

**Sunday School**  
**March 22, 2020**

This is a very difficult and uncertain time that we are living in. There's no better place to go for comfort, assurance, and direction than Jesus' own words. I don't know how long this arrangement is going to last, but I thought a great place to study for the time being is Matthew 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount. This week kicks off some reflections from this critical teaching passage by Jesus.

-Read: Matthew 5:1-12

-Questions to consider and discuss:

1. Take a look at the list of "beatitudes" (fun fact: "beatitude" comes from the Latin for "blessed/happy"). Do you currently fall into any of these categories? Perhaps you find yourself fitting into the "poor in spirit" group or the "mourning" group. Know that Jesus empathizes with all situations, even though some might feel more trivial when compared to others.
2. Are there some categories that you don't currently fall into, but maybe you should? For example, do you earnestly hunger and thirst for righteousness, or have you spent your hours mindlessly consuming media content? How pure in heart are you right now? Are you being a peacemaker, or contributing to the craziness, chaos, and selfishness that exist in our world?
  - a. Talk about what the word "meek" means. Sometimes, people equate this to "weak," but that's not really what it means. Rather, meekness is having the ability to assert power over someone, but willingly choosing not to. Someone who is meek is gentle, not seeking to further their own agendas in their own strength. These are people who trust in God to direct the outcome of events, instead of running over people in their quest to see their desires accomplished.
3. Read Luke 6:17-26. What differences do you notice between this passage and the Matthew passage? Luke displays Jesus' concern for physical needs ("hunger now" vs. "hunger and thirst for righteousness"; "poor" vs. "poor in spirit"). The reality is that Jesus is concerned about both the physical needs (exemplified in Luke) *and* spiritual needs (exemplified in Matthew) of people.
4. What is one takeaway from this teaching from the Sermon on the Mount that you can apply this week?