

Give thanks to God for His Law. Thank Him for providing a blueprint by which you can walk in joyful obedience and humble repentance. Rejoice that Jesus kept God's Law perfectly, earning a righteousness that would be applied to the account of all those who would respond to the gospel message with faith and repentance.

Additional Resources

- *The Message of the Sermon on the Mount* by John Stott
- *The Sermon on the Mount* by R. Kent Hughes
- *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* by Oswald Chambers

For Next Week

Session Title

- No Ordinary Faith

Main Passages

- Matthew 5:38-48

Session Outline

1. Instructions for Perfection (Matt. 5:38-44)
2. The Model of Perfection (Matt. 5:20, 48)
3. Only the Perfect are Rewarded (Matt. 5:46-48)

Memorize

¹⁴ *“You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

- Matthew 5:14-16

Daily Readings

- Monday - 1 John 3:18
- Tuesday - Colossians 3:17
- Wednesday - Galatians 5:13
- Thursday - Ephesians 4:1-3
- Friday - 1 Peter 2:17
- Saturday - Matthew 20:28

Extended Commentary

Matthew 5:13-37

5:13 Salt has many uses, but in the OT it is most often a purifying agent (Ex 30:35; Lv 2:13; 2Kg 2:21; Ezk 16:4). As the salt of the earth, Jesus's disciples are to purify a corrupt world through their example of righteous living and their proclamation of the gospel. However, contaminated salt does not promote purity. The verb translated lose its taste indicates foolish and immoral behavior. It refers to a professing disciple whose unrighteous lifestyle promotes destruction rather than purification. Such salt is only good for spreading over ground where you want to kill vegetation. Such is the fatal effect of an unrighteous disciple's lifestyle. Nothing grows where they go. The verb thrown out describes the disposal of something worthless, and the verb trampled alludes to the treatment an immoral disciple receives from the world.

5:14-16 You are the light of the world is an allusion to Is 9:1-2; 42:6; 49:6—texts that describe the ministry of Messiah, Servant of the Lord. This indicates that Jesus's disciples are to be extensions of his ministry, carrying salvation to the ends of the earth. Such ministry is intrinsic to true discipleship. A disciple should no more conceal his righteousness or the gospel message than a glowing city should douse its light at night. The reference to giving light for all combines with the reference to "the world" to show that Christ's ministry is intended for all people. This anticipates the Great Commission of Mt 28:18-20.

Jesus's words make clear that the disciple is not the ultimate author of his good works. If the disciple were the author of his good works, he would justly receive praise. However, Jesus taught that only the Father in heaven is to be praised for a disciple's good works, for he is the true source of such works (see note at v. 6). This must not be overlooked. The righteousness demanded by the Sermon on the Mount is a divine gift that God imparts to Jesus's followers.

5:17-20 Jesus defended himself against charges that he defied the law (9:3,11,14; 12:2,10; 15:1-2; 17:24; 19:3; 22:34-36) by insisting that he came to fulfill both the Law and the Prophets, which together amount to the entire OT. The word fulfill may refer to fulfillment of OT prophecies (1:22; 2:15,17,23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54,56; 27:9). This is suggested by the words all things are accomplished. However, it can also refer to obedience to God's commands (3:15). This additional meaning is implied by the reference to practicing these commands. Consequently, Jesus's words imply that he would fulfill all of the OT promises and obey

all its commandments. The smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet is the yod, which resembles an English apostrophe. The stroke of a letter is a slight pen stroke that distinguishes similar letters. Jesus's statement shows that he regarded the OT as accurate and reliable down to the smallest detail. In keeping with this conviction, Jesus taught that fidelity to the OT witness determines a disciple's stature in his kingdom. True fidelity to God's commands is made possible by God's miraculous work in a disciple's heart (see note at v. 6).

5:21-22 Matthew 5:21 begins a section of the Sermon on the Mount generally known as the "six antitheses." The title may seem to imply that Jesus opposed the OT in some way, but in reality he always upheld its authority. Rather than contradicting or overturning OT teachings, Jesus opposed the misguided interpretations of the scribes and Pharisees. These men were concerned only with superficial matters, but Jesus went deeper. He argued that the law prohibits not just actual murder but murderous attitudes as well. Similarly, violent temperaments are condemned just as surely as violent deeds.

5:23-24 Disciples must attempt at their earliest opportunity to reconcile with a brother or sister who has something against them, even if doing so interrupts important business. Speaking to the context of his day, Jesus said disciples should seek reconciliation even if it meant halting in the middle of offering sacrifices at the Jerusalem temple. This interruption was significant since Jesus's original audience (located away from Jerusalem) would have to abandon their gift at the altar, travel for days to reach Galilee and seek reconciliation, and then return to Judea to complete the sacrifice. Such is the priority of reconciliation.

5:25-26 A person can typically pay a smaller penalty for their offense by seeking an out-of-court settlement rather than waiting for the issue to be settled in court. This illustrates that reconciliation is urgent because the longer it is postponed, the more severe the consequences.

5:27-28 Jesus said that gazing on a member of the opposite sex for the purpose of arousing illicit sexual desire is adultery of the heart. This does not mean lustful thoughts are equally as sinful as the act of adultery. Rather it means the law prohibits adulterous desires as well as adulterous actions. Sin begins in the mind before it is committed outwardly. True righteousness therefore seeks to avoid not only adulterous acts but also adulterous thoughts.

5:29-30 Self-mutilation and amputation are not effective ways to overcome sin. After all, sin arises from a corrupt heart rather than flesh and bone (15:19). Jesus here uses hyperbole (intentional exaggeration for the sake

of making a point) and allegory (in which the eye represents a lustful perspective and the hand represents an immoral deed) in order to convey a vital requirement of discipleship. Disciples should put a stop to thoughts and behaviors that contribute to immorality.

5:31-32 Jesus challenged a loose rabbinic paraphrase of Dt 24:1 that distorted the original meaning of the text. In the hands of the rabbis, Dt 24:1 greatly multiplied the number of offenses that could justify divorce. For instance, rabbinic commentaries on Dt 24 cited minor complaints such as a wife's fading beauty or her tendency to burn food as legitimate grounds for divorce. However, Jesus kept true to Dt 24:1 and insisted that sexual immorality is legitimate grounds for divorce. People who divorce for frivolous reasons and remarry are guilty of adultery since their original marriage covenant has not been genuinely dissolved.

5:33-37 Oaths to the Lord (i.e., "I swear to God") were considered binding, but since Jews avoided use of God's personal name and instead used reverent substitutions, clever liars could take an oath that seemed to appeal to God without technically doing so (23:16-22). Jesus taught that swearing oaths is wrong since oaths call for the destruction of an object or person if the oath is broken. Thus, swearing by heaven . . . earth . . . Jerusalem, or even one's own head is inappropriate because it implies that we have the authority to destroy things over which God alone has authority. Swearing against God or his belongings aligns us with the evil one who attempted to assume God's position as ruler of the universe.¹

References

1. *CSB Study Bible: Christian Standard Bible*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017.

Author Bio

John Stott (The Message of the Sermon on the Mount)

John R. W. Stott is known worldwide as a preacher, evangelist and communicator of Scripture. For many years he served as rector of All Souls Church in London, where he carried out an effective urban pastoral ministry. A leader among evangelicals in Britain, the United States and around the world, Stott was a principal framer of the landmark Lausanne Covenant (1974). His many books, including *Why I Am a Christian* and *The Cross of Christ*, have sold millions of copies around the world and in dozens of languages. Whether in the West or in the Two-Thirds World, a hallmark of Stott's ministry has been expository preaching that addresses the hearts and minds of contemporary men and women. Stott was honored by Time magazine in 2005 as one of the "100 Most Influential People in the World."

R. Kent Hughes (The Sermon on the Mount)

R. Kent Hughes (DMin, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) is senior pastor emeritus of College Church in Wheaton, Illinois, and former professor of practical theology at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Hughes is also a founder of the Charles Simeon Trust, which conducts expository preaching conferences throughout North America and worldwide. He serves as the series editor for the *Preaching the Word* commentary series and is the author or coauthor of many books. He and his wife, Barbara, live in Wyncote, Pennsylvania, and have four children and an ever-increasing number of grandchildren.

Oswald Chambers (Studies in the Sermon on the Mount)

Oswald Chambers (1874–1917) is best known for the classic devotional *My Utmost for His Highest*. Born in Scotland, Chambers had a teaching and preaching ministry that took him as far as the United States and Japan. He died at age forty-three while serving as chaplain to Allied troops in Egypt during World War I.