



**Title: The Good Life**

*Text: Matthew 5:1-12*

## CONTEXT |

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus is portrayed as the one Messiah who is better than Moses. The Sermon on the Mount is the parallel to Moses giving the Law to God's people on Mt. Sinai. It is the law of the New Covenant. Instead of external rules, it is what the Holy Spirit writes on the heart and accomplishes in the life of true followers of Jesus. In this sermon we have a great summary of the gospel message as well as practical descriptions of the Christian life. Jesus has entrusted to us a message. It is one that must be proclaimed with our lips and with our life at the same time. As we walk through the Sermon on the Mount we will be considering God's message and our mission.

## MAIN IDEA |

The good life is not an easy life, but one that finds joy in Christ even in hardship.

## KEY VERSE |

<sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matthew 5:11-12 ESV)

## DISCUSSION QUESTION IDEAS |

- Is it proper for a follower of Christ to pursue "happiness"? Why or why not?
- What are some practical ways we can increase our hunger and thirst for righteousness?
- Describe some ways that total allegiance to Jesus could lead to forms of persecution in our culture. Have you ever experienced any form of persecution specifically for your loyalty to Christ?
- How should we feel about persecution? Should it concern us if we are not persecuted? (Try to think about the ditch on both sides of the path here)
- How would you describe a good life to your children, someone you are discipling, or a lost person? We need to be able to explain a proper aim in life and the appropriate expectations.

## EXPLANATION |

Early in Jesus' ministry he called the disciples to follow Him and preached the gospel of the kingdom. In Matthew 5, Jesus changes his pace and sits with his disciples to teach them practically what it looks like to follow Him.

He begins with the Beatitudes, which are pronouncements of blessing. He describes what a good life really looks like, and it is quite surprising. Most of these 8 statements describing what type of people are "happy" are contrary to what the world thinks. Jesus shows that the path to blessing is an emptying of self and enjoyment of God.

Take time to think about each of these beatitudes and the way the world responds to someone who walks in them according to Jesus. This should cause us to evaluate our own lives concerning where we really look for our joy and fulfillment in life and whether we ever feel any opposition.