

An Orientation to using Study Bibles, Bible Dictionaries, and Commentaries using The Beatitudes, and elements of The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5.1-16.

Investigation Prompts:

1. Investigate the meaning of “blessed” (5.3) and its wider application.
2. Who are “the poor in spirit?” (5.3)
3. What does “the Kingdom of Heaven” refer to, and is it a “future” or “present” situation?
4. What does the word “mourn” (5.4) mean?
5. What is the meaning of “the meek” (5.5) and of the phrase “inherit the earth?”
6. What is it to “hunger and thirst for righteousness?” (5.6) Is this hunger for external realities, for an internal condition, or something else?
7. What are the full dimensions of the words “merciful” (5.7) and “obtain mercy?”
8. What is it to be “pure in heart” (5.8) and what is meant by “see God?”
9. What is the full meaning of the concept “sons of God” (5.9) and why are “peacemakers” in particular linked with this concept?
10. What is the specific meaning of “for righteousness’ sake” (5.10)? Why does persecution for this reason lead to “the Kingdom of Heaven” and how do such people experience it in the present?
11. Consider why Jesus regards those reviled, persecuted and slandered “for (His) sake” (5.11) as particularly blessed? What is the basis for such people to “rejoice” and how does “rejoice” differ from “be glad?”
12. Explore the meaning of 5.13 in relation to “salt.” How can salt “lose its taste?”
13. Is “You are the light of the world” (5.14) a constant, or is it contingent upon specific circumstances? How do “(our) good works” (5.16) relate to this concept?

14. How do all these teachings influence us in our thinking about the concept “the Kingdom of Heaven?” Is our answer to this question formulated on the basis of what is on the page, what is in our hearts, what is our experience, or what is our daily attitude toward our life?