



*“Blessed are Ye”*

## Show Notes & Transcripts

### Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Friday and Saturday.

### Podcast Episode Descriptions:

#### Part 1:

How do we obtain lasting happiness? Dr. Lincoln Blumell explores the depths of Jesus’s longest recorded sermon.

#### Part 2:

Dr. Lincoln Blumell continues to examine the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount.

## Timecodes:

### Part 1

- 00:00 Part 1--Dr. Lincoln Blumell
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- 02:51 The Beatitudes in Luke and Matthew
- 06:19 The Sermon's audiences
- 08:01 The JST and the Sermon in the Book of Mormon
- 10:18 Matthew shows a new Moses and alludes to hundreds of miracles
- 13:16 The First Principles in Matthew and the JST
- 14:14 Calling of the Twelve Apostles
- 17:06 The meaning of meek
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- 32:00 Hunger and thirsting for righteousness
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- 38:15 Temple imagery and the peacemakers
- 42:18 Messianic expectations and discipleship
- 46:52 The salt of the earth
- 52:06 End of Part I--Dr. Lincoln Blumell

### Part 2

- 00:00 Part II-- Dr. Lincoln Blumell
- 00:07 Salt and savor
- 01:23 The purpose of light
- 04:27 The Law and fulfillment
- 09:31 Six antithesis
- 14:39 Inward spirituality vs. outward behavior
- 16:29 Jesus talks about divorce
- 23:33 Jesus discussing oaths, vows, and forgiveness
- 31:25 The Berlin Wall story
- 34:15 The commandment to be perfect
- 38:04 Dr. Blumell shares his takeaways from Matthew 5
- 44:17 End of Part II--Dr. Lincoln Blumell

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Received a BA with honors in classical and early Christian studies from the University of Calgary; an MA from the University of Calgary in religious studies (ancient Christianity); an MSt from Oxford (Christ Church) in Jewish studies; and a PhD from the University of Toronto in religious studies (early Christianity). Before coming to BYU, he held a visiting assistant professorship in the Department of Classical Studies at Tulane University in New Orleans.

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Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their Come, Follow Me study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:09	I'm John Bytheway. We love to learn. We love to laugh. We want to learn and laugh with you as together, we follow Him.
Hank Smith:	00:19	Hello, my friends. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my happy co-host John Bytheway. John, we are studying the beatitudes today. Blessed are ye, and I've read in my Scriptures that the Latin for beatitude, meaning to be fortunate or to be happy. I thought of happy, and that's you. You are a happy guy so-
John Bytheway:	00:43	On most days.
Hank Smith:	00:44	... take that for what it's worth. Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:45	Thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:47	On most days when your back isn't hurting.
John Bytheway:	00:49	Right.
Hank Smith:	00:49	We are studying the greatest sermon in the history of the world today John, the Sermon on the Mount, and we brought a Bible expert. Who's with us?
John Bytheway:	00:57	Yes, we did. He's been here before. So, our listeners and our watchers might recognize Dr. Lincoln Blumell. Let me briefly reintroduce him. He received a bachelor's degree with honors in classical and early Christian studies from the University of Calgary, a master's from the University of Calgary in religious studies focusing on ancient Christianity, and a master's from Oxford Christ Church in Jewish studies, a PhD from the University of Toronto and religious studies, early Christianity. Before coming to BYU, he was visiting assistant professor in the Department of Classical Studies at Tulane in New Orleans. New

Orleans, Nawlins. Will you pronounce that for us? Nawlins, right?

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 01:35 Yeah, Nawlins. Yeah.

Hank Smith: 01:35 New Orleans. Yeah.

John Bytheway: 01:42 Go, Taysom Hill and the Saints. His areas of expertise include the New Testament, Second Temple Judaism, history of ancient Christianity until the Byzantine period, because language is biblical Hebrew, reading Sahidic Coptic, classical Greek, Latin, French, and German.

Hank Smith: 01:59 Wow.

John Bytheway: 01:59 So, I'm feeling like the dumbest guy in the room today, but that's impressive. I did want to mention he's the editor of a book called New Testament, History, Culture and Society: A Background to the text of the New Testament, that's a religious study center publication. We've talked about that before. Go to [rsc.byu.edu](http://rsc.byu.edu). So wonderful to have this kind of scholarship, faithful scholars writing about these kinds of things for people who want to go even deeper. Welcome back Dr. Blumell. Thanks for joining us.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 02:33 It's a pleasure to be back. Thank you so much, John, for the introduction. Hank, it's great seeing you.

Hank Smith: 02:37 Yep.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 02:37 No pressure at all. You know, the greatest sermon ever so-

John Bytheway: 02:40 I know.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 02:42 Yes, I'm already kind of feel set. I'm like, how am I going to possibly live up to this? I'll do my best, but yes, it is a great sermon indeed. We're just going to do part of it today.

John Bytheway: 02:51 So, we're in Matthew 5 and Luke 6. That's what the Come, Follow Me manual is having us look at today. Matthew 5, yeah, that's the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount and the beatitude.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 03:01 So, you have this Sermon on the Mount, which is the longest discourse that Jesus gives that we have recorded. The second longest is also in Matthew. It's the Olivet discourse. When you read Luke 6, you realize, right, beginning around about verse 17,

you have what appear to be sections of this kind of that would correspond with Matthew 5, Matthew 6, Matthew 7, but if you all start reading Luke elsewhere in his gospel, like even in Luke 14 or Luke chapter 16, you will find other sayings and teaching that overlap with what you have in the Sermon on the Mount. Luke seems too, there's some division of this perhaps, and then of course, we can't forget, we also have a version of this sermon, not exact. There are some key differences of course in 3 Nephi 12 through 14. Then, as you read in the New Testament elsewhere like James or other works, you can periodically find references back to this sermon or teachings that clearly are derived from this sermon here on the Mount.

- 03:59 Really remarkable sermon. For Matthew's gospel, it is really front and center. When you read Matthew, it seems to me as I read Matthew's text, he presents things in chunks. So, you start off with the genealogy. Then, we have the birth, and then we have the baptism in three, and then the four is kind of the beginning, calling of some disciples. Then, you have, right, starts performing miracles. Now, we get into five, and now, it's framed with this long sermon. Then, after the sermon, he details the end of four, just Jesus performing miracles but not telling us. Then, he'll start telling us right away in eight, now here are the miracles, man with leprosy or a centurion's child. He'll go into that.
- 04:37 He organizes his gospel in that way where Luke kind of moves things around. Again, that shouldn't really be surprising when you read the prologue in Luke. So, when you read Luke chapter 1 verses 1 through 3, he actually says that if you read this carefully, he won't go back into this, but he says, "Look, a couple things. I'm not an eyewitness" If you read carefully, he's saying, it says, "But I've consulted eyewitnesses, and I've consulted sources, and I'm going to put it in an order that I think is appropriate."
- 05:03 So, Luke's telling us from the start, "I'm editing this material, and I'm putting it in order." So, it shouldn't surprise us that Luke might have some things in different place than you have in Matthew, what you find a bit more spread out and Matthew has here in this one section. Now, something that's interesting is you start off in Matthew 1:1, and you have, and seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain. Then, you go over at Luke 6:17 and says, "And he came down with them and stood in the plain."
- 05:28 People have wondered, what is going on here? There's clearly some overlap with the material. Do Matthew and Luke have

completely different understandings of the topography of the region? Don't think so. What I think is going on here and what I would say is when you think of the Sermon on the Mount or the material in the Sermon on the Mount, I would imagine that Jesus gave this sermon or versions of this sermon in multiple places. To pick up Dr. Seuss here, he gave it on a mountain, in a plane, on a train, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

- 05:59      What you have now is Matthew says, "I want to make sure I focus on the one that was given on a "mount." That's important for him. Why I think that's important for Matthew to accentuate here a mount is when you read Matthew's gospel, I think what he's trying to do is I think it's pretty clear it's written primarily for a Jewish audience, right? You started genealogy. It's the gospel just loves quoting passages from the Old Testament. It will do that just repeatedly more than any other gospel. It tends to get into Jewish legal issues more than any other gospel. We might pick up on that a little bit later today.
- 06:35      What's pretty clear here with this is he wants to accentuate parallels, I think, with Jesus and Moses. For example, Moses as a child, his life's threatened. They're in Egypt. Jesus is taken out of Egypt. You find these things that are going on, and I think now with Jesus and the law, well, Moses receives a law on a mount. Now, Jesus will be giving a law, expanding a law on a mountain. So, I think that's why Matthew wants to select that. Then, of course, Luke, that's not a focus, right, to try to parallel or accentuate a life of Moses, I think for his readership, and so okay. You can now have this here.
- 07:09      I think the best evidence that Jesus is giving us multiple occasions is the Book of Mormon because He has the Book of Mormon. Now, you have another version of this given. So, when I served a mission and probably when you did, we had missionary discussions, and in discussions, you'd find sometimes we would give a quick discussion on somebody's doorstep or don't give a full discussion, but we hit three or four key points of that discussion. We do that again and again. I think with the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew's giving the fullest version of this, but these teachings could be taught ... They don't have to be taught as an entire unit. They could be taught individually. I think Jesus would be doing this on multiple occasions, so that would account for some of the differences here certainly between Matthew's and Luke's account and at least initially with context of why a plain and why here you have it on a mountain. I think Matthew wants to emphasize that there right at the start.

07:52 Now, what's interesting with the Sermon on the Mount is you do get a fair amount of JSTs, more so I would say in chapter 7. There are, of course, some in chapter 5 we're looking at today. Something I'll just mention because I don't think we'll have time to go through all of the JSTs, we'll certainly mention some of them, is it seems to me when you look at the JSTs is that in a number of cases, what they do would actually parallel what you have in the Book of Mormon rendering of this.

08:18 For example, you start off in Matthew 1:2, "And he opened his mouth and taught them saying. Blessed are the poor in spirit," in Matthew 3, but what the JST does is it actually adds blessed are they who believe on me. Again, blessed are they who shall believe on your words when you shall testify that you have seen me and that I am, and it goes on and talks about blessed are they who believe on your words and come down to the depth of humility and be baptized in my name and shall be visited with fire, with the Holy Ghost and shall have remission of their sins.

08:46 So, if you actually go over to the Book of Mormon, you'll find the parallels here are quite close. Here, it's about starting off with the beatitudes, and we'll talk about what a beatitude is here momentarily, it really frames this with believing, hearing the words, really listening. In fact, it's interesting here. It's like where he says even more blessed are those who believe on your words, kind of an echo here of John 29 where you have him talking to Thomas. "So, you've seen me, but more blessed are those who have not seen me, yet will believe."

09:13 It's picking up this language, then really frames it. Well, what I would say with the doctrine of Christ in the JST, Book of Mormon, there's baptism. You'll be visited with fire and the Holy Ghost. I think that's important to consider as you're reading this. This JST kind of frames it in this way with this emphasis here on, again, baptism, gift of the Holy Ghost, much like you find in the Book of Mormon there that the JST kind of parallels their verses, end of verse 1 and 2 and 3 Nephi 12.

Hank Smith: 09:39 This is really helpful stuff, especially that parallel to Moses. I can absolutely see that. I can see Matthew starts out with a man named Joseph who has many dreams. Then you've got the Pharaoh who goes after the children, and you've got Herod going after the children, and God protects him in Egypt. Then, God parts the Red Sea, and you have God speaking at Christ's baptism. Moses spent 40 years in the wilderness. Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness. Then, the Sermon on the Mount comes about the same time in Moses's story where he'd go up on the

Sinai and receive God's law. So, we're getting a second Moses here as it were. Do you think Matthew was after that?

- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 10:18 I think for his readers, it's not here's a new Moses, but I think the readers start reading this and saying, "Aha. Oh, this sounds like Moses. Oh, this sounds like Moses. This sounds like Moses." Oh, we're now giving a new law. You have these expansion of law. So, I think the careful reader would see this. Matthew does these kinds of things. So, just for example, just jumping ahead in Matthew, you have in Matthew 4 before we begin the sermon is that Jesus performing all these miracles, but again, we're not told which miracles he's performing, and then all of a sudden, we're being told now in Matthew 8 to 11, well, now this is what he's doing. We're having leprosy, we're having centurion's child, we're going to have the dead raised up.
- 10:52 You get to the episode, you read a couple chapters beyond Sermon on the Mount, and all of a sudden, the disciples of John come. They want to know, well, who are you? Jesus starts saying, "Well, go tell John this is happening. The poor having the good news preached to them, the dead are being raised up, the blind are having their sight restored to them." Matthew just narrated all those miracles previously.
- 11:11 I think it's pretty clear here, it's going back to expectations of when the Messiah comes based on what you have on Isaiah, these are the things he's going to do. I think a careful reader would be like, "Oh, my goodness, we're expecting this, and look what Jesus is doing." I think there are dozens and dozens, probably hundreds of miracles Matthew could have picked, but he's selective, saying, "I'm going to pick these ones," because the careful reader will begin seeing this as opposed to, "I'm going to tell you, you will come to your own understanding just like Jesus tells the disciple John. "Well, go back. Tell John these things are happening." For the reader, like okay.
- Hank Smith: 11:42 If you know your Old Testament, all of a sudden, things are coming out to you. Someone who doesn't know their Old Testament very well, their Hebrew Bible, they wouldn't see, but Matthew is speaking to those who have read that book.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 11:53 I think very much so, assuming people have a knowledge of Israelite history and the Old Testament where Luke doesn't take that for granted as much, nor does Mark to some extent. You'll even find this in stories. So, in Luke 6, before you even get into the Lukan material, you have a story of the disciples going and taking grain from a grain field on the Sabbath. That story also appears in Matthew 12. It's really worthwhile at some point to

go and read the Lukan version 6 and then the Matthean version 12.

12:23 You can see how you have a much larger story that is constantly engaging with the Old Testament. It's quoting Hosea. It's talking about the temple in Matthew. Again, it's like ... Well, we don't need to put in all these examples. Yeah, we'll mention the reference to David going and taking shewbread, which wasn't lawful, but because of expedient circumstance, it was okay, and then drawing a parallel saying, "Well, in like manner, what Jesus is doing is because of expedient circumstances, it's okay what they're doing," but Matthew is ... It more pains to say, "Well, there's this. Something greater than the temple has come," and cites additional passages, which I think clearly have to appeal to a Jewish audience wherefore Luke, it's like, "I've made my point, okay, in this story, and I can now move on."

13:00 I think that becomes clear when you compare sometimes the stories or you could say the pericopes, the little pericopes of Jesus between Matthew and Luke. So, that's how I read this here is that there's a framing of you're thinking Moses, when you see Jesus and Matthew.

Hank Smith: 13:14 Yeah, up on the mountain. I really like that.

John Bytheway: 13:16 I'm so glad you mentioned the Book of Mormon and baptism. Sometimes, when I'm in Matthew 5, I ask my students, "Hey, where's the first principles of the gospel? Where are they?" The answer is always they're there in the JST and in the 3 Nephi version where perhaps even the first beatitude, blessed are those who will come and be baptized, they're there, and maybe that's in verse one here of Matthew 5, his disciples. If they were disciples, can we say that they may have been baptized already? That's maybe implied because first principles are really first principles. Well, where are they? Yeah, they're there especially in 3 Nephi and then, these other common beatitudes to both begin.

Hank Smith: 13:57 Yeah, this has been a fantastic start. When some people picture the Sermon on the Mount, they picture thousands of people there, but I wonder, does he have that many disciples at this point? What do you picture in your head, Lincoln? Do you picture a few or a lot or ...

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 14:14 Couple things. When you read the gospels, the way I read the gospels anyway is it always focuses primarily on the 12. In the Luke verse, he actually mentions the 12, the calling of the 12. You get that in Matthew 10, but here in Luke 6, he mentions

that and then all of a sudden, he starts to teach. What's very clear though, I think, is the gospel kind of focuses on the 12, and occasionally, somebody else is mentioned, but there must be more that are there. I think the evidence here is in Acts 1, right? They're going to call a new apostle because Judas has taken his life. Peter says, "Well, the qualifications here ought to be this person, first off, should have been there from the baptism up until basically the death, and then be witness of the resurrection."

Hank Smith: 14:49

So, there's other people there definitely.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 14:51

They're there like Mathias who is ordained an apostle, apparently, he's been there all long. He's never mentioned a single time in the gospels. So, I think there are other disciples there. This word you have in Greek, it'll empirically mention ochlos like crowd. The crowds were there. I've looked a little bit at this, how big is a crowd? When you look at Greek literature, you're looking anywhere from dozens, even into the hundreds. Of course, it could be somewhat bigger than that, so it's hard to say.

15:16

So, I would just be inclined, this is more than just the 12 are there, but there are other disciples and others there, but in terms of numbers, other followers, people that are listening ... and it's interesting because in the Matthew 4, which precedes this, again, it says there are great crowds coming to Him. Well, something to consider hearing, our chapter divisions we have are completely artificial. These are not put in our New Testament until the 13th century by the Archbishop of Canterbury. So, you just kind of read this right through. So, sometimes, I think it gives us artificial break. Oh, it ends. Oh, something new is happening.

15:47

It doesn't have to be that case. It could be He's healing, there's crowds, and now, He starts speaking. So, that's just worth just considering sometimes. It breaks it up and gives an artificial gap that doesn't always kind of bear out in the text. I do take, there's more than 12 here that there are certainly others who are there and are listening.

John Bytheway: 16:03

It sounds in verse 1, like He saw the multitudes and left. Seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain. When He was set, His disciples came unto Him. It's not the entire multitude that's there, but it's the disciples. That's what we've been talking about. How many disciples is that? The 12 plus more.

Hank Smith: 16:22 12 or more. It's a great question. I just wondered what I see in my head versus what you see in your head and see if I had the right picture.

John Bytheway: 16:29 See if I have the right head.

Hank Smith: 16:31 Yeah. Oh, man, that could be argued. Just how many are there? It's impossible to know, but I like that that Matthew 4:25, "There followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, from the capitalist, from Jerusalem, from Judea and beyond Jordan, and seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain, and when He was set, His disciples came unto him." So, it doesn't sound like everybody went, but it sounds like those serious disciples went with Him up on this mountain side.

John Bytheway: 17:01 Hank, you used the word followers, which I like. Some followed him when He went up into the mountain.

Hank Smith: 17:06 All right, so let's jump in, Lincoln. What do you think about these beatitudes?

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 17:10 Well, we start off, of course, in the Book of Mormon. Blessed are those who believe on me. If you think of a beatitude, the Latin beatus, blessed, happy, fortunate, what you're getting here is the Greek's Macarius. This person is blessed, even happy, but what you're finding here is it's not just some kind of just, well, you're happy if you do this, you're happy if you do this. It's saying you want to be blessed, you want to be happy, go and do these things. It's an injunction to go and do.

Hank Smith: 17:36 Oh, okay.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 17:36 Where you're getting this from is if you go back and read the Psalms, the Psalms actually begin, the Psalm 1:1. "Blessed is the man or the person that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." So, the Psalms, you'll find a number of places where you have effectively beatitudes. It's an injunction to go and do. Who doesn't want to be blessed? Who doesn't want to be happy or fortunate? So, this is what you go and do saying if you want to be blessed or fortunate, happy, here's what you ought to do. I think it's very appropriate with the JST is, first of all, believe on me. That's the source.

John Bytheway: 18:12 Faith in Christ. First principle, right?

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 18:14 Faith in Christ. First principle. You see it right there in the JST. Then, as you, of course, get into the Matthean text with this, the very first one we have, blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is interesting. Again, going back to the JST, we take poor in spirit as humility, humble, but the JST adds who come unto me. That might be interesting here in light of our previous conversation. There's a lot there, but then the real disciples actually come and listen.

Hank Smith: 18:43 His disciples came unto Him, and so He might be giving them a shout out. Blessed are the poor in spirit who come unto me.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 18:50 Come unto Him. I think that's important. Yes, I guess humility is a good attribute, but I think being humble and then coming unto Him, I think this is saying, "Come unto me. You want to be blessed. You want to be happy. The source of happiness is Christ. In all things, come unto me, all of you that are heavy laden. I'm going to give you rest." Here, it's like I will bless you.

19:10 So, I like that JST, how that adds that in there and maybe kind of thematically for a second here, if we think of verse 3 in terms of the issue here of humility, and then you just jump ahead just to 5 for a moment, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth," I've once heard the difference between meekness and humility is meekness might be more of a voluntary humility perhaps. So, they are kind of similar here in this. By the way, this beatitude right here is taken right from Psalms 37:11, "But the meek shall inherit the earth."

19:42 He's picking up on some of this in the text, and something that I find interesting, at least from the Greek word meek, it means gentle, right, meekness, but here is something that may be worth considering, a facet of this word, right, it's the Greek word praos. It can also mean fashionable. What's it mean by fashionable is that you can be molded because you're gentle, you're soft. So, I think something the disciples are blessed is if, you know what, Lord, I will let you fashion me. You can mold me. I can be an instrument in your hand. This is really, I think, appropriate as we get to the crescendo here of this chapter in 5:48, being perfect. We'll talk about that, what that means, but I think I say being fashionable, God can mold you, you can do this, you will inherit the earth. Little different but also quite similar there with the 3 and 5, with poor in spirit and then with being meek.

Hank Smith: 20:34 Moldable. Blessed are the moldable. Blessed are those who will be shaped.

- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 20:40 Yeah. You can find a principle like this, right, whether it's in Proverbs or in Hebrews. God chastens those whom He loves. He will mold you. It might be hard sometime. You might be kinda... There might be a lot of rigor mortis in you spiritually speaking, but that's a, no, I'm going to move you. If you're moldable, I can make something more of you. I think there's something really beautiful in the beatitudes in that verse.
- Hank Smith: 20:59 What was it that Joseph Smith said? "I am like a huge rough stone, rolling down from a high mountain, and the only polishing I get is when some corner gets rubbed off by coming in contact with something else, striking with accelerated force." So, Joseph Smith's saying he's moldable. He says, "Thus, while I become a smooth and polished shaft in the quiver of the Almighty, becoming moldable." I like that.
- John Bytheway: 21:23 My son, Andrew, came to me once. Remember, he's maybe 15 or 16. "Dad, I think the church is trying to turn us into a bunch of meek little choir boys." So, I punched him as hard as I could and ... no, I'm just kidding.
- 21:37 I don't think that's what meekness means. It was a really good kind of an adventure for us to try to figure out, what does it mean to be meek because the dictionary.com definition is not, I think, what Jesus was saying. It says a spiritless, tame, overly compliant, submissive. That does not sound like Captain Moroni, that if all men would be likened to Moroni, the very powers of hell be shaken forever. It didn't sound like Moroni was, "Okay, well, go ahead and attack us. I guess that's okay." That's not what Captain Moroni did. It was a really fun thing for us to go through that.
- 22:12 One of my favorite definitions I found was from S. Michael Wilcox, who we've had on the program. He tells a story in an Ensign article and says, "Meek is great power under complete control." He quotes someone who says that in the article, which I really liked. Meekness is great power under complete control because Jesus was meek that way. Then, Elder Bednar came out and gave this whole talk on meekness and said, "It's not weak. It's not passive. It's tough to be meek." I can't give you a perfect paragraph right now, but Elder Bednar totally answered our question about what meekness is.
- 22:48 I love that discussion because I don't think Jesus was meek the way the world defines it as spiritless and tame, and neither was Captain Moroni but fashionable, that is a great ... Not really into high fashion, but what you're saying fashionable is, is able to be fashioned. I'm willing to be molded and changed by Christ.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 23:10 That's a facet of the meaning that could be worked with. Yeah, really beautiful beatitude. Of course, we go back to four, right, because we kind of jump from three to five. This is a really beautiful one. "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." Here, there's nothing directly quoting a Psalm here like you have in 5, but something I find interesting here is this word, for those who mourn shall be comforted.

23:35 Just a little note on this, the Greek, right, I'm always going back to these Greek words, and there's some interesting things here, right? You have this Greek word, for comforted, it's from this verb, parakaleo. You have this parakletos, which means comforter, advocate. They're related, and so you're reading Greek, you of course see this. It's interesting that the two people in the New Testament that are called a comforter are the Holy Ghost in John 14:26 and then Christ in 1 John 2:1.

John Bytheway: 24:02 The advocate.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 24:02 The advocate or a comforter, using your related word that's used here. We've talked about seeing Christ in the Old Testament. Well, can we see Christ more in the New Testament? Here, right, this idea of comforting, you'll be comforted. If you look at a root here, relying on the spirit and upon Christ can bring real comfort and peace. So, it's not obvious in the English of it. In Greek, you read that, and say, Oh, this is related to this word. Both these people are called this in the text. I think we can see with the peace and comfort that comes from having the Holy Ghost, relying on Christ.

Hank Smith: 24:34 So, the word comforted is a noun, comforter, which would draw me close to Christ and the Holy Ghost, both who have been called comforters in the New Testament.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 24:44 With the related term, we have the verb with the related noun, the Holy Ghost is called the Comforter in John 14:26, and then Jesus, called the Comforter in 1 John 2:1. So, I think that's interesting here that these are some titles they bear. So, you may be able to think about, how do I get comfort? Well, through Christ, through feeling the Spirit, through feeling that peace.

Hank Smith: 25:04 We might say they shall be comforted by the comforters.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 25:08 Think about it that way. There may be something there. It's interesting, of course, when you go over to Luke, what He does this, He says, "Blessed are ye that weep or cry," He says, "for ye

shall laugh." He was trying to say for those who are in mourning, there will be days of rejoicing ahead. So, a little bit different, but it's the closest parallel that we have. It's not exact. Jesus may have mentioned that, or Luke's rendering of this a little bit different but yeah, you have comforting, bringing the Spirit, at least in Christ here in the Matthean version, I think it's certainly worth considering.

Hank Smith: 25:38

Okay.

John Bytheway: 25:39

I have a question about mourning because I think most of us, when we see the word mourn in English, we're thinking about a death, a funeral, those who are mourners. I have read both that we are mourning our own sinful state. Perhaps that's what the beatitude means. I think it can apply both ways, but I don't know, what's the Greek on the word mourned? Is this like a death of someone, or is it our own sinful state, our own spiritual death perhaps?

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 26:07

It's this Greek word pentheo. In the Lukan version, it's a different word. It's actually for crying or weeping. You can have lament. When I think lament, a death or something bad has happened. I think that's kind of implied in this word, a death, the sickness or something, saying even when these hard things, whether there's a death, a sickness, you can find comfort, you're not left alone. We've all experienced periods of real mourning, real loss. I know that I have profoundly, and the thing that brought me the most comfort was the gospel. In some ways, almost inconsolable at times, but now, the one thing I know is I'm a son of God. I know Christ loves me, and I feel His peace. I don't know why all this other stuff's happening, but I know that, and I'm going to get through this, and so I felt comfort.

John Bytheway: 26:51

President Boyd K. Packer used to say this little poem, and I'm not remembering the author. "I walked a mile with pleasure. She chattered all the way but left me none the wiser for all she had to say. I walked a mile with sorrow and not a word said she, but oh, the things I learned from her when sorrow walked with me."

27:10

I've always liked that when I see that beatitude there. Some of our greatest lessons come from difficult times, not just our happy times. That's what's kind of fun about these beatitudes. Happy are the sad. Jesus sounds like he's saying, "Happy are the unhappy." Can you imagine, Hank and Lincoln, a reporter down there, if I mix my time zones a little bit before Jesus gets up to speak, "So, who are the happiest people to you?" "Oh, they're

well-off, they're secure. They're employed. They are self-confident," and Jesus gets up, and it's, "Welcome to opposite world. Blessed are the poor." So, like, what? Blessed are they that ... What? What? Blessed are the meek, and turns ordinary ideas about happiness just upside down. That's why I love this because it was, I think, so different than what your average folks would think happiness is.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 28:07

Yeah. First century. This is not an easy life. Life is short. Life is hard. For many people, it's hand to mouth, your food, you're not really living ahead. You're living day-to-day for many people. So, I think people had a very tough existence, certainly a physically tough existence. So, I think the things he's saying, people can say, "Yep, you'll do this, but you will find real peace," could have been ... Well, it's really appealing. You look at this, that poem you mentioned. I don't think Jesus is engaging other philosophies, right, whether it's Epicurean, stoicism, or others, but there are other answers out there that try to offer, "Well, this is what you do. You seek pleasure. This is what you do if you really want to do this," or there's others, you seek no emotion.

28:44

Jesus is not saying get rid of emotion, you're going to have this, but you will find peace and comfort in hard times, and you'll be blessed. I think there's a very powerful ... would've resonated with them and really timeless, right? Resonates today, of course. I think our challenges can be certainly different, probably certainly not as physically challenging and we might say spiritually, emotionally, very challenging, but yeah, I think that would really resonate with the audience that he's speaking with, given life circumstances.

John Bytheway: 29:12

We read a verse, and there was a famine in the land. We just go right past it, but imagine a famine, the insecurity, the, what am I going to eat today? What am I going to feed my children today without refrigerators and preservatives? I'm glad you just said that. We're in the first century. What's life back then for these people? Yeah, that's a good ... Try to put yourself in that frame of mind. That's a tough life. Like you said, short too. I don't know what the average lifespan is in the first century.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 29:41

Demographically, the best evidence we have from inscriptions, tombstones is once you hit your 30s, 40s, you've lived a pretty full life in your 40s. Again, of course, for women, infant mortality. A lot of people give birth, will die, and again, just things like us, we just take for granted. Oh, you just go to the doctor. Infections, they have no idea. We get infection, like no big deal. Take some penicillin, you'll be fine. These life-threatening. People are surrounded by death in that world. You

see it. For us, we're kind of shielded from it. Yes, you go to funerals here and there, but it's much more there. So, I think these things about really being comfortable when you mourn because I think there's certainly some lamentation mourning. People really knew that. I think feeling that, it would really recognize the power in that.

- Hank Smith: 30:22 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 30:23 Thank you.
- Hank Smith: 30:24 This reminds me of the Come, Follow Me manual. It says, "Everybody wants to be happy, but not everyone looks for happiness in the same places. Some search for it in worldly power and position, others in wealth or in satisfying physical appetites. Jesus Christ came to teach the way to lasting happiness, to teach what it truly means to be blessed." What do you learn about obtaining lasting happiness from Matthew 5, 1 through 12? How is it different than the world's view of happiness? It seems like that's exactly what we've been talking about today is this. What'd you say, John? Welcome to opposite world where He gives His: here's what happy people are and do, and it doesn't probably seem like those things that you would automatically think of.
- John Bytheway: 31:07 Like conventional wisdom. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 31:09 Yeah. I would think happy people have a lot of money, have big houses and things, and He doesn't say anything like that.
- John Bytheway: 31:16 Yeah, He's, happy are the unhappy. It's fascinating.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 31:18 Just to pick up on ... I know we're jumping ahead, we'll cover this, but Matthew 6, you really get this, right? Well, what do you do? Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither thief break in nor rust doth corrupt. That's what you do, having this kind of otherworldly gaze, having your priorities. Who are you going to put first? So, it's beautiful. You won't get that today, but as you go through, it kind of goes from this, and then you start saying in 6, okay, where really your heart ought to be if you want to find this blessed or happy or fortunate state? Here's what you should do. So, it's beautiful. It's kind of built on as you're getting 6 and then into 7 in this discourse.
- 31:55 Speaking of 6, I guess, verse 6 is another verse that we have, a really important JST, which again will parallel what you have in the Book of Mormon. Blessed are they, which do hunger and

thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. The JST and the Book of Mormon had what will be filled, with the Holy Ghost. This is why I kind of like that reference in verse 4, with comforted, you will have the Holy Ghost. This what you'll be filled with. Psalm 107:9 does kind of hint this a little bit. They don't mention Holy Ghost, but you will be filled with kind of goodness, so maybe picking up on that a little bit.

- Hank Smith: 32:27 Hunger and thirst. That's such a common feeling. I'm sure for these people, hunger and thirsting is most of their lives, but He says hunger and thirst after what? After righteousness. If it was after ice cream, I would've been translated by now, but it's hunger and thirst after righteousness. That's a hard one. How hungry are you for things of the Spirit?
- John Bytheway: 32:52 This is my favorite of the beatitudes. At least, it is today. I might learn some more things, but because it doesn't say blessed are the righteous, and I love to explore that idea because it may be technically none of us are, we all need the Savior, but we can hunger and thirst after it. Where's our heart? The other thing is, how often do hunger and thirst have to be addressed?
- Hank Smith: 33:14 Frequently.
- John Bytheway: 33:15 Every day. To hunger and thirst after righteousness, we never get to that point where we arrive at this, I don't think.
- Hank Smith: 33:23 Yeah, where you're like, I'm done eating.
- John Bytheway: 33:24 Okay, I'm done, right? I'm righteous now. I'm done eating. I think of the same thing with Scripture study. If we're supposed to feast upon this, I don't think anybody in the world has ever said, "You know, I don't think I've had a bite to eat since last Thursday." They just forgot.
- Hank Smith: 33:38 Yeah, yeah.
- John Bytheway: 33:38 You don't forget. Hunger and thirsting, I love the idea because it has to be addressed every day. Jesus doesn't say, "Blessed are the righteous," because none of us are, but we can hunger and thirst for it. That gets into that, what is the desires of our hearts? We're trying to do better, and we stumble, and we fall, but we just keep trying. So, I love that particular beatitude. Then, the Book of Mormon, and as you said, Lincoln, they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, and striving fills us with the Holy Ghost. Not perfection, but striving fills us with the Holy Ghost. Love that.

Hank Smith: 34:15 Doesn't it remind you a little bit of Enos, my soul hungered, and then towards the end of his chapter, what does he say? My soul was at rest because of what he was filled with.

John Bytheway: 34:27 Maybe he went hunting because his body hungered, but then his spirit started to hunger, and suddenly, he lost all interest in hunting and prayed all day. It's a great story.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 34:37 I think, just think of an example is John 4 and John 6 about water, living water. You're going to be thirsty or the bread of life. I like that. It's hunger, but you can be satiated, but the directive there used the same imagery with water and bread.

Hank Smith: 34:54 By the bread of life and by living water, you can be filled. What's next, Lincoln? Verse 7.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 34:59 So, it's blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. When I think about this beatitude, what this is kind of makes me think of some initial thoughts. I think in Matthew, I sometimes pose to my students. We talk about, what's your favorite scripture or what scripture means a lot to you? When you look at Matthew, as I'm going to say, in the gospel of Matthew, what's Jesus's favorite scripture? Because there's one scripture He actually quotes more than any other, and it's actually Hosea 6:6.

Hank Smith: 35:22 Oh.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 35:23 He quotes in Matthew 9, also Matthew 12. It says, "I will have mercy, not sacrifice, desire the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings." That the part's not quoted, but this emphasis on mercy is a theme in Matthew, or you can even try as compassion. Blessed are those that are compassionate, they will be shown compassion or merciful. It's interesting for me that He quotes this more than any other passage, just quoted twice. Otherwise, scriptures are singly quoted. I don't want to read too much into that, well, that's his favorite scripture, but for me, it's interesting that, yeah, this emphasis of mercy here. It's a theme here, and it's picked up again in the following chapters, and so that it seems appropriate. Again, there's not an obvious Psalm that talks about the Lord is merciful, but it's obviously directly echoing, but yeah. That's important that you will receive mercy or compassion.

John Bytheway: 36:09 As you give it away. I've heard it called the doctrine of reciprocity like a reciprocal. If you want mercy, give mercy. Kind

of in the Lord's Prayer, there's that. Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 36:23

Forgive our debtors.

John Bytheway: 36:24

That's one of those that when I realize the level of mercy, forgiveness that I want, it helps me motivate me to be sure to give out what I'm seeking. If I need forgiveness, I've got to be more forgiving.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 36:37

In Matthew, this is beautifully illustrated in the parable of the unforgiving. It says servant or steward in Matthew 18. In the story of the 10,000 talents, the point is an unpayable debt has been paid for Him. So, whatever debts are owing Him, He ought to be merciful in those because somebody's paid for Him an unpayable debt. I think you think of Christ there. We've had an unpayable debt made. So, whatever smaller debts are against us ought to be forgiven, but again ties in this reciprocity and certainly here with being merciful, really showing that.

37:12

It's interesting again with this emphasis on mercy, certainly, in Matthew as you get into 8, blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. What's interesting here is it seems to me what's rallied behind this is Psalm 24. I'm just going to read a couple verses from that. It's Psalm 24:3, "Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord," or you say the mountain of the Lord, i.e., the temple, or who shall stand in his holy place? Then, it goes verse four, "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

37:43

It then tells you, well who are those who have clean hands and pure hearts? A little bit of a definition here, those who don't have their soul lifted up to vanity, i.e., empty things. We've kind of talked about earlier on, having your things that are not ephemeral, maybe that aren't valued just in the world and has not sworn deceitfully. Then, you get to verse 6, and then you have this is the generation of them that seek Him, then it says, "That seek thy face." So, you go and you could read some temple imagery in here certainly. It was clearly picking up on the Psalm. Though the pure will see. So, I think you could have an application here of, based on Psalm 24 and this beatitude of the idea of the temple. You have clean hands, you have pure heart, and you see or you feel God very palpably in the temple.

38:28

So, I think there's certainly, extending that more, is you're in a blessed state, keeping your covenant so you can go and do that, and encounter God in Spirit in the temple. I should point out that some later Christian authors didn't like this so much, kind of seeing God. So, some render this as blessed are the pure in

heart for they shall see God in their heart but didn't like the idea quite so much. Anyway, really beautiful. You think of the kind of temple imagery behind this proverb pretty sure from Psalm 24.

- Hank Smith: 38:56 That's fantastic. I was going to mention something, and I'm not sure if it's still there, but when I was in the Mesa temple last ... and it was a while ago, there's a big gold sign. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. I remember that being so big and striking, and I like how you've tied that back to the temple for us.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 39:17 I think, yeah, it's picking up on that. So, I think this kind of brings more meaning into this beatitude. As we get near the end here, right, we have in verse 9, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God, those who want to make peace. Interesting because this word doesn't actually appear elsewhere in the Bible, this word peacemaker, one who actually brings peace, but as I was thinking about this, you really are the children of God, those who want to bring peace. Of course, I thought back to Isaiah 9:6, right, talking about the Prince of Peace, talking about Christ. Let's be like our prince. Let's bring peace. Let's try to establish peace.
- John Bytheway: 39:55 It's kind of a gathering Israel missionary work to teach people of the Prince of Peace, to extend peace that way. It hits me that way that this could be a missionary scripture. Go and teach people about the Prince of Peace like you just said.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 40:09 Yeah, you go and do this. Kind of picking up on that, John, in a few verses, it'll be very clear, Okay, here's your state. Now, go and do these things. Be a light. Really go out. You bring this up now, this injunction to really act even beyond what we just have in the beatitudes. As we get to the end here, right, really this unit from verses 10 down through 12, here talks about persecution. Things are going to be tough. So, you have verse 10, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Here, JST adds, again, with the Book of Mormon, "Blessed are all they that are persecuted." Here, it adds, "for my name's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This idea that it's not going to be easy to be a disciple.
- 40:55 It'd certainly be challenging at times. I like, was it from general conference back in, it was October 2021 where it's talked about waiting on the Lord. He gave that great line where he talks about Christianity. It's not comfortable, but it is comforting. We'd have a lot of hard times, and it takes some tenacity and even hinting at there's going to be some persecution, some

derision, but it is well worth this, right? So, it says that's the reward there is monumental. So, as I was thinking about this kind of you are blessed when you're persecuted for righteousness' sake or for my name's sake, yours is the kingdom of heaven. Probably can relate to it various times, experiencing some of this certainly. I think saying it's disciples, yeah, you're going to see this. He's going to build on this, saying the prophets before you had this. So, you should be ... Rejoice. Be exceedingly glad.

- Hank Smith: 41:41 You're lining up with the prophets of old.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 41:44 Yeah. It's funny in Acts where you have the apostles are brought before the Sanhedrin. It says they're in Acts 4 and 5, right, they're brought in. They're threatened, saying, "Stop teaching about this Jesus guy, and if you don't stop teaching about Him, bad things are going to happen." This is basically, they flogged them and then sent them out. Then, right after, it says, the disciples pray to God and thank God that they were worthy to suffer shame on account of his name, which I don't think for people, this is the first thing comes to mind, but here, we're seeing this. Well, I'm so grateful. I'm worthy to suffer shame or persecution, derision, for your name's sake. Be saying you're blessed when this happens.
- Hank Smith: 42:18 I look at these 12 verses. You have to wonder if this is what they expected to come from the Messiah. Maybe they did. Maybe being serious disciples, they knew what they were getting, but if I wanted a Messiah who was going to throw off the yoke of Rome and say, "Let's go to battle," this would be the exact opposite of what I would hear. Happy are they that are meek. Happy are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, not revenge. Happy are the peacemakers. You're going, well, this isn't maybe the Messiah I thought I was going to get.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 42:51 Well, I think when you read the gospels, the Messiah you don't think you're initially going to get, right, because when you think about the gospel of Matthew, right, let's just say you only have the gospel of Matthew. Of course, we all ... Hindsight's 20/20. We already know what's going to happen. We know the gospel stories, but you're reading Matthew. You're going through this and saying, "Huh."
- 43:05 Then, you get to Matthew 16. They're up in Caesarea Philippi and Jesus said to the apostles, "Well, who are people saying that I am?" People say, "You're Jeremiah, maybe one of the prophets." He says, "But who do you say that I am?" Then, Peter says, "Well, the Christ, the Son of the living God." It's interesting

the first time in Matthew, then what does Jesus say next? Well, among things He says next is He says, "Well, we're going to go to Jerusalem. I'm going to be handed over. I'm going to die, but I'll be raised up in three days."

43:28 Then, Peter's like, "Well, this can't happen." Of course, we know, right? You're rebuked, and get behind me, Satan, but there's this learning going on, but I think for all disciples, it's this learning experience kind of line upon line, precept on precept. Once they kind of get us down, he says, "Okay, now I'm going to tell you this is what's going to happen," because up to that point in Matthew, if you know the end of the story, you really don't know what's going to happen. You don't say, "Oh, Jesus is going to be crucified." Of course, we know that because of hindsight, but when He finally says, "Okay, here's what's going to happen," again, there's this new learning, level of learning.

Hank Smith: 43:54 They don't seem to pick up on it until ... I think it's John who admits they knew not the saying. Yeah, when it happens, he says, "We didn't quite know what he was talking about until after the fact."

John Bytheway: 44:05 Yeah, the gospel's written after the fact, hey, yeah, He did say that thing. I mean, He did say that he was going to suffer. It's like, oh yeah. Right up until the trial, Peter's like, "All right." Gets out his sword. Let's see if I can take off somebody's ear and-

Hank Smith: 44:21 Let's go to fight.

John Bytheway: 44:21 He's here. The fight begins. No, no, that's not that kind of a Messiah. It's interesting.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 44:25 This would've been surprising to some, but as they ponder and think about it, say, okay, here's what discipleship is. If you really want to be disciples, it's going to require some hard things, but wow, just think of the blessings. Again, kind of Romans 8, picking up on this where it talks about really becoming children of God, we're going to go back and think about verse 9. You're the children of God, He says, to the effect of summarizing here about Romans 8, about 12 to 14 says, "Well, basically, nothing you can experience here and now is possibly equivalent to what God has in store for those that truly love Him and serve Him." I think we're seeing this here that, yeah, it's going to be tough. There'll be some challenges, but yet, you do this, well, yours is the kingdom of heaven if you'll endure.

- 45:08 So, I think, yeah, really preparing them for what is ahead. As we see, there's going to be real hardship moving forward in the gospel at time but really beautiful, these beatitudes. You're probably all familiar with the work by Harold B. Lee. He calls the Sermon on the Mount a constitution for a perfect life. You don't get to perfect, but yeah, if you really want to be a disciple, and it's not easy, here are things you ought to really start implementing. The cost of discipleship. I think that's really illustrated beautifully.
- John Bytheway: 45:35 I've heard people suggest that there's a sequence in them, the poor in spirit. I realize I need something. I mourn my sinful state. I'm meek. I realize I can't save myself. I hunger and thirst after righteousness. I come to Christ. As I'm extended mercy, I extend mercy to others. I see others differently. I'm more pure in heart. I want to extend peace to them. I don't know if it's a sequence, but I'm fascinated by that idea that we all go through this sequence that's in the beatitudes. Have you ever heard that before that it could be a sequence?
- Hank Smith: 46:09 It's in a guide to the Scriptures. Beatitudes, a series of teachings that Jesus gave in the Sermon on the Mount that describe a refined and spiritual character. The beatitudes are arranged in such a way that each statement builds upon the one that precedes it. Then, it talks about the more comprehensive and accurate record being found in 3 Nephi 12 in the Book of Mormon.
- 46:30 So, Lincoln, I've heard that "the salt of the earth" statement my entire life, and I don't know if I've ever truly understood it, but someone will tell me about a town or part of the planet that they've been to and this, those people are the salt of the earth. I've always thought I know it's a compliment, but I'm not quite sure why it's a compliment. So, can you tell us why?
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 46:52 Yeah. Clearly, it's going back to what you have here in Matthew 5:13 where He tells His disciples basically to be like salt. So, you are the salt of the earth, but what's interesting here is, again, going back to kind of pick up what John said earlier, JST is important. It doesn't say you are. It says, I give unto you-
- John Bytheway: 47:11 I'm asking you.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 47:12 ... to be the salt of the earth. Yes. I'm asking you. So, you're not righteous. You're thirsting after it. I want you to strive to be like salt. Okay, really, what does this mean? It says this. Reading the second part of the verse, but if the salt lose its savor or

wherewith shall it be salted, it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.

47:30      Saying, you want to be like salt, right? I'm giving unto you to be this. So, when you think of salt in the ancient world, there's this famous Latin writer in the first century. His name's Pliny the Elder. He writes this large book, Natural History, very well known. He ends up being killed at the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Hank Smith:      47:45      Oh, wow.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell:      47:46      Well, he was very curious. What's going on with this mountain? I better hike up the mountain and see what's going on. It didn't end so well when it erupted, but he has this great phrase. He's very eclectic in this writing about things you should do. He has this Latin phrase. It says [foreign language 00:48:00]. The line is this. He says, "Nothing is more useful to the entire body than salt and sun." Of course, today we think, oh, you avoid salt, don't have sun.

Hank Smith:      48:14      Yeah.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell:      48:15      When you think of the ... This is the opposite. We're like, "Well, what's he doing here?" but you think of the ancient word with salt. What salt does, of course, it's a flavoring. You can add this, but one of the principal uses of salt is to preserve or save things. We're living in a world before modern refrigeration, dehydration, all these things, and so you want to preserve stuff. You salt it. Being like salt, I think in one way, I guess you can add flavor as a secondary thing. You're going to go out, and don't be like everybody else. You're different. You're going to add this flavor to this, but I think part of it, you got to go and you got to save or preserve things.

48:50      I think over time, it evolved into this. You're just good people. You're the salt of the earth, but I think originally, it's you bring flavor but you preserve, you save things. How do you do it? Well, you do this by you're keeping the commandments, not losing your savor. Here's the question. How does salt lose its savor? When it gets intermingled with impurities. Don't think of the ancient, they have salt shakers. They're shaking out salt. You're dealing with large clumps of salt. You're probably breaking off, rubbing things like this, and you drop your salt on the ground or a block of salt repeatedly, and all of a sudden, all these impurities get worked into it, it doesn't work anymore. It cannot preserve. So, as a preservative, I think He's saying, this is

what you ought to aspire to be. You can preserve, and you can save things. I give unto you to be salt.

- Hank Smith: 49:34 This is one commentary. These words are spoken to the disciples in their ideal character as the germ of the new Israel called to prophetic work, preserving the earth from moral putrescence and decay. Putrescence and decay, so kind of the antiseptic action of salt.
- John Bytheway: 49:52 Prior to my mission, I don't know how old you were, Hank in 1980, but Elder Carlos E. Asay made this great comment about salt in a general priesthood conference. He said, "A world renowned chemist told me salt will not lose its savor with age. Savor is lost through mixture and contamination. Similarly, priesthood power does not dissipate with age. It too is lost through mixture and contamination. Flavor and quality flee a man when he contaminates his mind with unclean thoughts, desecrates his mouth with speaking less than the truth, and misapplies his strength in performing evil acts." I just thought it was a fascinating idea that it won't lose it unless it gets mixed or contaminated. Oh, you guys have probably heard that one before from Elder Asay but-
- Hank Smith: 50:40 No, I like that. That's great.
- John Bytheway: 50:41 It's always in my margin here on Matthew 5:13.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 50:45 I like, was it D&C 101:39?
- John Bytheway: 50:48 And 103 talk about savor. Yeah.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 50:50 Yes. Yeah. It talks about this ... It actually started with the everlasting covenant, and when they have this, they're accounted as the salt of the earth and the savor of men, keeping covenants. Doing that, you can keep that savor.
- John Bytheway: 51:05 Please join us for part two of this podcast.



Hank Smith:	00:01	Welcome to part two with Dr. Lincoln Blumell, Matthew 5 and Luke 6. What does it mean when salt has lost its savor? Why is it trodden under the foot of men? Could you answer that one?
Dr. Lincoln Blumell:	00:13	I would think it's just like, if it's not good for saving or eating, what then is it good for? And so things are discardable. You discard it and you can walk over it. And the couple things it's good for, it doesn't actually do. It's lost its utility.
Hank Smith:	00:25	This is from Gerald Lund. He says, "So valuable was the commodity of salt that Roman soldiers were often paid with bags of salt. From this practice came the word salary, from the Latin solarium or salt money."
John Bytheway:	00:40	Have you heard somebody say, "He's not worth his salt"? I've heard that phrase, too. Maybe that comes from that.
Dr. Lincoln Blumell:	00:46	True. Very valuable. People fighting over salt or rights to salt. There's always natural resources, people fighting over them. Well, at times, there were battles over who would control the salt resources.
Hank Smith:	00:57	Very useful, very valuable. That's what the Savior's calling his disciples to be. Useful, valuable. You're the cash of the Earth, so don't involve yourself with impurities, because then I can't use you as my instrument, my tool.
John Bytheway:	01:12	And I like the idea of savor. Just everything is better with a little spice, with a little savor. With the Gospel, everything's a little bit better, and you be that way. Go out and make everything a little bit better.
Hank Smith:	01:23	I like that.
Dr. Lincoln Blumell:	01:24	I think being voices that are different in an otherwise kind of mundane, and I don't want to say maybe tasteless world, where it seems everybody tends to have the same opinion at times, and it's like, "No, there's a different opinion." We bring

something different. There's a uniqueness. I think at times we're called upon to do this.

01:39 And this is why I like this kind of fitting in with in 14. You are a light. People should see you and see something different. And in 14, again going back to what you have, a salt, it's not saying, "You are the light," but what does it say? "I give unto you to be the light."

Hank Smith: 01:55 Be the light.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 01:56 Of the world. And so there's that challenge that He issues. Again, this is the same reading, of course in the Book of Mormon in Third Nephi 12:14. It says, "If you're a light, city on a hill, can't be hid. People will be seeing lights." But then 15, "You don't get light and then immediately put it under something." There's a purpose for the light.

02:13 And just a note here, verse 15, "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick." I would probably say a better translation here, probably more accurate, would be, "People don't light a lamp and put it under a bushel, and Greek word's modeum, it's kind of a measure here. It's a dry measure, but like a basket. But they put it on a lamp stand. It's a little bit different in terms of not so much a candle, here, but just a lamp.

02:37 He's saying, "You let it shine." The injunction is right to the disciples. "Let what you're doing shine. Then," verse 16, "they'll see what you're doing," your light shine, "they'll see your good works, the good, and they'll glorify your Father in Heaven." I like the following verse. "I give unto you to be like a light. You don't go and hide your light. Let your light shine so that others will see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven."

03:03 There's a good work by Dieter Bonhoeffer. He was a German theologian. He was actually put to death under the Nazis, and he wrote a book called The Cost of Discipleship. He posed this rhetorical question: how do you resolve the paradox here of letting your light shine in Matthew 5, and then in Matthew 6 saying, "Whatever you do, don't let anybody see it. Don't let your right hand on what your left hand is doing. Or when you give alms, don't let anybody see this. Or when you're fasting, don't let anybody know you're fasting."

03:28 The point he was making there, it's, why are people seeing this? And in six, it's about, well, they're seeing about it really to

glorify you. What a swell person. Gee, they're fasting, they're giving so much. But here it's, "Who are they glorifying? They're glorifying God." That's the point. And so he has this nice little digression in his book there that always really kind of touched me. What are your motives? And if you're going to be a light, it's not about you, it's about God and enlightening others with the love of God.

03:54 I really like how Christ does this here, and the focus there on the Father. As you think about this striving to be like salt and light, this challenge, these first century disciples, even today, how can we be like salt and light?

Hank Smith: 04:08 Yeah, I like these two. One, salt is a preservative, like you said, keeping things from decay. And then a light can be that enlightening influence on other people, so not only are you fighting against sin, but you're also a positive influence for the rest of the Earth.

John Bytheway: 04:27 I find this fascinating, because of all of the nicknames that Jesus has, it seems like He shares this with us, because John 8, Feast of Tabernacles, He says, "I am the light of the world." And here in Matthew 5:14, He says, "Ye are the light of the world." But what you just said, Lincoln, is important, because we're also told not to set ourselves up for a light.

04:53 And Third Nephi just perfectly puts the two together, how He is the light of the world, and ye are the light of the world. We share that nickname. Third Nephi 18:24 says, "Therefore, hold up your light, that it may shine unto the world. Behold, I am the light which ye shall hold up, that which ye have seen me do. Behold you see that I have prayed unto the Father and ye have all witnessed. If you do what I am doing, then ye are the light of the world."

05:21 I love how clarifying that is. But isn't that cool, that He shares that nickname with us, and tells us we are the light? I don't know how many others I can think of where He does that except for this one.

Hank Smith: 05:32 That's awesome. Moving on, Lincoln, the Lord is now going to talk about Mosaic Law, what has been said of old time, what they've heard before, and he's going to either strengthen those Mosaic prohibitions or he's going to suspend, maybe, Mosaic permissions.

- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 05:48 Yeah. You have this discussion, and this is really where I see kind of a turn, now, in chapter five. We have this unit in verses 17 to 20 about the law and its fulfillment, and then you'll get examples throughout. You'll have what I call six antithesis, where here's what the law says, and now, here is now something more in terms of fulfilling the law.
- 06:09 And when it talks about fulfilling the law, I don't take this here is like, "Well, I'm going to destroy this," because it is very clear, He said, "I'm not here to destroy this." When I think of fulfilling here, I think he's getting at, "Here's now its true meaning. I'm going to bring out the full expression of what this should be." I think it's preparation for the Gospel. It's requiring more.
- 06:29 We talk about the Law of Moses going away. It will, right? The law is going to be fulfilled in Christ, but you have a lot of those symbolic, ceremonial, sacrificial aspects are done away with. But in the Gospel, a lot of the ethical components of the law are reaffirmed and, in fact, even strengthened.
- 06:47 What you get here in the law, here's this one example, and we will of course come to the appropriate one, but you see this in Sermon on the Mount, it's the law about what I call orthopraxy. It's doing the right thing. You do the correct thing, whatever that is. "Do this, do this, don't do this, thou shalt, thou shalt not." The law, if you read it carefully does not get into, "Well, what is a person thinking?"
- 07:10 Doesn't worry about their thoughts. Yes, it might talk about the heart periodically, but what you're going to find here is an expansion or this fulfillment reading to the Gospel. It's not only what you are acting; it is what you are thinking internally. That's part of this. We get to, "Don't just not do adultery, don't even let that enter in your heart lest I reckon it against you like you've committed it." And so this is what I see it's doing. It brings us to its true meaning.
- 07:36 You think about Paul, when Paul talks a lot about the law, he talks about, "The end of the law is Christ, to bring us to this." And so I see Christ on fulfilling saying, "Here's what the true expression is," preparing them for really what you have in the Gospel. He's very clear to say, as you read on verse 18, "For verily I say unto you, till Heaven and Earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no ways pass from the law till all be fulfilled."
- 08:00 And when He talks here about a jot or a tittle, the Greek literally has here for jot is iota. And for tittle it has this Greek word that means little horn. And what He's saying is even the smallest

parts, even the smallest letter in Greek iota, but here they do jot, or in Hebrew, a yode, or you hear you have a tittle, but a serif. Not one of these things is going to pass away until it's all fulfilled, brought out to its true meaning. We're not going to remove this.

08:27 And you think about law codes in the ancient world, not only among the Jews who are very fastidious about the law and not take away from this, but others also even have a story saying, "Don't remove a word or a syllable from a law. It's a very serious offense." And so just picking up on this saying, "The law's there, nothing's to be destroyed, but we're going to fulfill this, bring out its full expression."

08:47 And I think the full expression of the law, relying on Paul, I think the law is a means to an end, I.E., the end is Christ. It's not an end in and of itself. This is what I see is now following in what we have in these six antitheses that are going to start here in verse 21, where He'll now invoke the law and He'll say, "Okay, the law says this." It's not saying, "Okay, well don't do that anymore," but it's saying, "Well really to bring this to its full expression, to expand it, this should really be naturally part of the law."

09:18 And by the way, I should just note this here. When you read the Third Nephi account in 17:20, it is somewhat different from the Matthean account. Of course, it drops a reference to scribes and Pharisees, not surprisingly. It's very clear there that the law has been fulfilled. This is a post resurrection sermon. This is before the act of atonement and frames a little bit differently there.

09:41 But as you get into these six antitheses, you get the first one in verse 21. "You have heard it has been said by them of old time." I would say to the reader, pay attention to that, because often they'll say, "Well you've heard of old time," and sometimes He won't say that, and when He doesn't say it, it might not be significant, but actually, might be significant. Certainly, in one case we're going to get to a little bit later in Matthew.

10:04 You've heard of old time, so clearly he's referring to the law. Torah. Thou shalt not kill, and whoever shall kill shall be in danger of judgment. Now just a note here, just a clarification. KJV puts kill. Technically it's murder. I think there's a distinction there. We're saying you shouldn't murder. I think we all say, "Yep, that's a good law. Let's not murder." Let's not do this.

Hank Smith: 10:22 That's a good law.

- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 10:23 It's not abrogating it. He's saying, "Yep, that's a good law, right? Don't murder." But then look, in 22. He says, well, I'm now going to break to his full expression. "Not only should you not murder, but I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother," says, "without a cause shall be in danger of judgment." Picks up on judgment also in 21, "And whosoever shall say his brother, raca, shall be in danger of the council. Whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hellfire."
- 10:44 As he's expanding, he's saying, "Look, don't murder," but He says, "Don't even get angry with somebody to the point that you start berating them and doing these things, calling them raca. Raca, it's an Aramaic word, but it's from the Hebrew that you find in the beginning of Genesis, where it talks about emptiness or there was a void. It's saying, "You're empty-headed," and so you're really berating somebody. And so not only don't murder, but you don't do this. This is a full expression of what is in the law.
- 11:09 Now, what's interesting here is you have this little phrase in the KJV, "Without a cause," which actually, when you read that carefully, it does say, "Well, maybe somebody really is empty-headed, that's okay to do this." But both in the JST and in the Book of Mormon, it actually gets rid of that. It's saying, "There is no reason to go and do this." And what I find really interesting here, again as one who works in manuscripts, when you go back and you look at the earliest manuscripts of our New Testament, they similarly have dropped this particle. It's not there. And later manuscripts then add this. And because the King James's textual base of the New Testament is reliant on later manuscripts you have this reading in here.
- 11:50 In fact, most modern Bibles drop this, but it's clearly a scribal interpolation. Somebody reads it, says, "That's a hard saying. Well, maybe there's a cause, here. Somebody could really be this," so they add this in here. I think the JST yet removes that. I'll speak for the Sermon on the Mount, the JSTs often, and of course in the Book of Mormon. And they're not borne out in ancient manuscripts. And I don't think that's a big deal, based on [inaudible 00:12:18] evidence.
- 12:18 But here's one that actually we do find that actually does appear in our earliest manuscripts. This reading's not there in the JST, actually agrees with it, just as an interesting aside, but it does change the frame. No, there's not an excuse to do this.
- Hank Smith: 12:31 It sounds like he's upping the bar a little bit, where don't murder, that's an easier law to keep, versus don't get angry.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 12:40 Angry to the point you start berating somebody. Because I think people say, "Well, can you be indignant?" Is there such thing as the wrath of God, righteous indignation? But it's this point where you start berating and doing those things, he says, "Yes, this is not acceptable." And you might look at this also here as you're unlikely going to go and commit some heinous act like murder if you don't even become angry at somebody and start berating them. It would seem to me this escalation, that's kind of the pinnacle, and it's saying, "Nope, don't ever get to even close to that. Don't even do these other things that could potentially lead to that."

13:12 I think this is something you'll find with adultery. And just a point on the law. I just want to make here. You have this one, first of all, with murder and then you get into 27 and 30, and here you have, again, going back to one of the 10 Commandments, "You have heard it has been said by them of old time, 'Thou shall not commit adultery.'" Good commandment both in Exodus 20 and in Deuteronomy 5.

13:34 But then He goes and He's now going to say, "Okay, don't do the act," talk about orthopraxy, but He says now, 28, "But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart," so it's now expanding that to, "Don't even let that enter into your heart."

13:50 I think here of maybe the story of David, and probably a great modern application that we could relate this to. I think in today's society, there are going to be scenarios where you're doing nothing wrong, and out of the blue, there's just going to be something that's going to come in right in front of you, in vision. And I think the response is, "What do you then do with that?"

14:08 I think with David's case and Bathsheba, "Okay, there's something wrong. Do I sit there and dwell and let it enter in? Or do I come across it, okay, I'm now going to move and I'm going to get away." Maybe like Joseph, "I'm going to run the other direction." And so here it's like, you let it enter in, and you say, "I'm going to reckon this against you." And probably I'd imagine that people that go and commit adultery, probably in many cases, isn't just an impromptu thing. It's probably a lot of thought put into that beforehand.

Hank Smith: 14:31 Yeah.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 14:31 And say, "Avoid the action and now don't even let the thought penetrate into you, because I'm going to count that against if it really enters into your heart."

Hank Smith: 14:38 Got it. It seems that both of these are focusing on an inward spirituality versus outward behavior. The law takes care of the outward behavior, and the Savior's saying, "I want your internal spirituality to be in line, as well."

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 14:54 I think certainly this one is with internal and it's interesting. He says, "Don't do this," and then look what He says. You get some really interesting advice. "And if your right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee." Now, you do have a JST, here. He says, "I'm speaking to you as a parable," which I think should be obvious to the readers. Don't literally go and don't pluck out your right eye or cut off one of your members. But He's saying if these members are causing you to stumble, He says, "Get rid of them." He said, "It's better to go into the kingdom maimed than to not go in at all."

15:22 And I think a great application here, if I were to give what I would call a very loose dynamic rendering, it could be appropriate, I would say this, sometimes I do this in my class, I say, "If your computer screen offends thee, pluck it out. If your phone is offending you, if the television, toss it away. It's better that you get into the Kingdom and to be maimed, so to speak, than to not get there at all."

15:43 And it's very applicable with this, where there are things that can engender feelings of adultery and other things that you might come across on a computer screen, elsewhere, and that's really the message there. Jesus is saying, "If there's things that are causing you to stumble, here in this case, to allow this to enter your heart, get rid of them, remove them from you. It's far more important." I think we can really apply this. Today, think about the immorality, which actually we're going to talk about immorality here in a moment when we get to the next couple verses, I think is really applicable.

Hank Smith: 16:10 Yeah, absolutely. This is something that is prevalent today and could be used by more people today, is this idea of get away from those things. It's better to live a life without those things so you can go to the kingdom of God. Lincoln, those are our first two. What comes next?

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 16:30 In our next one, number three, verses 31 and 34, we'll talk about divorce. He said, "It has been said, whoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement." And

here, He's referring back to Deuteronomy 24, where in the law, people were permitted, you could bring a marriage together and you could then dissolve the marriage. And in the law, when you read Deuteronomy 24:1 and forward, they're at least driven by the man. The man can initiate a divorce.

- 16:54 And so He said, "Okay, Moses allowed you to do this, so there was divorce, it's in the law." And then you follow in verse 32. He says, "But I say unto you that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." This, I think, deserves some unpacking now about what does Jesus say here about divorce?
- 17:17 I would start into the nitty, because there's nitty gritty we got to talk about. There's also, what's interesting here, a ton of textual variance. It's clear that it's Jesus teaching on divorce, and textual variance are such that scribes did not like what He was saying, because He takes a much stronger stand on this. We'll talk about that. He says, "Okay, the law granted divorce, but whoever goes and puts away his wife," meaning gets a divorce, "if it's done," and the only exception He gives says, "the cause of fornication."
- 17:46 Now, the Greek word here for fornication, and you're going to know right away what the English word is, it's porneia, which is fornication or sexual immorality. You could even extend this word. Porneia can denote even apostasy, although primarily it has to do with sexual immorality. He says, "Okay, if you go and you put away your spouse and they're committing porneia, sexual immorality, if that person is remarried, she commits adultery and whoever marries her commits adultery."
- 18:14 Now, this is interesting, the second part of this, because this last line here in verse 32 is missing in various manuscripts, and so you're trying to think, "Okay, what is He saying?" Because when you go over to, for example, in Mark 10, because Jesus talks about divorce four times. He talks about it here, He talks about it in Matthew 19 where, in fact, He will reiterate this, and then you have it in Mark 10 and also in Luke 16.
- 18:40 And it's interesting, the Markean version is basically says, "Well, whoever divorces and marries commits adultery." He strengthens this. The question is, "Okay, what's He getting at here with this?" He gives one exception. And by the way, there's a lot here to this. When you read 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, Paul actually picks up and he says, "I'm not speaking to the married."

- 19:00 He says, "I'm not speaking, but the Lord's speaking. If you get divorced, you should not be remarried." But he says, "Now I'm going to go back." He says, "That was the Lord's words." It does seem that Jesus does take a stronger chord on this. And what I would do here with this passage is Jesus trying to say, "Look, marriage is sacred. Not only should it not be entered into lightly, it should not be dissolved lightly." Does grant there is a ground here where it could be dissolved.
- 19:26 When you think about Jesus' day, there are two notable rabbis in his day that we read about. One is this rabbi called Shammai, and another is Hillel. And Shammai is known as this more right kind of conservative and Hillel's more conservative liberal. I don't know if that's the greatest way to describe them. But you have cases that is talked about in the Mishnah basically, where Shammai says, "You know what? The only grounds for divorce should be unchastity," which actually agrees what Jesus is saying here. If somebody's committing porneia.
- 19:58 Hillel says, "Well, because it says back in Deuteronomy, 'if she finds no favor in your eyes,'" and he says, "Well, if you find somebody prettier," and he gives somebody these examples that are cringe worthy. If she spoils a dish, I.E., burns dinner. Now again, these are real extremes, and I don't want to say this was the norm in Judaism at the time. In fact, Rabbi Akiva, he said clearly says, "If you find somebody prettier, that is okay."
- 20:22 And I bring this up because it's very clear that in his world, some of this is going on. Just a few weeks ago doing Malachi, it was clear where you have people divorcing their wives, seeking other women, and there were not appropriate grounds. Lord actually in Malachi says, "I hate this." And you have the Jewish historian, Josephus. He was divorced multiple times and on one case he says, "I divorced the lady after she bore me three children because I didn't like her manners." And he talks about, "This is what you do."
- 20:50 And I think what Jesus is saying, "Look, this is going on," but He says, "this is a sacred act. It should be sacred and you should not dissolve it lightly." But He does grant a ground for that. Now, in Matthew 19, He will go into some more detail on this and in fact, He says, "God joined you together and you become one flesh." This is not brought up here. The way I would teach is saying, "It's really sacred."
- 21:12 Now of course, in the church today, divorce is granted beyond just if one partner is sexually unfaithful. There's a talk. The one that come to mind for me is by Dallin H. Oaks on this, where

there are reasons they allow for this. The principle behind this really is, it's sacred and should not be dissolved lightly, because it's clear in Judaism that some of this is going on and the Savior was not pleased with this and wanted to make this point, drive it home very clearly to his listeners at the time.

- Hank Smith: 21:41 Wow, that is a strong stance. I have nothing to say on that. Wow. Lincoln, before we jump into number four, can we say something to the divorced so they don't feel alienated? Someone who's listening maybe got divorced not for fornication, for other reasons, and they're thinking they maybe did something wrong.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 22:01 We might not always follow the exact practice, but what is the principle? And Christ, He says, "Here are the conditions I'm putting in place for its dissolution in the first century." We have prophets and apostles today, and in Elder Oaks talk, understanding that people, at times through no fault of their own, it takes two people to marry but only one person to end a marriage. And we read Elder Oaks talking to the other comments that people who are keeping their covenants, to use the word savor, will not lose their reward, if they're covenant keeping people and a spouse chooses no longer to keep their covenants.
- 22:36 In fact, that's why I even brought up with this word porneia, the principle meaning is sexual immorality, but you could even have an element of apostasy. Of course there's other things, too. Elder Oaks talks about abandonment, abuse, all these things. There are certainly allowances, and I think that when this does happen, it's a very challenging, difficult, hard thing, obviously. But I would say to people, look to the Lord. Be true to who you are. And if you've kept your covenants and you've done your best, you know that you can stand before the Lord and say that. I absolutely know that you can stand before the Lord and say, "I did my best."
- 23:11 Elder Oaks' talk, he says, "Marriage doesn't require two perfect people. It requires people just to try." And if you are trying your best, you can stand before the Lord, whatever your situation might be, you can't control the other person. You can stand before the Lord and say, "I did my best." And you cannot be faulted for that, because this is a hard thing. And yes, there are challenges and people will make decisions. There are allowances for this.
- Hank Smith: 23:33 Okay, Lincoln, what's number four? What's the fourth old time law that He talks about?

- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 23:40 The fourth one is verse 33-37, and here it's talking about forswearing. "Again, you have heard it has been said by them of old time, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths." Here, when you think of forswear, it's basically swearing falsely or making false oaths. If you go back to Numbers and Deuteronomy, it's like, "If you make a vow to someone and you swear upon this, don't break that." It's really deemed a grave act to do so.
- 24:08 And what I love about this is the Lord says, "Don't make false oaths. Be a person of integrity." But I love how the Lord then goes on and says, "Look, you shouldn't even have to swear at all, whether in Jerusalem or anywhere else, to be a person of your word or a person of integrity." He says, "Really, all your communication should be," and this is in verse 37, is "Yea, yea, or nay, nay."
- 24:32 We think of our society today, think of a juridical setting in a courtroom. "Well, will you place your hand on the Bible and tell us the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?" Because it's like, "Well, if they do that, now they'll tell the truth." My dad's a lawyer and said people still lie all the time anyway, even when they do that.
- 24:47 But the point is that for disciples, you shouldn't have to do that to be a person of integrity. You should say yes or no. Your word is your bond. And so this is what He's getting at, that all this swearing is really not needful. Said, "Well, I know they're telling the truth because they just swore on Jerusalem or they swore on something else." No, you're just a person of integrity.
- 25:07 In the law to really make sure somebody's doing this, you make a vow or an oath and He says, "This really shouldn't be necessary." I think really just to be a person of your word. And really, that is one of the more simple ones. And look at ourself, is our word our bond as disciples? Since this is the challenge here that He issues, to go and to do this.
- 25:26 As we move into the fifth antithesis, we have now in 38-42, an eye for an eye, as you get down to this passage. "You've heard it hath been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Exodus 21 or Leviticus 24, Deuteronomy 19, all mention this, an eye for an eye.
- 25:44 I may want to take a digression here just for a moment on the law, because I talked about this before in an earlier section about fulfilling the law. When people think about the law, they think, "Well, this law is this bad, horrible thing. It's an eye for an

eye." Just to reframe that a little bit, when I think about what the law is, and there's a Latin legal phrase that I think kind of encapsulates the law, and it's the phrase Lex Tallonis, or a law of retribution, or almost like tit-for-tat.

26:10 And what the law's trying to do, people say, "Well, it's about revenge. I think, "Well, the law's not about revenge." In fact, what does Christ say about the law in Matthew, later on in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 7:12? He says, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

26:29 And so what the law is about, really, it's the law of absolute justice. If you wrong me, I can now go back, do something to you in like measure. And I think in that respect, the law's a good thing. I think in ancient society or in any society, you probably have what's the law of the jungle, where you have, "Okay, you wrong me, or you call me a name. Well, I'm going to call you a worse name, and then you call me a worse name, and then you hit me, and it keeps on getting escalated. It goes up and up."

26:54 And the law is saying, if somebody wrongs you, there is a cap on what you can do back to them. It's reciprocal. If somebody called you a name, you can't go and kill them. You can only do something back in like measure. An eye for an eye. Well, in the law, by the way, somebody knocks out your eye, you can't go and actually knock out their eye. It's a monetary fine. What is equivalent to that?

27:16 I think you have to think about the law in this sense. And Christ does say, "This is the law." We're going to now expand that. And what you're going to expand this now is saying, "Okay, yes, in the law you can act justly against somebody. You've wronged me, I'm now going to wrong you back in a certain measure or redress this wrong." And He is saying, "You know what? Maybe you just ought to forgive them and not go and carry out justice against them."

27:36 Here, for example, it will talk about turning the other cheek. I think there's something really in this, this whole idea of forgiving. It's easier to do that sometimes than to go and seek justice. I think this idea of forgiveness, I mentioned the parable, unforgiving steward, forgiving. There's a quote by Alexander Pope where he talks about, "To err is human, but to forgive, divine." In this, especially, trying to be like the Savior. Being forgiving when we're wronged. I'm going to say, "You know what? I'm just forgiving. I'm turning the other cheek on this, if you've wronged me here in this."

- 28:11 Again, I think requiring more. Where the law can say, "No, you can act back in a just way," no, we're going to forgive. You've got an expansion of this here in this antithesis where He brings this up.
- Hank Smith: 28:23 That is absolutely beautiful, and it's something the Savior teaches often. This isn't the only place where the Savior teaches it's easier to forgive.
- Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 28:31 We're trying to be disciples. And just a note here, I know that some people in the passage you have where it talks about, "Ye resist not evil." People say, "Well, what does this mean?" Well, I think a better reading is, "Resist not the evildoer." It's not saying just go and let evil be rampant, but if somebody wrongs you sometimes, okay, it may happen. If they strike you, well then, turn the other cheek.
- 28:53 Paul gives some counsel in Romans 13 on this. When people are wronging you, you still treat them as a disciple ought. And this is really nice, because this really sets up the final antithesis, which, for me, I think is one of the most challenging things. A lot of people listening probably don't have too much of a problem with murder and some of these things. But I think here, you think of now forgiving, and now what's the hard thing this leads into?
- 29:16 Well, now, loving those who do not love you back. We have 43-47 about loving enemies. Look how it says here. "You have heard it hath been said thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thy enemy." I did point out earlier on, I said that often He'll say, "You have heard that's been said by them of old." He doesn't say that, but here, "This is being said, you should love your neighbor." Well, if you go to Leviticus 19:18, we know where it says, "Love your neighbor as thyself." Okay, we have that.
- 29:42 What's interesting, though, it says, "And hate thine enemy." If you go back and read in the law, there is nowhere where it says you should hate your enemy. People are wondering, "Well, where are they getting this from?" And this is a good question. As I read here, "It's been said," or "It's being said," there is maybe a trade in there in Jewish society that is saying, "Look, we don't like our enemies, whether they're Gentiles or someone else."
- 30:05 In fact, in the Dead Sea Scrolls, they have this document called the Community Rule. It's kind of like a charter for things they will adhere to. And one of the things it says there repeatedly, it says, "Okay, make sure you love all the sons of light and totally

hate all the sons of darkness with an everlasting hatred. The people not in our group, they're wicked." And I'm not saying that Jesus is necessarily responding to this group, but I could see in a society where people are saying, "Okay, let's love those who love us back and let's hate those who don't love us, because it's not in the law."

30:36 And this is where He then leads into saying, "Well, you know what? What you really ought to do is love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." And why do you do this? "That you may be the children of your Father." Now going back, think about this. Who are the children in the Beatitudes? The peacemakers. You don't fight fire with fire. You fight with water. You try to put it out. And in fact, you even go beyond that. You actually show them love. This can be a really challenging thing, but I think it's again, the cost of discipleship.

31:12 There's a great story that I think really epitomizes this, and the story relates back to events surrounding the aftermath of the building of the Berlin Wall in the early 1960s. I think everybody knows the Berlin Wall. It was put up in the early 1960s, it separated East and West Berlin, but also East and West Germany, and it was a real symbol of an ideological divide with Communism and then the west. And this wall got put up, and literally, if you go to Berlin today, the wall's still up, or they'll have a place where it's marked on the ground. It literally went right through the middle of neighborhoods.

31:47 And there's a story that's told, is that as this wall is put up, is that one morning people living on the western side of the wall woke up and the people on the east had thrown all their garbage over that night onto their side of the wall. If you wake up one morning and your neighbor's thrown all their garbage deliberately on your lawn, what are you likely going to do? Let's be honest. Well, we're probably going to throw back on their lawn and say, "There, we got you back." You throw it on the lawn, no, throw it back on your lawn.

32:11 They said, "Okay, those darn East Berliners or Commies, let's just throw the garbage back on the other side of the wall, so they do that. Well, they go to bed, they wake up. What do you think happens the next day? Well, there's more garbage. They have this garbage war, kind of throwing garbage back and forth over the wall. And a local minister, and I believe it's a Lutheran minister, heard about this, and came to those who were in his congregation, some of them were, and said, "I heard this is going on, you shouldn't be throwing garbage over this wall." But

he says, "Let me ask you a question. If Jesus was given garbage, what would He do?"

32:41 And they hemmed and hawed and said, "Well, He probably wouldn't return garbage with garbage." And he says, "Okay, what should we do?" And they said, "Okay, when garbage is thrown over, let's just scoop it up and we'll haul it off," so they scoop up the garbage, they haul it off. A short time later, he comes back and says, "Okay, let me ask you again. What would Jesus do?" And the decision was, "Well, Jesus wouldn't return garbage with garbage. In fact, He'd probably return it with love."

33:05 He says, "Okay, how can we show love to these people?" In fact, the stories we're hearing is that they're very oppressed. It's a very challenging regime. There are shortages. And so they determined saying, "Okay, when garbage is thrown over, we're going to throw over blankets, food, letters, things like that." Guess what happened in one night to the garbage? It stopped. It totally stopped. And letters and things started coming over saying, "Thank you so much. We're in a very hard situation. Have you seen family members?" And all this thing, and there was a relationship built up because somebody showed love to their enemy. Eventually, the Communist regime found out and put a station there, so they put a stop to that.

33:39 But I think it illustrates a very profound lesson. Your natural reaction is to return garbage for garbage, especially to an enemy. But if you take the time and show them love, sometimes, profound things can happen. And I would even say, even if it didn't make a change, we're still commanded to do it. But I think more oft than not, you'll see how it can change somebody when they're truly loved, when they've wronged you. That story for me really illustrates, the power of this is to love your enemies, and to do things to them even if it's really challenging.

John Bytheway: 34:07 How that changed, that's a beauty for ashes thing. I'll return beauty for ashes, and that's a great one.

Hank Smith: 34:13 That is. Wow, I'm going to use that. That's beautiful.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 34:16 And as I look at these, you have this antithesis, and for me anyway, I think a challenge is this is probably for me one of the hardest things, loving your enemies. Maybe this is why this is last. And then what you have? Well, now we have the final verse. "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect." What does the JST do? It's, "You're commanded to be

perfect." What's interesting here, here's an A case where the JST now actually differs from the Book of Mormon, because the JST, in many cases correspond. What does the Book of Mormon have? "Therefore, I would that ye be perfect, even as I or your Father who is in Heaven is perfect." Jesus now includes Him in this.

34:52 When we think of this term perfect, I think for many people, they don't like hearing this term. "I'm never going to be perfect. I'm nowhere close." Going back to this idea of Greek, this Greek word, teleos. What does this mean? It means complete, or a finished product. In fact, I'm going to bring in some Aristotle. Aristotle is the one that begins defining this and using this word, teleology. What is perfect? Well, it's the end or purpose in something. It's the purpose you are to become.

35:23 As I look at this, it's not something that just happens all of a sudden. It's a process. You become a finished product. And I even bring up here, and this is important, that even Jesus, it's only after the resurrection, says, "Even as I or your Father is perfect." And of course, the question that begs is, "Well, was Jesus not perfect?" Well, if we look at this, yes, Jesus lived a perfect life in the sense that he followed the will of the Father. However, it's very clear when we think about perfection, becoming like the Father in every way, Jesus, there was progression.

35:56 The passage that is a great passage, I'll also mention it really quickly that is worth looking at, we have D&C 93 about progression, but in the New Testament it's Hebrews 9 and 10, which it actually even says using the verbal form of this about Jesus, it calls Him "The Captain of their salvation," and it says the end of 10, "was made perfect through sufferings." We look at this process, and Hank, you quoted that thing about that rough stone rolling. These things happen, right? This is a process until you become this smooth shaft in the quiver of the Almighty.

36:25 The Greek word, really, it's a process, and I really like the Aristotelian teleology. It's kind of the end. This is what you're seeking for, you're striving for. You're looking to be a finished product like the Father. I wouldn't look at that as like, "Oh, I'll never, I can ever be perfect." Well, I don't think it's asking you to do this. It's saying, "You're moving in this direction like you're trying to become a finished product." It's this process, and by doing the things that you see leading up to this, this will now help you now expedite that work of becoming teleos, that finished product like the father and like the son.

Hank Smith:	36:58	That's great.
John Bytheway:	36:59	President Nelson, when he was Elder Russell M. Nelson in, this would've been October, 1995, General Conference, and forgive me if I don't pronounce the Greek as well as you did. He said, "The term perfect was translated from the Greek teleos, which means complete. The infinitive form of the verb is teleono, which means to reach a distant end, to be fully developed, to consummate or to finish. Please note that the word does not imply freedom from error. It implies achieving a distant objective," which is just what you were saying. This is a process. And more recently, Elder Jeffrey R. Holland gave that talk called Be Ye Therefore Perfect Eventually.
Hank Smith:	37:41	Eventually.
John Bytheway:	37:42	Yeah.
Dr. Lincoln Blumell:	37:42	Yes, eventually. And it really is. As I think about this, we define ourself by our potential. This is our potential, and it's a lot to go there, but this process, this development. And I love this, because the sermon at this point, it's kind of putting the building box in place, saying, "You want to do this? Here's what you ought to start doing and working at in this process."
Hank Smith:	38:04	Lincoln, this has been a fantastic day, going through this one chapter. Just so much in 48 verses, so much to talk about, so much to see. What do you hope our listeners walk away with from Matthew 5?
Dr. Lincoln Blumell:	38:20	What I would hope is, first of all, if I were to tell somebody, or if they say, "I want to be a disciple," I'd say, "Well, then, start in the Sermon on the Mount where it starts." What is Jesus teaching His disciples? What's He advocating? I would also say here, how does restoration scripture, both the JST and the Book of Mormon, how does that give us a better understanding? Because often you'll find, "I command you, I give unto you to be this." And so you sometimes read it and you're saying, "Oh my goodness, how can I be righteous? How can I be this?" But it's a charge to be like this.
	38:50	It moves along, "Okay, you want to be in a blessed state? Do these things." It expands the law. And really, the capstone is this idea of being complete, being whole, but it's a process. Jesus knew that it's a process. When you read the Gospels, we really get one disciple focused on most in the Gospel. That's Peter. It's very clear that Peter's process to become teleos, or to be

refined, is a long process. And if that's for Peter, it's for all of us as disciples.

39:19 I would say, and for myself, not to be overwhelmed or discouraged. I struggle with enemy. How do you deal with this? I think, love them back. Show them genuine love. Pray for them. In those times where I've tried to do this, there at times can be a profound change. I guess little by little, I'm trying to become this developed disciple and do things Christ would have me do. I would just say to people, yeah, it's a process. That's why I like the reference of the talk: become perfect eventually, but you're moving in the right direction. Just keep moving.

39:50 There's that statement I've heard, that the path of discipleship is not always a straight path. Sometimes there are detours or there are things, but I say, just keep going in the right direction every single day. Do those little things. I quoted Pliny the Elder here, where he talks about salt and then about sun. He has this other great line. He was such a prolific writer, but one of his lines, I won't quote the Latin here, but more or less, he says, "Every day, I write a line," he says, "I do something." He says, "Every day, I do something," and I would bring it into a Gospel perspective of small and simple things.

40:22 You'll say, "Hey, I can't do all this." Well, let's start with one thing. Just every day, by small and simple things are great things brought to pass. And if you do this over time, cumulatively, you will see a big, big difference. This is my takeaway from the Sermon on the Mount, and really, it's the essence of the Gospel. I can say you do get peace from it. Absolutely. I, like all of us, have some profound struggles in our own life, personal struggles, but the peace and the comfort have come through the Gospel, and if it works for me, it works for you. Those are my big takeaways from this chapter.

Hank Smith: 40:57 What a great day we've had in Matthew 5.

John Bytheway: 41:00 And there's more of the Sermon on the Mount coming, too. That's what's fun is it's in a couple of more chapters.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 41:05 Two more chapters. Yep.

Hank Smith: 41:07 Greatest sermon ever given. Lincoln, you definitely did it justice today. Thank you for being here.

Dr. Lincoln Blumell: 41:11 I hope it was helpful.

Hank Smith:	41:11	Yeah.
Dr. Lincoln Blumell:	41:13	I love just getting your insights and everything, so I really enjoyed this, so thank you for having me on.
John Bytheway:	41:16	Thank you.
Hank Smith:	41:17	Yeah, that was so many good things. I can't tell you how many notes I've taken in my scriptures here. To really draw out the power of this chapter has been a lot of fun. We want to thank Dr. Lincoln Blumell for being with us today. What a treat. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen, and we always remember our founder, the late Steve Sorensen. We hope you will join us next week. We have more of Sermon on the Mount coming up on followHIM.
	41:47	Today's transcripts, show notes, and additional references are available on our website, <a href="http://followhim.co">followhim.co</a> . Followhim.co. And you can watch the podcast on YouTube with additional videos on Facebook and Instagram. All of this is absolutely free, so be sure to share with your family and friends. To reach those who are searching for help with their Come, Follow Me study, please subscribe, rate, review, or comment on the podcast, which makes the podcast easier to find. Thank you.
	42:14	We have an amazing production crew we want you to know about. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilsen, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts and Ariel Cuadra. Thank you to our amazing production team.

## HOW CAN I FIND LASTING HAPPINESS?



- Hank Smith: 00:05 Hello, my friends. Welcome to another followHIM Favorites. My name is Hank Smith. I'm here with the incredible John Bytheway. Welcome, John.
- John Bytheway: 00:12 Thanks, Hank.
- Hank Smith: 00:13 This is where we do a short clip with this week's lesson.
- 00:16 John, we're in Matthew chapter 5, and I think a good question from Matthew chapter 5 that Matthew chapter 5 answers is, how can I find lasting happiness? So John, let's use Matthew 5 and answer this question. Where do I find lasting happiness? It may not come from what we think it's going to come from. When it comes from the Savior, it may come from a backwards point-of-view.
- John Bytheway: 00:39 Yeah, the beatitudes have been called the happy attitudes because blessed are the... Could have been translated.
- Hank Smith: 00:45 Happy are they.
- John Bytheway: 00:46 Yeah. I just wonder if the people that were there were like, "What? Blessed are the poor in spirit? Blessed are they that mourn? How's that blessed?"
- Hank Smith: 00:53 Yeah. How am I happy? Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:55 One of the things that I've heard you talk about so beautifully, Hank, is the idea of happiness is a mode of travel. It's not a destination. So the Book of Mormon says we lived after the manner of happiness. How do we discover what that manner is? And something that I've loved that you've done, Hank, is talking about people who put a deadline on it. As soon as this, then I'll be happy.
- Hank Smith: 01:16 Yeah. We do that so often. Soon as I graduate from high school, I'll be happy. As soon as I'm out of college, I'll be happy. As soon as I'm married. Soon as I have kids. Soon as the kids move out. Right? Soon as I'm retired. It just keeps going. The happiness is

out there somewhere else. And I've always thought that unless happiness is where you are, it's never going to be somewhere else. You've got to find it in the situation you are currently in.

01:40 The Come, Follow Me manual says this. "Everybody wants to be happy, but not everyone looks for happiness in the same places. Some search for it in worldly power and position. Others in wealth or in satisfying physical appetites. Jesus Christ came to teach the way to lasting happiness, to teach what it truly means to be blessed or to be happy."

01:59 So what you can do is you can go into Matthew chapter 5 and you can kind of grade yourself on what the Savior outlines here, being poor in spirit, mourning, being meek. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Being merciful to other people. Being pure in heart, not having any ulterior motives. Being a peacemaker in your home and maybe you're persecuted for Jesus's sake.

02:24 He says that's going to lead to long-term happiness for you, lasting happiness. And being a light to the world, trying to be an uplifting influence to the people around you. Not being angry. Not letting anger enter your heart.

02:38 "The law of Moses says, Don't kill. I say to you, don't get angry. To root out lust out of your life is to be happier." Jesus comes at this a little differently than maybe a psychologist would, or someone who's really saying you got to get a lot of money and you got to be able to shop at these certain stores and you got to drive this kind of car. Jesus is saying, "Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you."

03:02 So again, a little bit backwards from what other people might teach is the happy way of life. And the big question here is, who are you going to believe?

John Bytheway: 03:10 Yeah, exactly. That's a good way to put that is who are you going to believe? And I think we get to a point, Hank, when we get older, maybe happiness if we think of that as I'm giggling all the time. But I think really what we want is peace, peace of mind, peace of conscience. And as we get older, it's not so much that happiness is peace, it's a peace of conscience. Things are going to be okay. And that's what we really want.

Hank Smith: 03:33 And that's what the Savior's offering here in the Sermon on the Mount is peace inside your heart. Maybe not the wealth or the sin that supposedly brings happiness, but not lasting happiness.

He's offering us something enduring. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. We're with Dr. Lincoln Blumell this week studying this one chapter in the Sermon on the Mount. Come join us there. It's called followHIM and then come back next week for another followHIM Favorites.