



Holy Living

A Bible Study
on the
Sermon on the Mount
Matthew Chapters 5, 6, 7



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Session 1

Matthew 5:1- 6

As the scene opens, we see Jesus preparing to teach on a mountainside. In Biblical symbolism, when an event takes place on a mountain, it means that this is an important contact with God.

First, Jesus notices the crowd. We can imagine that he feels a great concern for each person. He understands their needs, and he wants to help them. The best teaching he can give them is one that will guide them into a more love-filled life – an abundant life in which they are closer to God than ever before, loving him more, becoming more aware of his love, and more able to love one another.

Picture yourself in the crowd. He is speaking to you, too. He is addressing the needs that you have today.

The first set of Beatitudes (verses 3-6) focuses on our relationship with God. The rest of them will center on our relationships with each other. This pattern reflects Jesus' core message: First love God with all your heart and soul and mind, and the second commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:37).

The first four Beatitudes tell us that God is the source of our happiness. When we accept into our daily lives the values of God's kingdom, we grow into a fuller relationship with him.

We are "poor in spirit" when we stop placing our confidence in material security or other false gods (the kingdom of the world). By depending instead on God (the kingdom of heaven), we experience his power and love and faithfulness.

We "mourn" when our fallen flesh-nature wants to take the easy path that leads to sin while our sanctified spirit chooses to resist and to take the

holy path. God comforts us while we struggle with it.

We are "meek" when we're submissive to God and obedient to his commands. Inheriting the "land" means becoming one of God's royal children in the kingdom of heaven on earth.

We "hunger for righteousness" when we want to live morally, i.e., when we want to conform our will to God's will. This hunger will be satisfied because God helps us achieve righteousness. Even though we may get frustrated with our spiritual progress, what may seem impossible for us is never impossible for God.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. Describe a time when you felt poor in spirit, relying on God when it seemed easier or more sensible to trust in the things of this world.
2. Describe an experience of fighting against yourself because you did not want to do something God's way. Did your flesh-nature mourn when you refused to give in to it? How did God comfort you?
3. What are some rules of the Church that people don't like to obey? Is there a rule that you first disobeyed then obeyed? Why did you change? What effect did it have on your life?
4. Name ways that can help us grow in righteousness. What activities purify us? What has helped you become more loving or more morally upright?