

Week Beginning: 29th January 2017

Worship Series: #1 in series



living sharing growing



lifegroups
live life abundantly

Theme Verse

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled" Matthew 5:6

Remember This Week

The heart of the Gospel, the root of faith, is that God gives you a righteousness that is outside of yourself. When you acknowledge before God that you are broken and empty, you will discover that you are: more loved than you ever deserve, more radical than you could ever imagine, more blessed than you could ever believe possible.



Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.

Psalm 37:4-6



Lord God, we come to you to study your word and its truth for our life. Many things in this world seek to fill the desires of our hearts but they are only fleeting. Help us, in our lives, to delight in our relationship with you and trust in your word. Draw us close to our Saviour, Jesus Christ, as we study his radical teaching for our lives. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.



1. *Highs and Lows for the week.*
2. *Accountability time. How did you go with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *What makes you happiest? Describe the last thing that truly made you happy.*
4. *When do you feel blessed? Is there a difference between blessed and happy?*
5. *What is the most radical thing you've ever done?*

What do you associate with the word "radical?" The word "radical" often implies being way out on the edge and is used today to dismiss a group that makes us feel uncomfortable. So if this series "Radical Church" makes you feel a little bit uneasy, then that is understandable. But the word "radical" comes from the Latin term *radix* which means "root" and today Jesus is calling the Church back to its roots to re-discover her calling to be a world-changing, spirit-infused, culture-shaping, paradigm-shifting and radical movement of God in the world today. It begins with a radical faith.

Read Matthew 5:1-12

This starts Jesus' epic block of teaching (Matthew 5-7) which is known as "the Sermon on the Mount". Jesus' opening discourse is called "The Beatitudes" as the first word of each verse in 5:3-11 is traditionally translated "Blessed" or "Happy." We will be spending 5 weeks exploring Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount and what it means for our lives.

6. *On first reading, how do the Beatitudes make you feel? Encouraged, discouraged, engaged, shocked, comforted, afflicted? Explain your answer.*
7. *What do you find confusing about this text?*
8. *As a group, come up with a list of worldly Beatitudes, that is, the kinds of things people tend to think will make them happy in life. Eg, Happy are those with the most toys as they will always have fun.*
9. *What then is so radical about what Jesus' list?*





10. *All of the the characteristics mentioned in this text belong to all Christians. In what ways do you see these attributes lived out in the lives of the Christians you know?*

On the one level, it may seem like Jesus is suggesting that these are the ways we should live if we want to get into heaven. Yet, what he was announcing to the people of his day and to us is that through him these things start to come true. This is an announcement, not a set of laws or good advice. It is gospel—an announcement of wonderful news, of good news, to all people. Verses 3 and 10 end with 'for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.' Jesus is saying to all Christians, 'You are blessed now, for the Kingdom of heaven is yours. The meat in this Good News sandwich is verse 6.

Read Romans 3:9-24

11. *If Jesus is just telling us what to do in the Beatitudes, he has given us more law to live by and the law doesn't save us. So then how can the Beatitudes be Good News?*
12. *What is the main point of Jesus' beatitude that those who mourn will be comforted?*
13. *Mourning sin is counter-cultural to a culture that celebrates and medicates sin. What are some ways that our culture medicates and/or celebrates sin instead of mourning it?*
14. *What is one area in your life where you have or are currently experiencing mourning over your sin?*
15. *What do you think it means to hunger and thirst for righteousness?*

Verse 6 is the meat in the sandwich of the Beattitudes, that are framed by the repeated refrain, 'for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.' Those who admit before God that they are empty, impoverished in Spirit, that there is nothing that they can do to make God pleased with them, who then mourn over their sin and in humility recognise that nothing in this world can satisfy, they will be filled.

16. *In what way is confessing sin, a way in which Christians empty ourselves of our attempts to please God? What is the confidence we have to do this each week in public worship and provately in our own lives.*
17. *What things have you hungered and thirsted after to try and satisfy the deep longing of your heart?*
18. *To what degree has obtaining those things satisfied your hinger and thirst, and in what ways has it left you still unsatisfied?*

Read Revelation 3:17

19. *Even though at times we may think we have satisfied our hunger and thirst, what does Jesus say is the reality of what we think we have achieved?*
20. *What is the long-term effect of hungering for righteousness as opposed to the long-term effect of pursuing happiness?*

Righteousness is a gift that God gives preely by his grace. When we are acknowledge our bankruptcy before God and hunger and thirst for him, knowing that only he can satisgy, the promise he gives, is that we will be filled. This filling, this clothing of his righteousness, enables us to be peacemakers, to show mercy, to endure persecution and struggle, knowing that we are blessed because God tells us unequivocally that he loves us and that we belong to him.

21. *How do you see God working through your faith in Jesus Christ to fulfill the other Beatitudes? How do these grow out of a living relationship with Jesus Christ and what needs to change this year in your life to make that happen?*
22. *Of the eight qualities listed in the Beatitudes, which of these characteristics of a Christian do you most desire to grow in your life at this present time? Why?*
23. *What are some practical ways and areas in your life where we can pivot from hungering for happiness to hungering for righteousness?*

- * Pray for all Christians that they would continue to turn to God in repentance and receive the forgiveness and acceptance that Christ has won for them.
- * Pray for those who are poor in spirit, mourning or pushed around in their lives by those more powerful than them, that they may know the powerful presence of a Saviour who is for them and with them.
- * Pray that God would continue to work in power through our lives in all that we do in and through LifeWay that his character might shine through radically in this world.
- * Pray for each member of your Life Group and those you know who are in need.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

Name, in Christ, you are truly blessed. Amen.

