



Week 7: The Sermon on the Plain (Part 1)

Introduction:

After His baptism, Jesus set out to display His authority and power to the world. Now we encounter Jesus preaching the “Sermon on the Plain” in which He teaches His followers what life looks like in His Kingdom, where the rules and roles of society and culture are reversed.

Note: As you discuss questions in your groups or reflect on them by yourself, keep in mind that the goal is not to get all the answers right. Many of us will not know the answers, and that is okay! The goal is to interact with God’s Word and give genuine thought to it. If you struggle to even guess a possible answer, that is okay too! The pastors will provide the answers after your discussion so you can know and record them on your study guide.

Questions:

Read Luke 6:17-26

1. In the scriptures leading up to this moment, the religious leaders condemn Jesus and His followers for their beliefs and practices. In this scripture, Jesus proclaims a new reality of life for those who follow Him. How does this new way of measuring oneself comfort and strengthen all believers?

Answer:

2. (Breakout) In these “Blessings and Woes” that Jesus teaches to His disciples, we encounter multiple harsh, uncomfortable realities. Jesus clearly defines what genuinely following Him will look like. Why do you think many Christian people ignore these? What is the effect of ignoring them? Name a reason you may be quick to forget them.

Answer:

3. As Christians who are Americans, it can oftentimes be confusing which parts of our belief are rooted in Scripture and which ones are rooted in culture. (This happens in **every** culture.) How do you think our cultural understanding of life skews our understanding of this teaching? And what effect does it ultimately have according to what Jesus has just said?

Answer:

NOTE: Poverty, hunger, hatred, weeping, and rejection are meant primarily in a spiritual way. We can see that as we compare this text with Mary's song in Luke 1. However, that meaning doesn't completely overshadow the basic, literal meaning of these verses. The blessings and woes come together to express the Christian's deep dissatisfaction with this world as well as their struggle to fit into a world that is sinfully ignorant of its Savior.

Read Luke 6:27-36

4. (Breakout) Jesus here calls His followers to love their enemies, do good unto them, to submit to abuse, and to even show generosity towards them. As you read vv 27-36, what problems do you find in it? What do you fear this behavior might lead to? Do you disagree with Jesus? Why?

Note: This is not a trick question or a trap. This question is here for us to be honest and examine ourselves.

Answer:

5. Who is our ultimate example of these behaviors? How does that validate Jesus' commands? How does that calm our worries that we will ultimately end up drawing the short stick?

Answer:

6. What effect might treating “enemies” this way have on those we consider enemies?

Answer:

Closing Thought:

Today, Jesus tells us of the natural consequences to being His faithful people. But He encourages us by helping us see the eternal picture, rather than just our small moment in time. He also guides us in how we are to treat a world to which we are, in part, strangers. He explains to us that we are to show the goodness of God to those around us, as a people who, no matter what happens, refuse to have enemies for the sake of the Gospel.