

**[Slide 1: Series cover slide]**

Good morning, New City.

We're in a series called "Life Change from the Heart".

When we kicked off this series

many, many, many weeks ago;

Kevin explained that life change comes from the heart

And that it begins

as we begin to live by the Spirit.

*Galatians 5:16-17, 22-23 say*

**[Slide 2: Galatians 5:16-17, 22-23]**

<sup>16</sup> *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.*

*[you're free to change]* <sup>17</sup> *For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.*

<sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*

<sup>23</sup> *gentleness and self-control.—Galatians 5: 16-17, 22-23 (NIV 1984)*

**[Slide 3: John 15:5]**

So the deeper we grow within the Spirit (i.e. the deeper we grow in Jesus, The Vine), the greater is our experience of the Spirit's fruit. This is God's desire. In John 15:5, 8 Jesus says

<sup>5</sup> *I am the Vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing....* <sup>8</sup> *This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*—**John**

**15:5 (NIV 84)**

The idea is that

the more our hearts experience fulfillment in the Vine,

the less we need to pursue it anywhere else,

because a deep experience

of things like love, joy, peace, and faithfulness

is what we're really after  
when we pursue those other things.  
So as this need is being met in our hearts,  
through a fulfillment that is by the Spirit  
we become free to change—to no longer gratify what our flesh desires  
In this way,  
life change really begins from the heart,  
from the heart's true fulfillment.

The question then becomes

**What the heck does it mean to “live by the Spirit”, to “remain in the Vine”?**

To help us explore this,

**[Slide 4: The flow chart]**

we said that for this series  
we'd be using the 12 step framework  
written by Bill W and Dr. Bob,  
the two cofounders of Alcoholics Anonymous.

**[Slide 5: Noooo! Not the flowchart!]**

In doing so, you might remember  
that I walked you through the construction of a crazy flow chart  
to show you how I reverse engineered the steps  
back into their Gospel origins  
because we said  
we're going to look at the gospel foundation  
which inspired them.

By focusing on this gospel inspiration,  
we eliminate the idea  
that this is a series about addiction.

**[Slide 6: The Pepsi Challenge]**

The frame work simply serves

to guide the sequence of our focus,  
while giving us a practical way to live out  
each piece of the gospel  
that we do focus on,  
along the way

**However, we cannot dismiss the powerful reality**

that when one devotes herself to the gospel  
in a way which takes advantage of this framework  
the experience of the spirit is so powerful  
it can free her from the clutches of death and insanity,  
the very byproducts of addiction.

**As we began looking at this frame work**

we recognized  
that it all begins with a recognition that,  
like the Apostle Paul,  
every single one of us is equally powerless to sin  
when we are apart from the Spirit

**This is the essence of the first step**

In Romans chapter 7 Paul writes

**[Slide 7: Dooby dooby doo]**

**Romans 7:15, 18-19, (dooby dooby doo)**

*<sup>15</sup> I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.... <sup>18</sup> ...For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. <sup>19</sup> For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.... <sup>21</sup> So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. <sup>22</sup> For in my inner being I delight in God's law;<sup>23</sup> but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.*

So this journey continues as we recognize  
that the solution  
must be in a power greater than ourselves—  
**that it is a solution in Spirit.**

This is the essence of the second step.

In the sermon devoted to this step

Kevin explored two questions

Is it logically sound to trust that the solution is in Christ?

And if so,

Does it work?

Recognizing that it is logically sound to believe in Christ;

and having considered the testimony of others who have done so,

**we began to consider**

**what it means to surrender one's will**

**to the care of God—to be saved**

this is the essence of the third step

in considering what this means

Kevin talked about the very platform

Upon which salvation is based—Grace

and we said that being saved is based entirely on faith

In the following sermon,

We considered the implications

of what it means to surrender

To do so, we took a deep look at the 3 components of Romans 10:9

**[Slide 8: Surrender—a Deeper Look at Romans 10:9]**

*If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.—Romans 10:9 [NIV 2011]*

In doing so, we talked about the reality

that faith—or belief with the heart

always results in a natural byproduct—action  
and this byproduct  
is what begins to address the heart’s condition  
in that it prepares it  
for the work of the Spirit

In considering what this action might be  
we said it must somehow be  
a demonstration of the heart’s devotion  
first for the Lord  
and then for one’s neighbor

and we said that this must be true

because of what Jesus says in Matthew 22:34-38

**[Slide 9: The Secret Sauce]**

*<sup>34</sup> Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. <sup>35</sup> One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: <sup>36</sup> “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”*

*<sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment.*

*<sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”—Matthew 22:34-40 (NIV)*

So Jesus says that all the Law and all the prophets  
hang on the two greatest commandments  
this devotion is the secret sauce!

because to love the Lord with all one’s heart  
is the **greatest** commandment

we began to consider

“what actions could possibly demonstrate  
a heart’s devotion to the Lord?”

“where do we begin?”

to help with these questions

we recognized that Jesus contrasts the spiritually blind approach to Lordship  
with this idea of cleaning the inside of the cup

**[Slide 10: Clean the inside of the cup]**

<sup>25</sup> “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence.” <sup>26</sup> Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.”—**Matthew 23:25-26 (NIV)**

This idea of the cup cleaning process  
comprises steps 4 thru 7

**[Slide 11: 4 elements to cleaning the cup]**

the basic idea of this process begins in step 4

where we examine our hearts (the inside of the cup)

for as much self-indulgence as possible

(because that’s the stuff that dirties the inside of the cup)

so that in step 5 we can confess what we find to God

(the only one who can cleanse our hearts)

and so that in step 6 we can stop filling the cup

with even more self-indulgence

in other words, steps 4 and 5 enable us to learn what it means to repent

to turn our heart’s devotion

from self-indulgence to a love for God

that was step 6

and the reason that we do all of this

is ultimately so we can have as much room as possible

inside the cup (our heart)

to devote to God’s Grace in step 7

the more you find

the more God removes

and the more God removes  
the more room there is devote to Him.  
So steps 4 – 7 are nothing more than a practical demonstration of what it means pursue  
the greatest commandment

Well....

you guys survived the six weeks we took to talk about the cup cleaning process

We're now ready to shift our focus

to the second greatest commandment

this transition is the focus of the 8<sup>th</sup> step and today's sermon

now when we searched the Bible

for what it means to devote oneself to Lordship

we found our answer in Matthew 23

where Jesus says to clean the inside of the cup

and we used this scripture to update our flow chart with steps 4 – 5

**[Slide 12: Cup cleaning flow chart]**

but is there anywhere in the Bible

where Jesus talks about a type of work

which demonstrates our hearts devotion to loving others

in the context

of already observing greatest commandment?

**[Slide 13: 2<sup>nd</sup> Greatest Commandment flow chart]**

It turns out it does,

and it's found in one of early AA's favorite parts of the Bible

The Sermon on the Mount

It's from this scripture that I think the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> steps are derived

**So that I don't ruin the sermon,**

I'll hold off on telling you what those steps are actually about

Until the end of the sermon

What I would like to do for this sermon

is walk you through the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

one section at a time

leading into the transition

from the greatest commandment to the second greatest commandment

The Sermon begins with Jesus taking a seat on a mountainside  
with His disciples

He says to them

**[Slide 14: Matt 5:3-7]**

<sup>3</sup> *“Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>4</sup> *Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.*

<sup>5</sup> *Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.*

<sup>6</sup> *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.*

<sup>7</sup> *Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.*

**[Slide 15: Matt 5:8-12]**

<sup>8</sup> *Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.*

<sup>9</sup> *Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.*

<sup>10</sup> *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>11</sup> *“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all  
kinds of evil against you because of me.<sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, because great is  
your reward in heaven, for in the same way, they persecuted the prophets who  
were before you.*

**When I think about the significance of this portion of the Sermon**

I like to think of it in terms of what matters  
in the Kingdom of God  
versus

what matters in the Kingdoms of earth

**In Romans 12:2 Paul says that**

we are not to conform to the patterns of this world  
(the patterns of society and what it values)  
instead we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds  
we need to hit the reset button  
to begin valuing what matters in the Kingdom of Heaven  
instead of what is valued by the patterns of society

**In this opening piece of His sermon**

Jesus reveals what really merits blessing in His Kingdom  
He reveals that what really matters to Him  
is the condition and position of the heart  
as opposed to the greatness of your works

Let's consider a few of these  
and contrast them with the patterns of the world

**[Slide 16: Poorness in Spirit: views]**

in verse 3,

Jesus says that to be poor in Spirit

This is what merits blessing

**when I think of what society says is most important**

I can't help but think that  
it is the opposite of poorness in spirit  
that matters

I need to tell my children that as they grow up  
they need to develop self-confidence

they need to believe in themselves  
that this is one of the tenets of success in life, right?  
not poorness in spirit  
that's for losers

but what does poorness in spirit say about the heart?  
What is the effect that it has?

**[Slide 17: Poorness in Spirit: heart]**

I think when we are poor in spirit  
the heart has a tendency to recognize  
that I can't do this on my own strength  
it becomes ready  
to rely upon God

**self-confidence on the other hand**

may or may not lead one to rely upon God  
because "I got this" "I did it"

**[Slide 18: Poorness in Spirit: blessing]**

your blessing for a heart that recognizes it needs God  
yours is the Kingdom of Heaven  
your reward for self-confidence  
whatever you earned through your works

**[Slide 19: Those who mourn: views]**

Blessed are those who mourn  
which is an extension of poorness in Spirit  
I think the contrasting world view for this one is  
No. you go what you deserved. Suck it up

**[Slide 20: Those who mourn: heart]**

Now, when poorness in Spirit  
leads to mourning **which does** turn to God  
I think it fills the heart with compassion

for those who also suffer

on the other hand

**when you live by the  
“you get what you deserve” model**

this leads to a heart of arrogance –

if you are successful

or if your not successful

it leads to doubling down

on trying harder and harder

**[Slide 21: Those who mourn: blessing]**

The blessing for those who mourn

is that they will be comforted

The reward for pursuing what you deserve

Is whatever it is you've earned

maybe your wages, maybe your grades, status

things that apparently matter less to Jesus than the heart

**so does this mean that Jesus is suggesting**

we should be in a perpetual state of weeping?

I don't think so,

I do think that He does want our hearts

to demonstrate a position

of poorness in spirit and mourning

this is what we should pursue as we go about our business

**[Slide 22: The Meek: definition]**

Blessed are the meek

Well, I'm not as smart as you

I had to look this up to make sure I was using it correctly

meekness

1. Showing patience and humility; gentle.
2. Easily imposed on; submissive.

Just as in the case of mourning,

**[Slide 23: The Meek: views]**

I think Jesus wants us to have a heart that is humble  
one which spawns gentleness  
and I think He wants this to be intentional  
especially when authority belongs to you  
**on the other hand**

I think the world tends to view meekness  
as weakness  
instead, the world seems to favor a show of strength  
practice flexing those muscles in the mirror  
**and then bring everybody along to the gun show**

this is what gets you places at work, right?  
everybody needs to know how good I am  
cause that's what gets me promoted  
**and if someone attacks my position**

I'm coming out guns a blazing  
Because everybody needs to know  
that I don't just lie there like a dog taking a beating  
**and if I'm the boss**

and someone threatens my command  
what matters most  
is that I put you back in your place  
I don't care about your pansy feelings  
Respect for my authority comes first

**For Jesus, however,**

an intentional position of meekness

is what matters

**[Slide 24: The Meek: blessing]**

a heart that is meek

inherits the earth

in the world,

a demonstration of “can do” gets you further

for this,

you are rewarded with whatever you earn

**[Slide 25: Hunger for righteousness: views]**

blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

well, given that Jesus is absolute righteousness

to hunger and thirst for righteousness

is to hunger for Him

this can only lead to a heart for others

in the world’s eyes,

rightness with the world

is based on doing your part

which leads to obedience

the reward for obedience is based on how well you perform

**[Slide 26: hunger for righteousness: blessing]**

the better you perform, the more you get

the blessing for a hunger for righteousness

is that you will be filled

you will begin to experience fulfillment

**[Slide 27: Mercy: blessing]**

Blessed are the merciful

In order to show mercy,

you first have to be in a position of authority

so Jesus is saying that it's important to learn  
just what it means to show mercy  
in the context of authority

**does this mean that in the work place**

you just turn a blind eye  
when an employee does wrong?  
Or does it suggest that you demonstrate mercy  
by not immediately firing him,  
that instead,  
you come up with  
some type of corrective action  
so that he has an opportunity  
to redeem himself  
until the true act of mercy  
is really to let him go

**I think the world view**

might lean a little more toward the mentality of  
“you dug your own ditch”  
or

“you get what you deserve”

**[Slide 28: Mercy: heart]**

the heart of mercy desires redemption in others  
the mentality of “you get what you deserve”,  
desires reciprocity

**[Slide 29: Mercy: blessing]**

The blessing for mercy,  
Is Mercy  
The reward for “you get what you deserve”  
is whatever you deserve

**[Slide 30: Pure heart: views]**

Blessed are the pure in heart

Jesus says,

“clean the inside of the cup”

This is what matters

Then the outside will be clean as a result

The world says,

only the outside of the cup can be seen

why are you so worried about the inside

**[Slide 31: Pure heart: heart]**

To prioritize cleaning the inside of the cup

is to say

my image in God’s eyes is what matters

to focus on the outside of the cup

is to say

the perception of my image by others

that’s what really matters

**[Slide 32: Pure heart: blessing]**

The blessing for a heart that is being prepared for the Lord

You will see God

The reward for a devotion to your image

Maybe you earn a little more

**So Jesus lists these conditions of the heart**

**and a few more**

as He talks about what merits blessing in the Kingdom of God,

He does so in contrast

to what the patterns of the world tend to reward.

within that particular culture,

you might say

that Jesus was telling his disciples  
not to worry so much about being devoted  
to the specifics of the Law  
but to instead  
worry about their heart's position and condition

**This would be in total contradiction**

to what a Pharisee might teach

This is the first part of The Sermon on the Mount

After this

Jesus goes on

**[Slide 33: Salt of the earth]**

*<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.”—Matthew 5:13 (NIV 2011)*

At first, this piece of The Sermon gave me a little trouble

you see pure salt is sodium chloride  
it can't lose its saltiness.

It's salt

so I checked out a few commentaries

which all talked about salt

taken from the Dead Sea (pictured behind me)

**the salt taken from the dead sea**

is a mixture with other chemicals

so if the presence of sodium chloride is minimal

it has little saltiness

and is of little use

**one of the few things it could be used for**

is to harden the ground of future pathways

when used for this purpose

it is spread on the ground to be trampled underfoot  
so that it can harden the ground

**whereas pure salt was of great value**

not so salty salt

had limited usefulness

I think that when Jesus preached this

He was emphasizing

that this message of the heart's devotion

being more important than the degree of one's obedience

makes one

**like the salt of the earth**

it's what really matters in the Kingdom of God

and when one loses site of this

and begins to dilute it

like salt that has lost its saltiness

they limit their usefulness in the Kingdom

**Now, Jesus isn't saying**

That we should sit around all day

meditating on our heart's condition—that

there shouldn't be any deeds

That would imply that we are to become vegetables

I think what He is saying

is **to take your focus off of the work itself**

And instead place it on the heart

That this

will align your deeds

with the work of His Kingdom

**I think this is what He emphasizes**

**as the Sermon continues**

**[Slide 34: Light of the earth]**

*<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.—Matt 5:14-16 (NIV 2011)*

**So when you focus on the heart’s position and condition**

**Your deeds become a light to the world**

which draws attention to the light’s source

God the Father

because He

is what’s at the center of the heart’s focus

as the deeds are enacted

**When one’s attention is focused instead**

on the degree of obedience to the Law,

their deeds shine in a way which draws attention to the self

to the outside of the cup

**following this portion of the Sermon**

Jesus immediately squashes the idea

that the Law is not important,

instead He says

**[Slide 35: Fulfillment of the Law]**

*<sup>17</sup> “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup> For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. <sup>19</sup> Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup> For*

*I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.—Matthew 5:17-20*

The Law is important.

It's the very reason He came

He came to fulfill it

so that humanity could be right with God

Without His Sacrifice

pure righteousness could only be reached

through perfect obedience to the law

not a single stroke of the pen could be missed

one's righteousness

would have to surpass even that of the Pharisees

it's impossible

To emphasize His point

About the impossibility of the Law-centered righteousness

He uses the law against murder as an example

**[Slide 36: Law against Murder]**

*<sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca,' is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.—Matthew 5:17-20*

Even obeying the law against murder is impossible

because if you are guilty of building the stage

on which murder is executed

that is,

if you are guilty of anger

you're also guilty of murder  
you can't even call someone a fool

Unfortunately

I make a lot of people guilty of that one

**Jesus follows this reality**

**With the right way to approach obedience**

and He does this in the context  
of having already addressed  
the greatest commandment

**Of having already cleaned the inside of the cup**

**After having already addressed the heart for the Lord**

**[Slide 37: Leave Your Gift at the Altar]**

*<sup>23</sup> "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that  
your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there in front  
of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.*

*—Matthew 5:23-24*

To address the greatest commandment first,  
Jesus sets the scene for what He says at the altar  
The place where one goes to offer their devotion to the Lord  
So when we are at the altar,  
After we have completed steps four through seven  
We are now ready to move on to the second greatest commandment  
And what type of action demonstrates  
the heart's devotion to loving your neighbor as yourself?  
The pursuit of reconciliation.  
And not with those who have wronged you,  
but with those you have wronged.

**So after you do steps 4 – 7**

i.e. when you are at the altar

**you move on to steps 8 and 9**

you remember if there is anyone who has something against you  
and you pursue reconciliation

Step 8 is all about getting ready to do this

And step 9 is about going out and doing it

They read

**[Slide 38: Steps 8 & 9]**

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

So I finally get to update my flow chart

**[Slide 39: flow chart]**

It's been over a month, people

Raca!

**So I really had fun**

digging through the Sermon on the Mount

to get to reconciliation

but it was a little difficult.

Remembering each part of the Sermon

and keeping it in focus

long enough to appreciate the connections

was kind of hard for me.

To help me with this,  
I put together a little summary  
of this portion of the Sermon  
and I contrasted it against the patterns of the World  
looking first at the left side of the table  
there are 5 groupings of thought that lead into  
the scene at the altar  
**[Slide 40: summary table]**

## Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1-14)

It's the heart's position which merits  
blessing in the Kingdom of God (3-12: beatitudes)

Your utility in the Kingdom is limited when  
you lose focus of this (13: like salt for the roads)

When you keep this on focus, your deeds  
draw glory to God (14-16: city on a hill)

The law is important. Every letter of it must  
be fulfilled. Jesus came to fulfill it because  
it's impossible. (17-20)

Consider the law against murder—  
impossible: even anger (murder's catalyst)  
violates it (21-22)

So focus on the heart instead—first for the  
Lord (go to the altar) and then for your  
neighbor (be reconciled) (23-24)

This is what matters in the Kingdom of God

The kingdoms of the world

On the other hand are more concerned

With the right side of the table

## World View

It's obedience that merits reward

The greater your obedience, the more you are rewarded

When your focus is on obedience, your deeds draw glory to yourself

Righteousness is about holding obedience in the highest esteem

Law against murder—simple: Do not kill or you will be subject to judgment

The focus is on obedience

Next Sunday,

We'll be going into the mechanics of the step work

We'll talk about what it means to prepare,

who this preparation should be modeled after, and

I'll share a little about my experience

Going through with it

Until then,

Have a great Sunday everybody