

Blessed by God

Matthew 5:1-16

What are your personal/family core values?



The Gospel as told by Matthew

Jesus is the long-anticipated Messiah

The one chosen by God to bring His goodness

Jesus is the founder of God's new people / society

With very surprising and puzzling values!

The Sermon the Mount

Matthew 5-7

Jesus taught us to pray: "your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:10

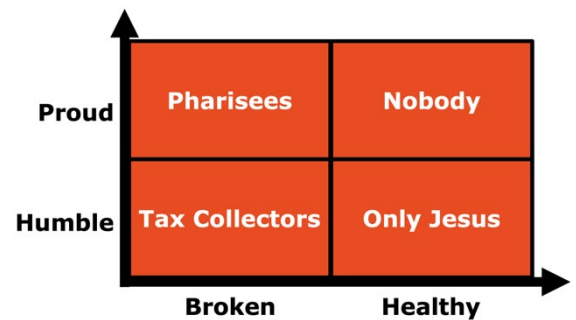
In addition to telling us to pray for heavens ways, He also teaches us to pursue the ways of heaven on earth.

Matthew 5:1-16

The Big Idea

God blesses humble and merciful people

God's people bless humble and merciful people



"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'"

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." Luke 18:13-14

To the church in Laodicea, Jesus said: "You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.'" Revelation 3:17

What should we do?

Value humility and meekness

Humility = knowing our need

Meekness = accepting our place under God

Value mercy and peacemaking

Seeking the good of others, even when it costs us

Especially those who know their needs

Be distinctive (salt)

Pursue humility, meekness, and mercy

"Gravity" pulls us away from these

Be visible (light)

Be known for humility, meekness, and mercy

NOT being self-righteousness (Pharisees), judgmental, fighting for us, pursuing the "winners", ...

Jesus, “being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!” Philippians 2:6-8

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What are the 8 qualities that Jesus tells us that God blesses? Put them in your own words. How would you summarize them?
2. What is the blessing (e.g., “for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven”) for each value, and how does it fit the value?
3. What are examples, in the Bible and elsewhere, of these values? What happened to these people in this world? What happened to them in God’s Kingdom?
4. Jesus taught these values because they are not the natural values in a broken world. “Gravity” pulls us away from them. For each of these 8 values, what is the alternative that the world tends to value? Where is there temptation for you and us to adopt the values of the world rather than the values of God?
5. If being poor in spirit means that we know, deeply, our need for God and His forgiveness, why is that blessed? What would it look like to grow in our awareness and right response to our own deep need for grace?
6. Perhaps together as a group, or in a discipling friendship, or on your own, where are you most aware of your own need for the grace and forgiveness of God? What will it look like for you to “hunger and thirst for righteousness” in this area? What will help you pursue God’s “filling” of this deep hunger? Who can help you in that journey?
7. What does it look like to pursue these values personally? Pick a value and then consider what you can do to live according to that value and to grow in that value.
8. Jesus was teaching the values for His new Kingdom. What does it look like to grow in these values together? Pick a value and then consider how we can bless people who have that value, honoring and caring for them.
9. **Digging Deeper:** Read Philippians 2:5-11. How did Jesus live out the beatitudes in His own life? Since He never sinned, what does “poor in spirit” mean for Him? How did and does God bless Him for how He lived? What does it look like for us to have “this same mindset”?

Conversation starters

Jesus blessed and spent time with the poor in spirit, the meek, and the merciful. How could that strategy have touched off a movement that has spread to every nation on earth?