

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 6/22/2020-6/26/2020

The following content is based on the message on 6/21/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. It is not meant to be a full synopsis, but rather a resource to help you analyze and apply the main ideas. To use this devotional effectively, please listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

MONDAY // BLESSED ARE THOSE

Read Matthew 5:1-12. Jesus shares nine different statements that should characterize people who are citizens of the kingdom of God. Each of these beatitudes should describe our lives. Jesus always takes us deeper than we want to go. He wants to transform our hearts, not just modify our behavior. When Jesus uses the word “bless,” He is describing a state of happiness. The state of happiness can be found because Jesus calls us deeper than surface-level circumstances and behavior. Jesus calls us into finding our identity in Him alone, the one who will never let us down.

Our rest and happiness found in Jesus must come from deep heart transformation.

- *Why is it so easy to focus on behavior modification rather than heart transformation?*
- *How does a deep heart transformation lead us to experience a state of blessing found in Jesus?*
- *Which beatitude convicts you to continue to seek transformation in your heart?*

TUESDAY // ENTERING THE KINGDOM

Read Matthew 5:1-6. The first four beatitudes describe what it looks like to enter the kingdom of God. When Jesus tells us to be “poor in spirit,” He is asking us to come to a place where we realize that we are completely powerless and bankrupt apart from Him. This includes the fact that we are unable to be completely righteous without Him. When Jesus tells us that we should hunger and thirst for righteousness, He is ultimately telling us that we must turn to Him as the righteous one.

We can't become righteous unless we submit to the righteous one.

- *In what ways have you experienced powerlessness apart from Christ?*
- *How does the righteousness of Christ satisfy you? How does the righteousness of Christ encourage you to submit to Him?*

WEDNESDAY // MOURNING IN SPIRIT

Jesus says, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.” When Jesus says this, He isn't just describing a human emotion. The human emotion of mourning a loss is helpful, but Jesus takes us deeper into a sorrow that mourns our sin. The apostle Paul writes about this as well. **Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-10.** We mourn because

we are disconnected from God. However, we are comforted, because Jesus reconnects us to God in spite of our sin.

Christians can mourn differently because we know the comfort of God is near.

- *Set a timer for five minutes. Reflect on your sin, mourning how it disconnects you from God.*
- *Ask the Holy Spirit to comfort you despite your sin. How did He comfort you?*

THURSDAY // HOW TO LIVE IN THE KINGDOM

Read Matthew 5:7-12. The last five beatitudes describe what it looks like for a follower of Jesus to live within the kingdom of Heaven. Jesus immediately asks us to be merciful. Why? Because we have received mercy from Him. Being merciful means that we are moved to be empathetic with someone else's pain. But it goes further than that. Truly being merciful means going further than empathy. It means that we are moved to alleviate that pain, at cost to yourself.

Jesus also tells us, “Blessed are the pure of heart.” This purity of heart means “singleness” of heart, or a heart purified from idols. The single most important thing to each of us must be Jesus Himself.

Living in the Kingdom of God means that our hearts should be filled with love for God and others.

- *When you hear about someone else's pain, where do you usually start? Do you start with mercy? If not, to whom do you need to show mercy today?*
- *Set a timer for five minutes. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you some other things that take up space in your heart, moving you away from a singleness of heart?*

FRIDAY // THE ULTIMATE PEACEMAKER

In the last section of the beatitudes, Jesus says, “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Jesus didn't say that we would have peace in every circumstance. However, He calls us to seek peace because of the peace that we have received through His blood. **Read Romans 5:1-11.** Jesus came to bring peace between mankind and God. The peace that we can bring to the world ultimately comes through gospel. Sometimes the gospel will divide people, but Godly peacemakers help others see their need for Jesus.

We must point people to Jesus because He is the ultimate peacemaker.

- *How may Christians be persecuted for being peacemakers?*
- *Set a timer for five minutes. Reflect on the peace that you have received with God because of the work of Jesus. How does Jesus' work challenge you to be a peacemaker today?*