



# Life in the kingdom

matthew 5-10

**Bible Studies For Ashfield Presbyterian Church**  
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# The Sermon on the Mount

Jesus' Sermon On The Mount (Mt 5-7) is all about **the kingdom of heaven**. The kingdom of heaven isn't a place, rather, it is about God reigning. The kingdom of heaven is wherever, and whenever God reigns, and whomever God reigns over.

John the Baptist warned the people to repent for the kingdom of heaven was near (3:2), a message repeated by Jesus himself (4:17),

1. What else do you find out about the kingdom of heaven from the early chapters of Matthew?

5:3	
5:10	
5:19	
5:20	
6:10	
6:33	
7:21	
8:11-12	

## Matthew 5

**Please read Mt 5:1-16.**

2. Where have the crowds of v1-2 come from? Do you think that Jesus was teaching just the disciples or the whole crowd? (See also 7:28-9).
  
3. Read through each of the beatitudes (v3-12). Discuss the following with your group:
  - a. How does Jesus' call to attitude and behaviour differ to that of the world?
  
  - b. In what context will these blessings be experienced?
  
4. Look over the beatitudes and measure yourself on these mental attitudes-1 being LOW and 4 being HIGH

	LOW	1	2	3	4	HIGH
<b>POOR IN SPIRIT:</b> I have come to the place where I feel accepted by God when I feel most unacceptable to myself. I recognize my need for God and know that I do not have to earn His love with wealth, status or spiritual sophistication.						
<b>MOURN:</b> I am more aware of my failures than I used to be. The further along the road I go, the more I realise how much further I have to go to become like Jesus. I appreciate the pain people experience in their lives, and can weep						

like Jesus did.	
<b>MEEK:</b> I have come to the place where I don't have to be the strong one all the time. I can be tender and gentle with people. I've given the control of my life to God and I don't have to "win" all the time.	
<b>SPIRITUAL HUNGER:</b> I have come to the place where I want to know God and His will for my life more than anything. I am more excited about God's will for the world than my own financial gain, success in my career, or acceptance by my peers. I long for God's perspective in my decision-making.	
<b>MERCIFUL:</b> I have come to the place where I can enter into the feelings of someone who is hurting, lonely, or distressed and feel alongside them in their pain. God has given me a sensitivity for the suffering of others.	
<b>PURE IN HEART:</b> I have come to the place where I can be completely open and honest with God and others--transparent because I have nothing to hide. I don't have to put on "airs," or pretend to be what I'm not.	
<b>PEACEMAKER:</b> I have come to the place where I really. work at keeping the channels of communication open between me and those around me. I deal with anger and disagreements immediately and don't allow them to fester. I encourage those around me to work out their differences without hurting one another.	
<b>PERSECUTION:</b> I have come to the place where I know what I am living for, and for this cause I am not afraid to suffer and, if need be, die. I am willing to "take the heat" and stand alone for what is right. I can take criticism without feeling self-pity or self-righteousness.	

5. Below is a list of qualities based on the Beatitudes. In silence, think about the members of your group and jot down their initials next to the beatitude paraphrase where you see each person as strong. (For instance, you might put Bob's initials next to "gentleness".) Then, share with the group who you selected for each characteristic.

<b>SELF-ACCEPTANCE:</b> The ability to accept yourself and your imperfections, and to enable others to be more self-accepting.	
<b>EMPATHY:</b> The ability to feel what others feel; to laugh and cry with others.	
<b>GENTLENESS:</b> The ability to be tender because you are inwardly strong and to lead without overpowering others.	
<b>SPIRITUALITY:</b> The ability to maintain spiritual priorities and to cause others to seek a deeper walk with Christ.	
<b>SENSITIVITY:</b> The ability to pick up on the hurt and pain of others and be "present" without being pushy or nosy.	
<b>TRANSPARENCY:</b> The ability to be yourself without any pretenses and allow the presence of Christ to radiate through you.	
<b>PEACEMAKING:</b> The ability to harmonize differences between others without causing either	

person to "lose."	
ENDURANCE: The ability to stand up for what you believe without getting defensive or compromising your principles.	

6. What are the characteristics of salt and light (v13-16)?
7. In what ways are we called to be salt and light to the world?
8. How can we develop a life of salt and light, personally and as a church community?

**Read Matthew 5:17-20**

9. What role does the law play in teaching us about God?
10. Jesus states in v17 that he came to fulfill the law. How was the law fulfilled by Jesus?
11. Read v18. What is the everything that needs to be accomplished? Has that happened yet?
12. Why does Jesus place so much weight on the correct understanding of the law?
13. How will our righteousness ever surpass that of the Pharisees, people who had given their entire lives to learning and applying the law to the way they live?

**Read Matthew 5:21-48**

14. Look at each section (v21-26; v27-30; v31-32; v33-37; v38-42; v43-48).
  - a. Identify the areas from each section where we would all be declared guilty according to the law.
  - b. Identify the areas from each section where we are expected to achieve obedience.

As we have been working our way through chapter 5 we have seen that the only way we can come to God is according to his mercy. There is no point at which we can trust our own spiritual self-sufficiency. As one Christian author has commented "*Attempts to conform our character to God's requirements by the sufficiency of our actions are ... arrogant.*"

15. If this is so (and it is) what is the basis of even trying to live a life of obedience?
16. How can we be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect (v48)?
17. What would be your response to someone who stated that they know they are forgiven on the basis of faith in Jesus so they'll continue in a certain sin knowing it's wrong but believing that in the end they'll be forgiven?

# Matthew 6

## **Please read Matt 6:1-18.**

1. Is Jesus contradicting himself in Matt 5:16 and Matt 6:1? Why/why not?
2. Does Jesus teach not to give to the needy? What is the expectation?
3. How is giving to be done? Why?
  - a. How would you instruct people in regard to giving?
  - b. How would you set an example of giving if it is all done in secret?
4. Does Jesus' teaching mean that we should stop public prayer in church or Home Groups (v5)?
  - a. What instruction would you give to those who do pray in church?
  - b. Why might it be helpful to have people pray in church?
5. Is the Lord's prayer a prayer to be repeated or an outline to be followed or both? Why?
6. What is the command regarding fasting (v16-18)?
7. In all these things what is the most important aspect which governs the way you do things?

## **Please read Mt 6:19-27**

8. What, in your opinion, are the challenging and encouraging things in these verses?
9. How would you define treasures on earth?
10. Why are we warned against storing up treasures on earth?

## **Please read Mt 6:28-34**

11. What things are we told not to worry about? What does not worrying about what to eat and what to wear look like?
12. What reasons are given to show us that it is useless to worry? What reminders are we given that God will indeed look after us?
13. What are we to seek first? Give specific examples of how you are doing/might do this.

# Matthew 7

## **Please read 7:1-12**

1. What is the warning about judging others? Are you judging others? What is this verse saying to you?
2. How should we approach others?
3. Discuss v6. What's the point?
4. What is the good news that Jesus gives us about our heavenly Father? What does this mean to you?

## **Please read Mt 7:13-29.**

5. What does Jesus say about the nature of the gate to life (v13-14)?
6. What are the implications of the gate being narrow according to the passage (v14)?
7. What does Jesus say about identifying false prophets (v15-16)? Where will their actions lead them (v17-19)?
8. Will everyone who CLAIMS to do God's will enter the kingdom of heaven (v21)?
9. What is the fruit of the one who will enter the kingdom of heaven (v21)? What is the fruit that does not necessarily mean that one will enter the kingdom (v22-23)?
10. What does Jesus say about the authority and nature of his commands/teaching (v24-29)?
11. What is the rock Jesus recommends as a strong foundation?
  - a. the truth of the gospel
  - b. faith in Jesus
  - c. faith expressed in action
  - d. blind obedience
  - e. Jesus himself
  - f. ....
12. In what sense is this last parable a great way to finish the sermon on the mount?
13. How would you sum up the attitudes Jesus is encouraging in this chapter? Why are these required of kingdom people?
14. Where do you place your hope in being a part of the kingdom of heaven? How does that hope gel with the teaching of this passage?

# Matthew 8

## **Please read Mt 8:1-17**

1. What strikes you as different about this interaction with the man with leprosy (v2-3)?
2. Does the leper ask for something or make a statement about something? What might this tell us about the leper's understanding about Jesus?
3. What are the outstanding aspects of this miracle (v3-4)?
4. The centurion of v5 is a Gentile (cf v8, 10). Is there anything amazing about that?
5. What does the centurion's statement (v6) tell us about his understanding of Jesus?
6. What do the centurion's words about his lack of worthiness and understanding of authority show about his faith in Jesus? How does Jesus respond to this understanding (v8-9)?
7. What is the result of failing to come to Jesus with faith (v10-12)?
8. What does Jesus do to confirm that faith in him is not misplaced (v13)?
9. What have you learned, been reminded of with regard to faith and Jesus' willingness from this passage? How does this new/renewed help you in your daily life?

## **Please read Mt 8:18-22.**

10. Why do you think Jesus wanted to cross to the other side of the lake when he saw the crowd?
11. Why would Jesus answer this way (v20) to someone who wanted to follow him (v19)?
12. Another follower approaches Jesus and expresses a desire to attend to some family business before going with Jesus (v21). What is Jesus' response to him (v22)?
13. How might it be seen that Jesus is making it more difficult to follow him?
14. Why would Jesus want to respond to those claiming a desire to follow him in this way?
15. What does this passage tell us about following Jesus?
16. How has this passage helped you to understand the nature of following Jesus?

# Matthew 9

## ***Please read Mt 9:1-17***

1. What did the men in v2 expect Jesus to do? Why did Jesus do something else instead?
2. Why did the teachers of the law consider this blasphemy?
3. What is the logic of Jesus' argument in v5-7?
4. How does the story of Matthew and his friends relate to that of the paralytic?
5. What implications might v12-13 have for how we think about church, and what we do there?
6. Why do Jesus' disciples not fast at this point (v14-17)? When will they?
7. How does unshrunk cloth, and new wine relate to fasting, the bridegroom, and the kingdom?
8. Is there any benefit in us fasting now? Why/ why not?
9. So far in Matthew, where have you seen the new wine and cloth of Jesus clashing with the old wine and cloth of the Jewish leaders?

## ***Please read Mt 9:18-38***

10. What contrasts and similarities can you draw between the story of the dead girl and the sick woman in v18-25? (Social position, role of faith, touch....)
11. What is the significance of the title the blind men use of Jesus in v27? How might this help explain Jesus' reluctance for people to know about the healing (v30)?
12. What are the three reactions people have to Jesus in v27-34?
13. How do Jesus' actions in v35-36 prove the Pharisees wrong?
14. Read Ezekiel 34:1-16. What was God's opinion of Israel's leaders? What was his opinion of his people? How does Jesus reflect those attitudes?
15. From ch 9, what have you learned about labour in the field of God's kingdom where he has placed you?

# Matthew 10: Living for the King

## **Read Matthew 9:35-10:42.**

1. How and why does Jesus demonstrate compassion for the crowds (9:35-38)?
2. What is the connection between the end of chapter 9 and the start of ch 10? (Did you notice 9:36 and 10:6?)
3. Jesus sends out the Twelve (10:1-15). Describe their mission.

How is it similar to Jesus'?

How is it different?

4. Is there a principle for us to follow from v11-14 to do with finding a worthy person? How might it work for you in practice?
5. Jesus warns the disciples that their compassionate ministry will not be warmly received (10:16-25). What will they experience?

What reasons does Jesus give for such opposition?

6. What does it mean to be shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves (16)?

What does this look like in practice?

7. What attitudes does Jesus want his disciples to have? What reasons does he give?

Attitudes	Reason
v17	v17
v19	v19-20
v22	v22
v26	v28-31

8. In 10:26-33 Jesus prepares his present and future disciples for opposition. What form will this opposition take?

Why shouldn't his disciples be afraid of those who oppose them?

9. What challenging commands does Jesus give in these verses?  
V32-33

V37

V38

V39

10. What does Jesus promise to those who are receptive to our message (10:40-42)?