

Guided Bible Study

During the time we cannot meet publicly due to the Corona Virus emergency, Rick is going to post a guided Bible study on here to help fill the void left by not having Sunday School and Wednesday night classes. We encourage you to read the passage in the Bible together with your family. Questions and brief comments to help guide your study appear here. We are going to feature Jesus' SERMON ON THE MOUNT from Matthew chapters 5-7. We will post the study for a new section of this passage each week.

MATTHEW 5.1-16

Matthew 5.1-2: These people were eager for Jesus to teach them. Are we eager to study and learn from Him through the Bible?

Matthew 5.3: Does it say "blessed are the poor"? Certainly many of the poor followed Jesus and He was compassionate toward them. His church in the early days and today, when functioning at its best, reaches out to help the poor. But is this verse talking about being poor economically as opposed to rich or some where in between? What does it say? What does "poor in spirit mean"? (Discuss) Many scholars think this is talking about that state of mind that realizes our SPIRITUAL poverty, our need for God's grace. (Consider Romans 3.10 and 23 and Ephesians 2.8)

Matthew 5.4: Certainly we see crying and pain vanquished when we go to heaven. However, this is probably referring to mourning over our sin and being comforted when we get saved by Jesus. Does it bother us, sadden us, when we sin? Paul talks in II Corinthians about a "godly sorrow that leads to repentance".

Matthew 5.5: Do you want to know what God's will for your life is? Do you want to be led and spiritually fed by Jesus? (Discuss) That's the idea of being meek. By "inherit the earth" it probably means things will turn out all right for us in the long run.

Matthew 5.6: People have been really stocking up on food lately in case they get confined to home. The thought of hunger is a driving force. Do we have the same

desire for righteousness? Do we seek to live righteous lives? Do we promote righteousness instead of just going with whatever the world wants? Do we seek the righteousness that comes through faith in Jesus that results in God counting us as being righteous? (See Romans 3.21-26)

Matthew 5.7: Are we merciful to people? I just read about an 86 year old truck driver who was hauling potatoes. The little town where he loaded had no eating establishments. He went to some fast food places along the way and they wouldn't serve him because he tried to walk up to the drive through window. He finally came upon a restaurant that not only was glad to serve him but various people in there paid his bill. They were showing mercy. When you leave a little for someone else at the store right now, that's a way to show mercy. **Discuss some other ways you can show mercy.**

Matthew 5.8: How's your "heart"? We can show outward righteousness but what are our innermost thoughts and desires. Do you measure up or fall short of having a pure heart? Are you ready to "see God", to stand in His presence with your heart being centered on what it is now?

Matthew 5.9: Do you stir up fights or calm things down? Are you constantly involved in "drama" (in life, not theatrical productions) or do you refuse to get drawn into it even by family and friends? This includes online! Are you a peacemaker?

Matthew 5.10-12: Have you experienced persecution and insults for your faith? We increasingly do in this country, particularly if we stand for Biblical morality. However, thanks to our religious liberty we don't have it as bad as Christians do in some other countries. Take a few minutes to pray for persecuted Christians around the world. Then discuss how to handle insults and persecution we might encounter.

Matthew 5.13: Salt can both preserve things and make them taste better. It in some cases can help purify things. Jesus wants us to have that effect on the world around us. Discuss how we can be "salt" to our community.

Matthew 5.14-16: Sin makes this world a dark place. Problems like the one we all are facing now make this world a dark place. Jesus calls us the light of the world.

Elsewhere He referred to Himself as being “light”. How can we share Jesus’ love and Jesus’ gospel and bring “light” to the world around us?