

Translator's Note

This book is the last of a great quartet of "series sermons" on some central, familiar biblical materials: in the order of their appearance in English the parables of Jesus, the Lord's Prayer, the first chapters of Genesis, and now the Sermon on the Mount. In many ways this volume may prove to be the most valuable of them all, for the Sermon on the Mount is so commonly misinterpreted as a collection of lovely, impossible ideals. Helmut Thielicke makes it clear in every chapter that the Sermon on the Mount can never be understood, indeed, will always be misunderstood, if even for a moment we forget the Preacher of the Sermon. For apart from the person and work of Jesus Christ these marvelous words are the most radical and devastating distillation of God's claims that it is possible to conceive; they leave us in utter, hopeless dismay. Only "in Christ" do these words of the law become the glorious gospel that promises that for every man "life can begin again." The last sermon in this book achieves a compelling beauty which even the hazards and ineptitudes of translation cannot wholly obscure. Again the translator is happy to have a part in helping this great preacher to tell us in our own tongue the mighty works of God.

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