

THE
SERMON
on the MOUNT

Study Guide

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on the **MOUNT**

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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY GUIDE

This is a **10-session study** specifically designed to be done in small groups. Each session has five main parts that will guide you through your group meeting time.

5 PARTS PER SESSION

- 1. Bible Reading:** Begin your meeting time with prayer and reading the assigned Bible passage aloud for the session.
- 2. Videos:** Each session has at least two, if not a few more, videos. Watch these together as a group after reading the Bible passage and before your group discussion.
- 3. Discussion Questions:** These questions can be used to prompt your group conversation. Don't feel compelled to get through all the questions every session. Pick a few that resonate with your group and spend your time discussing those questions.
- 4. Spiritual Practice:** These are spiritual disciplines designed to help you put the learnings from each session into practice. Between your group meetings, spend time doing these on your own.
- 5. Additional Resources:** If you'd like to dig further into the topics discussed in each section, these resources (podcasts and articles) can help.

To access all accompanying videos and resources, click the links for each session or visit wdm.lutheranchurchofhope.org/sermon-on-the-mount-study-resources.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Answer a few quick questions to [tell us about your group](#). Only one person, probably your group leader, needs to fill this out. If you have any questions, please reach out to hopegroups@hopewdm.org.

This study primarily uses BibleProject resources.

Session 1:

INTRO TO THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 5-7](#)



VIDEOS

- [Intro to the Sermon on the Mount](#) (5:19)
- [Matthew 5-7: Sermon Overview](#) (9:05)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Has familiarity with Jesus' words ever dulled their impact in your life? What would it look like to read the Sermon on the Mount with fresh eyes and an open heart?
2. The structure of the Sermon on the Mount is layered, intentional, and artistic. What does that reveal about Jesus as a teacher? How might understanding the structure help you engage with the message more deeply?
3. This sermon begins with blessings for society's outsiders and ends with a call to build your life on Jesus' words. What does that beginning-to-end arc reveal about the kind of life Jesus is inviting us into?
4. The Sermon on the Mount redefines righteousness as right relationships with God and others. How does that challenge the way righteousness is often understood—or misunderstood—today?
5. Jesus doesn't just offer moral advice—he casts a vision of a radically different kind of world. What's one area of life where you hope Jesus' kingdom vision will reshape your thinking or habits?
6. Why do you think Jesus' teachings in this sermon have remained so famous—and so controversial—for over 2,000 years? What makes them both beautiful and difficult?
7. Jesus speaks to a crowd of everyday people and tells them they are the light of the world and the salt of the earth. What might it have felt like to hear that, and how might those same words apply to you today?
8. This sermon invites people to a life of deeper transformation, not just outward behavior. What's the difference between following rules and being remade from the inside out? Which one are you more familiar with?
9. Jesus' teachings often reverse our expectations, calling the poor blessed, elevating mercy, and inviting enemy love. Why do you think the way of the Kingdom is so upside-down from the way of the world?
10. After watching this overview, what question or theme are you most curious (or nervous) to explore in the coming sessions? What do you hope to gain or wrestle with as you walk through the Sermon on the Mount together?

Immersive Reading: The Sermon, Repeated

- ## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Kicking Off a Year With Sermon on the Mount](#) (56 min)
- [The Hebrew Bible's Connection to the Sermon on the Mount](#) (43 min)
- [The Sermon on the Mount's Place in the Gospel of Matthew](#) (40 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5](#)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 6](#)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 7](#)

- What Is the Sermon on the Mount?

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Session 2:

THE BEATITUDES

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 5:1-16](#)

The Sermon on the Mount

5 ¹One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, ²and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

3 “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

4 God blesses those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

5 God blesses those who are humble,
for they will inherit the whole earth.

6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,
for they will be satisfied.

7 God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.

9 God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.

10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

11 “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers.

12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Teaching about Salt and Light

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

14 “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. **16** In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.



VIDEOS

- [The Beatitudes](#) (6:34)
- [Matthew 5:3-16: Beatitudes](#) (10:12)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do you think Jesus started his most important sermon with blessings for people the world often ignores? What assumptions about blessing and success does this challenge in your own life?
2. Which of the Beatitudes feels most personal to you right now, and why? How would your view of success or the “good life” change if you believed these are the people closest to God’s kingdom?
3. What do you hunger and thirst for most in your relationships, and how closely does it match what Jesus is talking about?
4. Jesus says the pure in heart will see God. What do you think it means to be “pure in heart” when we all have mixed motives?
5. Mercy is framed as extravagant kindness. Can you think of a time when someone showed you mercy beyond what you deserved? How did it affect you?
6. Peacemaking is not peacekeeping. It involves entering conflict for the sake of justice. Why is that both risky and necessary?
7. Jesus says peacemakers will be misunderstood, insulted, and even persecuted. Have you ever experienced resistance while trying to do what was right? What helped you endure?
8. Jesus calls this group of outcasts the salt of the earth and the light of the world. What does that say about how God works, and what might keep you from embracing that identity fully? What does it look like to “preserve,” as salt does?
9. In what area of your life is God calling you to let your light shine more openly for the sake of others and God’s glory? Where does the world need more light? How can you bring it there?
10. What’s one tangible act of mercy, justice, or peacemaking you could do this week that brings light to others?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Silence and Stillness Before God

- Spend 5–10 minutes each day in quiet stillness with God. Don’t bring an agenda—just sit, breathe deeply, and be present with the one who fully sees and loves you. Try to be “God-conscious,” meditating on his presence. You can use a simple phrase like “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10) or another Bible verse to gently guide your focus. Let silence, stillness, and listening shape your time with God.
- The Beatitudes invite us to humility, longing, and openness. Stillness helps you embody the posture of those Jesus says are truly blessed. It invites us to learn from and seek his heart.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [What Does “Blessed” Mean? The Beatitudes Pt. 1](#) (33 min)
- [The Powerless, Grieving, and Unimportant: The Beatitudes Pt. 2](#) (40 min)
- [The Type of People God Is Forming: The Beatitudes Pt. 3](#) (46 min)
- [What Does It Mean to Make Peace? The Beatitudes Pt. 4](#) (44 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:1-12 Pt. 1](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:1-12 Pt. 2](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:1-12 Pt. 3](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:13-16](#) Episodes

Articles:

- The Sermon on the Mount and Jesus as the New Moses
- What Does It Mean to Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness?

NOTES:

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Session 3:

JESUS FULFILLS THE LAW

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 5:17-20](#)

Teaching about the Law

¹⁷ Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose.

¹⁸ I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God's law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. ¹⁹ So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God's laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

²⁰ "But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!



VIDEOS

- [Jesus Fulfills the Law](#) (6:10)
- [Matthew 5:17-20: Righteousness and Jesus' Bible](#) (6:27)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus says he didn't come to dismantle the Torah but to fill it full. What do you think that means practically, and how does it challenge common views of Jesus as either throwing out the Old Testament or strictly enforcing it?
2. How do you think righteousness (doing right by God and others) differs from just following religious rules? What's one relationship in your life where you're being called to practice righteousness?
3. Jesus says your righteousness must surpass that of the scribes and Pharisees. What do you think he means by that, and what's the danger of equating righteousness with rule-following rather than heart transformation?
4. Where are you tempted to settle for surface-level goodness rather than being truly transformed? What area of your life might Jesus be calling deeper?
5. Jesus claimed he was fulfilling Israel's story and showing what true partnership with God looks like. Do you see your life as part of that same story? Why or why not?
6. Jesus invites people to live by God's wisdom. What voices or habits sometimes shape your decisions more than God's wisdom? What would it look like to choose God's wisdom instead?

7. What does it mean to “meditate on Scripture day and night” in today’s world—and do you do it? How might this practice shape your understanding of righteousness?
8. How do you balance respecting Scripture’s authority while also recognizing its cultural context? Have you ever experienced a moment when a passage of Scripture suddenly felt alive or wise in a new way?
9. Jesus flips the social order, suggesting the “least” and “greatest” in the Kingdom are not who you’d expect. How does that disrupt conventional thinking, and how might it shape how you live and lead?
10. The video describes Jesus’ vision of righteousness as “more generous, more just, and more merciful than we could imagine.” Which of those qualities do you most need to grow in—and how can your group help each other live this out?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Lectio Divina: Meditating on Scripture

- Choose a short passage of Scripture (like Matthew 5:17-20) and slowly read it four times, following this pattern: Read. Reflect. Respond. Rest. First, read the passage slowly. Then, spend time reflecting on what you’ve just read. Write down anything that stood out. Next, respond by taking time to speak with God in prayer about the passage. Share your heart with him and ask him to reveal something new to you. Finally, rest and be silent. Listen for God’s voice and what he wants you to hear.
- This session explores Jesus’ fulfillment of the Torah. Lectio Divina is a method of prayerful reading of Scripture that helps you receive God’s word as wisdom for your life, not just information.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [The Salt of the Land and Light of the World](#) (46 min)
- [What Does Jesus Think of Old Testament Laws?](#) (47 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:17-20 Pt. 1](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:17-20 Pt. 2](#) Episodes

Articles:

- [The Sermon on the Mount and Jesus as the New David](#)
- [How Does Jesus Fulfill the Law?](#)

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Session 4:

WISDOM WITHIN LAWS ABOUT MURDER, ADULTERY, AND DIVORCE

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 5:21-32](#)

Teaching about Anger

²¹ “You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ ²² But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.

²³ “So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴ leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

²⁵ “When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. ²⁶ And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.

Teaching about Adultery

²⁷ “You have heard the commandment that says, ‘You must not commit adultery.’

²⁸ But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ So if your eye—even your good eye—causes you to lust, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ And if your hand—even your stronger hand—causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.

Teaching about Divorce

³¹ “You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’ ³² But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.



VIDEOS

- [Wisdom Within Laws About Murder, Adultery, and Divorce](#) (8:12)
- [Matthew 5:21-22: Murder and Contempt](#) (3:12)
- [Matthew 5:27-28: Adultery and Lust](#) (2:06)
- [Matthew 5:29-30: Eye and Hand Mutilation](#) (2:46)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus connects anger, insults, and murder as flowing from the same source: contempt for others. How often do we excuse anger or sarcasm without realizing the deeper damage it causes? Do you feel like this connection is fair?
2. Jesus says it's not just about avoiding murder—it's about rooting out contempt. Can you think of a time when your words or emotions caused harm, even if your actions didn't? What did that reveal about your heart?
3. Jesus doesn't say, "Don't ever be angry," but he does warn against where anger leads. What's the difference between righteous anger and destructive anger, and how can you recognize the difference in your own life?
4. Jesus says that lustful objectification strips people of their God-given dignity, even if no action is taken. How does this confront the modern assumptions, beliefs, and understandings of society?
5. In contrast to lust, Jesus calls us to a way of love that is sacrificial, honoring, and self-controlled. What does that look like in how we view relationships? How would our world change if everyone viewed each other as made in God's image?
6. Jesus uses intense imagery—gouging out an eye, cutting off a hand. What might he be warning us not to minimize or ignore in our own hearts? Why do you think we often treat internal temptations as less urgent than visible sins?
7. Jesus suggests that dealing with sin may require radical self-denial. What's one thing in your life—habit, influence, media, or routine—you might need to "cut off" to pursue holiness more fully?
8. Jesus challenges cultural assumptions about marriage, power, and roles. How does his teaching on divorce reveal his concern for the vulnerable, and how might we reflect that same care today?
9. Jesus criticizes those who follow the letter of the law but miss its heart. Where are you tempted to obey externally while harboring brokenness internally? What would deeper integrity look like?
10. Jesus is forming a people whose inner lives match their outward actions. What spiritual practices help you pursue that kind of wholeness, and how can your group support each other in that journey?

Confession and Repentance

- ## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [How Is Anger the Same as Murder?](#) (56 min)
- [Why Do the Beatitudes Matter for the Overworked and Hopeless?](#) (68 min)
- [Jesus' Vision for Sex and Desire](#) (47 min)
- [How Jesus Responded to the Divorce Debate](#) (45 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:21-26](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:27-30](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:31-32](#) Episode

- Divorce in the Bible: How Jesus Responded to the Debate

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Session 5:

WISDOM WITHIN LAWS ABOUT OATHS, RETALIATION, AND ENEMY LOVE

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 5:33-48](#)

Teaching about Vows

³³ "You have also heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not break your vows; you must carry out the vows you make to the Lord.' ³⁴ But I say, do not make any vows! Do not say, 'By heaven!' because heaven is God's throne. ³⁵ And do not say, 'By the earth!' because the earth is his footstool. And do not say, 'By Jerusalem!' for Jerusalem is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Do not even say, 'By my head!' for you can't turn one hair white or black. ³⁷ Just say a simple, 'Yes, I will,' or 'No, I won't.' Anything beyond this is from the evil one.

Teaching about Revenge

³⁸ "You have heard the law that says the punishment must match the injury: 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹ But I say, do not resist an evil person! If someone slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. ⁴⁰ If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. ⁴¹ If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. ⁴² Give to those who ask, and don't turn away from those who want to borrow.

Teaching about Love for Enemies

⁴³ "You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. ⁴⁶ If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. ⁴⁷ If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. ⁴⁸ But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.



VIDEOS

- [Wisdom Within Laws About Oaths, Retaliation, and Enemy Love](#) (8:09)
- [Matthew 5:33-37: Oaths and Truth-Telling](#) (2:59)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus says we shouldn't need oaths to prove our honesty. In what situations are you tempted to twist the truth or present a version of yourself that's not entirely real, and why?
2. Jesus calls his followers to a radically simple way of speaking: "Let your yes be yes." What's the connection between truthfulness and trust in relationships, communities, and spiritual leadership?

3. Jesus links manipulative or overly qualified speech to “the evil one.” Why do you think he sees false or performative speech as so spiritually dangerous?
4. Jesus isn’t just talking about avoiding lies—he’s inviting people into a culture of integrity. What does that kind of culture look like in a friendship, family, or church? Where do you most need to grow in honesty—with others, yourself, or God?
5. Jesus tells us to respond to injustice with creative, non-retaliatory love. Which of his examples (turning the cheek, giving your coat, going the extra mile) challenged you the most, and why?
6. What would it cost you to “go the second mile” in a current relationship or situation? What might be gained through that kind of generosity?
7. Jesus says to love your enemies and pray for those who mistreat you. Who might that be in your life—not just someone hostile, but someone you avoid, resent, or struggle to forgive?
8. Jesus says God gives sun and rain to both good and evil people. What does it mean to imitate that kind of indiscriminate generosity, and where might God be calling you to do it?
9. Jesus ends by saying, “Be complete as your heavenly Father is complete.” How does loving your enemies move you toward that kind of spiritual wholeness?
10. How might this teaching reshape the way you approach promises, casual commitments, or even social media posts? What’s one situation this week where you need the courage to speak truthfully and act generously?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Praying for Your Enemies

- Think of someone hard to love—someone you avoid, resent, or disagree with. Each day this week, pray for their well-being and ask God to bless them and help you see them through his eyes. Don’t try to change them in prayer—just ask God to transform your heart and relationship with that person.
- Jesus’ call to love enemies is one of the most challenging teachings in the sermon. This practice opens your heart to God’s radically generous love for all people.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [Why Does Jesus Say Not to Swear Oaths?](#) (46 min)
- [What Jesus Means by “Turn the Other Cheek”](#) (61 min)
- [Why Does Jesus Want Us to Love Our Enemies?](#) (51 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:33-37](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:38-42](#) Episodes
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 5:43-48](#) Episodes

Articles:

- What Jesus Meant By “Turn the Other Cheek” in Matthew 5:39

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Session 6:

WARNINGS ABOUT RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 6:1-4](#)

Teaching about Giving to the Needy

6¹ "Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. **2** When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. **3** But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. **4** Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.



VIDEOS

- [Warnings About Religious Practices](#) (6:43)
- [Matthew 6:1-4: Generosity and the True Reward](#) (4:26)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus warns about practicing righteousness to be seen by others. Why is it so tempting to let spiritual actions become performances—and how do we even recognize when that's happening?
2. What's the difference between living out your faith publicly and using it for validation? In what spiritual practice do you most need to check your motives right now?
3. Jesus calls his followers to give in secret when there's even a hint of hypocrisy. What do you think he's trying to protect in the giver's heart?
4. Jesus uses the image of blowing trumpets to describe performative generosity. What does that look like today—in church, online, or everyday life? How might pride disguise itself as righteousness in your own habits of giving or serving?
5. Have you ever experienced a moment when giving felt more about you than about love for others? What did you do with that realization?
6. Jesus says those who seek human praise have already received their reward. What "reward" do you think he's talking about—and how is God's reward different?
7. What does it mean to be "rewarded by your Father who sees in secret"? How could trust in that unseen reward reshape your daily habits of generosity?

8. Jesus isn't just warning about what we do, but why we do it. Why do you think motives matter so much to him? What helps you stay centered on love instead of approval?
9. What would change in your giving if it truly became a quiet act of worship instead of a moment for recognition? When have you experienced the joy of giving with no one else watching?
10. What does a community of humble, selfless giving look like—and how might your group grow in that kind of joyful, Spirit-led generosity together?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Secret Generosity

- Find a way to give this week that no one will know about. It might be money, time, help, or encouragement—just don't tell anyone. Let your generosity be an act of worship, not recognition. Offer it quietly and joyfully to the God who sees in secret.
- Jesus warns against doing good to be seen. Secret generosity trains you to care more about God's presence than people's applause.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [What "Hypocrite" Means to Jesus](#) (31 min)
- [Jesus' Surprising Warning About Religious Practices](#) (54 min)
- [Why Say "Kingdom of the Skies" Instead of "Kingdom of Heaven"? \(56 min\)](#)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 6:1-4 Episodes](#)

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Session 7:

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 6:5-18](#)

Teaching about Prayer and Fasting

⁵ "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

⁷ "When you pray, don't babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

⁹ Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,

may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.

May your will be done on earth,

as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need,

¹² and forgive us our sins,

as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation,

but rescue us from the evil one.

¹⁴ "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you.

¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

¹⁶ "And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting.

I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷ But when you fast,

comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸ Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.



VIDEOS

- [The Lord's Prayer](#) (9:22)
- [Matthew 6:9-13: The Prayer of Jesus](#) (6:16)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus calls God our Father—a term of both intimacy and shared identity. How does that reshape your view of God, yourself, and others?
2. The first three lines of the prayer focus entirely on God’s name, reign, and desire. How does that challenge the way you usually approach prayer, and what might it look like to start there in your own prayers?
3. How would you describe the difference between your kingdom and God’s kingdom? Where do you sense God inviting you to surrender your will more fully?
4. Why do you think Jesus teaches us to ask for daily provision instead of long-term security? In what area of life are you being invited to trust God for just enough today?
5. Jesus ties receiving forgiveness to extending it. How does that connection challenge you? Is there someone you need to forgive—not to excuse, but to release your right to get even?
6. Jesus acknowledges that life brings tests. What’s a recurring “test” or voice of temptation in your life? What does it look like to ask for protection and deliverance?
7. The prayer opens with both closeness (“Father”) and reverence (“in the skies”). How do you hold intimacy and awe together in your relationship with God?
8. The prayer contains seven requests, symbolizing completeness. What would it look like for your life to reflect the wholeness and balance modeled in this prayer?
9. If this prayer shaped not just your words but your habits, relationships, and desires, what would change?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Daily Prayer Using Jesus’ Words

- Pray the Lord’s Prayer slowly every day this week. After each line, pause and reflect—what is God showing you through this part of the prayer? Let Jesus’ words shape your own. Use this pattern to open your heart, express your needs, and stay connected to God.
- This session focuses on the Lord’s Prayer itself. Practicing it daily helps you internalize it as a way of thinking, living, and relating to God.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [How Does Jesus Teach Us to Pray? The Lord's Prayer Pt. 1](#) (59 min)
- [What Does "Hallowed Be Thy Name" Mean? The Lord's Prayer Pt. 2](#) (40 min)
- [What Does Jesus Mean by "Daily Bread"? The Lord's Prayer Pt. 3](#) (43 min)
- [What Forgiveness Is and Isn't: The Lord's Prayer Pt. 4](#) (65 min)
- [Does God Lead Us Into Temptation? The Lord's Prayer Pt. 5](#) (56 min)
- [Do Jesus' Teachings Conflict with Old Testament Violence?](#) (53 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 6:5-15 Episodes](#)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 6:16-18 Episode](#)

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Session 8:

WEALTH AND WORRY

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 6:19-34](#)

Teaching about Money and Possessions

¹⁹ "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

²² "Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. ²³ But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.

²⁵ "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸ "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰ And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹ "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴ "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today."



VIDEOS

- [Wealth and Worry](#) (6:46)
- [Matthew 6:19-23: True Wealth and Generosity](#) (5:47)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus says, “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” What does your use of time, money, and attention reveal about what you truly value?
2. Jesus warns that earthly treasure is fragile and fading. How do you typically seek security? What would it look like to find it in something eternal?
3. Jesus contrasts a “good eye” (generosity) with a “bad eye” (stinginess). How does the way you view others—and your stuff—reveal the state of your heart? What does it look like to have a scarcity mindset? What is Jesus calling us to instead?
4. Jesus says we can’t serve both God and wealth. Where in your life are those two loyalties most likely to compete? How do you tell when money is starting to master you?
5. Jesus’ answer to worry is not passivity but priority: “Seek first the Kingdom.” What does that actually look like in your everyday life?
6. Jesus invites us to trust God for daily needs like food and clothing. What’s one specific area where you’re being challenged to trust God more today?
7. Jesus says, “Don’t worry about tomorrow.” What keeps you from being present with God today? What practices help you live more grounded and less anxious?
8. Jesus reframes generosity as a way of seeing clearly. What habits or influences cloud your perspective, and what helps clarify your focus on God’s kingdom?
9. How might redefining wealth as “acts of mercy, justice, and love” reshape your goals or lifestyle? What does it mean to intentionally store up treasure in heaven?
10. Who in your life models this kind of generous, uncluttered Kingdom living—and what would it look like for you to take one step closer to that this week?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Sabbath Simplicity and Thankfulness

- Take one day (or half-day) this week to pause striving and simplify your life. Don’t buy anything, work, or scroll. Instead, rest in God’s presence, enjoy what you already have, and let contentment take root. Count your blessings, the things you are thankful for, to help cultivate a grateful heart. Notice where anxiety or impulse shows up during this time and release it to God. Recite Psalm 23:1, “The Lord is my shepherd; I have all that I need,” to help focus you on God’s provision.
- Jesus teaches us to seek God’s kingdom over material security. Sabbath simplicity helps free your heart from worry and recenters it on God’s abundance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [What Kind of Treasure Is in Heaven?](#) (56 min)
- [How Is the Eye the Lamp of the Body?](#) (39 min)
- [What Does Jesus Say About Money? Studio Conversation](#) (42 min)
- [What Does Jesus Say About Money? Featured Episode](#) (61 min)
- [What Does Jesus Say About Anxiety? Studio Conversation](#) (71 min)
- [What Does Jesus Say About Anxiety? Featured Episode](#) (62 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 6:19-24 Episodes](#)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 6:25-43 Episodes](#)

Articles:

- What Are “Rewards in Heaven” in the Bible?
- What Matthew 6:22-23 (The Eye Is the Lamp of the Body) Means
- What Matthew 6:33 (Seek First the Kingdom of God) Means

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Session 9:

WISDOM IN RELATIONSHIPS

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 7:1-12](#)

Do Not Judge Others

7 ¹"Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. ²For you will be treated as you treat others. The standard you use in judging is the standard by which you will be judged.

³"And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own? ⁴How can you think of saying to your friend, 'Let me help you get rid of that speck in your eye,' when you can't see past the log in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in your own eye; then you will see well enough to deal with the speck in your friend's eye.

⁶"Don't waste what is holy on people who are unholy. Don't throw your pearls to pigs! They will trample the pearls, then turn and attack you.

Effective Prayer

⁷"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

⁹"You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? ¹⁰Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! ¹¹So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

The Golden Rule

¹²"Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets."



VIDEOS

- [Wisdom in Relationships](#) (5:14)
- [Matthew 7:1-2: Don't Judge](#) (2:58)
- [Matthew 7:6: Pearls Before Pigs](#) (2:23)
- [Matthew 7:12: The Golden Rule](#) (2:50)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus says not to judge others. What kind of judgment do you think he's warning against—discernment, condemnation, superiority, or something else? How do you recognize when discernment crosses into judgmentalism?
2. Jesus uses the image of a beam in your eye to describe blind spots. What's one area in your life where you've realized you were blind to your own faults? How did you first notice it? How did it change you?

3. Jesus connects the measure you use on others to the measure God will use on you. How does that raise the stakes for how you treat people? What kind of grace would you want God to use with you, and are you offering it to others?
4. Why do you think judging others is such a common temptation? What would change if churches became known for empathy and understanding instead of criticism?
5. Jesus warns against offering wisdom to people who aren't ready to receive it. When have you tried to help someone but realized afterward they weren't open? What did that experience teach you about discernment?
6. What do you think the "pearls" represent in Jesus' teaching about not throwing them before pigs? Why might Jesus put this teaching right after the warning about judgment?
7. How do you discern when to speak truth, and when silence might be more loving or wise? What helps you tell the difference between courage and impulsiveness?
8. Jesus says to ask, seek, and knock, and promises that God responds generously. Where in your life are you currently seeking wisdom or clarity? What holds you back from asking God first?
9. Jesus summarizes this whole section with the Golden Rule. What does it look like to treat someone with the kind of grace and patience you'd want in your worst moment?
10. What would it take for your small group to become a place where people feel safe to be real—where confession is met with kindness, not judgment? How could that kind of culture change lives?
11. The Golden Rule sums up the law and the prophets. Why do you think this teaching is central to God's vision for humanity? What would it look like to treat someone in your life right now the way you want to be treated?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Judgment Fast

- Jesus challenges us to trade judgment for mercy and grace. But judgment can be sneaky—it often hides in our thoughts, words, and tone. It shows up when we criticize, gossip, label, compare, or even mentally rank others. This practice is a fast—not from food, but from something even more tricky: judgment.
- For one day this week, commit to a 24-hour judgment fast. That means avoiding criticism of others, gossip, comparison, unfair labeling, and even judging yourself harshly. Instead, pay attention to when you want to assign motives when all you can do is describe behavior. Get curious about others and be slow to speak in situations that frustrate you.

- At the end of the day, spend some time in prayer and write down how the day went. What did you notice? When was it most difficult? Did anything surprise you? What helped avoid judgment?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Podcasts:

- [Is There Ever a Time to Judge Others?](#) (48 min)
- [Why Does Jesus Talk About Pearls and Pigs?](#) (51 min)
- [What Does Jesus Mean by Ask, Seek, and Knock?](#) (54 min)
- [What Makes the Golden Rule the Greatest Command?](#) (55 min)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 7:1-6 Episodes](#)
- [The Ten Minute Bible Hour: Matthew 7:7-12 Episode](#)

Articles:

- What Matthew 7:1-5 (Judge Not Lest Ye Be Judged) Means

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Session 10:

THE CHOICE

BIBLE READING: [Matthew 7:13-29](#)

The Narrow Gate

¹³ "You can enter God's Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴ But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

The Tree and Its Fruit

¹⁵ "Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. ¹⁶ You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. ¹⁹ So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

True Disciples

²¹ "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²² On judgment day many will say to me, 'Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.' ²³ But I will reply, 'I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God's laws.'

Building on a Solid Foundation

²⁴ "Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. ²⁵ Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. ²⁶ But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. ²⁷ When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ for he taught with real authority—quite unlike their teachers of religious law.



VIDEOS

- [The Choice](#) (6:55)
- [Matthew 7:24-27: The Two Houses](#) (2:59)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Jesus says the path to life is narrow and few find it. What are the biggest temptations in your life that pull you toward the “wide road”? What’s one practical step you can take this week to walk the narrow road with more intention?
2. Jesus warns that some people will appear spiritual but lead others away from truth. How do you discern healthy spiritual leadership—whether in others or in yourself? What kind of fruit do you hope your life produces?
3. Jesus says many will do mighty works “in his name” but still not be known by him. How does that shift your understanding of success in the Christian life? What helps you stay connected to Jesus personally, not just religiously?
4. The wise builder hears and obeys Jesus’ words. What’s a teaching from the Sermon on the Mount you’ve heard, but struggled to live out? What would it look like to start putting it into practice?
5. When storms hit—suffering, loss, stress—what reveals whether your life is built on rock or sand? What foundation have you been building on lately, and what changes might Jesus be inviting you to make?
6. Jesus doesn’t end with ideas—he ends with a choice. Looking back on the whole Sermon on the Mount, what are one or two things you feel called to do differently? What holds you back from responding fully to Jesus’ invitation?
7. Jesus says false prophets will be known by their fruit. In your life, what kinds of spiritual “fruit” are most visible? What kind do you want to grow—and what practices will help cultivate it?
8. Jesus invites us to build our lives on a foundation that can endure storms. What spiritual habits help you stay rooted in him when life gets hard? Where is God asking you to rebuild, repair, or reinforce your foundation?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Creating a Rule of Life

- Write a short, simple “Rule of Life”—a set of intentional rhythms and practices that will shape how you follow Jesus in your everyday life. This is not a list of rigid rules or lofty ideals. It’s a realistic, personal guide that helps you stay rooted in Christ and live out his teachings. Include practices around prayer, Scripture, rest, generosity, relationships, and how you spend your time. Think of it as a spiritual framework, supporting your growth and helping you live fully in God’s kingdom.
- Throughout this study, we’ve explored Jesus’ vision for life in God’s kingdom:
 - **Listening to Jesus’ voice** in a noisy world.
 - **Intentionally praying**, not for performance but for presence.

- o **Reflecting on emotions**, letting them surface and submitting them to Jesus' transforming power.
 - o **Forgiving, serving others**, and **pursuing righteousness** not just outwardly, but from the heart.
 - o **Fasting** from what distracts and **giving generously** of oneself and resources.
- A Rule of Life brings those threads together. It's a way to say, "This is how I intend to live out the teachings of Jesus in my season of life, with my personality, and in my circumstances." Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount with a call to build our lives on his words—not just to hear them, but to do them. This practice gives you a practical way to begin doing just that.
- Start small. Be honest. Write something you can return to and refine. Let your Rule of Life serve as both a foundation and a compass—helping you walk with Jesus with intention, consistency, and grace. A Rule of Life is not meant to be a burden, but a blessing. It helps you continue to grow in your relationship with God.
- Use the following question prompts to help guide you in creating your Rule of Life.

My Rule of Life

STEP 1: Reflect on What Matters

- What is Jesus inviting me into right now? (Write a sentence or two about what's stirring in your heart after this study.)
- What helps me stay close to Jesus? (Think about habits, people, or places that draw you near to God.)
- What distracts me or pulls me away from living in God's kingdom? (Name things you may need to fast from, limit, or release.)

STEP 2: Choose Your Rhythms

AREA	MY RHYTHM OR PRACTICE	FREQUENCY
Prayer		
Scripture		
Sabbath Rest		
Worship		
Relationships & Community		
Generosity & Service		
Other		

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- ["The Good and Beautiful Life" by James Bryan Smith](#)
- ["The Divine Conspiracy" by Dallas Willard](#)
- ["The Cost of Discipleship" by Dietrich Bonhoeffer](#)



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