

Weekly Study Guide

The week of September 8, 2013

Daily Readings

Monday	Matthew 5:1-12	Tuesday	Matthew 4:12-17	Wednesday	Matthew 4:18-22
Thursday	Matthew 4:23-25	Friday	Matthew 5:1-12	Saturday	Proverbs 14:12

My notes on this week's readings...

Next Week in Worship

Next week's message: *The Full Story*

Next week's readings: Matthew 5:13-20

We all have a story, no matter what it is. We all have a future, but it hasn't been written yet. Join us next week to learn how Jesus teaches us to understand our powerful place in God's story, and to be strengthened for the chapters He still wants to write in us.



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Group Discussion

Connect

What was the first big dream you can remember having for your life?

Learn

Read **John 10:10** together. This isn't part of the main passage we're learning from today, but it's an example of Jesus promising life to those who follow him. And Jesus also says that other promises of life are really empty promises.

- What comes to mind for you when you hear a phrase like this one, "life to the full" or "life abundant"?
- If you asked the people you know for their vision of "the good life," what kinds of things do you think they would say?
- What kinds of empty promises are people today invited to believe to make their lives good?

Read **Matthew 5:1-12** together.

- Notice how the first and last "beatitudes" say that the "Kingdom of Heaven" is theirs. We learned in this week's message that the God-given arrival of the Kingdom in Jesus helps us make sense of these verses. In your understanding, does it make any difference if we read these verses as a description of something God is bringing into the world ("Blessing is here") or as a formula we can use ("Do this and get blessed")? How so?
- This passage takes a lifetime to understand, and it's probably impossible to grasp the whole thing quickly. But God may be using even just a part of it to speak to you now. Do you find any of these verses particularly striking, compelling or inviting? Why do you think you find that part interesting?

Apply

When Jesus first began casting His countercultural Kingdom vision in **Matthew 4:17** he said, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near." The word "repent" can mean to "turn around" and also "to change your mind." What kind of turning around or changing your mind do you think Jesus is inviting you to move toward through this introduction to the Sermon on the Mount? Share this with your group and consider how you might begin responding to this.

Pray

We hear lots of messages everyday that make empty promises of the good life. Pray this week for spiritual vision and faith to trust and pursue the promises of Jesus instead.