

An Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

Suggested Questions based on Sunday 5 September's talk

- Visit the Church Website's homepage to view Sunday's service on Facebook or Youtube).
- You may find it useful to use the sermon notes to help discuss various questions. These can be found on the Inspiring Resources Page.

To start

Reflect on the ethics, morals and values that have shaped your life and the decisions you've made over your lifetime so far. If able, choose a couple of them and share with the group why you have allowed these to shape your life in the way you have.

Setting 'The Sermon on the Mount' in Context

Wilkins, a Bible commentator writes: *The initial phase of Jesus' ministry has been narrated briefly yet powerfully [in Matthew chapter 4]: Jesus has announced his kingdom mission (4:17), called his first coworkers (4: 18-22), and conducted an extraordinary teaching, preaching and healing tour of Galilee (4:22-25). Matthew now records an extensive message that develops in detail the kind of life available to those who respond to the arrival of God's kingdom.*

- What purpose do you think chapter 4 serves in preparing for the Sermon on the Mount Teaching?

The Sermon on the Mount

Read Matthew chapters 5-7 together as a Group (this will take 20-30 minutes).

As you read it, ask yourself:

- What aspects of this passage resonate with you?
- What aspects of this passage are you not sure about?

Make a note of these so these can be discussed as this Teaching series progresses.

Sunday's Bible Passage

Read Matthew 5: 1-2

In Sunday's Sermon, Tim highlighted three things about these two verses.

First, we have the geographical setting of the Mountain.

- Reflect on some of the Mountain settings found in Scripture (e.g. Exodus 19; 1 Kings 19: 16-46; Matthew 15: 29-39; Luke 22: 39-46). What importance does the setting contribute to the encounter with God?

Second, we discover that in the context of teaching, Jesus 'sits' down.

- In Jesus' cultural setting, what is the significance of Jesus 'sitting down'?
- What importance do we give today to the posture of people 'teaching' us about God? Should we give this importance? Why? Why not?

Third, these verses introduce us to two of the three primary groups of people that surrounded Jesus during his ministry, namely the Crowd and the Disciples.

- What is the difference between being part of the Crowd and being a Disciple?
- At what point does a person become a Disciple?
- What does living as a disciple of Jesus involve?

To conclude

Learning to live lives as Jesus' Disciples is a high calling and at times will conflict with the World's ethics and morals.

- What Ethical and Moral Values can you think of where there is tension and conflict between the World and being a Disciple of Jesus?

Make a note of these so these can be discussed as this Teaching series progresses.

Prayer to finish

God be in my head, and in my understanding;
God be in my eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart, and in my thinking;
God be at my end, and at my departing.

Old Sarum Prayer