

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

MATTHEW 5-7



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The sermon on the mount, in Matthew's Gospel, contains some of the most famous, powerful and confronting words that Jesus ever said. These words come as an invitation to Israel to return to being God's people, and return to being God's salt and light in the world. These same words challenge us today, inviting us live as authentic disciples of Jesus that seek first his kingdom and his righteousness in all that we do.

In these small group studies below you will see the below symbols. They are there to indicate the different types of questions in the study. They are just a guide, of course feel free to do these things in a way that will best serve your group.



This is the care symbol. It is at the beginning of each study. where you will have the opportunity to chat and share how people in your group are going. Try and use these questions as opportunities to deepen relationships and understand each other better.



This is the bible symbol. It represents questions directly related to the passage that you read.



This is the arrow symbol. It represents application questions where you can discuss how to put the words of Jesus into practice. It can be easy to keep the bible theoretical, so use these questions to be as practical and specific as you can.



This is the prayer symbol. It is at the end of the study with guided tips for how you might pray. Make sure you leave enough time to do this.



Matthew 5:1-16



At the half way point in the term and the year, check in with each other. Share how you are you feeling in life and faith as you come to these famous words of Jesus. What do you already know about the sermon on the mount?



Describe some of the story of Israel before Jesus arrives on the scene in Matthew.

Read Matthew 5:1-12

Who are these words primarily addressed to? Who else is listening?

Come up with a simple definition for each of the blessings:

- Poor in spirit
- Mourn
- Meek
- Hunger and thirst for righteousness
- Merciful
- Pure in heart
- Peacemaker
- Persecuted

How were these words good news to an Israel that had turned away from God?

How are these words exemplified in Jesus?



How might these words be good news for us?

John Piper describes the blessings in verses 1-12 as “*six future promises sandwiched by the same present assurance.*” How do these promises:

- give you comfort for the present?

- and hope for the future?



Read Matthew 5:13-16

What do you think it means to be:

- the salt of the earth?

- the light of the world?



We spend our days interacting with all kinds of people. How can you “let your light shine before others, that others may see our good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” in all the different relationships you have?



Spend time in prayer, sharing comforts and challenges from this passage, what you most need to remember, and how you will apply this to your life.



Matthew 5:17-48



Recap what you discussed last week. How did you go being salt and light? When was it hard to be different?

This section is all about what it should be like living as God's people. If a stranger walked into church, what characteristics would we want them to notice in us?



Read Matthew 5:17-20

Brainstorm what you know about the Old Testament law.

How was the law *meant* to shape Israel as a community? (cf. Lev 19:1-2)

What do you think Jesus means when he says he has come to fulfil the law?

Choose your own adventure

Pick 1-2 to read together, or divide them amongst your group:

- Matthew 5:21-26 on murder
- Matthew 5:27-30 on adultery
- Matthew 5:31-32 on divorce
- Matthew 5:33-37 on oaths
- Matthew 5:38-42 on payback
- Matthew 5:42-47 on love

For your chosen passage, follow the pattern and consider the questions:

You've heard it said....

But I tell you...

How does Jesus' way reveal the heart of this law?

What would it look like to live this out, both in Israel's time and now?

Read Matthew 5:48 and notice the Old Testament echo



How does the gospel of Jesus relieve the burden on us needing to be perfect?

Imagine if our church lived out the heart of the law. What would it be like?

How could you contribute to BPC being a place like this?



Spend time in prayer. Give thanks for Jesus' righteousness and grace. Then ask God to help us live according to His way.



Matthew 6:1-7:12



Recap what you discussed last week.
How did you go trying to live out the way of Jesus?

Why do Christians sometimes get accused of being hypocrites? When is it easiest to fall into this trap?



Read Matthew 6:1

Choose one or two adjectives to describe this attitude.

Jesus now gives examples of where he has seen the “hypocrites” acting like this

Giving
6:1-4

Prayer
6:5-15

Fasting
6:16-18

Divide them between your group and discuss what Jesus wants in place of hypocrisy. Share what you learn with your group.

Why do you think Jesus cares about authenticity instead of hypocrisy?



When are you tempted to do these kinds of religious actions to please others rather than to please our Father in heaven?



Read Matthew 6:19-34

Why are we tempted to care so much about money and material possessions?

What reasons does Jesus give for why we don't need to stress about those things?



While these verses might be familiar, take a moment to reflect on how radical what Jesus is saying actually is. What would it look like in the day-by-day to “not worry about your life ... but seek first his kingdom and his righteousness”?



Read Matthew 7:1-12

In these verses where can you see hypocrisy and where do you see authenticity?

How does verse 12 capture what Jesus has said about the law in the last two studies?



What is an area of your life where you want to be more authentic as a follower of Jesus and live to please God not people?



Spend time praying to our kind heavenly Father, who loves to give good gifts to his children. Revisit the words of Matthew 6:9-13 and use them in your prayers.



Matthew 7:13-29



Recap what you discussed last week. How did you go at being authentic rather than hypocritical? When did you live for the praise of God and when did you live for the praise of people?

Every day we are making choices, some big and some small. What is your process for making those choices? Where do you go for advice or information?



Read Matthew 7:13-14

Describe the differences between the wide road and the narrow road.



Wide

Narrow

What makes the wide road attractive to so many people?

What is difficult about choosing the narrow road?



What strategies or habits could you put in place to keep choosing the narrow road?



Read Matthew 7:15-23

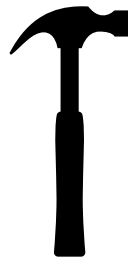
What are Jesus' listeners to watch out for on the narrow road?

What role do actions play in the Christian life?

How can we be certain that we know Jesus and are known by him?

Read Matthew 7:24-29

Compare the wise builder



and the foolish builder



What would it require from you to put the words of Jesus into practice?

How could your small group help this to last beyond this week or this month?

“There is nothing which exhorts us more than this Sermon on the Mount to be what we are meant to be, and to live as we are meant to live; to be like Christ by being a complete contrast to everyone who does not belong to Christ.” - Martin Lloyd-Jones.

Spend some time sharing things you learnt or were reminded of during these weeks.



Spend time praying that you would be a wise builder that chooses the narrow way. Pray that God would help you put Jesus' words into practice.