Sacred Delights
Choose JOY!
Sunday, May 5, 2024

Matthew 5: 1-12 NIV

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

1. **Unbending Joy.**

2. **Sacred Delight.**

3. **Radical Reconstruction of the Heart.**

Conclusion: The One who had every reason to be bitter and miserable, chose an unbending JOY focusing on the sacred delight offered by the Father. These delights are the foundation of the promises found within the Beatitudes. Therefore, let us follow Christ and choose to live in an unbending joy as we revel in the sacred delights God bestows on us.

LIFE GROUP LESSON
Choose JOY!
Week of May 5 – May 11, 2024

Ice Breaker: You can likely think of times your body felt strong and healthy, as well as times it did not. How are you affected and what manifests in your life either way?

Read Matthew 5: 1-12.

1. What was Jesus' demeanor in this setting. (v.1) What does this tell you about how we can approach Jesus?
2. What was He doing? (v.2) What does this tell you about how He desires to help us live well?
3. In what ways can Jesus teach us today?
4. What is the focus of this teaching?
5. Do you think this would have been contrary to teaching they had heard? How so? Does it seem odd, even for today? In what ways?
6. What makes one blessed in God's kingdom?
7. Is Joy at the core of this teaching? How so?
8. Read Proverbs 17:22. What do we learn about a joyful heart?
9. Read Hebrews 12:2. What did Jesus focus on to endure the cross? What does this mean? What did He know would happen through His death on the cross?
10. How might He have displayed an unbending joy in His ministry and persecution? How can we?
11. Who are we called to fix our gaze upon? Why? What happens?
12. V.8. Why are the pure in heart blessed? What does this mean?
13. Read Psalm 37:4. How can we increase the purity of our heart?
14. Read Psalm 18:19 and Psalm 149: 4-5. Who delights in us? How do you respond to this truth? Are you aware of this daily?
15. How are these blessings considered sacred delights?
16. Vs. 3-4. What heart posture is required for these blessings? What is the reason for joy as we come before God in this manner?
17. Read Ezekiel 36: 26-27. What does God give to His children? Why?
18. How does Jesus want to change us? How does this manifest joy?
19. V.12 what are we told to do when we are persecuted because of Jesus? Why? Is that strange or does it resonate as a sacred delight?

Point to ponder: The more radical the reconstruction of our heart, the greater the joy we experience in Jesus! Let us bring a humble heart before Him and heed His teaching. *This is to our great gain!*