



## Message Discussion Guide Week of February 26, 2023

**Message:** 18 Minutes, Part 1: The Pursuit of Happiness

**Key Scripture:** [Matthew 5:1-12](#)

**Preacher:** Tom Parkinson

### Message Highlights:

The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus' invitation for his disciples to enter a whole new world.

- In the early chapters of Matthew, Jesus is portrayed as the king who has come to announce the presence of the Kingdom of heaven and to demonstrate the power of the Kingdom of Heaven. Now, in this Sermon, he outlines the program of the Kingdom.
- The Sermon on the mount is the most basic instruction for how to live as a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Before Jesus gives instructions, he offers eight beatitudes, statements about conditions that set one up for blessing and happiness.

- The beatitudes can be divided onto two parts: those dealing with what attitudes inside of us, and those that address actions that flow outside of us.

The Beatitudes reveal three truths about living in the Kingdom of Heaven:

- In order to be filled with the Kingdom, we must first be emptied of ourselves.
- The values of the Kingdom are a reversal of the values of the world.
- Citizenship in the Kingdom will lead us into conflict with the world.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What do you know about the Sermon on the Mount? Have you studied it before? In what ways is it part of your understanding of your identity and purpose as a follower of Jesus?
2. [Read Matthew 5:1-12](#):
  - Why do you think Jesus chooses to start his sermon with the beatitudes?
  - With which of the beatitudes do you most resonate? Which ones challenge you? Which ones confuse you?

3. What does it mean to be blessed? How are blessings and happiness related? How are they different?
4. What does it mean to be “poor in spirit?” How is it related to Jesus’ later teaching that we need to die to ourselves? Why is self-sacrifice and self-emptying so important in order for us to follow Jesus?
5. Name one thing you heard in this message that you didn’t know before? What’s one thing that inspired or challenged you? What’s one thing you will do in response to this message.

**Abundant Life Tip:** The Sermon on the Mount is discipleship 101, so we should read it carefully. Take 18 minutes and read the Sermon (Matthew 5-7), asking God to show you how you can begin to let Jesus’ message guide your life.