

Introduction

Good morning Image family! Really looking forward to our time together this morning!

I always appreciate the opportunity to stand before you and share God's word and I hope and pray that this morning we would all be encouraged and challenged, and that we would walk away loving Jesus more than when we walked in

And fueled up to go and be disciples who make disciples!

I hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and that you ate some good food and had time with family and friends or just able to rest.

Holidays in America are kinda funny to me, food feels like it's the center of every holiday!

I can be on the phone with my mom and she is telling me about everyone who is coming but I'm like, cool cool cool, but what are we eating??

I mean think about it, Thanksgiving: meal, Christmas: Presents and meal: Valentines day - chocolate: labor day, memorial day, 4th of July - hey we should do a cookout or BBQ depending on where your from

All I can say is I am here for it! This also has nothing to do with the sermon this morning I just like talking about food - maybe its me - I dunno...

Any way... really looking forward to our time together this morning, this morning I want us to look at what I am sure is a somewhat familiar passage

The beginning of the Sermon on the Mount

But as theologian John Stott says, that the Sermon on the Mount is "probably the best known part of the teaching of Jesus, though arguably it is the least understood, and certainly it is the least obeyed."

That is some real strong language he uses and I am not going to lie at first I was a little offended

But the more I read the sermon on the mount and the more I do understand it, the more I realize how true his statement is.

I think we have a general idea on what Jesus' teaching here in Matthew 5-7 is but there is just so much that Jesus lays out here and so I want us to spend our time together

Specifically In **Matthew 5:1-12**, so if you have your Bible's go ahead and turn with me to **Matthew 5...**

Before we jump in - Lets Pray for our time together...

STORY...

Back in 2020 my daughter Kynslee had just started walking... so she was everywhere and into everything! Princess and I were in our kitchen talking and preparing dinner when we heard the TV come on... Kynslee had gotten ahold of the fire stick remote (by the way she is the only one to this day that knows how to turn the TV on with that remote, Princess and I both can't figure out how she was doing it we always have to use the actual TV remote) but anyway I come around the corner and see she is on Amazon Video and has selected a movie and before I can get to her she buys it!!

I'm like you have got to be kidding me... she bought this documentary about some missionaries... I check our account and it cost \$20 for this thing.... Not knowing what to do Princess and I decide well we are at least going to watch it right!

So we sat down that night after Kynslee went to bed and we watched this crazy story about David and Karen Eubank and their three kids who serve in a war torn Burma (now Myanmar) and have for almost 30 years, as well as Sudan and Iraq. They spend months on end traveling to remote villages to bring supplies and medical aid to those affected by the war... often finding themselves on the front line... in Burma or Myanmar this is the longest civil war ever for any country.

So we watch as David and Karen trek with their young children through a war torn country to bring aid...

and so you ask yourself what would possess them to give their lives to this? why? Because for them this is what God has called them too! For them this is what it means to live the kingdom life.

This morning as we walk through our text I want us to think about **What does it mean to flourish?**

I think it's tough to really put a definition to the word flourish... I mean one does exist and **the definition is to the effect of growing or developing in a healthy way**

We could think of synonyms to help us understand... succeed, excel, develop, abundant or maybe Thrive - ironically the name of my failed lawncare business - **that business that did not in fact flourish was thrive lawncare**

But more specifically, what does it mean for us to flourish in the Christian life, after all, is that not what brings us together this morning?

Are we not here because we hope to grow in our faith, to be encouraged to be quote on quote **"better Christians"**?

Well I believe that as we walk through our text this morning we will gain a better understanding what it means to flourish as Christians

Our flourishing is found in living the kingdom life! The Sermon on the mount "It is not a sermon about an ideal life in an ideal world, but about the kingdom life in fallen world"¹

I think there is some really important context for us to understand as we dive in this morning...

Matthew 4: 23-25 tells us,

23 Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every [i] disease and sickness [k] among the people. 24 Then the news about him spread throughout Syria. So they brought to him all those who were afflicted, those suffering from various diseases and intense pains, the demon-possessed, the epileptics, and the paralytics. And he healed them. 25 Large crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

Jesus began to preach the good news of the kingdom... Well, **What kingdom?**

*Sinclair Ferguson says, "The kingdom is the rule or reign of God, the expression of his gracious sovereign will. To belong to the kingdom of God, then, is to belong to the people among whom the reign of God has already begun."*²

With the coming of Jesus, a new kingdom is being ushered in, one in which will culminate in the end with the return of Christ,

in which all things will be restored, a new heaven and a new earth!

¹ Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount,

² Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount, pg. 3

But the kingdom of God is here and now, even if its not yet fully realized

we live in the already and not yet of the kingdom, serving our King and looking for his return.

John the baptist went around preaching **“the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe”**

Jesus begins his ministry with the Sermon on the Mount announcing that the kingdom of God has arrived. Matthew 4:23 tells us, that Jesus began teaching the good news of the kingdom.³

Ferguson continues... **“This is what it means to repent and to belong to the kingdom of heaven. The sermon is a description of the lifestyle of those who belong to that kingdom”.**⁴

Jesus is ushering in a new kingdom; the long-awaited Messiah has arrived and this is what the kingdom looks like. Jesus is showing that maybe what they thought the Messiah was going to come and do is not what Christ has come for. Many Jews believed the Messiah would come and deliver them from Roman oppression and bondage.

Jesus came to deliver that of spiritual bondage not necessarily physical. In His sermon, Jesus begins to unpack what the Kingdom of God looks like, and ultimately what he came to do.

³ Ferguson, The Sermon on the Mount, 2

⁴ Ferguson, The Sermon on the Mount, 2

And Jesus is going to open his sermon with 8 marks, or key identifiers⁵ for those who are apart of the kingdom,

this is what it looks like to live the kingdom life and each one is going to start with blessed

The Greek translation of the word is best understood as “happy” but I am going to be honest... I think that makes it tough for us to truly grasp what is being said

In English, for us **happy is often circumstantial**... you might say food makes me happy (yea don't judge me)

Or my spouse or significant other makes me happy... watching my favorite sports team win makes me happy... my job/career

Or we hear it this way, **“do what makes you happy”**... right life's too short so just do what makes you happy.

But given our American understanding of happy or happiness that is **NOT** a great way for us to understand what Jesus is saying here,

or atleast makes it difficult for us to truly grasp the significance of what Jesus is saying

Jesus here is speaking of a state of being... a way of existing, Really an identity! That in light of who Jesus is, and what he accomplishes,

⁵ JD Greear, “8 Ways to be Happy According to Jesus”

as Christians who have encountered the living God, who have been saved and redeemed, this is now who we are and how we ought to live.

Not an emotion to experience but This should be our reality of being in the world

As we dive into what has come to be known as the Beatitudes, just know I have found Ferguson Sinclair's book to be unbelievably helpful in understanding The Sermon on the Mount and I can't recommend it enough! Really good!

But in the Beatitudes Jesus is going to tell us exactly what our lives should look like, how we are to live and operate in the world and so as we walk through these

I want us to be thinking, is this me? Are these marks of my life? This morning what we need to see is that as Christians, this is what Jesus says are lives should look like!

Ok, so....

Matthew 5

When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then[a] he began to teach them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Followers of Jesus live in a posture of being poor in spirit

So, what does it mean to be poor in spirit... its not materialistic in nature,

it is the realization that we are broken and weak and sinful before God

One pastor says it this way, "*Poverty of spirit means you embrace daily dependence on God for everything that you need*"⁶

We really need to understand this one, because **this is key to our understanding the rest of the sermon on the mount and key to the Christian life.**

Most of us if not all, don't want to be poor in anything. Poor is not really a word we want used to describe anything about us.

We would rather have money than be poor, we would rather be sufficient than poor and please never let anyone say,⁷

"Poor Bryson, bless his heart. You know, he sure does try his best"

But Jesus calls this person who is poor in spirit "Blessed" or happy... or **hey follower of mine listen up...** this should be your state of being, how you should exist in this world,

Your posture...

Forever in constant awareness of your sinfulness and brokenness and fully aware of your need for me!!! You think you got it? NOPE

You think you are sufficient??? Think again... **Blessed are those who fully recognize their brokenness and sin, and fully aware of their inability to do this life apart from Christ.**

He says, Blessed are those who are poor in spirit for the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

In this respect we should gladly embrace this kind of poverty, **where we know who we are before a perfect and holy God**

⁶ JD Greear, "8 Ways to be Happy According to Jesus"

⁷ IBID

and the only thing we can do is cry out for mercy, recognizing only hope comes from the Lord.

Church, see the hope that is present even in the short verse... yes we are broken and sinful before God, and yes we need him and being poor in spirit is recognizing this need and it is out of desperation we cry out

But our recognition of who we are is in light of who God is, in light of Jesus! See we have the joy of knowing how the rest of the story unfolds

When we read this, we know who Jesus is, that he is in fact the messiah who came to save us from our sin. It is the goodness of God who does not leave us in our sin, in our brokenness.

This recognition of who are as sinners before a holy God does not and should not leave us in despair, but **we have eternal hope in the one who spoke these words!**

Followers of Jesus live in a posture of being poor in spirit

He continues in vs 4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted

Followers of Jesus, mourn over their sin, but find comfort in the cross

Ok, so we typically think of mourning in relation to the loss of a loved one, but that would be true for everyone. Everyone generally speaking mourns over death.

But remember, what we are seeing on the Sermon on the mount is the life that Christians are called to live

So, what should the Christian mourn?

We are to mourn over our sin. That in light of a perfect, holy and just God we are sinners. That our sin actually grieves us.

I think if we are honest, we definitely tend to categorize our sin on a scale of that's bad to I mean yea it's sin but is not a big one

So there is probably some sins that we commit that really bother us... pornography for example. If you struggle or have in the past there is the sense of hating that you did it again.

So if we do something higher on that scale, maybe adultery, murder - then maybe we are grieved over our sin

But what about the little lie or the harsh tone with your spouse, or yelling at your kids out of anger and frustration?

I did that one yesterday...

Are we grieved by our sin? Or do we rationalize it or ignore it or think well that's not a big one...

but the reality is all sin is an egregious act against a holy God.

We should mourn over our sin - our sin before God should grieve us, and it will when we have a right view of who God is, and who we are before God...

When we are poor in spirit, we will mourn over our sin

But again, **Jesus points us to hope in the same sentence!**

Jesus calls the person blessed - that they will be comforted. This comfort comes as the grace of God that there is forgiveness of sin found in Christ. **Christ is our comfort!**

Our sin should lead us to repentance and also joy, joy in the cross of Christ that he has paid our debt and that through Jesus there is the forgiveness of sin...

Mourning over our sin is not feeling condemned or sitting in shame in our sin, no! **Romans 8 tells us that there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus**

The Holy Spirit convicts us, we acknowledge our guilt before God but in the same breath we sing his praises because Jesus has paid our debt,

Christ righteousness is our righteousness

When God now looks at us he sees us through His Son, when Jesus said "it is finished" it was finished!

We do not have to sit in shame or stay in our guilt because **"if you confess your sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9)**

It is the good news of the gospel! Christ is our comfort!

Followers of Jesus, mourn over their sin, but find comfort in the cross

vs. 5 Blessed are the humble (meek) , for they will inherit the earth

Followers of Jesus are meek, following the example of Christ humility

Other translations use Meekness and it is rather difficult to define... humility is probably the next best word but I think there is more to meekness than just humility

so I am going to default to Ferguson Sinclair on how he explains it...

"Poverty of Spirit and mourning over sin have a pervasive influence on our lives. Their immediate effect is to make us meek. It is certainly not a lack of backbone. Rather it is the humble strength that belongs to the one who has learned to submit to difficulties (difficult experiences and difficult people), knowing that in everything God is working for his good."

"This kingdom characteristic of meekness is the clue to so much that God does in our lives, yet we too rarely recognise it. [God] wants us to be meek. But first he may have to break our pride, destroy our sense of self-sufficiency and humble us under his mighty hand before he uses us for his glory"

"Only as we come to know God and his presence do we begin to discover ourselves as we really are. When we know what we are before God, and look to him for grace and salvation, then we become poor in spirit; then we mourn for our sins; then, having seen ourselves as we really are, we bow to his will in all things. And as we experience the gentleness of his grace, we are meek and gentle with others"⁸

One Pastor puts it this way, "Meekness has nothing to do with being weak or passive. **Meekness is power harnessed by love. . . .**

In marriage, to be meek is not to be weak or vulnerable, but to be so committed to your spouse that you will sacrifice for his or her good."⁹

Jesus is our example of what it is to be meek and lowly in heart. Philippians 2 tells us of what meekness and humility is to look like, and gives us the example of Christ

⁸ Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount, pg.

⁹ Aaron Menikoff ["Why Meek is not Weak"](#)

Who though he existed in the form of God, did not count equality with God something to be held onto, but emptied himself and became a servant, taken on the likeness of man, he humbled himself even to the point of death on the cross

Jesus is our example... who though he had all power and authority and is the third member of the trinity he walked the earth in humility and meekness showing compassion to all who had need

Followers of Jesus are meek, following the example of Christ humility

Vs. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled

Followers of Jesus have a hunger and thirst for righteousness

Here Jesus tells us, it should be our greatest desire to be **in right relationship with God**. We pursue righteousness.

Our righteousness is provided for us through Christ, his righteousness is now our righteousness

So through Christ we are made to be in right standing before God, but there is also a reality in which we pursue righteousness as well.

That is to live rightly before God.

While our righteousness comes through Christ alone, and the ability to pursue righteousness, which comes from the power of the Holy Spirit and our dependence on the Spirit...

we are still responsible for the way in which we live

We are called to pursue what is right and good, and this is our right response to all we have seen in our text thus far

As we look inward to ourselves we realize our sinfulness before God, we are grieved over our sin but we now must look outside of ourselves...

In this realization and awareness of who we are, we see our great need for God, and it is in our brokenness that should drive our hunger and thirst for righteousness,

to know God and to do what is right and pleasing before the Lord.

But also hunger for righteousness is to hunger to see the righteousness of God prevail in our world,

the work of evangelism, missions and social reform¹⁰ are not just alternatives for the Christian, but the expectation on how we live and operate in the world!

Above all though, righteousness means right relationships between us and God, us and others, and in the world at large¹¹

Followers of Jesus have a hunger and thirst for righteousness

vs. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Followers of Jesus show mercy in the same measure in which they have received it

So if we don't show mercy we won't receive mercy? I don't think that is what Jesus is getting at

¹⁰ Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount, pg.29

¹¹ IBID

But rather those who have received mercy and experienced mercy will respond by showing mercy. **Those who have been shown mercy or forgiveness extend it in the same measure in which they have received it**¹²

I love how Sinclair articulates this point **“Mercy is getting down on your hands and knees and doing what you can to restore dignity to someone whose life has been broken by sin (whether his own or that of someone else)”**¹³

We see a great example in the story of the Good Samaritan...

Jesus asks, which one of these men proved to be a good neighbor... the one who showed mercy.

We realize we have been extended great grace and mercy from our God, we respond in kind by being merciful

Where do you need to show mercy? Where do you need to offer forgiveness?

We remember what has been done for us through Christ on the cross and out of that remembrance we are a people who show mercy to others

Ferguson says *“ This does not mean that we merit forgiveness by forgiving others, but rather, that unless we forgive others, there is no evidence that we ourselves have been forgiven”*¹⁴

Did you catch that?? That is strong language!!!

*“ This does not mean that we merit forgiveness by forgiving others, but rather, that unless we forgive others, there is no evidence that we ourselves have been forgiven”*¹⁵

Meaning for the Christian, who sees themselves for who they really are, and have experienced the grace and mercy of God, which we did not deserve, our response to being forgiven is to extend forgiveness, to extend mercy

Is there someone you need to forgive and extend mercy to? Our text tells us,

Followers of Jesus show mercy in the same measure in which they have received it

vs. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God

Followers of Jesus are to pursue holiness and be pure in heart

What Jesus takes aim at here is our hearts... none of us are pure in heart in the moral sense but that is not a secret, and Jesus knows this

What does it mean to be pure in heart... 1 Peter quotes Leviticus 11:44 and 19:2 where the Lord says **“Be holy for I am holy”**

The Lord says to His people, “Be Holy for I am Holy”!!!

To be pure in heart is to pursue holiness... to put to death the sin that so easily entangles us... to crush every idol that we so easily look to

That we have a singular focus, a singular desire to know and love God above all else.

¹² JD Greear, “8 Ways to be Happy According to Jesus”

¹³ Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount, pg. 31

¹⁴ IBID

¹⁵ IBID

On this side of eternity we will not be without sin, but we pursue holiness. We put to death our sin and we look to Jesus.

- pornography?
- Anger?
- Pride?
- Gossip?
- Harshness towards others/lack of love
- What about our thought lives?

Put it to death!

The pursuit of holiness is to put to death every sin, not just the big ones or egregious ones but all sin is egregious against a holy God, and he tells us, “Be holy for I am holy”

Followers of Jesus are to pursue holiness and be pure in heart

vs 9. Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God

Followers of Jesus are peacemakers

God is a God of peace... “he has made peace for us through Christ; he has reconciled us to himself. (2 Cor 5:19-21)

We were once alienated and hostile but God has made peace for us through Christ... here I think Jesus is getting at two things

1. **We have peace with God through Christ**
2. **We have peace with one another because of Christ**

Relationships that were once broken, where conflict existed are overcome through Christ both

- our relationship with God and
- our relationship with others.

It is not only something that has been done for us, but something that we seek with others as well.

How did Thanksgiving go? Got some family members it's tough to make peace with? What about co-workers or a boss you can't seem to get along with?

Is there peace in your home between you and your spouse?

- We have peace with God through Christ
- We have peace with one another because of Christ

Followers of Jesus are peacemakers

10-12. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

11 “You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. 12 Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Followers of Jesus will face persecution, but you can rejoice even in persecution

Here Jesus recognizes the life he is calling us to will result in persecution... **the world is opposed to God and the things of God**

If we are kingdom people and we live in the way in which we have been called to live, we will face persecution, and I don't mean the kind people claim on twitter

But I mean we serve a crucified Savior, so Jesus is telling us what we should expect as his followers.

But we can have joy even in the midst of persecution and we can remain faithful and walk in obedience even in the face of persecution

Followers of Jesus will face persecution, but you can rejoice even in persecution

Remember I said at the beginning, what does it mean to flourish as Christians? What is this kingdom Jesus speaks about?

With the coming of Jesus, he is establishing a new kingdom, this new kingdom has been ushered in!

a kingdom in which he rules and reigns and is Lord over all things, and he is gathering people into this kingdom,

and to be apart of this kingdom is simply through faith

faith in Jesus, that He is in fact Lord and Saviour, that God is reconciling all things and

God has graciously sent his son to reconcile us back to himself through Christ life, death, and resurrection

And through faith in Christ, we are now apart of this kingdom that Jesus has established and with it is

a future promise that God will one day restore all things and a new heaven and new earth will be brought about

But this kingdom is also here and now... and we have the future promise and we are holding onto it, we cling to that promise but in the waiting, in the here but not yet

Jesus tells us, **this is how my people who are part of my kingdom ought to live!**

This is what it looks like to live out the kingdom of God in a broken world.

Live this way!!! See many make the mistake thinking the Sermon on the Mount is some reiteration of the law...

Many respond like this, *"Yea I know we are supposed to live this way, but you know we can't, we could never do it so thank God for Jesus."*

This is true... everything we just walked through, the rest of the sermon on the mount we can't do it **but that doesn't mean we aren't supposed to.**

Here is how this breaks down for us....

- Jesus gives us the sermon on the mount,
- here is how you should live,
- but also why we can't do it,
- but here is how Christ did it for you,
- and here is how you now live this way through Christ!

The beatitudes is how we as Christians are called to live, Jesus is holding up for us how those apart of the kingdom live and operate in the world

Remember the Sermon on the Mount "It is not a sermon about an ideal life in an ideal world, but about the kingdom life in fallen world"¹⁶

As Ferguson puts it *"This is what it means to repent and to belong to the kingdom of heaven. The sermon is a description of the lifestyle of those who belong to that kingdom"*¹⁷

Are you suppose to live this out? **Yes! Absolutely!**

Can we on our own? Not a chance!

Does Christ make it possible for us to do so! Without a doubt!

¹⁶ Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount,

¹⁷ Sinclair Ferguson. The Sermon on the Mount,

How???

Through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of God we can actually live this way!

We just don't! **But why?**

Well... it's really really hard! And another reason... it's really really hard!

This is not our natural disposition, we are not naturally inclined to live this way!

Who would have thought that this would **NOT** come natural to live poor in spirit, and that we would want to mourn our sin,

and be meek, and we would **NOT** naturally hunger and thirst for righteousness, or want to be merciful, or pursuing holiness would be easier, that we would be peacemakers or welcome persecution

NO! Its just not natural to us.... but Jesus says follow me!

- I am the way, the truth and the life,
- I am the light of the world,
- I am the Savior of the world

John says he is the Lamb who takes away the **Sin** of the world, that He has come to give life, abundant life

And we believe, we believe He is in fact the Son of God, who came to live all this perfectly in our place, and then die in our place, and the raise victorious

Jesus is ushering in a new kingdom and He says, believe and follow me! And my followers **live this way!**

This is who you are, this should be your state of being in the world, how you live and how you operate in the world.

This is your new identity, but also, I am sending you a helper, who is going to enable you to live out this kingdom life,

I know you can't on your own **but my grace is sufficient for you** and through the power of the Holy Spirit you can in fact live this way!

Jesus is showing us the way, the way of living, the way of life that leads to our flourishing, even in the midst of a fallen and broken world!

But what do we do with this? What is it that this kind of kingdom life leads us to live?

Well I think it is summed up by Jesus in **Matthew 22**

35 And one of them, an expert in the law, asked a question to test him: 36 "Teacher, which command in the law is the greatest?"

37 He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.[1] 38 This is the greatest and most important[m] command. 39 The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself.[n] 40 All the Law and the Prophets depend[o] on these two commands."

All of the teaching of Jesus, everything we read about what he did and said, teaches us what it means to follow him, what it means to live apart of this kingdom that Jesus has ushered in

So when we look at the Sermon the Mount, when we look at our text and ask ourselves

what is it that Jesus is teaching us about how we ought to live this Christian life???

It is summed up here:

- **Love God**
- **Love your neighbor**

We are called to live life apart of the kingdom, we are called to live a life set apart, to live a certain way in the world

Jesus is saying this is the way to live a flourishing life, and Jesus will go on in the next few verses to say that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world

So that others might see your good works and glorify your Father in Heaven.

And as you live this way, as you seek the good of those around you, as you point them to Jesus, as we do good works, and live faithful and obedient lives

Others might know God as well. They might see our lives, how we live, how we operate, how we treat others the things that we do, and why we do it

And they too might glorify God and know God.

Look, you will never hear from the stage good works saves, NO! Only faith in Christ alone saves, we are justified and made right before God based solely on the basis of the finished work of Christ

But it is also true that we now called to live a life that is not for ourselves but is actually a laying down of our own lives

Jen Wilkin says *“the call to follow Christ is nothing less than a call to come and die. Death to sin through the gracious atonement, daily*

death to self through sanctifying obedience, and thereby, new life in the kingdom of heaven, which is even now at hand.”¹⁸

Jesus is offering us a new way of living and operating in the world, **that leads to our flourishing but also to those around us flourishing as well.**

The Lord told the Israelites in Jeremiah 29 to seek the welfare (or the good) of the city and in doing so they would find their own.

I believe that is what Jesus is calling us to as well... that in living the life that Jesus lays out for us, not only do we find our flourishing through kingdom living

But we are now to live in such a way that puts the goodness of God on display for all to see...

That what we are to live for is the kingdom, and building the kingdom

And I think part of what Jesus is building to what we will see in **Matthew 28** which is the great commission to go and make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe all that He has commanded us to

But also, we have to read every passage within the whole context of Scripture,

we know that God’s people are called to care for the poor, the oppressed, the widow, the orphan

We are called to care for the least of these in our city...

we see in our text this morning how Jesus lays out for us the way we are to live in light of who he is...

18 Jen Wilkin [“Why Study the Sermon on the Mount”](#)

He lays out for us our state of being/existing in the world, who we are as followers of Jesus, our means of flourishing as apart of this kingdom

Then he tells us, now go be salt and light in the world... spread your saltiness, shine your light in this dark world

Conclusion... Vamp

Paul says in Galatians 5:14 **"For the whole law is fulfilled in one statement: Love your neighbor as yourself"**

The out workings of our Christian life, out of our devotion to following Jesus, living as Jesus tells us we ought to live

Does Not just impact us in our relationship with God, but impacts our relationship with our neighbors

In loving our neighbor... you are most likely familiar with how Jesus answers the question of who our neighbor is... so we know it's not just the family that lives across the street

although it definitely is those neighbors...

That it isn't just those we are in proximity to in our lives, but it is them too...

Jesus telling us to love our neighbor, is Jesus telling us that for the Christian you are called to love, that we show now partiality or favoritism

We know from the Scriptures that **all people are created in the Image of God** and as such are to be treated as image bearers, to care and love all people

We are never given a stipulation or some sort of list of love these people but its ok if you dont love these other ones,

in fact Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, later in chapter 5 he says **"You have heard it said love your neighbor and hate your enemy but I tell you , love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you"**

So there is no limit on who we are called to love and to what extent and what greater demonstration of love than to share the good news of Jesus with all people?

But is evangelism the only thing we are called to? **Is the great commission of making disciples the only thing we as kingdom people are to do?**

If it was I don't think Jesus would have spoken so much about caring for the poor or caring for the hurting, the outcaste, or spent so much time healing the sick and actually being with them

Don't get me wrong, maybe the greatest act of love we could do is share Jesus with someone **but**

One only has to look at the life of Jesus and the teaching of Jesus to see how we are to

- care for the poor
- widow
- orphan
- marginalized
- oppressed
- the hurting
- the broken

Kingdom people live for the kingdom and not their own, **and to live for the kingdom is to love God and to love our neighbor as yourself.**

But How hard is that? Extremely!!

We love ourselves! Like we really love ourselves

- We don't let ourselves go hungry
- We don't let ourselves go thirsty
- Or without certain comforts and pleasures

Yet Jesus says, Yes! As much as you love yourself, now go and love others with the same amount of intensity and intentionality!

So we care for our neighbors, both those in proximity and those in our communities because we live as a part of a new kingdom

Family, we have several ways here at Image for you to do this in our city...

- The Table on Delk - serving women trapped in sex trafficking
- Foster Care ministry
 - serving vulnerable children
 - foster parents
 - biological parents
 - serving DFCS
 - serving those who have aged out of the foster care system
- Serving in schools like Osborne

And I can go on and on about each one of these areas and all the different ways you could serve

but what we are talking about this morning is so much bigger than where or in which ways you serve...

It's about us as a people, as individuals and as a church,

We will never love our neighbor on an ongoing basis, we will never serve our city for decades to come,

we won't have any meaningful missional footprint in our city, or be a church that wages war pushing back the darkness that is all around us

Until we become a kingdom people... until our state of being, our way of existing in the world, until we truly embrace God's way of us flourishing in this life

Through what Jesus teaches us here in the Beatitudes

Until we are poor in spirit, fully realizing our brokenness before Almighty God,

until we are people who mourn over our sin before a holy God, until we are meek and humble,

people who hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful and extending forgiveness, pure in heart, and peacemakers,

people who endure persecution when it comes, but do so with joy

Remember what Jesus says of this kind of people, these kingdom people,

- the kingdom of heaven is theirs
- you will be comforted
- you will inherit the earth
- you will be filled
- you will be shown mercy
- you will see God
- you are called sons
- the kingdom of heaven is theirs

Church, when we let the walls of our kingdoms fall, and step into living for the kingdom of God... then church, we become the church that pushes back darkness in our city

When we live out this kingdom life, not only do we find our flourishing, but those around us as well.

Lets Pray

This kingdom that Jesus ushered in, is here and while not yet fully realized, we know and our hope is in the very real reality that Christ will return

And he will restore all things, and a new heaven and a new earth will be brought about and we will spend eternity in the presence of our Savior worshipping him for the great God that He is,

but in the meantime we have work to do

- Love God with all your heart, soul and mind
- Love your neighbor as yourself

Image Church let us be kingdom people living out the kingdom life, remembering that Christ has done everything necessary to save us!

This morning, If you have yet to believe, would you see Jesus for who he is? Would you recognize that Jesus is in fact the Savior of the world, who died for your sin, and made a way for you to know God

And that there is hope in this life, hope only found in Christ! I would love to talk more with you today!

For the Christian this is your calling, the is the life you are to live, but you can't do it, but Christ did it for you, so now you can live this kingdom life out through Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit

Together would we Love God, Love Others, and Live on mission

Church family