

The Sermon on the Mount

Bible Story: The Sermon on the Mount • Matthew 5:1-11; 13-20; 5:43-48; 6:1-4; 6:14; 6:19-21; 6:28-29; 7:15-20; 7:28-29

Story Point: Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom.

Memory Verse: "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." **John 14:25-26**

Big Picture: What did Jesus teach when He was on earth? Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

FOR PARENTS: Bible Study

One of Jesus' most well-known teachings is the Sermon on the Mount. On that day, crowds of people had come to hear Jesus. Jesus went up on a mountain in Galilee, sat down, and began to teach.

Jesus' sermon is recorded across three chapters in the Gospel of Matthew, 5–7, and it tells how believers should live. While Matthew 5:1-2 specifies that Jesus taught His disciples, Matthew 7:28 reveals that the crowds listened to His sermon as well.

First, Jesus began with the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes describe God's great blessings for believers. God's kingdom belongs to the spiritually needy, God will comfort those who are sad, and God will give mercy to those who show mercy to others. Jesus gives believers reason to be glad when life on earth is hard because great rewards await in heaven.

Jesus also taught how believers should live in a world that does not honor Him. Jesus called believers "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13-14). He said the good works of His followers should cause others to give glory to God.

God's people had the law of Moses, but some of them—the Pharisees, in particular—were concerned mostly with the appearance of being righteous. They tried hard to look righteous on the outside, but it was all an act. Jesus warned against hypocrites, people who pretend to be something they're not. When a person knows and loves Jesus, he or she has a changed heart that wants to honor Jesus.

As you teach kids Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, emphasize that this moral teaching was not a list of requirements for being accepted by God. Rather, Jesus described what a person's life looks like when that person follows God and lives to honor Him. God's standards remind us that we rely on His grace through the gift of salvation in His Son.

Feeling happy is nice. Lots of circumstances can make us feel happy. Today, we will learn about something that is deeper than happiness: joy. The Bible teaches us that we can have joy in Jesus even when we feel sad. Does that surprise you? We'll talk more about it soon.

- Introduce the **Memory Verse**, the **Big Picture** for the month and the **Story Point** for this week.

Memory Verse Activity

What You Need: numbered cube

What You Say:

Jesus spoke our key passage to His disciples before He went to the cross. Jesus wanted them to know what to expect. Jesus knew that they would have trouble remembering all the wonderful things He taught about God and God's kingdom. That's why Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us. He lives within us when we have faith in Jesus, and He helps us understand and remember God's truth.

Let's read the Memory Verse out loud together.

"All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." **John 14:25-26**

What You Do:

Instruct kids on how to play and then assign to each face of the numbered cube a way to read the key passage, such as quietly, loudly, in a deep voice, in a high-pitched voice, in a pirate voice, and in a robot voice. Invite a kid to roll the numbered cube and lead the group saying the key passage in the designated way. Play multiple times, allowing other kids to roll and lead.

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Matthew 5:1-11

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Matthew 5:13-20

Salt and Light

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

The Fulfillment of the Law

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. ¹⁸ For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:43-48

Love for Enemies

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor^[a] and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶ If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸ Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 6:1-4

Giving to the Needy

6 “Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

² “So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. ³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Matthew 6:14

¹⁴ For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Matthew 6:19-21

Treasures in Heaven

¹⁹ “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

Matthew 7:15-20

True and False Prophets

¹⁵ “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree

cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Matthew 7:28-29

²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law

Discussion Questions

- Why did Jesus say those who mourn are blessed? (*because they will be comforted, Matt. 5:4*)
- What did Jesus compare believers to? (*salt and light, Matt. 5:13-16*)
- What did Jesus come to do with the law? (*obey it perfectly, not get rid of it; Matt. 5:17*)
- What are some ways God's kingdom is different from worldly kingdoms? *Guide kids to give examples about how God's kingdom is the opposite of what our hearts naturally desire. In God's kingdom, we love our enemies and consider ourselves blessed even in difficult or sad times. We give generously even to those who cannot repay. We trust in God instead of ourselves, and we do good to glorify God, not to look good in front of others.*
- Why does God care so much about what's in our hearts? *Help kids understand that sinful actions always begin as sinful thoughts and desires. Remind them that it is not enough to simply avoid doing bad things. Obedience to God means we do not even think evil thoughts. Help them see that we need Jesus because only He can meet God's standard of perfection.*
- Where did Jesus' authority to teach come from? *Guide kids to think about Jesus' identity as God the Son. Remind them that He was present at creation and that He is the King of kings. His words are God's own words. His teaching is perfect.*

Christ Connection

Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom. We can only enter His kingdom by faith in Jesus. Then God transforms our lives to look like Jesus. We cannot live the way Jesus said to, but Jesus fulfilled the law for us. We are saved by Him alone.

Jesus taught people what it means to follow Him. He taught how people should live, how they should treat one another, and how to love God. People who trust in Jesus live to honor God and show what His kingdom is like.

Big Picture

What You Say:

As we begin learning about Jesus' teachings, we will focus on a new big picture question. ***What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?*** As you listened to today's story, you should have gotten a pretty good idea about the answer.

Again, our big picture question is: **What did Jesus teach when He was on earth?**

The answer is: Jesus taught about God and His kingdom. He taught that all Scripture is about Him.

In the beginning, God created the whole universe, and everything was perfectly good. Sadly, things didn't stay good for long. Adam and Eve chose to reject God's authority, and their disobedience brought sin, sadness, and death into the world. Thankfully, God had a plan to rescue people from sin and undo the damage sin causes.

Jesus' healed people with all kinds of issues. Jesus healed people who could not walk or could not see; He even raised people who were dead! Although Jesus cared for people's physical needs, He also wanted people to know God. That's why He spent time teaching.

Christ Connection

When we have faith in Jesus, we are part of God's kingdom. That changes everything about us. We begin to look more like Jesus in the way we behave and how we treat others. We love people even when they treat us wrongly, and we care more about God's glory than our own.

Bible Story Video, Questions from Kids,

What You Do:

Show the Bible story video "The Sermon on the Mount." and pass out snacks. You will also show the Questions from Kids video.

What You Say:

This story comes from one of the most famous passages in the Bible. **Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom.** Jesus cared not only about people's physical needs, but also about their spiritual needs. The blessings Jesus taught about were very different from the kinds of things the world usually thinks of as blessings. In a way, God's kingdom is backward from what the world thinks a kingdom should be.

The religious leaders thought that the key to being with God was obeying all the rules. They thought that if they looked very special and holy, they could earn God's love. Jesus was teaching the opposite. God loves all of us, but we cannot obey perfectly. Even our thoughts are sinful sometimes.

We usually pay attention to what's on the outside, but Jesus was teaching that what's on the inside is just as important. God doesn't want us to do good things to glorify ourselves but to glorify Him. Without God's help, we could never honor God with our lives. Thankfully, God sent help.

Missions Moment

What You Do:

Play the "Meet Kesavan" missions video. Lead kids to practice saying Kesavan Balasingham's name (KAY-seh-van bah-lah-SING-hem). Remind kids that churches give to missions to spread the gospel and to help start churches, like the one Kesavan started—Fellowship Church Rouge Park.

What You Say:

Jesus taught people how to live in God's kingdom. We can learn from the Bible and from other Christians about how to live in God's kingdom. When Kesavan believed the truth of the gospel, it changed his whole life. Now he lives for God's glory as a missionary! We can live on mission too by loving others and telling them about Jesus.

Prayer

Father, thank You that Your kingdom is not like earthly kingdoms. Help us understand Your Word and obey Your commands. Give us wisdom and courage. Help us love You more each day. Amen.