



The Gospel According To Matthew

“The kingdom of the heavens is at hand.”
-Matthew 4:17

September 2, 2007
Group Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think this is one of Jesus most famous teachings?
2. What does it mean to have the kingdom of “the heavens.”
3. Why are those who mourn called “blessed” by Jesus? Is mourning a blessing? Is persecution?
4. Who might you include on Jesus’ invitation list? In other words, who feels rejected in our world today?
5. Compare and contrast this passage with Luke 6:20-26.

Who has the Good Life?

Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus here gives us a picture of who can enter the kingdom of the heavens (i.e., the people who receive the offer of God’s resources) and it’s not who we would expect. Jesus offers the kingdom of the heavens to those who are dejected, spit upon, lonely, sad people. This is not a group you would want to have to a party! Even those who hunger and thirst for righteousness—how much popularity do they gain in their quest? These are not always the first people to get an invitation to the party either.

I believe Jesus’ point here is not that the kingdom of God is only for the down and out—it is for everyone. The kingdom of God is at hand even for the people we assume have no redeeming qualities or anything the world would desire. We see manifestations of the kingdom of God throughout the Old Testament among the nation of Israel. Now though, Jesus announces that the kingdom does not exist just for one people, but for everyone. Even the meek have immediate availability to the kingdom of God that is all around them. So what the point? If you are in Christ, you have access to God’s kingdom, not just after you die, but you have it today!

