

WSBM exists to equip God's people – head, heart, and hands – through the Word of God, helping them know Jesus Christ personally and carry on His ministry.

COURSE: WSBM 255 Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Jonathan Pennington

DATE: July 24-26, 2025 | 7-9pm (Thursday and Friday); 8:30am-12:30pm (Saturday)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

No portion of Scripture has been more thoroughly studied, preached upon, or written about than the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). This pivotal passage from the Gospel of Matthew has a bearing on many fundamental questions of Christian life: What is the nature of God's kingdom? What ethical considerations are paramount? How do the Old and New Testaments relate to one another, and what are the implications of that relationship for our lives?

In this course we will seek to understand Jesus' teachings in the context of the Gospel of Matthew, the whole Bible, the church's history, and ethical and theological categories.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course the student should:

- Have a greater familiarity with and appreciation for the Gospel of Matthew.
- Have a greater understanding of and depth of knowledge of the Sermon on the Mount.
- Memorize the Beatitudes.
- Have produced an interpretive paper on some aspect of the Sermon on the Mount.

REQUIRED READING

- The Holy Bible (in any quality translation – ESV, NIV, NRSV, NLT).
- Pennington, Jonathan. *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing*. Baker Academic, 2018.

RECOMMENDED READING

- McKnight, Scot. *Sermon on the Mount* (The Story of the Bible Commentary). Zondervan, 2013.
- Eklund, Rebekah. *The Beatitudes through the Ages*. Eerdmans, 2021.
- Bible Project Bible Book Videos: <https://www.bibleproject.com/explore/>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic
Prior to Course	Read Through Matthew 5-7 in Three Translations
July 24	The Sermon on the Mount in Context
July 25	Reading the Interpreting Matthew 5:1-48
July 26	Reading and Interpreting Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Beatitudes Memorization (10%)**

The memorization of Scripture has been a timeless and consistent practice for many Christians. Memorization provides insights and encounters with Scripture that are not otherwise attainable.

To facilitate this formative practice, students will be required to memorize Matthew 5:1-12 in any English translation of their choice. At the conclusion of the last day of class students will write out their memorized text.

Due: Live in class on July 26, 2025.

2. **Reading Report (30%)**

This assignment has two parts.

Part 1: Read the first section of the course instructor's book, *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing* (Part 1: Orientation) prior to the course weekend.

Part 2: Upon finishing the whole textbook, write a minimum 700-word report, summarizing at least three of the author's main ideas (~350 words), and then include a personal response to the book (~350 words). Discuss both the most significant insight gained from the book as well as a practical application you will integrate into your life.

Due: Upload to class site by July 31, 2025.

3. **Bible Study Application Project (60%)**

To help students internalize the material discussed in class, the final assignment for this course is an active learning exercise. Students will prepare a Bible study based on a portion of the Sermon on the Mount that can be used in a Life Group or other small group setting. Reference the age group you are ministering to, indicating what level of understanding and experience the audience would have.

- A. Work through the passage by providing a clearly written explanation of the passage (1-2 pages).
- B. Provide a list of study questions (at least 6), along with your responses to the discussion questions, that will allow your study group to interact with your lesson.
- C. Be sure to include at least 2 additional questions that focus on practical application of the biblical material.

- D. Provide one example of how you personally intend to apply what you have learned through the study.

Anticipate questions you may receive from your group, and try to fashion your explanations and questions to address those possible questions. Structure your Bible Study so that it will require 30-40 minutes for your group to process it adequately.

Choose one of the following sections from the Sermon on the Mount:

- The Interpretation of Matt 5:1-16
- The Interpretation of Matt 5:17-48
- The Interpretation of Matt 6:1-21
- The Interpretation of Matt 6:19-34
- The Interpretation of Matt 7:1-12
- The Interpretation of Matt 7:13-29

Due: Upload to class site by August 9, 2025.

Bonus Opportunity: Scripture Recitation (potential of 5%)

Any student who wants to memorize an additional section from the Sermon of the Mount (besides 5:1-12) for recitation can do so for extra credit. Students should arrange a suitable time for recitation with Pastor Bryan Born.

- Matt 5:21-32
- Matt 5:33-48
- Matt 6:25-34
- Matt 7:15-27

Due: Live by August 10, 2025.