

Matthew 5:1-12

Discussion questions

Opener: List the top 5 qualities you feel are rewarded in our society

Read Matthew 5:1-6

1. What evidence is there that Jesus has more than our material or mental well-being in mind in these verses?
2. What progression do you see through these first four beatitudes?
3. Why do we find it hard to admit how destitute we are before God?
4. Isn't whole idea of focusing on our inadequacy depressing and demoralizing? Why or why not?
 - a. Is there anything in the text itself that suggests otherwise (hint: think about the promises Jesus makes).
5. How might we teach or model to our child that are the characteristics God values?
 - a. Won't adopting these attitudes toward God and themselves hamper our kids 'success'?

Read Matthew 5:7-12

6. List out the various things that should characterize the way we relate to other people.
 - a. Is there anything surprising in this list (cf. 11-12)?
7. How do these characteristics relate to the first four beatitudes?
8. The way we relate to God and to other people are closely connected. Relational struggles with our parents, spouse, friends, neighbors can reveal something about our relationship with God.
 - b. Think about a recent occasion when you experienced relational conflict. Did you respond in a way that was unmerciful, dishonest, disagreeable or retaliatory?
 - c. What might this reveal about the way you are relating to God?
9. Taking the whole passage together, how can we cultivate a more generous and loving attitude toward others?
 - d. How might we help our kids/grandkids become more loving and generous?
 - e. Do you have any practical suggestions?

Prayer Ideas

- Give thanks that Jesus exposes our spiritual inadequacy and that he promises to supply what we are lacking if we will admit our need.
- Pray for God to help you understand your own spiritual poverty and to mourn it. Ask him to give you a deeper hunger and thirst to be more like Jesus.
- Confess ways in which you have been unmerciful and unkind. Pray that Christ will cause his grace to flow through as you more deeply your own need for Jesus.