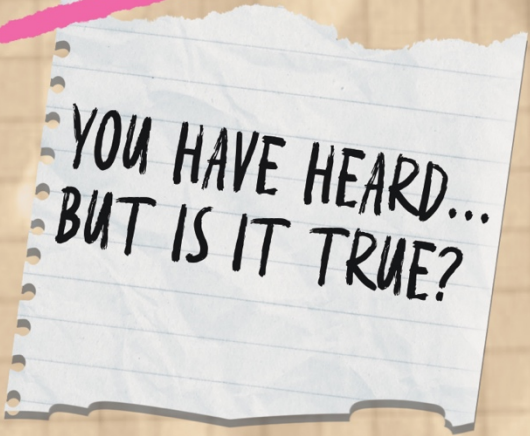




SCRIPTING

the flip



YOU HAVE HEARD...
BUT IS IT TRUE?

A Special Thanks

The pulling together of these journals is a team effort. We would love to give a special thanks to Mike Allen for all of his time, research and the creative work he put into writing the study deep dives located in this journal. We also would like to thank editors Heather Dody and Tricia Tucker for their insightful eye and skill to make this journal what it is!

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"SCRIPTING THE FLIP"

About This Journal

Here at NWH, our mission is to **Love Jesus, Live Like Jesus, and Make Him Known.**

In this journal, we want to invite you to go deeper into your **love of Christ.** As a church, we do this by **committing to Sundays** and by **practicing the spiritual disciplines**, which are practices found in the Bible, that help promote spiritual growth in the Christian's life.

These practices become the rhythms of our lives and include prayer, silence and solitude, sabbath, fasting, Bible reading and meditation, celebration, and many more. These are not a means to salvation, which is a free gift from God, but they help attune our hearts to His in our daily lives.

In the following pages, we hope you will find some helpful tools to practice some of these disciplines: Bible reading and meditation and prayer. We want to encourage you to engage deeply with the Scriptures, fostering a more rich and close relationship with God.

Each week you will find the following:

A space for sermon notes:

Our first ask for you is to **Commit to Sundays!** Take notes on the messages. Feel free to ask the pastors or a spiritually mature friend any questions you might have that arise from the message. If you miss any of the messages, you can watch them online. Let the Word of God do its good and intended work of transformation in you.

A space to Script Your Flip:

Each week, you will have time at the end of the sermon to do some “scripting”. What are you tempted to believe that isn’t true? What do you need to believe that is true? Write it out. During the week, take time to revisit your script and engage with it further.

A guide to dive into a deep study of the text on your own:

We have included a guided deep dive into the text each week. We encourage you to **read the text for yourself, reflect, and think deeply** about what you are reading. To get started, turn to page 6.

A section for prayer and meditation:

In this journal, we have included a space to walk through a **Lectio Divina** on the passage: an ancient practice of scriptural reading, mediation, and prayer. To become acquainted with how to do this practice, turn to page 8.

A section with two options for memorization:

Option A focuses on a key verse in the text.

Option B encourages the memorization of the entire Sermon on the Mount. *

**You should know, Pastor Ron, is offering his company and dinner out to anyone who memorizes these three chapters!*

How to Use the Study Deep Dive in this Journal

Each week, we will have a space for you to study the text and go deeper.

What to bring:

A timer

Your Bible

Your journal (and any extra paper you might need)

A pen or pencil

What to expect:

Start with **prayer**:

Ask the Lord to give you better hearing, as you listen to Him. As you consider what God was doing in the life of Peter, ask the Lord for personal growth and for the growth of our church... to become more like Jesus. Invite the Spirit to work real and lasting change in you.

Move into **observation**:

Begin with 10 minutes just **observing** the text. As you do, remember that God, through His Word, is the authority here, not ourselves. As such, each week starts off with you listing **observations** for a short period of time. This may prove trickier than you think at first but do your best. List anything that you notice in the text itself, regardless if you find it "meaningful" or not. The idea here is to strengthen your powers of observing the Scriptures, so that your mind can be guided more acutely by what *God* is saying (versus your own thoughts that you might "bring" into the text).

For example, Matthew 5:3 says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." One observation might simply be: "There is a kingdom of heaven." Another

observation that stems from that could be: "Heaven exists." Or another observation altogether may be: "People can be poor in spirit." You probably get the point, and it's worth noting that passages - even only one verse long! - can contain *tons* of information if you're willing to create time to study them. These observations will undoubtedly lead to more questions, which we can then explore throughout the Scriptures. We don't call it Bible *study* for no reason!

Work through the **questions**:

What follows each week is not an exhaustive list of every question that pertains to each passage, but a helpful start to dig deep into God's Word (with the help of His Spirit) by guiding you through a more intentional study of the Bible passage in focus for the week. These questions are totally optional to work through, and if they are not helpful for you, you don't have to do them. Likewise, if you have other questions that come to mind, then study them! That being said, if you do want to go deeper into the passage for the week, then we would encourage you to make some time to work through these questions on your own or with a group.

A quick note: It's going to be very tempting at times to bring in "outside" resources such as commentaries, books other than the Bible, the internet, etc. While those things can serve us to grow in Christ, please do your best to prayerfully search the Scriptures only. Again, the goal here is to grow (with God's help) in studying the Scriptures.

Above all, recall John 5:39-40 and John 17:3, that the Scriptures are not to be used as a means to merely acquire knowledge about God or eternal life, but to be used to draw near to Christ in a very real and practical way.

We pray this is one helpful tool in your journey to know Christ!

How to practice Lectio Divina

What is Lectio Divina?

Lectio Divina is an ancient practice, dating back to the early church. It is a type of meditative prayer in which we slow down, savoring the text, listen for God's voice in it, let Him change us through it, prayer, and resting in the joy of our relationship with Him.

When and where should I do Lectio Divina?

Generally, a quiet time and space, where you can slow down and focus. For many, this time is best in the early hours of the morning before the rest of the family is awake. For some this could be a specific time set aside in the middle of the day once a week. For others, this could be in the evening after the business of the day. We encourage you to intentionally create a time and space for this in your week.

There are 5 steps to this ancient practice, which you will find outlined in each week:

Step 1: Prepare

Step 2: Lectio (5-10 minutes)

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

More Resources

For more background on the Sermon on the Mount, see this article by Ligonier Ministries:

<https://www.ligonier.org/guides/the-sermon-on-the-mount>



or take a look at this book:

“Living Inside Out and Upside Down: A Journey Through the Sermon on the Mount” by Rich Hagenbaugh

www.amazon.com/s?k=living+inside+out+and+upside+down&crd=14JNT56BP7LL9&sprefix=living+inside+out+and+upside+do%2Caps%2C178&ref=nb_sb_noss



Introduction to “Scripting the Flip”

Have you ever heard the phrase, “Flipping the Script”? It’s a catchy way to point to a reversal of a narrative or situation, usually in a surprising way. It can be used to provoke thought, to challenge norms, and to inspire change. Sometimes it is used for good. Think of ordinary women advertising beauty products instead of ultra-groomed supermodels, flipping the script that you need to look a certain prescribed way. Sometimes it can be harmful, as in movies or plays like *Maleficent* or *Wicked*, where we see villains turned into sympathetic characters, flipping the script to suggest that being evil is really not so bad.

The ultimate flip of the script came in the Garden of Eden. This flip would go out into all the earth, for all time, affecting every human being to ever be in existence. Follow along with me as we go back to the beginning.

To have a flip, we first must have an original script. God’s original script for humankind, which was given at our creation, was one that was lifegiving, beautiful, purposeful and pure. It was a script of ultimate human flourishing, derived from living as we were created, whole and in close relationship with the Creator. It went like this:

“The good, abundant life is only found in being
A PART OF God’s kingdom”.

But the flip came when the Enemy spoke to Eve and trapped her with a lie. He is incredibly effective at what he does and is not called “the father of lies” without reason. He studies us and finds ways to twist our perception of reality, planting seeds of doubt about the goodness of our God. Satan’s promise to Eve was, “God is keeping you back from something great. He doesn’t want you to be like Him. If you follow MY WAY of life, you will TRULY have ultimate satisfaction. If you follow MY WAY, you will find so much more”. We could write out Satan’s creed like this:

“The good, abundant life is only found in being
APART FROM God’s kingdom”.

Sadly, Eve believed this flipped script and acted according to it. As a result, the world - including all of humankind - was broken. It is undeniable as we look at history from that point on. The secular world has continued to live out the Enemy’s flip, and instead of moving humankind to human flourishing (as the Enemy promised), it has moved us to ultimate emptiness, despair, and worthlessness (as the Enemy intended).

Same Old Story

We still live with this flipped script today. We hear the exact same lie, “YOU get to decide for yourselves what the good life is. YOU get to create your truth and write your own script. YOU get to decide what love is, what identity is, what family is. YOU get to decide what justice is, what community is, how we can save humanity, or if you even need to be saved at all. Come on up to the buffet and choose what looks and smells good to you. Create yourself and your world into what you want it to be”.

Bumper stickers, articles, books, and podcasts proclaim “You are enough”, “Live your truth, and “You do you”. These sayings sound great and are promoted as freedom, but really this worldview is flawed and comes with extreme pressure. It assumes that we humans have a divine amount of power and wisdom, not to mention perfect discernment. If it is really adhered to, this worldview does not result in freedom and does not result in the good life. Instead:

- It leads to personal selfishness and self-absorption, think spending endless time on social media curating the fake perfect image or trying to “discover” who you are.
- It can lead to a hardness of heart, as the focus turns so inward that all other concerns of people and the world are considered secondary.

- It leads to broken families, as in a wife and mom leaving her family to fulfill her longing to be her single and uninhibited “authentic self”.
- It leads to insecurity, as the feeling of who that “authentic self” is could change over time, influenced by a person’s emotions or other voices, leading to the constant creating and re-creating of the self.
- It can lead to an unhealthy balance of self-care, as a person tries to develop their self into who they want to be, perhaps becoming so preoccupied with it that it dominates all daily life, to the neglect of other, more important pursuits.

This worldview is trying to fill a hole that is impossible to fill apart from our original created purpose. Because you see, Satan is not Creator. His way isn’t working, and he never intended it to. The only way that truly works comes from God, the Creator Himself, whose voice alone can eclipse all other voices and answers.

Jesus flipped the script back when He came to earth, bringing the good life with Him. He did what only He could do to give us real life in His death and resurrection, and He told us how to live. Rather than the good life being found in everything that is APART FROM God’s kingdom, Jesus said the reality is that the good, abundant life is only found in being A PART OF God’s kingdom.

Even though we look forward to Christ’s return, when He will completely eradicate all evil and sin and the Enemy will be locked away for good, we do not have to wait until then to start living the good, abundant life. It is offered to us now.

So, this year at Northwest Hills, we are “Scripting the Flip”.

We are going to look closely at the claims made by our culture and its rewritten definitions of things like love, family, justice, and salvation.

We will see what Jesus has to say about these things, based on the word of the One who created us all. We will plan out how we will respond to “flip” things back to the original script, to point ourselves and others to true abundant life and to real human flourishing. We are going to “script” the “flip”.

We will begin the year in Christ’s famous sermon, the Sermon on the Mount, as recorded by the disciple Matthew who knew Jesus and heard these words in person. As in our secular world today, the Israelites in Christ’s day were trying to figure out how to enter the good life, or God’s kingdom, but were going about it the wrong way. Each group of Israelites at this time (and there were several) had a different idea on how to usher in the kingdom of God:

- The Pharisees, who held to a strict observance of the Jewish law, believed that God’s kingdom would come if you strictly adhered to every detail of it, both the written law and the oral man-made traditions.
- The Sadducees, who adhered to the written law, but rejected the use of the oral law, were often wealthy and powerful members of the Jewish aristocracy. They believed that God’s kingdom would come if you would just cooperate more with Rome.
- The Zealots had a radical passion for religious purity and adherence to the written law. They viewed obeying Roman rule as idolatry and betrayal to God, believing God’s kingdom would come in fighting for freedom from Rome, and expelling them from Judea by any means necessary.
- The Essenes, who lived in the desert, believed God’s kingdom would come by withdrawing and separating oneself, adhering to the written law and engaging in severe self-discipline.
- If you didn’t fit into any of these groups, you probably felt your head, like ours, swimming with all of the differing voices.

But Christ had a different answer altogether.

He said that God's kingdom was not something that was far away, but that it was among them, even then. It was not something to be brought about by strict adherence to the Old Testament law. It was not something that would happen by cooperating and benefiting from Roman rule. It was not found by withdrawing and waiting. It was a spiritual kingdom, in the present day for those who were citizens of it, with no end, consisting of everything good, pure, holy, and true.

The Invitation

The invitation to those listening to Jesus was to enter into God's kingdom, on His terms, in His way. This invitation is still open to us today. God's kingdom is as much of a reality now and exists in the present day for us as it did then for them.

But how do we become citizens of this kingdom? How do we enter into it? This is an essential question we must answer as we launch into the study of Christ's words on the Sermon on the Mount.

First, becoming a citizen of God's kingdom requires recognizing that you, like the rest of humankind, have tried to live life on your own terms, APART FROM God's kingdom. It is by understanding and accepting Christ's sacrifice for your sin as the only way to be right with God again. And by acknowledging Him as Lord of your life, giving your full allegiance to Him. If you have done this, you ARE a citizen of this kingdom. If you have not yet, this invitation from our Lord is open for you! He loves you! Christ died to give YOU access to be a part of this kingdom.

Isn't this such good news? That is what the Gospel means - good news. Instead of having to grit our teeth to gain access to the kingdom, we are FIRST granted citizenship and given the Holy Spirit! Then, by His power and what He does on the inside of us, rather than on our own strength, we can do what needs to be done, to live the good life, as mapped out by Christ in this sermon. Jesus' invitation is

still open today. If you have questions, please do not let this invitation slip by. We encourage you to engage with your Community Group or reach out to one of our pastors here at Northwest Hills.

Beatitudes - what the good life really looks like

Back to the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew chapters 5 to 7. The first 12 verses of chapter 5 are known as the Beatitudes. As we understand that the most abundant life comes only when living as A PART OF God's kingdom, the Beatitudes are Christ's words defining what a citizen of this kingdom looks like. Each line shows us a different characteristic of that life, only done through the power of the Holy Spirit. Even with just a cursory glance, this list looks very different from the way culture paints someone who is living "the good life". It says:

Blessed are the poor in spirit.
Blessed are those who mourn.
Blessed are the meek.
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
Blessed are the merciful.
Blessed are the pure in heart.
Blessed are the peacemakers.
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of
righteousness.

Jesus invites us to flip the script back to the way things were originally intended, to living in God's kingdom, here and now. We will be diving into each of these Beatitudes, comparing the world's script to each statement that Jesus is teaching, and we will think through and "script" out how we are to respond. Jesus offers us and the world something so much better!!!

It is going to be an amazing year ahead!

Welcome to "Scripting the Flip!"

WEEK 1

READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:1-2

“Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying...”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- Read Genesis 12:1-3 - this is God’s covenant (promise) with Abraham. Who is the ultimate “target” for God’s blessing?
- Read Isaiah 2:2-3, 9:1-2, 42:6-7, and 49:6 - these are from the prophet Isaiah, roughly 700 years before Christ was on earth. Is God’s salvation only for the people of Israel in Jesus’ time? Who does God plan on saving?
- Now notice: where are the crowds from? (Hint: read the previous passage in Matthew 4:12-17 and 4:23-25)
- What do you notice starting to happen, and how does Jesus’ ministry relate to these Old Testament passages?
- Read Genesis 22:1-19 - where does God command Abraham to go? What is Abraham commanded to do there? What is significant about God’s response to Abraham in verses 12-18?

- Read Exodus 19:1-6, 24:12-18, and 34:1-9 - in each passage, where does God command Moses to go? What kinds of things does Moses experience? What do you learn about God's character in these passages?
- So, when Matthew 5:1 says, "...He went up on the mountain...", why might this be significant? What things should trigger in our mind when we read about mountains in the Bible?

Note: Keep this theme in mind for other times we see Jesus on mountains!

- It might be tempting to think Jesus focused on the entire crowd, but reread Matthew 5:1 - who followed Jesus up the mountain? In other words, when verse 2 says, "And He opened His mouth and taught them..." who is "them"?
- How might this change the way we read the sermon on the mount?
- Then read Matthew 7:28-29 - at some point, others joined in...why might this also be an important point?
- Bonus study: Study how the word "disciple" is used in all 4 Gospels - who is considered a disciple of Jesus? What are the characteristics of Jesus' disciples? What does it mean to be His disciple? How does Jesus treat His disciples differently than the "crowds"?

- When Jesus opens His mouth to teach and speak, it's not flippant. He means every word He says:
 - Read:
 - Matthew 4:4
 - Matthew 28:18
 - John 8:28-32
 - John 12:49-50
 - John 17:6-8, 13-14, and 17
 - Who is Jesus constantly listening to?
 - In a very real way, who is *also* speaking when Jesus speaks?
 - Why is this significant to remember every time Jesus speaks?
 - How does this change the "weight" of what Jesus says?

- What kind of authority does Jesus have, and what does that mean for what He says? How should we respond in return?

- How does this change your interpretation of the sermon on the mount?

Putting it all Together

Look back over your answers and try to connect as many dots as possible. Why is Jesus' message here hugely impactful to His followers? How should we view this sermon on the mount?

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:1-2

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Seeing the crowds,
He went up on the mountain,
and when He sat down,
His disciples came to Him.
And He opened His mouth
and taught them, saying...”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.

MEMORIZE || WEEK 1

Option A: MATTHEW 5:1-2

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying...

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-2

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying...



WEEK TWO

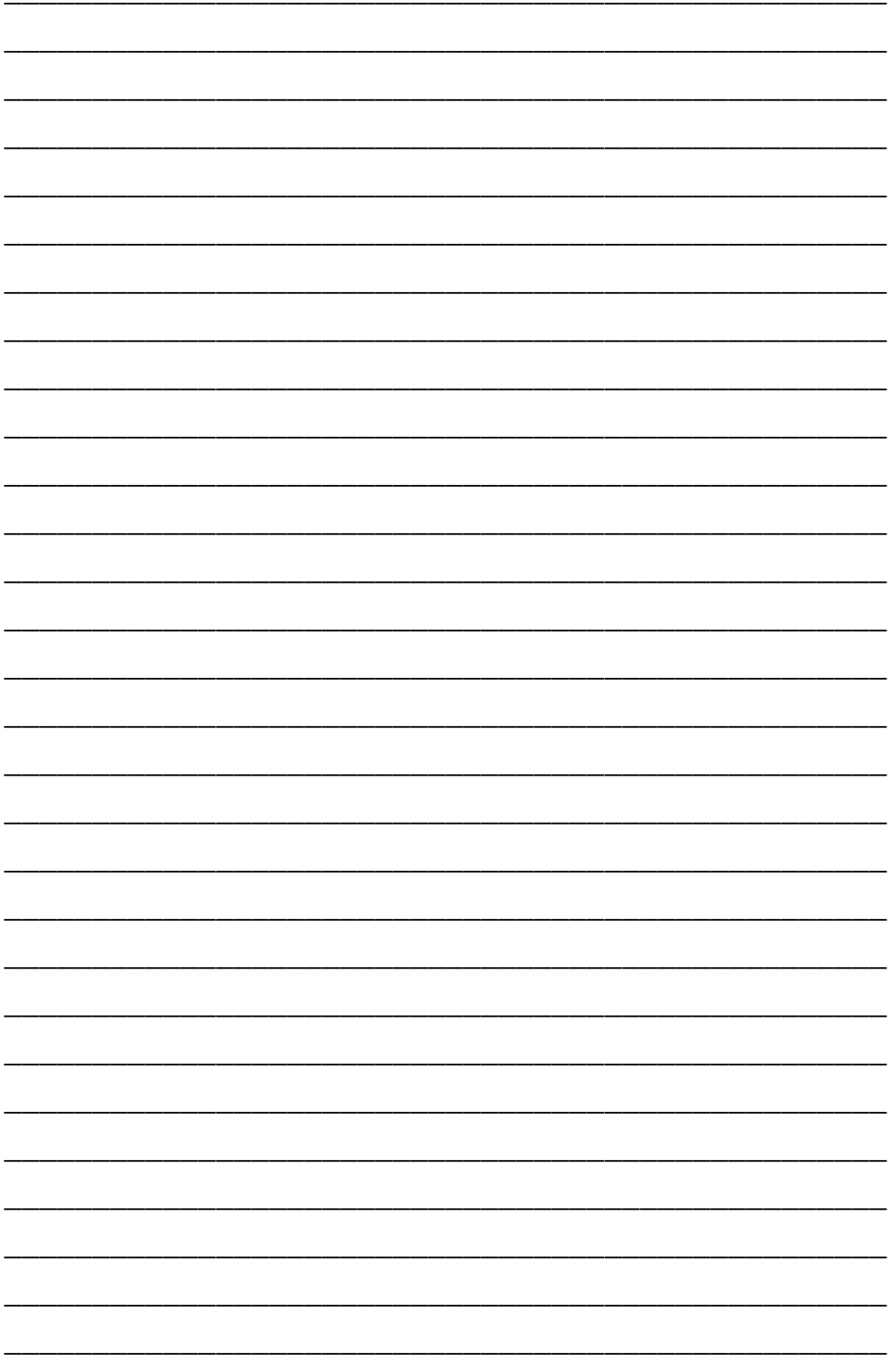
MATTHEW 5:3

SUNDAY MESSAGE NOTES

Sunday, October 6

SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:3

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.



READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:3

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- The word “blessed” that Jesus uses throughout the sermon on the mount simply means “happy” (for example, “happy are the poor in spirit” has the same meaning). Does this change the way you read Jesus’ teaching? Why or why not?
- Read the following passages, keeping two questions in mind (write down your thoughts as you read each passage):

Read: Psalm 32:1-5, 34:6-8, 40:1-5, 84:1-12, 94:8-15, 112:1-10,
and Jeremiah 17:5-8

- What do you notice about how *people* are described (or what is implied about people) vs. how *God* is described (or what is implied about God)?
- How is the word “blessed” used and what might it mean in these passages?
- What do you think it means to be “poor in spirit”?
- Read Psalm 51 and Isaiah 6:1-5. What do you notice about David and Isaiah in these passages? How would you describe them?

- Read Isaiah 57:15, Isaiah 66:1-2, and Luke 18:9-4. What type of person does God save, dwell with, and help? In other words, even though God is perfectly holy and all-powerful, He offers help to those who do what?
(Note: “Contrite” in Isaiah basically means “crushed.”)
- The previous two questions are snapshots on how God defines a “poor spirit” - is that how you view yourself? How might God be asking you to become poor in spirit?
- Read Daniel 2:44-45, 4:34-35, and 7:9-28, then answer the following questions:
 - What is the kingdom of heaven (i.e. God's Kingdom) like?
 - Who gives and who receives the kingdom? (Hint: there is more than one answer for who receives the kingdom here - reread **both** Daniel 7:13-14 and 7:18, 22, 27.)
- Now, reread Matthew 5:3 - how is this a fulfillment of Daniel’s vision? What do you think Jesus means when He mentions the “kingdom of heaven”?
- The phrase “kingdom of heaven” is used 31 times in the ESV Bible, and **all** of them are in the book of Matthew! For a great study on the kingdom of heaven, you could read Matthew’s Gospel and note everywhere the kingdom of heaven is mentioned, making observations about it. What do you notice? According to Jesus, what is the kingdom of heaven like?

Putting it all Together

Why must we be poor in spirit before receiving the kingdom of heaven? Why is this vastly important for us as Christians? How does this change the way you read Jesus' sermon on the mount?

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:3

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 2

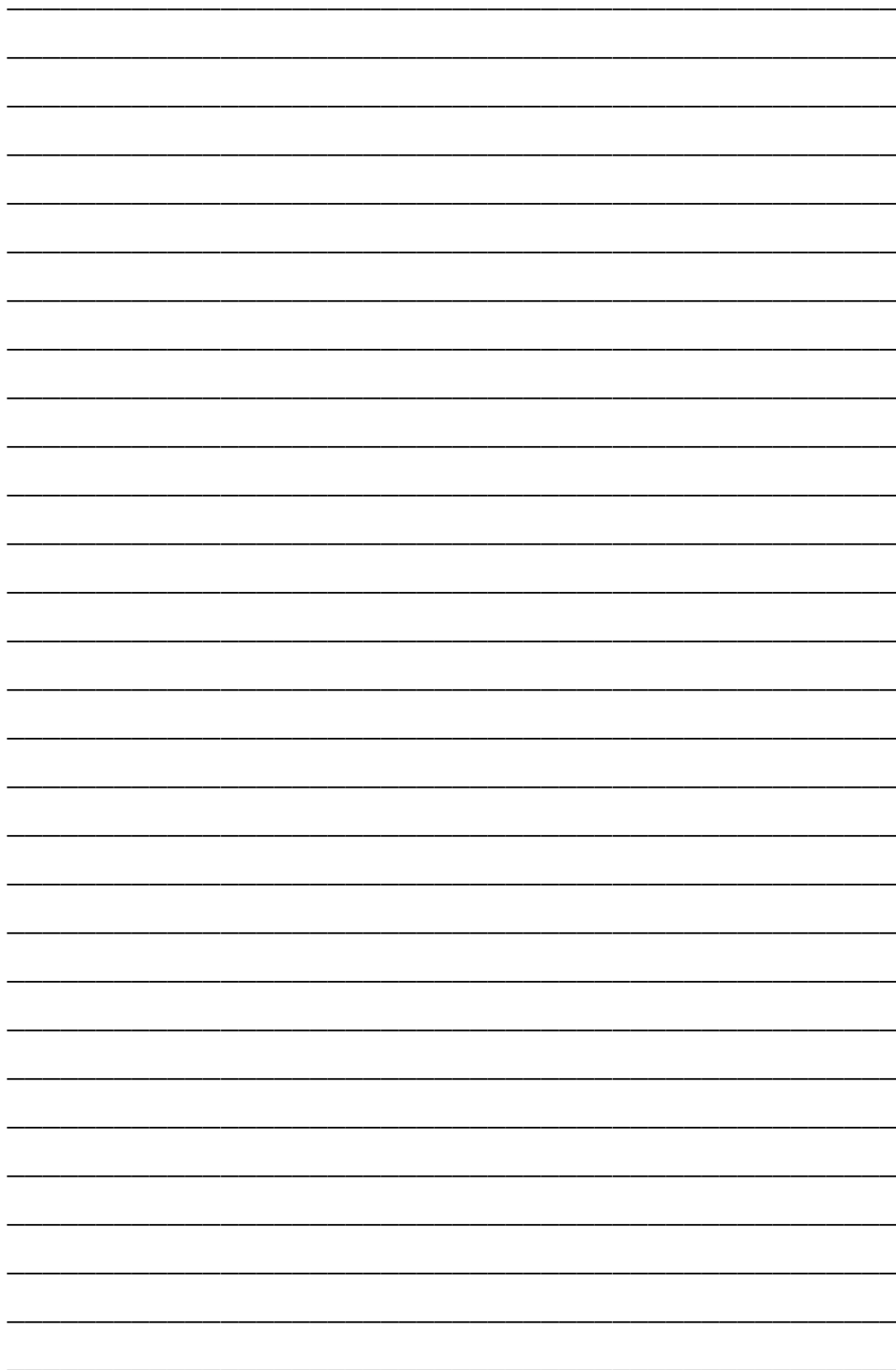
Option A: MATTHEW 5:3

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-3

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

WEEK 3



SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:4

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.

READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:4

“Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- What do you think is meant by “mourn” here? Mourning over what?
- Read Isaiah 53:1-6 and Zechariah 12:10-11 - From these passages, why do you think the prophet Isaiah refers to the Messiah as “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief”? According to Zechariah, why would someone mourn when looking at (or in our case, thinking of) Jesus being crucified?
- Read Amos 1:2, 8:1-8, 9:5-6 - why is mourning an appropriate response to God and His holiness?
- Read Isaiah 12:1-6 and Zephaniah 3:14-20 - how does God comfort us? In other words, what gives us reason to no longer mourn? What things has God done for us?
- Read 2 Corinthians 1:1-11 - as Christians, how are we to respond after God comforts us? What are some reasons that God allows us to mourn?

- If you have time, read all of Lamentations (it's only 5 chapters!) in one sitting, taking note of:
 - Why is the author of Lamentations writing? What are the main themes that arise?
 - Why does the author mourn so deeply?
 - What hope does the author recognize amidst such intense mourning?

Putting it all Together

Why must we mourn as Christians before being comforted? What are we mourning about? How does God comfort us, and what specifically has He done?

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:4

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 4

Option A: MATTHEW 5:4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-4

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.



WEEK FOUR

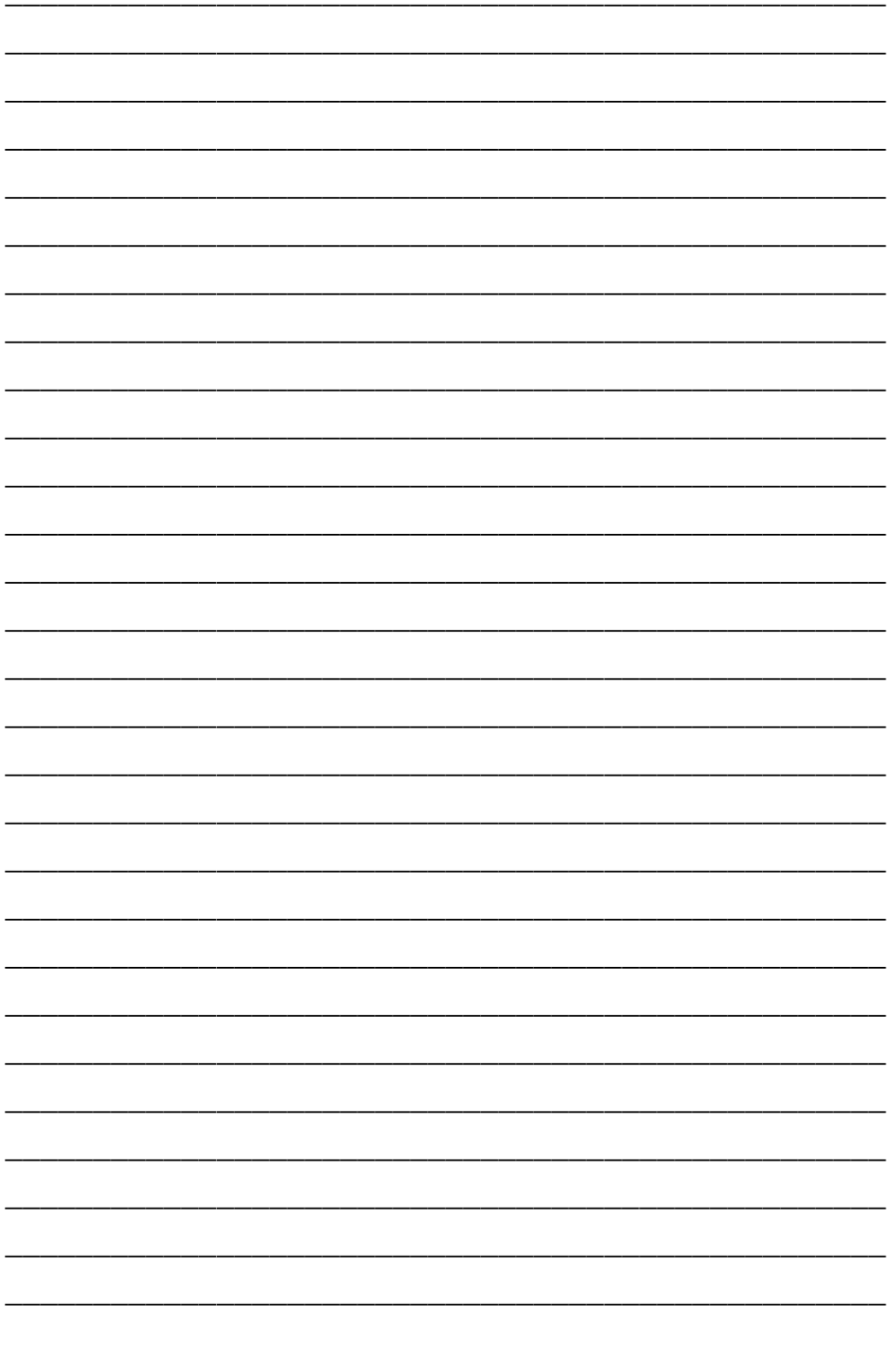
MATTHEW 5:5

SUNDAY MESSAGE NOTES

Sunday, October 20

SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:5

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.



READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:5

“Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- How would you define “meek”?
- Read Numbers 12:1-16 - how is Moses described? How did God relate to Moses that was different from how He related to anyone else? Why do you think that is?
- Read Psalm 37 - how are those who trust in the Lord described? How do they differ from the wicked? Take note of each verse where the phrase, “inherit the land” is mentioned - what do you notice about the person who is described in those verses?
- Read Matthew 27 and Mark 15 - how does Jesus respond during His arrest, trial, and crucifixion? Also, what do you notice that He *doesn't* do in response?

- Now read Philippians 2:1-11, 1 Peter 2:18-25, Isaiah 53:7 - meditate on what it means to be meek like the Lord Jesus. Meekness seems to be specifically related to *how we respond to others*. What do you notice in Philippians 2 about:
 - How Jesus “uses” His power and status? (Again, it might also be helpful to ask the question, “what does He *not* do with His power?”)
 - How the Father responds to Jesus after Jesus humbles Himself?

Putting it all Together

What does it mean to be meek? Why do you think the Lord specifically says we must be meek in order to inherit the earth? How is the Lord asking you to be meek this week?

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:5

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
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on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 4

Option A: MATTHEW 5:5

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-5

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.



WEEK FIVE

MATTHEW 5:6

SUNDAY MESSAGE NOTES

Sunday, October 27

SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:6

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.

READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:6

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- Read the following Psalms, writing down your responses to the following questions for each Psalm:

Read Psalms: 16, 19, 23, 63, 84, 143, and 145

- What do the Psalmists (authors) long for? In other words, what do they know will truly satisfy them?
 - How do God and righteousness go hand in hand?
 - What is either stated or assumed regarding people’s righteousness?
- Read Daniel 9:1-19 - what do you specifically notice about the way Daniel views righteousness? What might it look like to structure your posture in prayer to more closely resemble Daniel’s?
- Read Jeremiah 9:23-24, Hosea 10:12, and Micah 6:6-8 - what does the Lord delight in? What does God ask of people in these passages?
- Read John 4:31-34 and 6:22-40 - what does Jesus say we should hunger and thirst for? What does He require of us? How does this relate to hungering and thirsting for righteousness?

- Take a deep breath...and read Romans 1-6. There's a TON in these 6 chapters but focus specifically on righteousness. Similar to the questions for the Psalms portion, what do you observe about how Paul talks about people's righteousness? How does he talk about God's righteousness? What does Paul say about how we receive God's righteousness?
 - Additionally, in Romans 1:18-32, what do people *think* they want (i.e. what do they *think* will satisfy them)?
 - By reading the rest of Romans, what do we know *actually* satisfies us? List some specific verses from Romans that support your response.

- Notice how Matthew 5:6 does not say, "Blessed are those who do righteousness," but, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness..."
 - Why do you think that is? Based on our study thus far, do we really get any credit for being able to live righteously? What's our initial role in pursuing righteousness?

(For some direction, you may consider finding passages like John 6:60-65, Romans 8:26, Philippians 2:12-13, and Colossians 1:28-29.)

Putting it all Together

*Whose righteousness are we meant to hunger and thirst for? In doing so, **who** are we hungering and thirsting for? How do we show our hunger and thirst for righteousness (i.e., how do we actually do this according to the passages above)? How does this (as opposed to anything else) ultimately satisfy us?*

NOTES || MATTHEW 5:6

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:6

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

You also might like to journal what was discovered and spoken about at the end of this time.

MEMORIZE || WEEK 5

Option A: MATTHEW 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

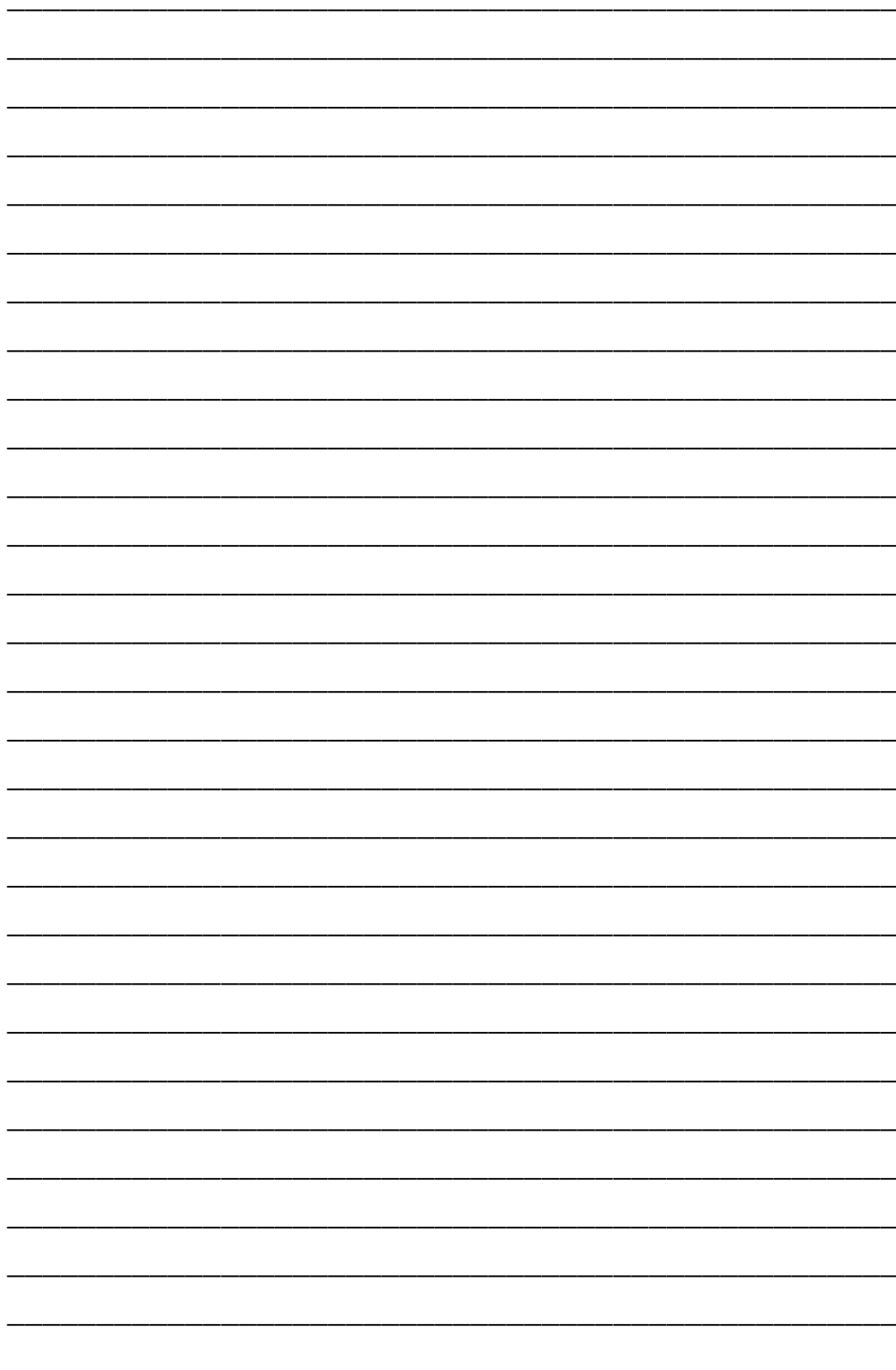
Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-6

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.



SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:7

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.



READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:7

“Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall receive mercy.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- Read Genesis 2:15-3:24 and Exodus 34:6-7 - what did Adam and Eve deserve when they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? In a very real sense they were cut off from God, but how did God also have mercy on them (see especially Genesis 3:21)?
- Read Psalm 28 and 103 - how would you define mercy based on these passages? What do you notice about how the Psalmist (the author) postures himself before the Lord? What does the Psalmist believe about God?
- Now read Isaiah 30:18, Jeremiah 3, and Lamentations 3 - how will God respond to our cries for mercy? These are promises regarding God’s character (i.e., who He is), despite our total failures - how might this change the way you pray? Meditate on the Lord’s mercy before moving on.

- Read Matthew 9:9-13 and 12:1-14, then turn to the Old Testament and read Hosea 5:1-6:6 - what might Jesus mean when He says, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice"? Think about the context of these two Matthew passages - what is Jesus *doing* when He makes these statements, and how does that inform your answer?
- Read Matthew 6:9-15 and 18:21-35 - how do these passages relate to this beatitude (Matthew 5:7)?
- Read Ephesians 2:1-10, Titus 2:11-3:8, 1 Peter 2:9-12, Hebrews 4:14-16, and Jude 1:20-22 - why did God ultimately have mercy on us? According to these passages, what does God expect us to do (i.e. how should we live) now that we have received His mercy?

Putting it all Together

This might seem paradoxical, because Jesus says that the merciful are the ones who will receive mercy, but the rest of Scripture shows how we don't deserve it. Despite that, He still had mercy on us. How are we (as Christians) now able to show mercy too?

NOTES || MATTHEW 5:7

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:7

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall receive mercy.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 6

Option A: MATTHEW 5:7

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-7

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

WEEK 7

WEEK SEVEN

MATTHEW 5:8

SUNDAY MESSAGE NOTES

Sunday, November 10

SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:8

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.

READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:8

“Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- What do you think it means to have a pure heart? How might we purify our hearts?
- Read Exodus 33:17-23 - Who does God say is able to see Him? Keep this in mind as we progress through this study.
- Read Leviticus 10:1-3, and all of chapter 16. As you read, take note of how often the following topics are mentioned: atonement, blood, uncleanness vs. being clean, and holiness vs. sin. How do these things relate to having a pure heart? Zoom out - why does the Day of Atonement even need to exist? In other words, why did God command the Day of Atonement to take place?
- Read Psalms 18:26, chapter 24, and chapter 73 - How does God relate to those who are pure and who fear Him vs. those who do not? In Psalm 24, what are the characteristics of the type of person who can truly be in God’s presence?

- Read Proverbs 20:9 and Job 4:17-19, 15:14-16, 25:4-5 and think back to your other answers thus far - can anybody actually claim to have a pure heart? Why or why not?
- Read Isaiah 6:1-7 - you may recall this passage from the “poor in spirit” section, and it’s significant that Jesus says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit” before talking about the pure in heart. How does Isaiah respond when he sees God? What’s his response? How does he become “pure” before God? In other words, how does he become clean and how is his sin atoned for (covered)?
- Go back and read your reflections from the Leviticus passage. Now read Hebrews 9:1-10:25 - who is the only One who is truly pure before God? How does Christ’s sacrifice majorly parallel the Day of Atonement? How can we receive Christ’s purity? Why is all this such significant news? Note down any other parallels you find between these two passages.
- Read 1 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 2:20-22, 1 Peter 1:13-25, and 1 John 2:28-3:3 - why is God concerned with us having a pure heart? What does this enable us to do? What else do you observe about God’s desire for His children?

Putting it all Together

For those of us who have had our hearts purified by God through Christ, we now see Him in a very real way (albeit in a spiritual way for now). Why do you think Jesus shares this beatitude after all the others? Who is the One who gets credit for purifying our hearts? What do you think it means to “see God”? How does this drastically change us?

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:8

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

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And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 7

Option A: MATTHEW 5:8

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-8

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.



WEEK EIGHT

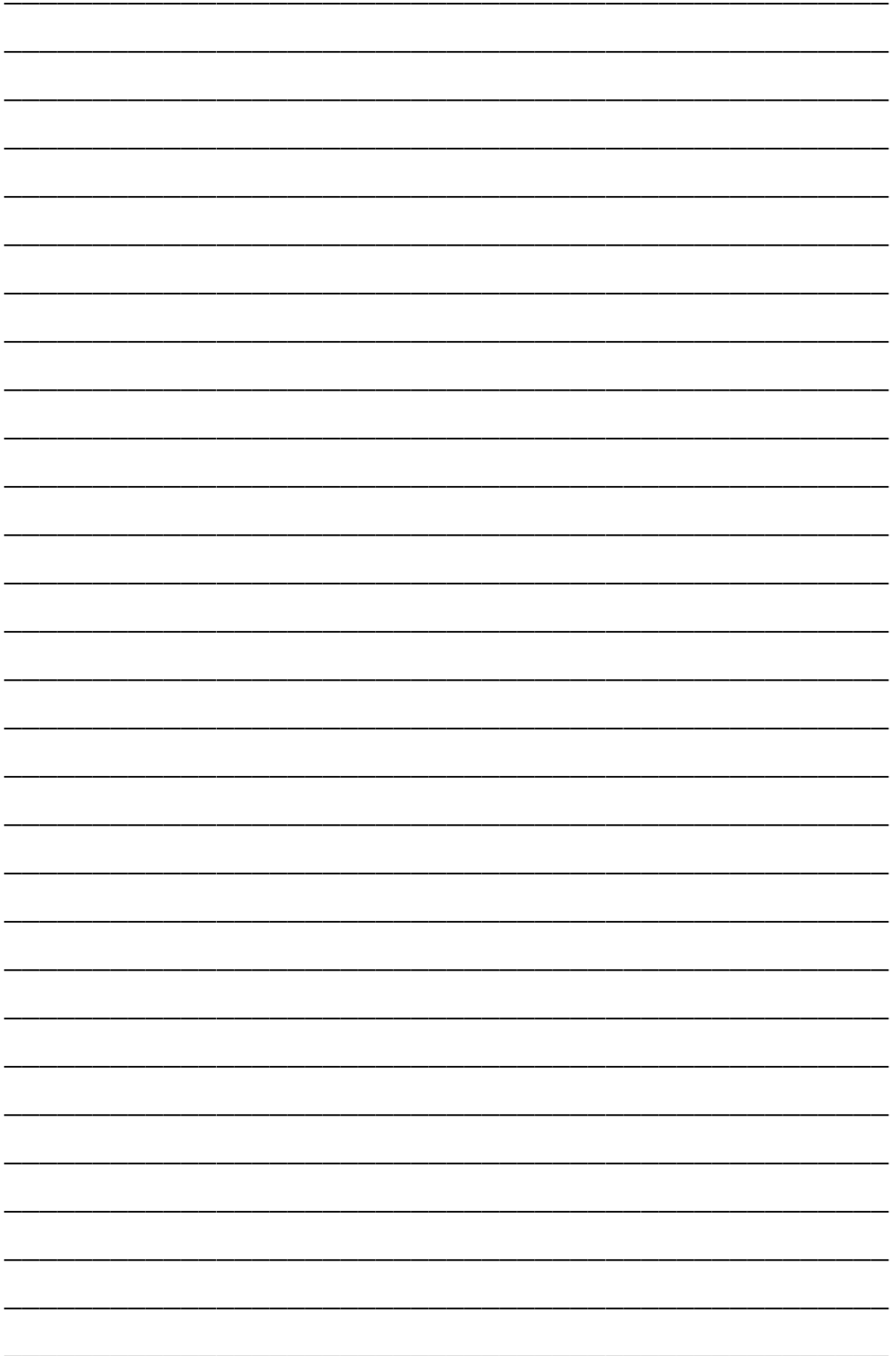
MATTHEW 5:9

SUNDAY MESSAGE NOTES

Sunday, November 17

SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:9

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.



READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:9

“Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons of God.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- Read Luke 4:16-21, then Isaiah 61 (keeping Jesus in mind). Jesus is the direct fulfillment of this prophecy in Isaiah. How do the situations described in Isaiah 61 relate to peace?
- Read the entire Gospel of John (either in one sitting or break it up throughout the week). Specifically take notes on:
 - How does Jesus live out and fulfill the prophecy from Isaiah 61 (in other words, how is He a *peacemaker*)?
 - How is He the Son of God (what kinds of things surround this title used for Jesus, what is its significance, etc.)? What does Jesus being a peacemaker have to do with Him also being the Son of God?
- Read Galatians 4:1-7, Romans 8:12-17, and Romans 12:1-21 - for those who have trusted in Christ for salvation, they are now adopted as sons and daughters of God. According to Romans, what is significant about that? How does God ask His children to live? How does this relate to being a peacemaker?

- Read Matthew 9:9-13 and 12:1-14, then turn to the Old Testament and read Hosea 5:1-6:6 - what might Jesus mean when He says, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice"? Think about the context of these two Matthew passages - what is Jesus

10 and Titus 2:11-14, 3:7-8.) As above, how does this relate to being a peacemaker?
- Read all of 1 John, specifically noting how John talks about 1) being children of God, and 2) how we are called to live as such.

Putting it all Together

What might it look like for you to become like Jesus in being a peacemaker? As children of God, why is it so important that we strive to be peacemakers and to love those around us? How does knowing that God designed us to do good works, yet our value is not based on our good works, change the way you view being His child?

LECTIO DIVINA || MATTHEW 5:9

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons of God.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

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After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

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Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
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As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 8

Option A: MATTHEW 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

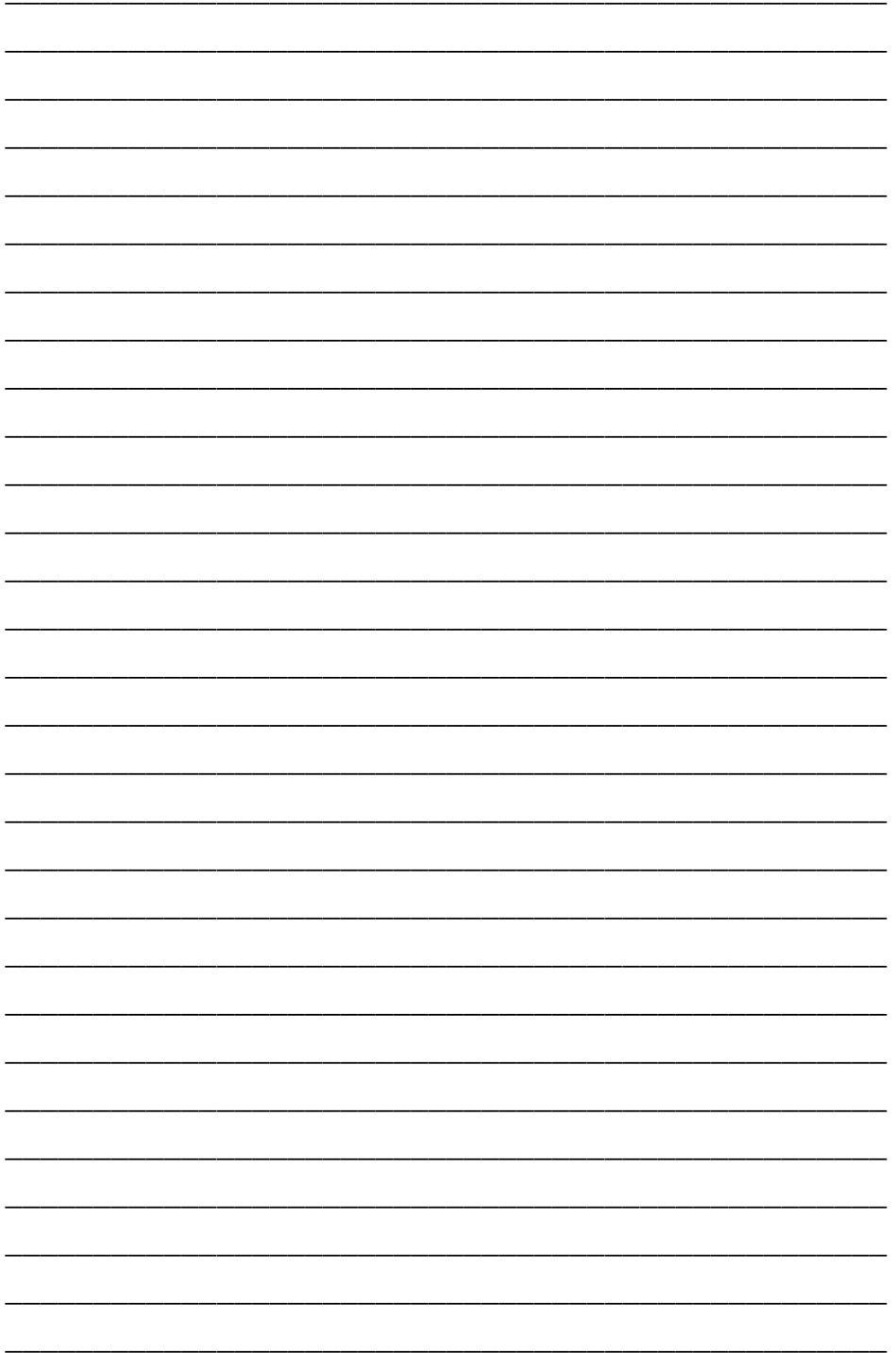
Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-9

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

WEEK 9

SCRIPT YOUR FLIP || MATTHEW 5:10-12

- This week, what are you tempted to believe that isn't true?
- From this text, what do you need to believe is true?
- During the week, take time to revisit your script and ask yourself questions about it, look up other scripture about it, perhaps write a prayer out to God around it.



READ & STUDY || MATTHEW 5:10-12

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

- Set a timer and spend 10 minutes listing as many observations as you can from this passage.
- Notice right away that those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake receive the same thing as those who are poor in spirit (see Matthew 5:3) - go back and reflect on some of your notes from that week before proceeding.
- Read Deuteronomy 32:34-43 - who will avenge all evil and wrongdoing? What do you notice about how God acts in this passage?
- Read 1 Samuel chapters 16-31, which focuses on a significant portion of King David’s life before he assumed the role - what do you notice about the types of sufferings and persecutions that David had to endure?

Focus on the relationship between David and Saul: How did both David and Saul respond to the other?

In what ways does David show his dependence on God vs. taking matters into his own hands? How does God deliver him?

- Read 1 Kings 19:1-18 and 22:1-28 - what do you notice about how the two prophets, Elijah and Micaiah, are being treated by those in power? Why are they being persecuted? How does God respond to Elijah in his persecution?
- The Psalms are FULL of passages that show the responses of God's people while experiencing persecution and suffering. A helpful exercise would be to make time in your schedule and go through the entire book of Psalms, scanning as many as you're willing to better understand God's heart for His people who are suffering. Pay careful attention to God's perspective on evil and persecution (vs. our own), and how God might want His people to trust Him amidst experiencing evil.

For a helpful start, here are a number of Psalms that deal specifically with this dynamic: Psalm 2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 17, 22, 27, 31, 42, 43, 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 63, 69, 73, 75, 77, 81, 83, 86, 94, 102, 107, 109, 116, 119:81-88, 119:153-168, 121, 123, 124, 136, 137, 140, 142, 143, 144.

Recall Deuteronomy 32 as you read the Psalms - who is the One who ultimately acts against evil? In each Psalm you read, is this theme continued? How so? How do God's people respond to suffering and persecution in the Psalms (list specific references)?

With the help of God's Spirit, who gives you the strength to comprehend His promises, this practice can have a significant impact in helping you trust God and to know His promises He gives to help you...but you have to be willing to carve out an extended period of time to "soak" in the Psalms with Him.

- Read Jeremiah 1, 15, 17:14-18, 20, 26, 38:1-13, 39, as well as Lamentations 1-5 - while there are many more examples of prophets being persecuted, this gives a really good snapshot of the kinds of things Jesus is referring to. What do you notice about why Jeremiah is persecuted? Lamentations (which is often attributed to being authored by Jeremiah) reflects a heart deeply affected by hardship - when focusing specifically on chapter 3, what do you notice about how the author trusts God amidst great persecution?
- Read Daniel chapters 1, 3, and 6 - why are Daniel and his three companions being persecuted? How do they respond to persecution? While they certainly did not compromise in what they believed, did they fight back? Why do you think they responded in the way they did? Specifically list the references that show their trust in God.
- Read Matthew 13:18-23 and Mark 4:10-20 - what do you notice about the four different types of soil? Specifically relating to God's people experiencing persecution, focus on the second type of soil that Jesus mentions - why do these fall away? How do they compare to the fourth type of soil? How might this influence the way you read and interpret Jesus' words?
- Read Matthew 10:1-42 and John chapters 14-17 - what do you notice about *why* Jesus is telling His disciples these things? How does Jesus talk about His disciples' relationship to the world? What does Jesus promise to give His followers? How does He console and encourage the disciples?

When reading Jesus' prayer in John 17, what are some specific things that Jesus asks the Father to do for His disciples?

NOTES || MATTHEW 5:10-12

- Read through the entire book of Acts - take note of all the ways Jesus' followers in the early church were persecuted, specifically noting 1) why they were persecuted, 2) how they actually responded when they were the target of persecution, and 3) how they trusted God amidst persecution. How did God use their suffering to glorify His Name?
- Read Romans 8 and 12; 1 Corinthians 4:11-13; 2 Corinthians 4:1-7:1 and 12:7-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12; 2 Timothy 3:10-17; Hebrews 10:32-39; James 1:1-4; all of 1 Peter; and Jude 1:17-24 - what sticks out to you about the ways these New Testament authors write about experiencing persecution? Similar to the above questions, what do you notice about what these authors (and therefore God) expect believers in Jesus to *believe about God* amidst hardship, as well as how they expect us to *respond practically*?

Putting it all Together

What can you conclude about how Christians are to respond to suffering and persecution from these passages? How does this sit with you? How might it look to apply what you learned from this study to your life? In what ways does the topic of persecution also show God's heart for you to trust Him?

NOTES || MATTHEW 5:10-12

A series of 35 horizontal lines for writing notes.

In Closing

In the Beatitudes, Jesus is tapping into significant biblical themes that not only challenge us but comfort us as well. He is for us, and the help that Jesus promises to give is the help that will further conform us to His Image.

Finally, it would be worth going through and rereading all of the Beatitudes in one sitting (Matthew 5:2-12), meditating on each one. What does the Lord Jesus bring to mind for you as you read? How is He wanting to use what you studied to help you know Him and obey Him?

Jeremiah 9:23-24 (ESV) - Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD."

Step 1: Prepare

Ask God to meet you here, to speak with you personally through His scripture. As we seek Him, He promises that He will be found by us.

Trust that He has a word for you and be ready to listen.

Take several deep breaths.

Sit comfortably.

Perhaps light a candle.

Invite God into this space.

Step 2: Lectio (10 minutes)

(Note: As this is a longer passage, it is helpful to increase this time from 5 minutes)

Now, read the passage slowly.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Read it again. And again. There is no prescribed number of times, just whatever is needed for you.

Step 3: Meditatio (5 minutes)

By now, a certain word or phrase has become noticeable to you, something that the Holy Spirit is drawing your mind to. Pay attention to it. Chew on it. Roll it around in your mind. What does it mean? How does this word or phrase make you feel? Don't rush through this step. God may settle on one particular area first, and then bring something else to your mind. Keep this slow.

Step 4: Oratio (10 minutes)

Having read and meditated, we move into Oratio, the time of prayer. Now it is time to ask God what this all means, to work through it with Him. We ask Him, "What are you inviting me into? What call do you have for me? What change do you have for me? What are you showing me about yourself? What are you telling me about who I am to you?" There will be an inner dialogue here. Sometimes silent, sometimes speaking.

Step 5: Contemplatio (5 minutes)

This fourth step is one of inner quietness. Here we quiet our minds and body and just rest in God's love. Lift your heart up to God, not because you desire His gifts, but because you desire HIM. Focus completely on Him, rest in Him, be silent with Him.

After this rest, it may be helpful to end your time with The Lord's Prayer, found in Matthew 6:9-13.

"Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts,
As we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil."

MEMORIZE || WEEK 9

Option A: Matthew 5:10

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Option B: MATTHEW 5:1-12

Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. And He opened His mouth and He taught them, saying: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Final Reflection

SCRIPTING THE FLIP

Take some time with God and reflect on what you’ve learned from your time listening to teaching, reading, studying, praying, and meditating on the Beatitudes from Christ’s Sermon on the Mount. Consider what He has done in your own life. Review your notes, prayers, and times of response from the last nine weeks. What are a few of the big takeaways that will impact the way that you understand and walk in God’s kingdom?



