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Herb Montgomery



## The Sayings of Jesus

by Herb Montgomery

## Quotable Quotes

*"People who think of God as a warrior may become warriors themselves, whether in a Christian crusade, a Muslim jihad, or an apocalyptically oriented militia. People who think of God as righteous are likely to emphasize righteousness themselves, just as those who think of God as compassionate are likely to emphasize compassion. People who think God is angry at the world are likely to be angry at the world themselves."*

– Marcus Borg

**Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.**

**(Matthew 5:1-2, emphasis added.)**

From each of us here at RHM, Happy New Year!

To kick off this brand new 2016, we are going to be starting a new series for our eSights and podcasts.

In 2015, we focused on the gospel of Mark. Beginning this year and for as long as it takes us, we're going to looking at the sayings of Jesus found in Matthew and Luke, a body of texts that scholars call "Q". Let me briefly explain this.

As we said a few weeks before Christmas, the early church was comprised of both Jewish and Gentile Christians. Mark's version of the Jesus story was written within a Gentile Christian context. Both Matthew and Luke based their versions of the Jesus story on Mark, yet there are things Matthew and Luke have in common with each other that are not found in Mark's gospel. Since 1801, scholars have believed that Matthew and Luke used a secondary source, Q. You can read more about it at <http://bit.ly/20qK77n>.

Here is a diagram that may help you visualize this.

	Mark	Matthew	Luke
Mark	x	x	x
Q		x	x
Uniquely Matthew		x	
Uniquely Luke			x
Uniquely Mark	x		

The Q source material (also called the Sayings Gospel Q) is believed to have belonged to the Jewish Christian community and included sayings of Jesus that they cherished.

When the Jewish Christians and the Gentile Christians blended in the early church, Matthew's gospel and Luke's

gospel were written to unite two Jesus stories, the Jewish Q and the Gentile Mark, for the blended community. Matthew's gospel combined Mark and Q for the Jewish Galilean territories, while Luke-Acts combined Mark and Q for the larger Gentile world.

This background is important for us because it's the sayings of Jesus, held in common by both Matthew and Luke (Q source), that have historically inspired significant positive world change. From Francis of Assisi and the anarchistic Anabaptists to Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and others, whenever those who desire to follow Jesus' teachings have sought to rediscover what those teachings actually were, the result has been positive change in each of their societies.

I believe that can be true today. Those who desire to follow the 1st century Jesus today, including Christians, need to rediscover the teachings of Jesus found in the Q source, the gospel that the Jewish Christian community claimed Jesus actually taught.

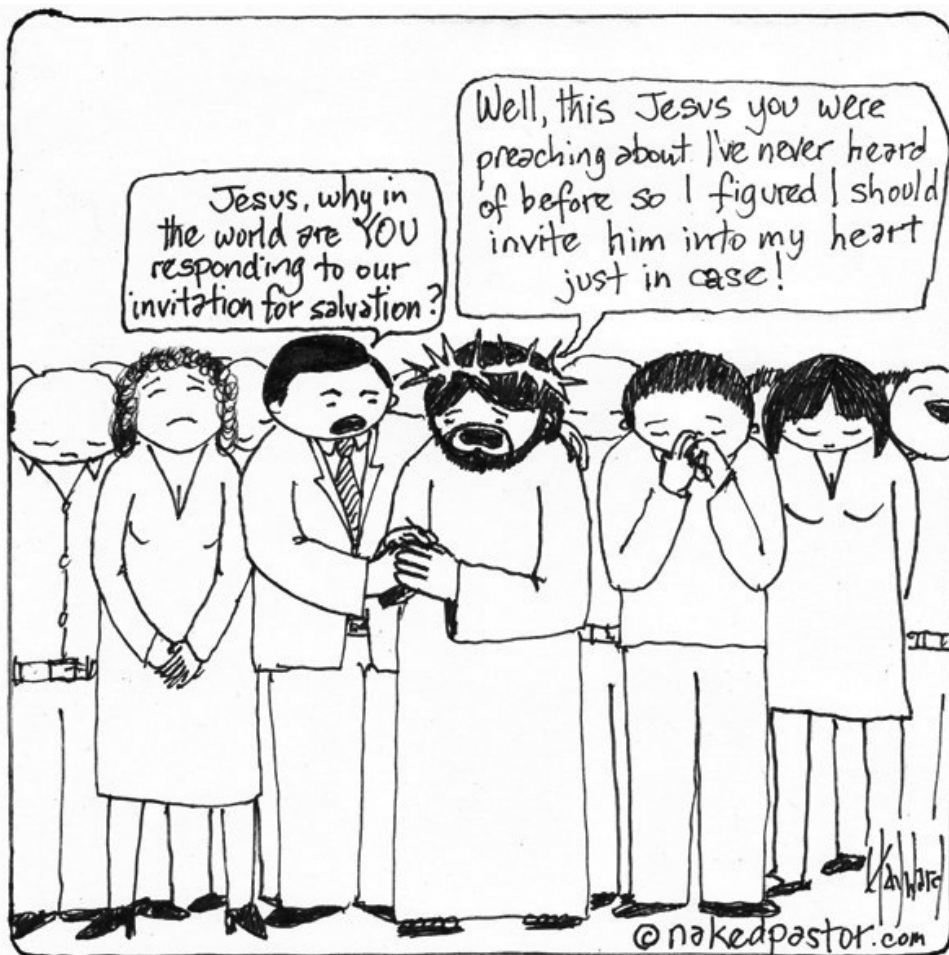
Although the Q source manuscripts were lost after the early Gentile Christians squeezed the Jewish Christians out, we can rediscover it to the best of our ability by simply looking at the sayings of Jesus held in common by both Matthew and Luke. These are the sayings that have inspired those who've approached them thoughtfully toward building a safer, more just, and more compassionate world for us all.

This is going to be an exciting series. I can't think of a better way to begin a brand new year!

I'll close this week with this statement from James M. Robinson in his volume *The Gospel of Jesus*:

**cont'd on page 3**





## Testimonies

"During a time when I forgot what love looked like, it was you, along with a list of other people as well, that helped me remember. Thank you. You continue to remind when every time I forget." **-YA**

"There are times in the ministry of Jesus that His total audience was one. This week, I believe I am that one. Thank you for letting the love of Jesus shine through you." **-Note received from an attendee at a recent event**

### The Sayings of Jesus cont'd from page 2

"Paul's letters were of course the most popular among theologians, but it is not they who converted the Roman Empire. Rather, it was the masses from whom the foot soldiers in Constantine's army came. They knew firsthand of the underprivileged and oppressed who had been rescued by the soup kitchens (which served more than wafers), the adoption of orphans, the absorption of widows, and the many other forms of humaneness that derive ultimately from Jesus, mediated through the Sayings Gospel Q and then through the Sermon on the Mount. So it was his foot soldiers that the emperor told of having seen the cross in the sky with the message "In this sign conquer!" The troops, heavily Christian and hence pacifistic, fell into line and marched into battle, on to victory. It seems to have been Francis of Assisi who then rediscovered the Sermon on the Mount. The Franciscan order that emerged from his leadership has been the bearer down through the

centuries of much of the message of Jesus found in the Sayings Gospel Q. Then Leo Tolstoy took up the torch in his *War and Peace*, followed by Mahatma Gandhi with his "passive resistance" and Martin Luther King, Jr., with his "dream" of an integrated America. Now that the Sayings Gospel Q is readily available for study, we can see how Jesus' message has indeed continued to be heard, though in quite unusual ways, down through the centuries."

### HeartGroup Application

1. This week, become familiar with the theory of the Q source. Read about the Q source at <http://bit.ly/20qK1gb> and at <http://bit.ly/20qK77n>.
2. Take time to read through the critical text of Q from the International Q Project at <http://bit.ly/1SYg0j4>.
3. Begin writing down the sections of Q that you can't wait to get to and share with your group why those sections are special to you.

As a Freshman in college taking Theology, the Q source theory was the very first thing I remember being taught that first semester. At the time, in my youthful impatience, I remember thinking, "Why are we wasting time on sources of materials when we should just be jumping into the material itself?" Now I understand why getting back to what the early Jewish community claimed Jesus actually taught is so important. It is in these teachings that we discover the potential to choose personal change as well as positive change within our world.

I'm looking forward to next week already!

I can't wait! Thank you for joining us for this look at what the early church taught were *the sayings of Jesus*.

I love each one of you.

Happy New Year.

I'll see you next week. ■

(If you would like to follow this series online, you can do so at: <https://renewedheartministries.com/Esigns/01-15-2016>)

# New York Metro Adventist Forum

New York City, NY  
St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
Harlem  
December 4, 2015

## Jesus and the Oppressed

by Herb Montgomery

As many of you know, I do not typically travel to do seminars during the month of December. The holiday season, for me, in the past, has typically been a time dedicated to my family. This year, I decided to make an exception.

This past weekend, I had the immense pleasure of presenting two talks for critique and discussion at the *New York Metro Advents Forum on Jesus and his Teachings on Social Justice*. The title for this event was *Jesus and the Oppressed*. The titles for my presentations were *From Pyramids to Shared Tables* and *The Unstoppable Revolution*.

Much of the content for these two presentations can be found in the new series *The Revolutionary Jesus*, available online:

<https://renewedheartministries.com/presentation/The-Revolutionary-Jesus>

I found the discussions after each presentation to be so encouraging.



The comments and questions were extremely relevant. I am referring specifically to the discussions regarding the reality that, over the next two decades, we are going to continue to see a growing focus on the social implications of the sayings and teachings of Jesus within the Jesus stories; the increased relevance of these continue to become more and

more understood. Many people are waking up to the realization that not only is there significant hope for our world by following these ethics and values, but also that their rediscovery is the only hope for Christianity if it is to survive, in some form, for the next fifty years.

I was deeply honored to be able to share my thoughts with the forum in Harlem. Many of you expressed to me how much you enjoyed my presentations. Please know that I immensely enjoyed your feedback as well.

We also had a few guests form the surrounding area. It was such a pleasure to meet them.

To each of you who continues to support Renewed Heart Ministries, thank you. This weekend reminded me, once again, of the importance of the nature of the hard work that we engage in. We could not do what we do without you.

Till the only world that remains is a world where only love reigns.

## Schedule

### **FEBRUARY 19 - 21, 2016**

Enterprise Adventist Church  
Enterprise, KS, USA  
785.263.8922

### **FEBRUARY 26 - 28, 2016**

Raymond Adventist Church  
Franksville, WI, USA  
262.878.5133

### **MAY 20 - 22, 2016**

Spokane Valley  
Adventist Church  
Spokane Valley, WA, USA  
509.926.5866





# The Sayings of Jesus

Edmonds, WA

January 11–16, 2016

I'm on a plane heading back home from one of a most enjoyable series of presentations. The people I've had the chance to get to know over the last week are amazing. Let me start from the beginning.

I had the privilege of giving a series of presentations at this church about three years ago. At that time the pastor scheduled me to return and do a follow-up series this year. Much to everyone's shock and deep grief, the pastor passed away this past December. The church was devastated, to say the least. But much to my surprise, even though the congregation was deeply grieving this loss, the members still wanted to continue with the arrangements he had made for me come to their church.

The topic that had been requested originally was the teachings of Jesus. I chose to focus on the sayings of Jesus that Matthew's and Luke's Gospels hold in common, that many scholars attribute to the early Jewish Christian community referred to as Sayings Gospel Q.

The response was more than I was expecting.

Rarely have I witnessed a church body responding so warmly and receptively to the teachings the early church held to be from Jesus. From nonviolence and enemy love to wealth redistribution rooted in relational community and helping the poor, mourning, and hungry, every evening those who attended responded with open hearts and a desire to follow the teachings of this Jesus more deeply, toward a safer more compassionate world for us all. Each night, no matter how challenging the ethics and values we found Jesus to be promoting, they leaned into those values

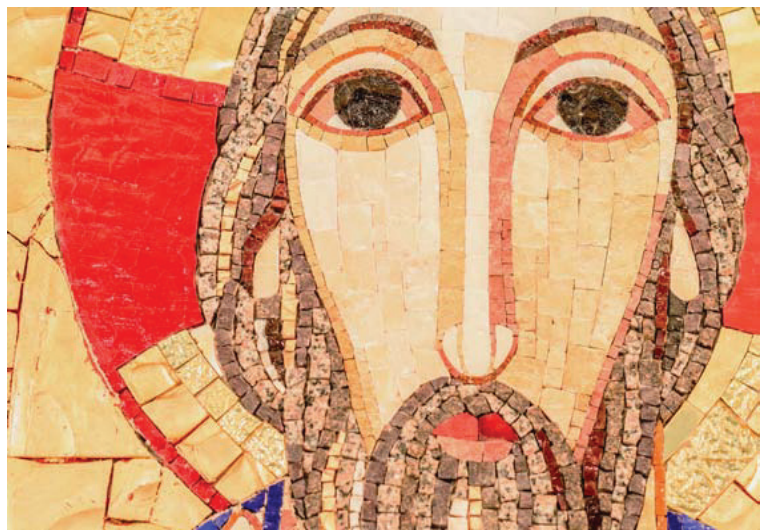
and sought in our discussion times to identify creative ways to apply and experiment with what we were focusing on.

If I could be transparent for a moment, in my personal experience (and please forgive me), the level of affirmation of Jesus' ethical teachings by Christians in the 21st century, for me, is rare. Richard Rohr's statement rings true for me, "Most Christian 'believers' tend to echo the cultural prejudices and world-views of the dominant group in their country, with only a minority revealing any real transformation of attitudes or consciousness. It has been true of slavery and racism, classism and consumerism and issues of immigration and health care for the poor." This group, however, was different.

I want to say thank you to those who attended this series. So many of you expressed gratitude for the content we were covering, but I want to thank you for the rare way you responded. You blew me away!

For all the rest of you who may be reading this and wanting to experience what this small group has just encountered, I have good news for you.

We at RHM have decided to spend this 2016, for as long as it takes, on the Sayings of Jesus that scholars believe the early Jewish Jesus-community held especially dear. We'll be discussing them each week in both our eSights and our podcasts, beginning with our first installment, *The Sayings of Jesus*. We'll be continuing each week and would love for you to join us.



You can find the first eSight here and the first podcast here.

## Readable:

<https://renewedheartministries.com/Esights/01-08-2016>

## Audio:

The Sayings of Jesus at <https://renewedheartministries.com/Podcasts>

If you have not already done so, you can sign up to receive the eSights each week via your email by going to <https://renewedheartministries.com/Contact-forms?form=EmailSignUp>.

To this group of dear people in Edmonds, Washington, who so deeply desire to be a community that follows the teachings of Jesus, and to each one of you who are journeying with us through this series online, together we can make a difference. Together we can, through the values set forth in the teachings of Jesus, work toward Jesus' goal of healing the world (see John 3:17).

Thank you, Edmonds SDA Church, for kicking off our 2016 with such a positive experience. I so enjoyed my time with you this past week.

Till the only world that remains is a world where only love reigns.





# Enough Room <sup>at</sup> the Table

A Conversation about Faith, Sexuality, and Gender



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## Enough Room at the Table – FREE!

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ENOUGH ROOM AT THE TABLE is a dialogue film set at the intersection of faith, gender, and sexuality. It's meant to model the sacred space that opens up when we gather to genuinely listen to each other and participate in each other's lives. Our differences in beliefs, theological paradigms, and practice don't disappear; but we stop seeing each other as position statements or labels and instead see each other as fellow beloved children

of God. We start looking like the sort of people who are known by their love.

This film shows a weekend dialogue as 12 Adventists from around the United States gathered to engage and converse about topics often not discussed (or often discussed without key voices at the table). The group includes pastors, educators, parents, and LGBT+ Adventists, all from differing theological paradigms, experiences, and perspectives.

The participants didn't know each other before this weekend, but they were committed to open, authentic, and respectful dialogue. The deeply honest, sacred, and inspiring dialogue they model is what we're making available now. We hope this dialogue

inspires viewers to host your own small group conversations in their own homes, churches, and communities as it's a powerful and transformative process that will create ripples of hope and healing.

Each pay-what-you-want purchase (only a \$.99 minimum) includes the feature-length film ENOUGH ROOM AT THE TABLE plus over 45 minutes of additional special features, and a facilitator's guidebook & resources (PDF) to help host your own small group dialogue.

"The first duty of love is listening."

– Paul Tillich

This film is produced and directed by Stephen Eyer and Daneen Akers.



# Two New Ways to Support the work of RHM!



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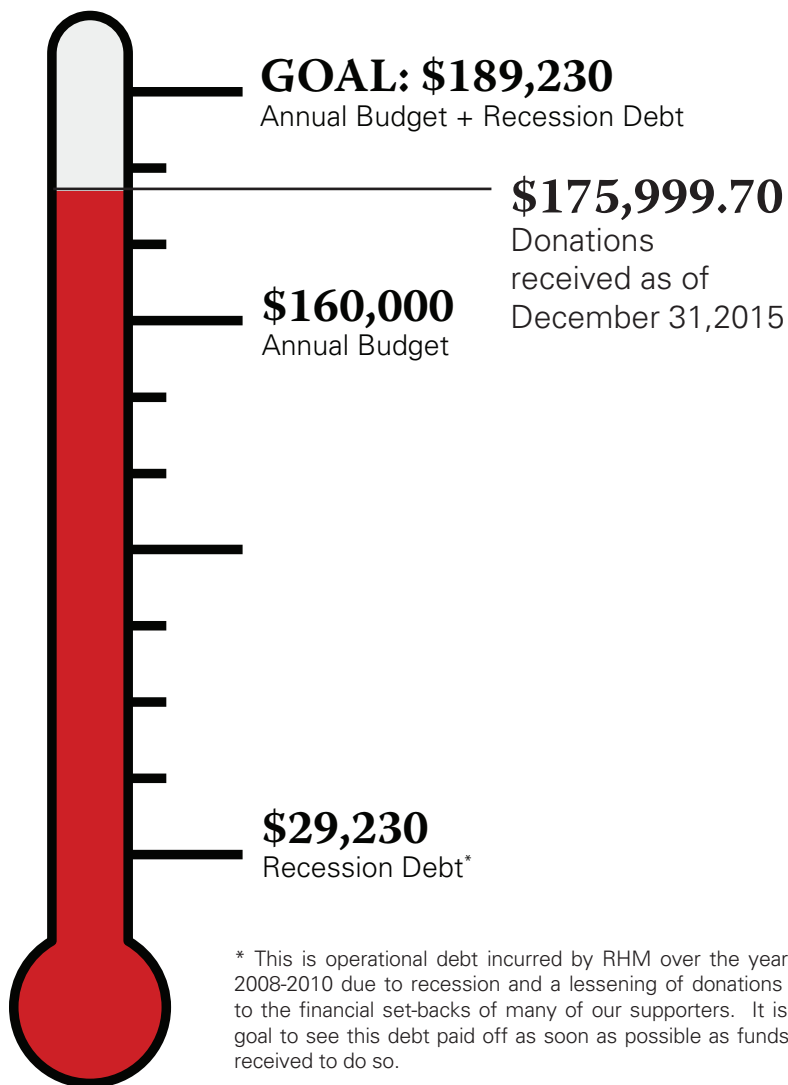
AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that **Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your favorite charitable organization.**

You can find us in Amazon's Smile Directory at:

<http://smile.amazon.com>



Benevity is an easy way for companies and employees to make a difference. Many corporate employers use Benevity to set up matching funds from the employer for contributions made by their employees. Benevity enables employees to connect with corporate giving & matching programs and make secure, efficient electronic donations through their employers. One such example is Google. Google offers a matching program with their employee who makes contributions to non-profits registered with Benevity. The good news is that Renewed Heart Ministries is now one of 70,000 charities who are registered. So check and see if your employer uses Benevity, and if they do you could be as much as doubling your contribution to RHM at no cost to yourself. This is a win-win all the way around.





# Featured Presentation

This year we are taking time to focus on the sayings of Jesus held dear by the early Jewish Christian community. A collection many scholars refer to as Sayings Gospel Q. In simple terms, these are the saying of Jesus found in both Matthew and Luke that are in common, but not derived from the Gospel of Mark. This is the foundation of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount and Luke's Sermon on the Plain, and much, much more. These sayings, when taken seriously, have historically



been a source of powerful changes in our world for good. From Francis of Assisi, through the history of the Anabaptists, all the way down to today with such historical icons as Gandhi, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This month we want to share an introductory message to our focus on Jesus' sayings with a presentation Herb gave last month – ***Sayings Gospel Q: An Introduction***. It is our hope that your heart will, once again, be renewed, equipped and empowered to follow the teachings of Jesus more deeply.

Renewed Heart Ministries provides its resources free of charge. Jesus instructed us, *"Freely you have received, freely give."* We at RHM take this command very seriously. Philosophically we have a difficult time charging money to people for things Jesus taught us for free.

In order to do this, we are entirely dependent on the contributions of our supporters. If you would like to make a one-time gift or offer monthly support, please send your contributions to the following address:

**Renewed Heart Ministries**  
**P.O. Box 1211**  
**Lewisburg, WV 24901**

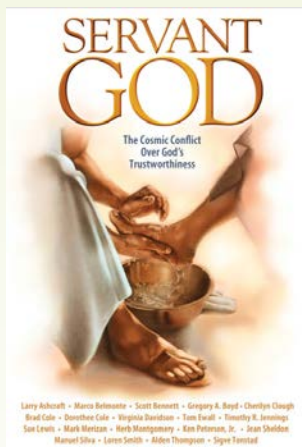
Contributions can also be made online at:  
[www.renewedheartministries.com](http://www.renewedheartministries.com)

\*All donations receive a tax-deductible receipt.

Be sure to check out RHM's **FREE** resources at:  
[www.renewedheartministries.com](http://www.renewedheartministries.com)

*As always, all proceeds received above and beyond our budgeted needs are passed on to other proven and charitable, non-profit organizations who are making significant changes in the lives of the poor.*

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