

WEEK 4 (September 6-12) Sermon on the Mount— “Unfamiliar Blessings”
(Matthew 5:1-12)

Starting the Conversation (Read Matthew 16:25)

The kingdom of God makes all things right. Because we live in a broken world, God’s kingdom sometimes feels like turning things upside down—the first is last, the servant is the leader, and the final life means a willingness to die to self. In the same way, the blessings of God can seem unfamiliar and illogical, but willingness to surrender to God’s calling leads to blessings that the world can neither give nor take away.

Let’s Read Matthew 5:1-12—

Leader:

- In what ways does Jesus challenge conventional thinking about what a blessing should look like?
- “Blessing” in this passage is the Greek word, “Makarios.” It can mean blessed, happy, or fortunate. In the context of what Jesus teaches, what does it mean to be blessed?
- How are these blessings experienced now on earth? How are these blessings experienced in heaven and in the new creation?
- Why is it so important to have an eternal perspective in life? Why is this so difficult?

Leader: It is important for us to think about how these words of Jesus apply specifically to our lives. They have to be more than theoretical beliefs. They also need to be more than a box to check for a certain payout. These blessings need to form a specific hope and desire in us that shapes what we go after in life. Let’s discuss each blessing...

- What does it mean to be “poor?” How and why do the poor inherit the Kingdom of Heaven?
- What does it mean to mourn? How and why are those who mourn comforted?
- What does it mean to be humble? How and why do the humble inherit the whole earth?
- What does it mean to be merciful? How and why do the merciful see God?
- What does it mean to work for peace? How and why are those who work for peace called children of God?
- What does it mean to be persecuted? How and why do those who are persecuted receive the Kingdom of God?

Leader: Living this way is not normal or easy. If it were easy and obvious, more people would live this way. There are lots of distractions and false beliefs that get in the way of us living for God’s Kingdom and God’s blessings.

- What hurdles do we face in trusting that this is the best way and choosing to live it out? How do we overcome these hurdles together?

Closing—

- What can be done to remind us of the blessings that God gives when life is hard or life tempts us to chase after worldly things that don’t have eternal value?

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for Your blessings. The life that you give truly is the best way to live, and it fills our lives with joy, peace, purpose, and strength. Please forgive us for forgetting and losing focus of the life You invite us to. Give us faith and wisdom to follow You every day. Give us strength to face the obstacles of life when it is difficult and painful. Comfort us in our pain and draw us close to You. Give us a desire for You more than anything that the world has to offer. In Jesus’ name. Amen.