

# The Sermon on the Mount : The Beatitudes (Matt 5:1-12)

## Welcome (10 mins)

If you were building a dream team to work with you on your dream job, what qualities would you look for in your team?

## Worship (10 mins)

**Read:** Psalm 67

**Note:** Notice how the psalm starts with us and moves to all the peoples and all nations. As we worship today let our worship move beyond us to those around us, and to the ends of the world. Maybe sing the song with a particular person or group of people in mind.

**Pray:** Invite God to be present as you worship through His Holy Spirit, and to reveal to bless each person in the room, and through them bless those in the wider communities we come from.

**Sing:** [The Blessing](#) by Kari Jobe ([chords](#))

## Word (30 mins)

*This is one of Jesus' most famous sermons spanning chapters 5-7 of Matthew's Gospel. In the sermon, Jesus describes what a life following him looks like. The standards are high, but in verses 3-10 Jesus lays out a surprising roadmap for blessing in his kingdom...*

1. On a large piece of paper make two columns, one column titled "Qualifications" and the other, "Blessings". Working through verses 3-10, list qualifications and corresponding blessings that Jesus lays out for life in his kingdom.
2. Thinking back to the qualities you'd want in your own dream team, what's surprising about the "qualifications" Jesus lays out here?

3. John Stott describes being poor in spirit as a recognition of our spiritual poverty and our complete dependence on God for everything. Why do you think Jesus lays out being 'poor in spirit' as the primary qualification for blessing in his kingdom?
4. As you look down the first column, how do these 'qualifications' relate to each other? How could you describe the progression from beginning to end?
5. What are some of the ways we typically respond when confronted with the realities of our own imperfection?
6. In these 'qualifications' for blessing in his kingdom, Jesus lays out a totally different path for dealing with the reality of our imperfection. What might it look like to use this roadmap in your own life?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Take some time to reflect on the 'qualifications' for blessing in the kingdom. In the silence, you might like to pray 'Come Holy Spirit' and ask if there are any he particularly wants to highlight for you: are there areas in which you need to repent and receive His forgiveness and help? Are there areas where you are being invited to receive these blessings?

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Go around the group and with a one or two sentence prayer ask the Holy Spirit to help you live out a particular beatitude with a particular person or group in mind.

# The Sermon on the Mount : Salt and Light (Matt 5:13-16)

## Welcome (10 mins)

Can you think of a person who has been a beacon of light, either in your life or to those around them? What made them that way?

## Worship (10 mins)

**Read:** Psalm 119:105

**Note:** This psalm is seeking out the Lord for wisdom and guidance through his word. As we come to worship Him, let us come in faith that God's word will show us how to navigate the world we live in.

**Pray:** Invite the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Scripture so that we may be able to live our lives as people who bring light to the world around us.

**Sing:** [Holy and Anointed One \(chords\)](#)

## Word (30 mins)

1. Jesus gives two "You are" statements describing those who follow him. What are they?
2. Both salt and light have many important characteristics and purposes. List as many of these as you can. You might like to brainstorm these on two big pieces of paper.
3. Work your way through these lists. What is Jesus saying about the characteristics and purposes of those who follow him?
4. What does Jesus say about salt that loses its saltiness?
5. What does that mean for us? Do we take our call to 'be salty' seriously?
6. What characteristic of light does Jesus draw our attention to in verse 15 and what therefore is his expectation of us as those who follow him (verse 16)?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

As followers of Jesus, this passage is describing us, describing you, as salt and light. Light a candle or many candles in the room and reflect on what being a lamp for Jesus means for us. Take some salt, feel it, taste it, and reflect on how we are the salt of the earth. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us where we need to be salty to flavour and preserve society (keep it from going bad) and where we need to be the beacon of light in our daily routines.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Jesus' expectation is that in being the light of the world, people would see our good deeds and praise our Father in heaven. What good things can we do that will make people stop and think about the goodness of our God? Individually? As Christ Church? As the wider church?

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Jesus Fulfills the Law

### (Matt 5:17-20)

#### Welcome (10 mins)

What was the rule most broken or neglected in your home growing up?

#### Worship (10 mins)

**Read:** Psalm 1

**Consider:** Proverbs 1:7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. In this psalm and proverb, we see that we find a posture toward God's word and law which leads to freedom but starts out in humility and reverence towards the Lord.

**Pray:** Invite the Holy Spirit to renew our minds, so that we may be able to humbly pursue Christ in the way of righteousness.

**Sing:** [Holy Forever](#) ([chords](#))

#### Word (30 mins)

In this passage Jesus mentions "the Law and the Prophets" referring to the two major, earliest parts of the Jewish Scriptures, their whole Bible and our Old Testament.

1. What misunderstanding do Jesus' Jewish hearers have in verse 17 about what he came to do? How does Jesus correct them?
2. Jesus says three potentially very surprising things about the law in verse 18, 19 and 20. Can you summarise each of them in a few words?
3. How does this high emphasis on the law leave you feeling?

4. What clues are given in verse 17 and 18 to how we obtain a righteousness that surpasses the pharisees?
5. How does Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection fulfill the law and prophets?
6. How does what Jesus says here help us to engage with the Old Testament?

#### Wonder (5-10 mins)

Faced with these high standards in the law we can veer either towards hopelessness or pride in our own abilities. Tim Keller says "The gospel is neither religion nor irreligion, but something else entirely - a third way of relating to God through grace." Invite the Holy Spirit to highlight to you the idols you can cling to for your own 'righteousness' - the things you look to for approval and acceptance and spend time confessing them to him, either out loud or in pairs.

#### Witness (5-10 mins)

It's often said: "I like the God of the New Testament but not the God of the Old." How can this passage equip you to help answer an objection like this. Practice giving an answer to someone else in your group. One of our outreach partners is CMJ (Church's Ministry to the Jews): feel free to contact Pete Houston at [peter@cmj-sa.org](mailto:peter@cmj-sa.org) if you'd like to explore this further.

# The Sermon on the Mount : Anger and Contempt (Matt 5:21-26)

## Welcome (10 mins)

How did your parents settle disputes between you and your brother/sister or friends growing up?

## Word (30 mins)

1. What new standard of right and wrong is Jesus creating (vs. 21-26)?
2. How does he link anger and murder? Why? What inner attitudes is he stressing?
3. Offering your gift at the altar would have been an act of worship. Why do you think it's important to reconcile with someone you have wronged (v.23) before coming before God in worship?
4. Who is Jesus' focus on in verse 25 - the accuser or the accused? Who is to be responsible for seeking reconciliation?
5. How does this go against the grain of our instinctive response when we have been accused of something? How does it fit with the wider pattern of Jesus' radical teaching here?
6. How easy do you find it to say sorry and ask for forgiveness?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Ask the Holy Spirit to highlight if there's anyone you've wronged with whom you need to seek reconciliation. Spend some time asking for forgiveness before coming to the Lord in worship.

1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

## Witness (5-10 mins)

We will all face relational challenges in our Monday to Fridays. These provide us with an incredible opportunity to be the salt and light that Jesus says we are, yet we all know how easy it is to follow the pattern of the world in how we deal with them.

In pairs, pray into any particular situations where you have that opportunity to be salt and light.

## Worship (10 mins)

Due to the nature of this teaching we have moved worship to the end of the section.

**Read** Romans 12:1 In view of God's mercy...

**Sing:** [Lord I need you](#) ([chords](#))

Take this time in worship to ask the Holy Spirit to give you the strength for the hard task Jesus calls us to and for the soft hearts.

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Lust and Divorce

### (Matt 5:27-32)

#### Welcome (10 mins)

What is your favourite love story; what makes a great love story?

#### Worship (10 mins)

Read: Psalm 51

Consider: David wrote this psalm after being confronted on his adultery. He would become known as a man after God's own heart. Not because of his lack of failures, but his response to his shortcomings and his dependence on God.

Sing: [O Come to the Altar](#) ([Chords](#))

#### Word (30 mins)

1. Jesus again creates a new standard of right and wrong in vv.27-30. What is it?
2. How does he link lust and adultery? Why? What inner attitudes is he stressing?
3. What does Jesus' use of exaggerated language in v.29-30 teach us about how seriously he treats these sins?
4. Unfaithfulness in marriage can lead to devastating consequences. How readily do we believe that lust can have the same consequences? Why or why not?
5. How does this clash with what our culture teaches?
6. If these standards are like a doctor's thermometer to show us how sick we are, what is the medicine needed to heal us? How does that relate to the Beatitudes (vv.3-10)?

#### Wonder (5-10 mins)

At this point you might want to split into gender groups. Jesus explains to us that it is better for us to lose an eye or a hand than for it to cause us to stumble. In your groups, take a moment to close your eyes and ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there is anything you are looking at or doing with your hands that you need to repent of. It might be helpful to close your eyes or look at your hands. The purpose of this is not to feel shame but rather an invitation to radically turn away from sin. James 5:16 says "therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." Take this opportunity to confess anything that He brings to mind, either privately to the Lord, or if you're comfortable with the group.

#### Witness (5-10 mins)

Here at CCK we take the covenant of marriage very seriously; we want to be building up and strengthening marriages in our community. How can you encourage and spur on the marriages around you? If you are married, how can you strengthen your own marriage? The Marriage course is a wonderful investment for any couple, why not consider joining us for the next course? (starting 2 August 2023)

# The Sermon on the Mount : Oaths (Matt 5:33 -37)

## Welcome (10 mins)

When do you find it easy to keep your word, and when do you find it most difficult?

## Worship (10 mins)

Today we're going to be thinking about letting our yes be yes and our no be no.

**Read:** Proverbs 30:5

**Sing:** [Yes and Amen](#) ([chords](#))

**Consider:** The beauty that our God is a God of his word, faithful forever, His yes always yes, His word always true.

## Word (30 mins)

1. What was the established understanding of the law regarding making oaths (v33)? What new standard does Jesus instigate?
2. Jesus' list of things not to swear by is comprehensive. What reasons does he give for not swearing at all?
3. Jesus is criticising the Pharisees' tendency to swear by something less than God in order to have a smaller degree of accountability. What does swearing by something hope to achieve? What's problematic about this? How does swearing by x, y, or z undermine trust?
4. Imagine a world where people's yes was yes and their no, no. What would it be like to live in a world like this? At home? At church? In our workplaces? In society?
5. What would it look like in your own life to let your yes be yes and your no be no? What fruit do you think it would bear?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Spend some time asking the Holy Spirit to bring to light areas of your life you find it difficult to keep your word, and in silence, confess them to the Lord. In Psalm 15, King David asks the question "Lord, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain?" The response in verse 4 is "the one...who keeps an oath even when it hurts". Is there someone you need to seek forgiveness from, or a habit you need the Lord to break? Pray with one another for the Lord's help to grow as a trustworthy people who would point to the God who is faithful and true.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Holiday Club is fast approaching. We'd love to invite you to be praying for the children who will be coming and the young people who will be caring for them. Pray that young hearts will be prepared to meet Jesus and that lives would be changed! There's also a lot of behind-the-scenes action that takes place to make Holiday Club happen. Could you be involved? Let us know [here](#) if there's an area where you think you could serve.

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Love your Enemies (Matt 5:38-48)

### Welcome (10 mins)

If you could create a humorous and creative 'love your enemies' bumper sticker, what would it say?

### Worship (10 mins)

**Read:** Psalm 35

**Consider:** In this psalm David expresses the frustration of having his good returned with evil and the difficulty of righteous living amongst those who actively 'gloat in his distress'. He ultimately calls on the Lord as one who is both just to act out against evil and honourable to care for those who love Him.

**Sing:** [Build my life](#) ([Chords](#))

### Word (30 mins)

1. What was the original intent for "eye for eye" and "tooth for tooth" (See Ex 21:24 and Lev 24:17-20) How is this law being perverted? What qualities ought to replace those desires for revenge?
2. When we are wronged often our first reaction is to get even. How does Jesus turn things upside down and challenge us to live in a supernaturally different way? (See vs 39-42) What does this reveal about Jesus' way?
3. How can we use moments where we feel entitled to exact revenge as opportunities for radical kingdom love?
4. Jesus says "you have heard it said: 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemies.'" (Lev 19:18). Only the first part of this quote is in the Old Testament. What liberties were the teachers of the time taking? In this context what does the type of love Jesus calls for involve?

5. Jesus says, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44). How does this command go against our human nature?
6. How does praying for those who persecute us bring us back to the blessing that comes from being poor in spirit?
7. According to Matthew 5:46-47, even tax collectors and pagans love those who love them. How does this challenge our understanding of love and inclusivity? How can we extend love beyond our comfort zones and show love to those whom society might consider unworthy?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

Jesus calls us in this passage to radical love. A radical way we can show love and service to each other is to wash each other's feet. Grab some warm water and a towel and take turns washing each other's feet. It might be helpful to read John 13:12-17.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

Jesus says, "Bless those who curse you" (Luke 6:28). How does blessing those who mistreat us affect our own hearts and attitudes? How can we practically bless others even when we face opposition or hostility? Take time to process out loud. You may find it helpful to prayerfully plan how to respond when you are in a similar situation.

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Giving (Matt 6:1-4)

### Welcome (10 mins)

What is one act of kindness or generosity that you have experienced or witnessed recently that left a lasting impression on you?

### Worship (10 mins)

Read: Psalm 41:1-3

Consider: We are blessed when we regard others, and we are able to do so because it is the Lord that sustains us, and he is the one who restores us.

Sing: [Ever Be](#) ([Chords](#))

### Word (30 mins)

1. In 6:1 Jesus introduces a principle that he applies throughout the rest of the chapter. What is his warning?
2. What motivation does he suggest is behind 'practising your righteousness in front of others'?
3. What does Jesus warn is the result of this kind of supposed 'righteousness'?
4. Instead, Jesus continues to describe a righteousness that surpasses the righteousness of the pharisees and scribes. How have they corrupted giving to the poor? What is their motivation? How does their hypocrisy contrast with genuine compassion for the poor?
5. What is the path of true righteousness that Jesus lays out in verse 3 and 4 with regard to giving? And what is the true reward offered to us?
6. Does this conflict with 5:16? Can you tease out how these two commands relate to one another?

### Witness (5-10 mins)

Take some time to share and encourage one another with stories of acts of generosity that have led you and/or others to 'glorify your Father in heaven' (as in 5:16).

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

Spend some time glorifying God for what you have just heard.



# The Sermon on the Mount: Prayer (Matt 6:5-15)

## Welcome (10 mins)

What were your impressions and/or experiences of prayer as a child (if any)?

## Worship (10 mins)

**Read:** Psalm 63:1-8

**Consider:** This Psalm speaks of a beautiful intimacy with God in the hidden places of our heart and a deep dependency on him for all things.

**Pray:** Speak to God either individually or together using David's words as your own. You might want to read them out loud together a few times in different versions to help you do this.

**Sing:** [Our Father \(Chords\)](#)

## Word (30 mins)

1. This passage follows on in the same theme as the principle Jesus lays out in 6v1. What is this principle?
2. Make a list of how and how not to pray that Jesus lays out and the reasons behind what he says. Does anything strike you?
3. How does Jesus upturn popular ways of praying? Why is "babbling" and praying for people's approval unnecessary?
4. What is it about praying in secret that pleases God's heart? Why do we find it so hard?
5. If our Father knows what we need already (v8) we might wonder why we need to pray at all. How does the Lord's prayer help us understand what prayer is about?
6. Is there a line in the Lord's prayer that you find particularly easy or difficult to pray? Why?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Verse 14 and 15 talk about forgiveness. When we fully experience the power of God's forgiveness in our life, Jesus lays out how this spills out into our lives and our forgiveness of others. Are you harbouring any unforgiveness in your heart towards anyone that you need to surrender to God? Spend some time privately now speaking to the Lord about this.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Our outreach partner for this month is Bettaway Community Church in Delft, led by Clive and Glenda McMinn. They run many ministries there and this week we want to pray particularly for the leadership team and the Learning Support Centre (a safe place where learners can receive support in their schoolwork through stationery, a lunch, textbooks, tutoring, internet and printing access).

They have specifically asked for prayer for the following:

- For health and strength for the church leaders and pastors team: Clive, Glenda, Romanus, Yvette, Virgil and Candice; that they would truly hear from God and obey His voice.
- For provision (financial, material and otherwise) of all their needs at the Learning Centre, and for their 80 learners and tutors at the centre.

# The Sermon on the Mount: Fasting (Matt 6: 16-18)

## Welcome (10 mins)

If you had to give up one type of food or drink for a day, what would be the most challenging for you and why?

## Worship (10 mins)

Read: Psalm 139. This psalm is a psalm of surrendering to our all-knowing God. Spend some time as we sing, glorifying and honouring God as we surrender to Him.

Sing: [Who is this man](#) ([Chords](#))

## Word (30 mins)

In this passage Jesus is talking about when we fast. Fasting is the practice of giving up something (most often food) in order to spend time in prayer. It teaches us self-discipline and reminds us that we can live with a lot less and helps us appreciate God's gifts.

1. What are the actions of the hypocrites described in verse 16? What is the issue with their approach to fasting?
2. What does Jesus mean by advising us to anoint our heads and wash our faces in verse 17? How does this contrast with the actions of the hypocrites?
3. Jesus promises a reward from the Father to those who fast in secret. Have you ever experienced this?
4. How can we apply Jesus' instruction to fast in secret and not seek recognition from others in our modern lives? What are some practical ways to ensure our fasting is genuine and focused on God?
5. What does verse 18 tell us about God's perspective on our motives? How might understanding that God sees what is

done in secret influence our approach not only to fasting but to other areas of our spiritual lives as well?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

Spend some time asking the Holy Spirit what area of your life he would like you to fast from in order to receive the Father's reward from him?

## Witness (5-10 mins)

Fasting is a tool given by God for spiritual breakthrough. In October we are launching another Alpha. Who could you be praying and fasting for, for them to come? Write some names down to share to the group in order to commit to prayer and fasting for them.

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Treasures in Heaven (Matt 6:19-24)

### Welcome (10 mins)

If you were walking on the beach and found an ancient treasure chest, what would you hope to find inside?

### Worship (10 mins)

**Read:** Psalm 73

**Consider:** This psalm shows the struggle and reality of seeing those around us prosper, and how frustrating it can be when we are struggling. The psalmist finishes with the understanding that God is our portion forever and that everything else will fade.

**Sing:** [Jesus at the Center](#) (chords)

### Word (30 mins)

1. According to Jesus what differences are there between treasures on earth and treasures in heaven?
2. What is Jesus saying when he says that "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." How does that impact the way we prioritise things in our lives?
3. What message is Jesus conveying through the metaphor of our eyes being "healthy" or "unhealthy"? What warning does he give us and how can we improve our eye's health?
4. Jesus states that we cannot serve both God and money. What are some practical ways in which the pursuit of wealth or material possessions might compete with our commitment to serving God? How can we actively choose to prioritise our devotion to God over material concerns in our daily lives?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

In today's materialistic world, how can we practically apply the principles taught in this passage? What are some steps we can take to shift our focus from earthly treasures to heavenly treasures? How can we guard our hearts and minds against the allure of materialism and ensure that our priorities align with God's will? Take some time to ask the Holy Spirit about one specific thing you can do this coming week to shift your focus?

### Witness (5-10 mins)

At CCK, one of our values is to Dare to Share. In this passage we have seen Jesus saying that there is more beyond this lifetime and that the way we live our lives impacts the life to come. Who can we think of to invite to church or to alpha, that they too can store up treasures in heaven?

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Do not worry (Matt 6:25-34)

### Welcome (10 mins)

What's one thing that always seems to make you feel anxious or worried? What do you do when encountering that thing or problem?

### Worship (10 mins)

Sing: [Firm foundation \(Chords\)](#)

### Word (30 mins)

1. What does Jesus tell us not to worry about? What do they have in common?
2. According to Jesus, what are the pitfalls of worry? (vs 27, 32, 34) Have you experienced any of these?
3. How does Father God's care for birds and lilies act as a challenge to uproot worry at its core?
4. What comfort do you find from the promise that your heavenly Father knows what you really need? How does this bring freedom to live out the rest of the sermon on the mount, particularly loving your neighbour?
5. In verse 33, Jesus offers us a way out of worry and affirms our human needs. He says: "he will give them to you if you give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to" (The Living Bible version). What does it look like for us to give him first place in our lives, in our relationships, our finances, and our time?
6. In v.34 Jesus commands us not to worry about tomorrow. What is the difference between responsible planning for tomorrow and worrying about tomorrow?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

In the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, global prevalence of anxiety and depression increased by a massive 25%, according to the World Health Organisation. According to the National Institutes of Health, nearly 1 in 3 of all adolescents ages 13 to 18 will experience an anxiety disorder. There may well be people in your small group struggling with depression and anxiety-related disorders. Take some time to recognise this and invite the Holy Spirit to come and minister to your group, inviting people to name the areas of worry and asking Him to set us free. A supportive community can be the first step to helping set people free from the damage of worry and anxiety. For further prayer or support contact [alison@cck.org.za](mailto:alison@cck.org.za); male counselling with Jody Burch 082 920 2902, or book a Sozo prayer session with Sandra Collier or one of her team [sandra@ascollier.co.za](mailto:sandra@ascollier.co.za)

### Witness (5-10 mins)

Worry can rob us of reaching out with the good news of Jesus! Eugene Peterson, paraphrased v.31 as "What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with *getting*, so you can respond to God's *giving*."

This week we have an opportunity to put into practice 'responding to God's *giving*'. Identify as a group some people you know who are beset with worry. Why not think creatively about how you as a group could bring a little bit of God's kingdom to their life this week, maybe baking a cake, dropping an encouraging email/whatsapp to them, delivering a meal, or offering to babysit so they can have a night off?

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Judging others (Matt 7:1-6)

### Welcome (10 mins)

Share a time when you realised that you were quick to judge someone or a situation without having all the facts. What did you learn from that experience?

### Worship (10 mins)

Read: Psalm 32

Consider: As we come to read about judging others, we can see the incredible mercy and grace that the Lord offers us in this psalm. We cannot help but be in awe of His kindness and respond in worshipping his greatness.

Sing: [Great are you Lord \(Chords\)](#)

### Word (30 mins)

Recap: The theme of the previous chapter has been to pursue righteousness before God in private rather than to be seen by others (6v1).

1. In 7v1 Jesus calls us not to judge others. What goes on in our hearts when we are judgmental? Why is this command relevant here?
2. Jesus doesn't say we shouldn't call out wrongdoing. Instead, he gives us helpful principles when it comes to the issue of judging others. What are they (v2-5)?
3. Practically, what is involved in taking the plank out of your own eye? How do the beatitudes (5:3-5) help us with this?
4. In the context of Jesus' Jewish hearers, what sort of reaction would the phrase *'throwing pearls to pigs'* get?
5. How can offering the gospel and its teachings to those who spitefully mock and reject it feel like that?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

The Holy Spirit does a wonderful work of conviction rather than condemnation. This leads us to a place of repentance to find wholeness and healing rather than feeling trapped in guilt and shame. As we were engaging in tonight's topic of judgement, you may have felt a prompting or a stirring to bring some of your own shortcomings to the Lord. Scripture says in 1 John 1:9:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."

Take this opportunity to write on a small piece of paper something you need forgiveness for or freedom from. Then folding the page you can together throw those papers away as a reminder that it is forgiven and purified.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

What does witness to others look like in light of 7:6? Dallas Willard suggests that too often we present the gospel in a way that is indigestible to those receiving it. What use are pearls to pigs? How can we present truth and the gospel in a way that they can internalise? It also emphasises the need to discern with whom we share the Gospel. Ask the Holy Spirit if there is anyone that you need to share the gospel with or invite to our upcoming Alpha course starting 11 October.

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Ask, Seek, Knock (Matt 7:7-12)

### Welcome (10 mins)

Have you got any stories of a time where persistently asking for something lead to a result, big or small.

### Worship (10 mins)

Read: Psalm 34

Consider: As Jesus comes again to the subject of prayer his focus is no longer on the act and how we pray but rather who we are asking. Let us worship God knowing that he is faithful and good.

Sing: [Goodness of God](#) ([chords](#))

### Word (30 mins)

1. What powerful promise does Jesus make in verse 7-8?
2. The Greek verbs ask, seek and knock in verse 7 are all in the present continuous tense (i.e. "go on asking", "go on seeking"). How does this imagery of continuous asking, seeking and knocking help us to understand the concept of persistence in prayer?
3. Imagine you were writing a character reference for God. Based on verses 7-11 what things would you say? Write them down. (*Note: Jesus' words 'though you are evil' can seem confusing at first glance - this phrase refers simply to the inherent sinfulness of all, even the best of parents.*)
4. How does this understanding of God help us approach God in persistent prayer?
5. Other teachers of the time made similar statements to verse 12 - '*don't* do to others what you *don't* want them to do to you'. True to form, Jesus turns this on its head and frames the golden rule (v12) positively instead - i.e. *do* to

others what you want done to you. What's so powerful about this?

6. How does this principle flow on naturally from what we've seen about the character of God in verses 9-11?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

Take some time to reflect on all we have looked at in the Sermon on the Mount about the attitudes and actions of 'kingdom people'.

In pairs, share one of the principles of kingdom living that has particularly stirred or challenged you during our time in the Sermon on the Mount.

Using the 'character reference' for God we have written down, spend some time in your pairs 'asking, seeking, knocking' for these things.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

September in the church calendar is marked as the 'Season of Creation' - an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on the beauty of creation and our responsibility to steward it well. There are a variety of ways you can get involved - head to [the event page on the website](#) for further details and spend some time together thinking about how you might like to get involved.

# The Sermon on the Mount

## Two Ways to Live (Matt 7:13-23)

### Welcome (10 mins)

Have you ever walked or driven on a treacherous mountain path or pass?

### Worship (10 mins)

Sing: [Konke \(In view of\) \(Chords\)](#)

As we sing, maybe in words we don't understand, let us take up an attitude of surrendering to God.

### Word (30 mins)

1. In John 10 Jesus describes himself as this narrow gate to eternal life and following him like walking along a narrow road. Think back to the stories you shared at the beginning. How does this language teach us about what following him is like?
2. Jesus warns that on our journey on the narrow road there will be various distractions and dangers that are not necessarily easy to spot. What are the dangers he warns of?
3. What do you think it means to 'recognise a tree by its fruit'? How do the fruits of the spirit listed in Galatians 5 help us to recognise good fruit (and therefore good trees)?
4. We can often think that simply doing good works means we are 'on the narrow road'. What is Jesus' sobering warning in verse 22-23?
5. What does it look like for us to pursue knowing Jesus first and foremost?

### Wonder (5-10 mins)

These passages call us to know and love Jesus better, Jesus promised us His Spirit, the Holy Spirit, to lead us to Him and become more like Him. Why not as group pray for each other to receive the Holy Spirit and pray "Come Holy Spirit" as we seek to pursue Jesus and know Him.

### Witness (5-10 mins)

This passage is a great example of Jesus using powerful imagery from the natural world. It is clear He holds a very high view of creation. Is this something that you have thought about before, or share in your walk with God? How would we act differently if our hearts were aligned fully with how God sees the natural world?

# The Sermon on the Mount: The wise and foolish builders (Matt 7:24-29)

## Welcome (10 mins)

When going to the beach are you the type of person who likes building big sand castles or jumping on sand castles?

## Worship (10 mins)

Sing: [Firm foundation](#) ([Chords](#))

## Word (30 mins)

1. Jesus concludes His sermon with a bang! What is His call and subsequent promise to people who have heard his 'words'?
2. What is the significance of both houses going through big storms?
3. If Jesus is using the house to describe someone's life, what does it look like for a house to weather a storm and yet still stand firm?
4. How does the crowd's response add weight to Jesus' call to hear his words and put them into practice?

## Wonder (5-10 mins)

As we finish our small group series on the sermon on the mount, look back over chapters 5-7 and all the 'words' Jesus has taught during this sermon. Jot down some of the different areas or topics Jesus has taught on.

Take some time to look at this list of Jesus' 'words'. What is one thing you are going to be intentional about putting into practice? Share it with the group so that you may be able to hold each other accountable and encourage each other in living out Jesus' words.

## Witness (5-10 mins)

At CCK we are currently praying into and asking God to help us with our church building. At Time to Pray this last week we heard from Warren Gatcke that there is a team meeting together to seek the Lord on the best changes to implement to the building. They are beginning the process of exploring all the needs and changes that need to happen, as well as dreaming for the future. Let us join them in praying and seeking the Lord for how we can build so that He is glorified and the church is able to minister effectively.