

The Gospel of *Matthew*

Session 2



These notes have been put together to be used in Life Groups alongside the Sunday teaching at Wavertree. This week we are looking at the kind of kingdom Jesus is announcing.

You could begin by sharing what stood out from Jenny's talk.

Matthew 3:2

repent of your sins
and turn to God, for
the Kingdom of
Heaven is near

Jesus and His life transforming kingdom

READ: Matthew 5:3-12 aloud as a group

The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 includes lots of famous teaching from Jesus and is often read as good advice or a list of rules for 'good Christians'.

However, the **gospel is good news, not good advice.**

Jesus is ushering in a completely new way of living. A kingdom that will transform the world, that will be the reality for all of us in eternity. And He is inviting us, to start living out God's kingdom values now, even when it's counter intuitive and makes no sense.

DISCUSSION: 10 minutes

- How have you previously read Matt 5 - as good advice or good news?
- Can you identify ways in which this teaching is radical or even 'revolutionary'?
- Are there any characteristics in the Beatitudes that God has gifted you with, or is calling out in you? What does that look like in your life?
e.g. humility, thirst for justice, mercy, peace making, sharing your faith.

offer your bodies as a living sacrifice

If we read these passages as rules for life then the bar is just too high. But Jesus is calling us to a transformational relationship with Him. We are invited to repent, believe and offer our lives back to God.

When we sacrifice something of our will, desires, control etc to God - then He promises to meet us, empower us and transform us through the work of the Holy Spirit. But the challenge is - sacrifice is always extremely costly - Jews gave the best of their flock, the woman gave expensive perfume, God gave His son.

Romans 12: offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

REFLECTION and DISCUSSION: 30 minutes

Manage this time in a way that works for your group - you might want to reflect individually with drawing, writing or music - you might only focus on 1 question - at some point come together to share and discuss.

- As you reflect on your life can you see ways that, as you have submitted to God, the Holy Spirit has transformed your heart and your thinking?
- How are you living sacrificially at the moment? (e.g. time, talents, money) What does this cost you? How is God meeting you in it? What is God saying?
- How much of your heart is Jesus allowed to transform? Are there any barriers or any 'no go areas'?

PRAYER: 10 minutes

Pray for one another - especially that as we lay out lives down sacrificially before God, that He would encounter us, provide, speak and shape us in a way that is more than worth the cost.