

# SERMON ON THE MOUNT

## STUDY 1 The Kingdom is Here!

Echoing Moses when he stood on Mount Sinai to give the 10 commandments to newly liberated Israel, Jesus stood amidst thousands teaching them how to fulfill the law and step into the New Covenant. Like Israel in Moses' time, Israel in Jesus' time were a conquered people who were mournful, oppressed, angry, and confused with their 'chosen' forced upon identity. On the edge of more rebellions and uprisings against the Roman rule, Jesus announced the arrival of God's kingdom on earth, and release from their oppression. This sermon declares three distinct points - revealing God's heart for humanity:

1. The kingdom of God is HERE
2. A kingdom present in Jesus
3. A kingdom for everyone

### READ & EXPLORE

How can the news that God's 'kingdom is HERE' inspire our own inside-out kind of discipleship?

**Being a lampstand** - Jesus continues by explaining that citizens of the kingdom live not just by observing but by being transformed inwardly by His Word. This transformation is how our discipleship transforms the lives of others too - like a lampstand (Matthew 5:16) and being a 'light to the nations' (Isaiah 42:6).

**Our hearts, not just our actions (Romans 8:27 ESV)** Radically, Jesus shows us through His teaching that God is after our hearts, not just our actions. This is 'inside out' discipleship! Says NT Wright, in *After You Believe*:

*"What Jesus is saying is, "Now that I'm here, God's new world is coming to birth; and, once you realise that, you'll see that these are habits of heart which anticipate that new world here and now." These qualities—purity of heart, mercy, and so on—are not, so to speak, "things you have to do" to earn a "reward," a "payment." Nor are they merely the "rules of conduct" laid down for new converts to follow. They are, in themselves, the signs of life, the language of life, the life of new creation, the life of new covenant, the life which Jesus came to bring.'*

**For His glory, not our own (Matthew 6:2, John 15:8)** Jesus teaches that we shouldn't obey the law for our own 'glory' - but instead pray, fast, give and love with a transformed heart.

**Treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-20, Philippians 2:9-10)** Just like Jesus: our example, our inheritance, instead of seeking treasures of the world, we need to treasure Jesus - and trust the treasure He establishes for us in heaven... by His side.

### DISCUSS & SHARE TOGETHER

- How bright is your light this week (see Matthew 5:16)?
- How does the world's idea of 'happiness' compare to Jesus' idea of blessedness?
- Why does it seem sometimes that we have to come to the "end of ourselves" before we truly turn to God for help and wisdom?
- This week - how have you been building your 'treasure in heaven'? Or have you been burying your treasure in the sand?

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### PRAYER (from Matthew 6:7-13 MSG)

Our Father in heaven, reveal who you are.  
Set the world right; do what's best - as above, so below.  
Keep us alive with three square meals.  
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.  
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.  
You're in charge! You can do anything you want!  
You're ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.

### FURTHER ENCOURAGEMENT

Be encouraged this coming week by this saying of the revivalist theologian, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

Grace is but glory begun,  
and glory is but grace perfected.

### PREPARE

Read the following passage **Matthew 5:2-13** in the coming week to prepare for next week's study, 'THE BLESSED INVITATION'.