

"The Greatest Sermon Ever Given"

Matthew 5:1-12

Overview



One of the more popular events in our nation is the showcasing of various ethnic cultures (think Folklorama in Winnipeg, Heritage Days in Edmonton, etc.). Such festivals are a great reminder of the cultural mosaic that is Canada.

These events often include elaborate displays and presentations highlighting the music, food, dance and traditions unique to those cultures. They are a great way to experience different lifestyles from all around the world.

In the Sermon on the Mount, it would have become quite clear that Jesus was calling people to another kind of lifestyle. However, this new life was not just different in outward appearance. It involved a revolutionary set of inner values.

Getting Started *A Whole New World*



1. In Matthew 5 we see Jesus teaching on a mountain. What is one of your favorite "mountain experiences" (riding a gondola, hiking a trail, skiing, etc.)?
 2. What culture or lifestyle (other than your own) do you admire? What is it about that culture that you like?
 3. What part of your own ethnic heritage do you appreciate? What do you wish you could change?
-

The Text



Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ²and he began to teach them.

He said:

- ³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
- ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
- ⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
- ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:1-12 (NIV)

The Video (optional) “The Greatest Sermon Ever Given” – Matthew 5:1-12 - by Kyle Corbin,
Jan. 31/21 (view at www.immanuelonline.ca)



NOTES: _____

Understanding



1. What prompts Jesus to sit on a mountain at this point (vs. 1)? Once there He begins teaching. Who is His teaching directed to?
2. Jesus ascent up the mountain is often considered to refer to another historic event. What might that event be (see Exodus 19:1-7)? How are these events similar? How are they different?
3. The entire Sermon on the Mount is contained in chapters 5-7 of Matthew (but it is unlikely that it is recorded verbatim). The writing here is likely a compiling of Jesus’ teachings on discipleship. Why, then, do you think Matthew starts this anthology with the beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-12?
4. Quickly scan the list of “blessings” that are contained in verses 2-12. These blessings are meant to describe people who are part of the kingdom Jesus has come to bring. How would you describe the character of these blessings? What do they have in common?

5. There is a parallel list of beatitudes in Luke 6:20-26. How is this list different from the one in Matthew? What are each of the Gospel writers trying to emphasize or address with their lists?
6. Would Jesus' disciples have regarded the content of the beatitudes as something completely new? Why or why not? (NB: In forming your answer, review also the following: Is. 61:1-3, Psalm 37:11, Psalm 24:3-6, Isaiah 55:1-2, Psalm 18:25-26, Psalm 34:14).

Applying



1. Do you believe God expects us to follow all the teachings found in this sermon (check out Matt. 4:17, 5:48, 6:9-10)? How well are you doing with that? How do you deal with being less than “10 out of 10” in following God’s Kingdom call?
2. How are the “Sermon on the Mount” values different from the values we find in the world around us? John Stott has suggested that the Sermon on the Mount describes a “Christian counter-culture” that Jesus calls us to. Where have you experienced being thought of as “different” because of your faith? How did you deal with that?
3. While we must appreciate that being “different” is part of our spiritual journey (consider Matthew 5:13), there are times when we seek society’s approval as well (read Matthew 5:14-16, 1 Peter 2:12). How do you balance these two seemingly contradictory thoughts? When is it right to seek the one as opposed to the other?
4. Which of the beatitudes do you think is the most difficult to practice in our current culture? Why do you think that is?
5. Which of the beatitudes do you personally find the most difficult to observe? What do you think would help you in your attempts to incorporate that beatitude more into your life? Which beatitude blesses you the most?
6. Work through the Discipleship Self-assessment tool (found at www.immanuelonline.ca under the “Next Steps tab”) to determine what your next step will be in Kingdom living.

Memory Verse(s)



³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

Extra Resources



- ❖ “*The Greatest Sermon Ever Given*” – *Matthew 5:1-12* - by Kyle Corbin, Jan. 31/21 (view at www.immanuelonline.ca). Pastor Kyle introduces the key theme of the Sermon on the Mount.
- ❖ “*The Message of the Sermon on the Mount*” – by John R. W. Stott (Inter-Varsity Press, 1978). In this classic exposition Stott breaks down the meaning of Jesus’ sermon (and relates it to our world today).
- ❖ “*The Sermon on the Mount*” – by Dan Doriani (P & R Publications, 2006). J. I. Packer describes this book as a thoughtful, probing, down-to-earth, and up-to-date exploration of Christ’s ideal of kingdom life.