

CONNECT AND GROW

The Jesus Way: The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:13-14, Matthew 5:20, Matthew 5:1-12

September 20, 2026

Icebreaker: Think of a time when you chose the “easy path”. What was the outcome? Or, think of a time when you chose the “right path” even though it was harder. What did you learn?

Opening Discussion: Looking back on your Message Notes, what stands out to you the most?

Study Summary:

1. Jesus’ way leads to life. (Matthew 7:13-14)
2. Jesus’ righteousness changes the heart. (Matthew 5:20)
3. Jesus’ kingdom leads to a blessed life. (Matthew 5:1-17)

Digging Deeper:

Read Matthew 7:13-14

While Jesus is the only way to salvation, here He is talking to those who are already His disciples. Jesus teaches that the way to life is narrow. Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, He describes what it looks like to live as His follower—a life that often looks very different from the values and priorities of the world.

Broad Road Says	Narrow Road Says
Do what feels right	Do what honors God
Follow the crowd	Follow Jesus even when others don’t
Put yourself first	Trust God rather than yourself
Avoid what is difficult	Love even when it costs you or is inconvenient
Live only for temporary pleasures	Put God’s kingdom before your desires
Don’t worry too much about obedience	Obey even when it is difficult

1. Why do you think Jesus describes the road to life as “narrow”?

2. What makes the “broad road” so attractive?

3. When have you switched from walking the broad path to the narrow path on a specific issue?

4. Bishop Fulton Sheen said, “The difference between a river and a swamp is that the river has borders and the swamp has none.” If boundaries can actually lead to freedom, how might Jesus’ narrow way lead to greater freedom, joy, and life?

Read Matthew 5:20

This statement would have shocked Jesus’ hearers because the Pharisees were considered among the most religious and righteous people of their day. But Jesus was pointing to a righteousness that goes deeper than outward behavior—it begins with a transformed heart.

5. According to the following passages, where does the righteousness Jesus calls us to actually come from?
 - **Romans 3:21-22** But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile...

 - **Matthew 5:17** Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

6. Why do we so easily fall back on thinking our righteous deeds is what earns God’s favor?

7. Looking at the following chart, which do you need to work on?

Performance-Based Religion	Kingdom Living
What must I do?	Look at what Christ has done
Concerned with appearances	Concerned with the heart
Following rules	Following Christ
Seeing approval	Seeking God's approval
External behavior	Internal transformation
How little can I do?	How faithfully can I live?

Prayer

This section can be done on your own during the week.

Read Matthew 5:1-12: Jesus describes the character of Kingdom People

The word for blessed means deeply satisfied; happy. There is a blessedness that has nothing to do with circumstances.

Matthew 5:3 — Spiritual poverty

Recognizing that we need God for everything.

Question: Am I self-sufficient, or do I recognize my need for God every day?

Matthew 5:4 — Spiritual mourning

This is more than ordinary sadness. It is recognizing the seriousness of sin and allowing it to grieve us rather than becoming comfortable with it.

Question: Have I become comfortable with any sin that should break my heart?

Matthew 5:5 — Meekness

Recognizing that I am not the center of the world and surrendering my rights to God.

Question: How do I respond when someone challenges, criticizes, or disrespects me?

Matthew 5:6 — Hunger for righteousness

Desiring God's righteousness the way a hungry person desires food.

Question: How deeply do I desire to become more like Jesus?

Matthew 5:7 — Mercy

Because we have received God's mercy, we extend mercy to others.

Question: Who needs mercy from me today?

Matthew 5:8 — Purity of heart

Having an undivided heart that puts God first.

Question: What competes with God for first place in my heart?

Matthew 5:9 — Peacemaking

Actively pursuing reconciliation rather than fueling conflict.

Question: Am I bringing peace into my relationships, or am I contributing to conflict?

Matthew 5:10-12 — Faithfulness under pressure

Following Jesus will sometimes cost us something.

Question: Am I willing to follow Jesus when doing so costs me something?

Challenge for the week:

Begin each day by praying: "Jesus, today I choose your way over my way."

Before going to sleep spend five minutes reflecting:

- Where did I follow Jesus' way today?
- Where did I choose the broad road?
- Where did I see God's grace at work?

Thank God for Jesus' gift of righteousness

