



## **The Gospel of Matthew (NLT)**

### **Chapter 5**

*<sup>1</sup>One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, <sup>2</sup>and he began to teach them.*

#### **The People of the Kingdom**

##### **The Beatitudes**

<sup>3</sup>“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

<sup>4</sup>God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.

<sup>6</sup>God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.

<sup>7</sup>God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

<sup>8</sup>God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.

<sup>10</sup>God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

<sup>11</sup>“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. <sup>12</sup>Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

#### **Teaching about Salt and Light**

<sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

<sup>14</sup>“You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

#### **Reflect**

#### **The Practices of the Kingdom (1)**

##### **Teaching about the Law**

<sup>17</sup>“Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. <sup>18</sup>I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. <sup>19</sup>So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

<sup>20</sup>“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

##### **Teaching about Anger**

<sup>21</sup>“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ <sup>22</sup>But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.

<sup>23</sup>“So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

<sup>25</sup>“When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup>And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny.

slaps you on the right cheek, offer the other cheek also. <sup>40</sup>If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. <sup>41</sup>If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. <sup>42</sup>Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.

#### **Teaching about Love for Enemies**

<sup>43</sup>“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. <sup>44</sup>But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! <sup>45</sup>In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. <sup>46</sup>If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. <sup>47</sup>If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. <sup>48</sup>But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.

#### **Reflect**

#### **The Practices of the Kingdom (2)**

### **Chapter 6**

##### **Teaching about Giving to the Needy**

“Watch out! Don’t do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. <sup>2</sup>When you give to someone in need, don’t do as the hypocrites do, blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. <sup>3</sup>But when you give to someone in need, don’t let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. <sup>4</sup>Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

##### **Teaching about Prayer and Fasting**

<sup>5</sup>“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. <sup>6</sup>But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

<sup>7</sup>“When you pray, don’t babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. <sup>8</sup>Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! <sup>9</sup>Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,  
may your name be kept holy.

<sup>10</sup>May your Kingdom come soon.  
May your will be done on earth,  
as it is in heaven.

<sup>11</sup>Give us today the food we need,  
<sup>12</sup>and forgive us our sins,  
as we have forgiven those who sin  
against us.

<sup>13</sup>And don’t let us yield to  
temptation,  
but rescue us from the evil one.

<sup>14</sup>“If you forgive those who sin  
against you, your heavenly Father  
will forgive you. <sup>15</sup>But if you refuse  
to forgive others, your Father will  
not forgive your sins.

<sup>16</sup>“And when you fast, don’t  
make it obvious, as the hypocrites  
do, for they try to look miserable  
and disheveled so people will  
admire them for their fasting. I tell  
you the truth, that is the only  
reward they will ever get. <sup>17</sup>But  
when you fast, comb your hair and  
wash your face. <sup>18</sup>Then no one will  
notice that you are fasting, except  
your Father, who knows what you  
do in private. And your Father, who  
sees everything, will reward you.

#### Reflect

### The Practices of the Kingdom (3)

#### **Teaching about Money and Possessions**

<sup>19</sup>“Don’t store up treasures here on  
earth, where moths eat them and  
rust destroys them, and where  
thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup>Store  
your treasures in heaven, where  
moths and rust cannot destroy,  
and thieves do not break in and  
steal. <sup>21</sup>Wherever your treasure is,  
there the desires of your heart will  
also be.

<sup>22</sup>“Your eye is like a lamp that  
provides light for your body. When  
your eye is healthy, your whole  
body is filled with light. <sup>23</sup>But when  
your eye is unhealthy, your whole  
body is filled with darkness. And if  
the light you think you have is  
actually darkness, how deep that  
darkness is!

<sup>24</sup>“No one can serve two  
masters. For you will hate one and  
love the other; you will be devoted  
to one and despise the other. You  
cannot serve God and be enslaved  
to money.

<sup>25</sup>“That is why I tell you not to  
worry about everyday life—whether  
you have enough food and drink, or  
enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life  
more than food, and your body  
more than clothing? <sup>26</sup>Look at the  
birds. They don’t plant or harvest or  
store food in barns, for your  
heavenly Father feeds them. And  
aren’t you far more valuable to him  
than they are? <sup>27</sup>Can all your  
worries add a single moment to  
your life?

<sup>28</sup>“And why worry about your  
clothing? Look at the lilies of the  
field and how they grow. They don’t  
work or make their clothing, <sup>29</sup>yet  
Solomon in all his glory was not  
dressed as beautifully as they are.  
<sup>30</sup>And if God cares so wonderfully  
for wildflowers that are here today  
and thrown into the fire tomorrow,  
he will certainly care for you. Why  
do you have so little faith?

<sup>31</sup>“So don’t worry about these  
things, saying, ‘What will we eat?  
What will we drink? What will we  
wear?’ <sup>32</sup>These things dominate  
the thoughts of unbelievers, but  
your heavenly Father already  
knows all your needs. <sup>33</sup>Seek the  
Kingdom of God above all else, and  
live righteously, and he will give you  
everything you need.

<sup>34</sup>“So don’t worry about  
tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring  
its own worries. Today’s trouble is  
enough for today.

### **Chapter 7**

#### **Do Not Judge Others**

“Do not judge others, and you will  
not be judged. <sup>2</sup>For you will be  
treated as you treat others. The  
standard you use in judging is the  
standard by which you will be  
judged.

<sup>3</sup>“And why worry about a  
speck in your friend’s eye when you  
have a log in your own? <sup>4</sup>How can  
you think of saying to your friend,  
‘Let me help you get rid of that  
speck in your eye,’ when you can’t  
see past the log in your own eye?  
<sup>5</sup>Hypocrite! First get rid of the log in  
your own eye; then you will see well  
enough to deal with the speck in  
your friend’s eye.

<sup>6</sup>“Don’t waste what is holy on  
people who are unholy. Don’t throw  
your pearls to pigs! They will  
trample the pearls, then turn and  
attack you.

#### **Effective Prayer**

<sup>7</sup>“Keep on asking, and you will  
receive what you ask for. Keep on  
seeking, and you will find. Keep on  
knocking, and the door will be  
opened to you. <sup>8</sup>For everyone who  
asks, receives. Everyone who  
seeks, finds. And to everyone who  
knocks, the door will be opened.

<sup>9</sup>“You parents—if your  
children ask for a loaf of bread, do  
you give them a stone instead? <sup>10</sup>Or  
if they ask for a fish, do you give  
them a snake? Of course not! <sup>11</sup>So  
if you sinful people know how  
to give good gifts to your children,  
how much more will your heavenly  
Father give good gifts to those who  
ask him.

#### **The Golden Rule**

<sup>12</sup>“Do to others whatever you  
would like them to do to you. This is  
the essence of all that is taught in  
the law and the prophets.

#### Reflect

### The Pathway to the Kingdom

#### **The Narrow Gate**

<sup>13</sup>“You can enter God’s Kingdom  
only through the narrow gate. The  
highway to hell is broad, and its  
gate is wide for the many who  
choose that way. <sup>14</sup>But the gateway  
to life is very narrow and the road is  
difficult, and only a few ever find it.

#### **The Tree and Its Fruit**

<sup>15</sup>“Beware of false prophets who  
come disguised as harmless sheep  
but are really vicious wolves. <sup>16</sup>You  
can identify them by their fruit, that  
is, by the way they act. Can you pick  
grapes from thornbushes, or figs  
from thistles? <sup>17</sup>A good tree  
produces good fruit, and a bad tree  
produces bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree  
can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad  
tree can’t produce good fruit. <sup>19</sup>So  
every tree that does not produce  
good fruit is chopped down and  
thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>Yes, just as  
you can identify a tree by its fruit, so  
you can identify people by their  
actions.

#### **True Disciples**

<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who calls out to  
me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the

Kingdom of Heaven. Only those  
who actually do the will of my  
Father in heaven will enter. <sup>22</sup>On  
judgment day many will say to me,  
‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your  
name and cast out demons in your  
name and performed many  
miracles in your name.’ <sup>23</sup>But I will  
reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away  
from me, you who break God’s  
laws.’

#### **Building on a Solid Foundation**

<sup>24</sup>“Anyone who listens to my  
teaching and follows it is wise, like  
a person who builds a house on  
solid rock. <sup>25</sup>Though the rain comes  
in torrents and the floodwaters rise  
and the winds beat against that  
house, it won’t collapse because it  
is built on bedrock. <sup>26</sup>But anyone  
who hears my teaching and doesn’t  
obey it is foolish, like a person who  
builds a house on sand. <sup>27</sup>When the  
rains and floods come and the  
winds beat against that house, it  
will collapse with a mighty crash.”

<sup>28</sup>When Jesus had finished saying  
these things, the crowds were  
amazed at his teaching, <sup>29</sup>for he  
taught with real authority—quite  
unlike their teachers of religious  
law.

#### Consider these questions during each of the reflection times:

- 1.) What are some of the important ideas being spoken of in this passage?
- 2.) What questions does this passage bring to your mind?
- 3.) How did Jesus “practice what He preached” in this passage?
- 4.) Do you feel led to apply any of these ideas to your life?

#### **Further study:**

-Follow the code below for helpful  
resources from **The Bible Project**:



-Also, grab a friend and join us as we read through the New Testament this year! (Use the code below for the downloadable guide.)

