

BBC SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sermon on the Mount: the Beatitudes - Matthew 5:1-12

How to use this guide: This fall we invite you to join our church family in digging deeper into the Scripture(s) preached each Sunday. We believe life change happens best in the context of small community where you can engage God's Word while inviting people into your life to encourage you to continue growing in Christ-likeness.

Background: In the Sermon on the Mount we encounter Jesus as teacher, savior, and king. As teacher he instructs His followers on the counter-cultural Kingdom ethic. As savior He provides salvation, gives us His Spirit, and imputes His righteousness to us. As king He promises rewards to those who pursue obedience to His instruction.

Getting Started: Personal Study

1. Why is being "poor in spirit" necessary for receiving the kingdom of heaven?
2. Why would those who are "poor in spirit" mourn?
3. What is the comfort Jesus promises to those who mourn?
4. From the world's point of view, why is it surprising that the meek (gentle) will inherit the earth?
5. What has Jesus said in the text that might lead us to hunger and thirst for righteousness?
6. In what ways are we shown mercy from God and show mercy to others?
7. Why would the promise of seeing God be reserved for the pure in heart?

Digging Deeper: Scripture Connections

1. Throughout scripture God desires to bless those who are His own. What descriptions of blessing are found in the following passages?

Genesis 12:1-9 *Psalms 34:8* *Psalms 41:1* *Psalms 146:5-6* *Psalms 1:1-3*
Psalms 33:12 *Psalms 84:4-5*

2. Before teaching the beatitudes Jesus preached *Isaiah 61:1-3* in His hometown of Nazareth. How does *Isaiah* inform Jesus words in *Matthew 5:1-12*?
3. God desires for us to mourn for something specific. How does *Ezra 9:1-10:6* give us a model for mourning as God's people?
4. What is God's promise to the meek and humble in *Zephaniah 3:1-13*?
5. How does the writer of *Psalms 71* hunger and thirst for righteousness?
6. In *Psalms 51*, what is the basis for David's request for God's mercy after he committed adultery?
7. What does *Psalms 24:4* say about those with a pure heart?
8. Peacemakers bring God's shalom into the world. What does *Proverbs 17:1* say about them?
9. What insights can we gain by observing prophets who suffered? See *Amos 7:10-17*; *Jeremiah 26:1-24*; *2 Chronicles 36:15-16*.

Getting Together: Group Study & Discussion

1. Is there a beatitude that is capturing your thoughts as you have studied them?
2. Which beatitudes focus on our relationship with God? Which focus on other people?
3. How are the blessings in *Matthew 5:1-12* both present and future?
4. When have you been most aware that you were "poor in spirit?"
5. When was the last time you felt a sense of mourning over sin - whether your own or others?
6. What is the most powerful example of meekness you have seen?
7. What does it mean to crave righteousness?
8. What can you do to cultivate a healthy spiritual appetite?
9. When has receiving mercy encouraged you to be merciful?
10. Where can you be a peacemaker in your life?
11. How can you encourage someone who is being persecuted for the sake of Christ?