

**“A new teaching –  
and with authority!”**

**The Sermon on the Mount  
Matthew 5-7**



# WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

- Jesus' sermon on the mount runs over 3 chapters of Matthew
- Its about discipleship – MANY topics
- Why did people sit up and listen – what made it so radicle?
- Today we'll stand back:
  - *What's the gist of this message?*
  - *Is there a central theme?*
  - *What's the BIG idea in Matthew 5, 6, & 7?*



# Disruptive, provocative & uncomfortable

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- Hard hitting and highly provocative statements from an obscure Rabbi
- Designed to unsettle the religious people of the day
- In a series of sayings Jesus says .....

  - You've got it wrong
  - You thought being close to God was all about doing ...
  - But God is interested in something else

What we DO matters but Jesus explains there is something more important



*from*  
***External conformance to  
the rules***



*to*  
***Internal transformation of  
the heart***



**Being seen to go thru religious motions can actually distract us from what God really wants – and he wants more than that**

# What do YOU think of the Pharisees?

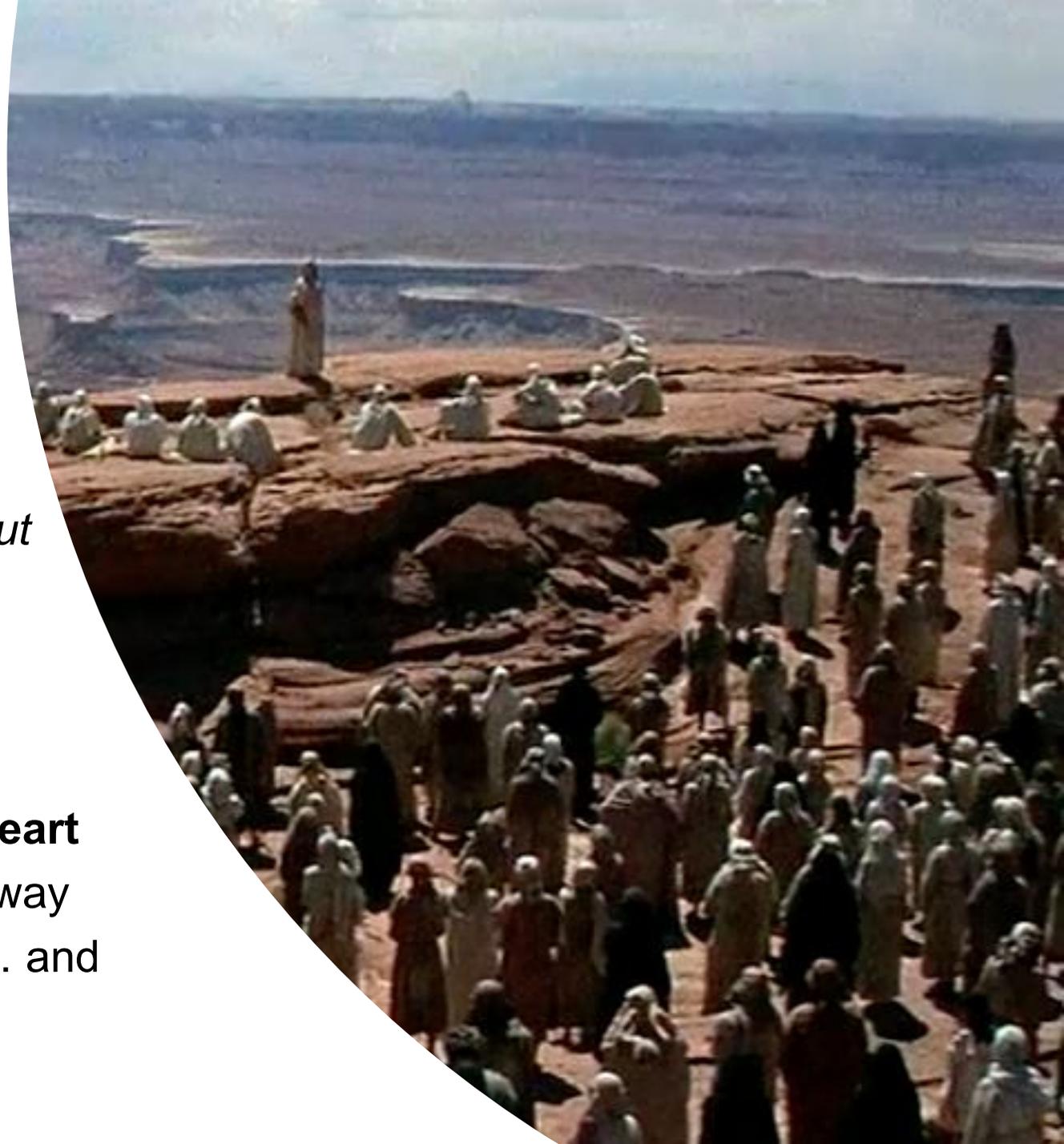
- ... they get a bad write up!
- But by and large they were men trying to do the right thing
- Sticking to the rules
- But they had lost focus of what God wanted They obsessed about
  - Sticking to the code of conduct ...
  - Ticking boxes ...
  - Focusing on what we do “out there” ...



# Jesus' reply

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- “You’ve got this the wrong way round”
- “*You have heard it was said THIS..... but now I tell you THIS ...*” ...
- You thought God wanted *THIS* but he actually wants *THIS*
- We easily make the same mistake ...
- **Internal ... Transformation ... of the Heart**
- This rubbed many people up the wrong way
- But others said “this is a new teaching ... and with authority!”



# To help us understand this ...

Jesus uses his catch phrase over and over (Matthew 5.21) ...

*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.” But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment ...*

*‘You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery”. But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart ...*

*You have heard that it was said, “Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.” But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also ...*

*‘You have heard that it was said, “Love your neighbour and hate your enemy.” But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven ...*

You thought it was all about doing the right thing, ticking the box,  
But now I tell you it's about having your heart changed - **which will cause you to do the right thing anyway**



*from*  
***External conformance to  
the rules***



*to*  
***Internal transformation of  
the heart***



DOING the right things is good but God wants our hearts to be changed so that

- We will know what to do even when there is no rule
- We will do it from right motives
- And ... we will do the right thing even when nobody notices ....

# Listen to Matthew Chapter 6 from v1

*'Be careful not to practise your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them ... when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing ...*

*And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others ...*

*When you fast, do not look sombre as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting ...*

Giving, praying, fasting are important but now I want you to do them from the right motivation, with the right heart – and when nobody else knows

**What** we do is important – it's a good start.

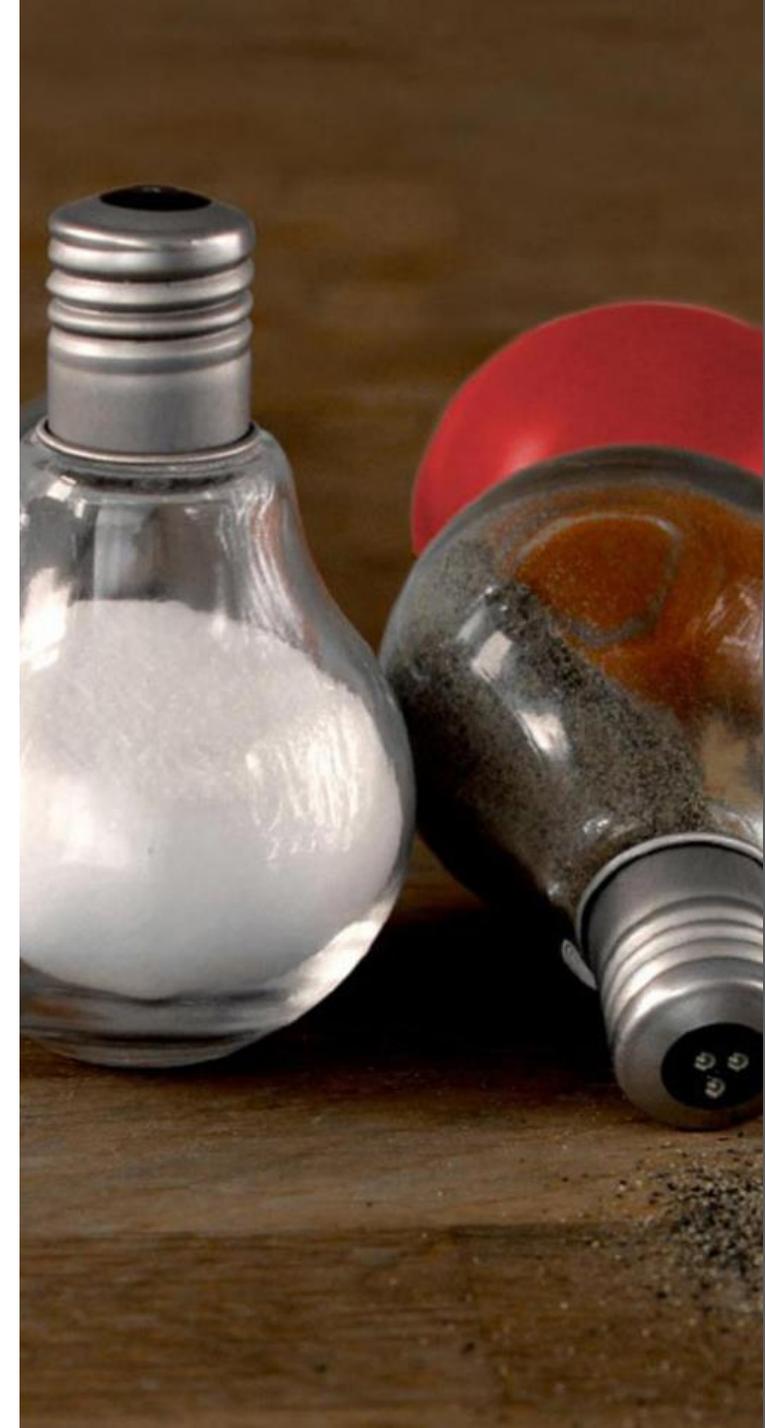
But, says Jesus the **How** and the **Why** matters as well



# Was Jesus changing the Bible when he said this?

- He certainly could have done!
- Jesus was actually fulfilling the Old Testament – the meaning God always meant us to have
- Internal transformation of our hearts

***SALT – LIGHT – TREASURE***

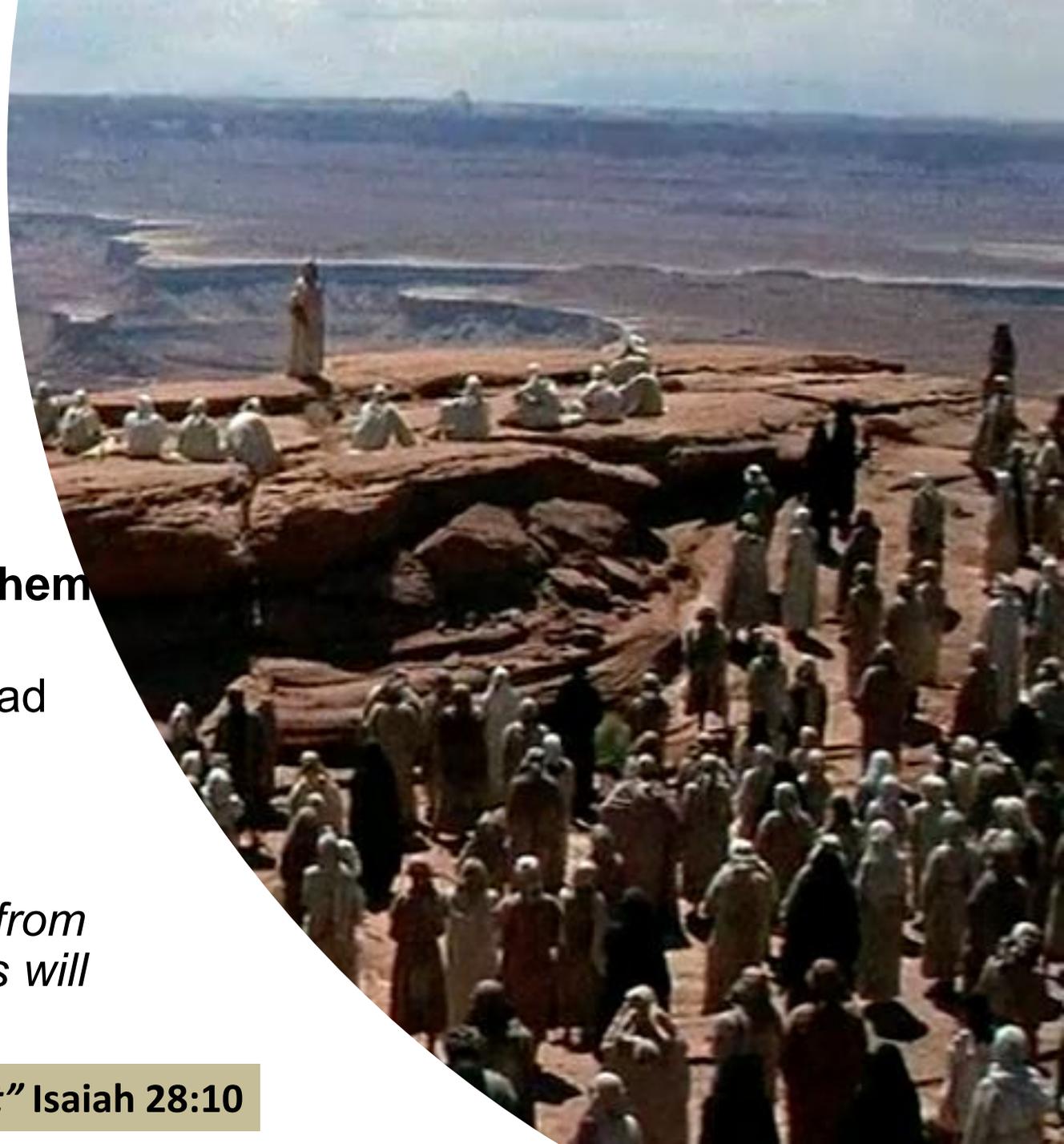


# Recap: the importance of our hearts

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- SOTM covers many topics
- But there is one idea running through
- **What** we do matters – but **how we do them** and **why** comes first
- The “What” on its own can eventually lead away from God
- Transformed hearts know the right thing anyway
- *... and if we get this right it will save us from the worst sins when just sticking to rules will not ...*

*“Do this, do that, a rule for this and a rule for that”* Isaiah 28:10



# Remember this?

- JB Feb 2018: “Murder Adultery and Divorce”
- When the Thames meets the sea – it’s too late to stop it
- Jesus says the adultery happened when you gazed lustfully at someone else ... ( gazing is different to noticing!)
- “External conformance to the law” is INCREDIBLY hard where the river meets the sea
- A transformed heart recognises and deals with it “upstream” ... in the heart

# Today's passage!

- Don't worry – it's brief! 😊
- We have stood back and looked at the SOTM generally ... Matthew 5 and 6
- This passage in Matthew 7 is another application of the same idea ... we focus on external rules and appearance. God says “look into your own heart first”



# Today's passage!

Matthew 7 from verse 1

*'Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way as you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.'*

*'Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.'*



# Hypocrisy and being judgmental

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- ... is a state of the heart
- It focuses on the External (THEY need to be corrected) .... Not than internal (help me correct myself first) ....
- When we are tempted to correct someone else (or complain about their behaviour) ask yourself a question: *could you ever do that?*
- Have you ever sat in a sermon and thought “THAT person needs to hear this?” .... What about you?

*“First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye”.*



# HOW do I DO this?

- Internal transformation of the heart ... sounds great but HOW?
- Lots of approaches we could talk about but here is a starting place that's so easy to remember

## ***“Soft hearts and Thick skins”***

Pharisees had gone off track – hard heartedly enforcing the law, judging people by external standards, unmoved by the plight of ordinary folk, intolerant of failure



# Soft hearts and thick skins

- We too can become zealously religious and lose sight of God's purpose
- At church, at home ...
  - So often we can be **HARD** hearted ... unsympathetic, critical, even condemning
  - So often we can be **THIN** skinned ... easily offended, finding it hard to forgive, avoiding each other



# Soft hearts and thick skins

- Soft hearts
  - Empathise, try to understand the other person
  - Focus on the HOW and the WHY – not just the WHAT
  - Are teachable - recognise a situation **upstream**
- Thick skins
  - Don't immediately take offence
  - Don't find fault

“Internal transformation of the heart” - takes  
a lifetime

***But a soft heart and a thick skin -  
that can start today!***

