

THE GOOD LIFE REDEFINED

MATTHEW 5:7-12

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – SEPTEMBER 22, 2024

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 5:7-12 ESV

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

When most people think of “the good life,” what are the things that come to mind?

SERMON RECAP

- “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”
 - Happy are the compassionate, the sympathetic...happy are the people who are concerned about others in need. Christians living the good life are known for helping others in need.
 - It’s not the easy life, it’s not the convenient life, it’s not the carefree life...it’s the Christlike life, and it’s so much better.
- “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”
 - The word for pure in the original language means to be clean...to be free from adulterating matter.
 - A pure heart seeks God above all. Those who seek God with a pure heart will see God, and this is happiness!
- “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”
 - As children, as sons and daughters, of God, we spread this good news about peace with God.
 - We walk into a world where people are rebelling against God, and we bring the good news that eternal peace with God is possible through Jesus’ death on the cross.
- “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
 - Happy are the persecuted, which means harassed, pressed on, pursued by people who want to drive you out and destroy your reputation, if not your life...Jesus says, “That’s happiness.”
 - Happy are you when others revile you...Happy are you when people lie about you in all kinds of ways...Jesus gives a command here: rejoice and be glad when people attack you!?
 - Jesus says, ‘Blessed are those who are persecuted in general,’ but, ‘Blessed are those who are persecuted/reviled/slandered because of righteousness and obedience to Me.’

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read Matthew 5:7-12 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - What does showing and receiving mercy look like?
 - What do you think of when you think about purity?
 - Besides Jesus, what peacemakers do you know about who were persecuted, and how did they respond to persecution?
 - How would you summarize Matthew 5:7-12?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. Merciful – Read Matthew 9:27, 15:22, 17:15, 20:30-31, and Matthew 18:21-35 (verse 33)

- What examples of mercy do you find in these passages?
 - What does it mean that the merciful will receive mercy?
2. Pure in Heart – Read Matthew 23:25-26 and Psalm 24:3-6
 - How were the Pharisees contradicting biblical purity? Describe their public and private persona.
 - How does Psalm 24 describe purity and what does it take to be clean?
 3. Peacemakers, Joy, and Persecution – Read Ephesians 6:15, Romans 5:1, Hebrews 12:14, Ephesians 4:1-3, Luke 15:32, Revelation 19:7, 1 Peter 1:8, 2 Timothy 3:12
 - How does peace relate to joy and how does it relate to persecution?
 - What does it mean to find joy in persecution and what is the result of doing it?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Seek mercy – Be merciful!
 - How have you seen and experienced God’s mercy in your life?
 - Where might you need to be a little more merciful with others, to those who are suffering or to those who have sinned against you?
 - How can your genuine mercy and concern for others in need contribute to your witness?
 - How is your Church Group merciful to one another and to the world around you?
2. Want purity – Be clean!
 - What comes to mind when you think about pure living?
 - In what areas might you need to pursue the purity of heart?
 - How can being pure (clean) contribute to your witness?
 - What examples do you see where your Church Group is more like the children of God than the Pharisees?
3. Desire peace – Look for joy in persecution!
 - How are you a peacemaker in your speech, actions, and social media?
 - How are you being persecuted and where do you go to find joy when you feel persecution?
 - How are you living the life redefined by Jesus in the Beatitudes to seek heaven’s reward?
 - How can your Church Group love the world who might be persecuting our Christian values?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

SUPPORT FOSTER CHILDREN | Your Church Group can play a vital role in supporting foster care families and children. Don’t wait to take the next step and learn more about fostering, mentoring youth aging out of foster care, providing support to a foster family, and other ways to get involved at mcleanbible.org/foster.

GLOBAL OUTREACH PRAYER FOCUS | We want regular global prayer to be a rhythm in our Church Groups. Throughout the year, the current week’s prayer focus is outlined at mcleanbible.org/goprayer. Join us this week as we pray for Türkiye, a country where less than 1% of the population claim to be a Christian.