



Bible Study Questions

18th August 2024

Matthew 5:1-11

Introduction

What energises you more, being with a large crowd of people or being on your own? When you want to relax and recharge, where do you go, or what do you do?

Read & Reflect

Read Matthew 5:1-11 at least twice using different versions of the Bibles. As you read or listen to the words, reflect and share on the following:

- What stands out to you, or what do you notice?
- What questions are raised for you?
- What challenges you?

Questions

Matthew's Gospel presents Jesus as the Teacher, or Rabbi and the passage we refer to as The Sermon on the Mount represents Jesus' greatest body of teaching. R.T France in his commentary referred to it as Jesus' Manifesto (hence our series title) and Jesus is setting out before us the nature and requirements of the Kingdom Life.

For some background on the place of the sermon on the Mount see;

<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/intro-to-sermon-on-the-mount/>

- How would you describe the Kingdom that Jesus is presenting before us?
- What else did Jesus say about the Kingdom, not just in Matthew, but in all the Gospels? (Use some of the following - Mark 1:15, 4:26 & 30-31, 10:14, Luke 4:43, 9:62, John 3:5, 18:36)

The Beatitudes (blessed attitudes) are often introduced in our English Bibles with the word "Blessed". The Greek word for Blessed is "makarios", and it is difficult to translate into English. It incorporates the meaning of wholeness, of joy, of well-being, of a holistic peace expressed by the Hebrew word shalom. The word describes a condition of inner satisfaction rather than an outward or external experience.

Understanding this, let's explore how this broader meaning of 'blessed' might shape our interpretation of Jesus' teaching.

- How might this broader understanding of "blessed" impact the way we understand Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:1-11?
- How does Jesus' teaching in Matthew 5:1-11 compare to what the world teaches (or celebrates) about being "blessed", "happy" or "content"?

It is important that we view the beatitudes through the lens of The Kingdom and our relationship with God, rather than our own personal experience. Take "Mourn" for example, while it is true that Jesus is able and does comfort those who mourn because of personal loss and grief, this is not the focus of Jesus' teaching. To 'mourn' in Matthew 5:4, is to know godly sorrow, to be deeply concerned about the evil in the world and to know the meaning of suffering because of the sin, injustice, and perversion in society.¹

¹ Myron S. Augsburger and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Matthew*, vol. 24, The Preacher's Commentary Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982), 18.

- How does the lens of the Kingdom and our relationship with God impact the way that we view “poor in spirit”, “meekness”, “hunger and thirst” etc..?

Application

- As you think and reflect on the words of Matthew 5:1-11, how well does your life reflect what Jesus is teaching about the kingdom life of a disciple?
- Is there someone in your life or in your group where you see one or more of these beatitudes at work?
- Of these eight beatitudes, which do you desire or need to cultivate more in your life?
- What is one thing you could start (or stop) doing to cultivate more of the Kingdom in your life today?