

Week Two: *The Spiritual Way*
Matthew 5:1-12, 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. When you think of someone who is spiritual or religious, what comes to mind? Does it imply a healthy relationship with God? Why or why not?

2. Read Matthew 5:1-12. What does Jesus repeat to those who are listening? What patterns do you see in his sermon?

3. The audience at the Sermon on the Mount would have heard Jesus’ words and connected them to the Old Testament promises and examples from the Psalms, Isaiah, and others. Read the chart. Note the connections you see between the verses.

Matthew 5:3	No Old Testament reference found. Would that have caught the attention of the crowd?
Matthew 5:4	Isaiah 61:2-3
Matthew 5:5	Psalms 37:11
Matthew 5:6	Isaiah 55:1-2
Matthew 5:7	Exodus 34:6
Matthew 5:8	Psalms 24:3-4
Matthew 5:9	Psalms 34:14
Matthew 5:10	2 Chronicles 24:21; Nehemiah 9:26
Matthew 5:11	Isaiah 51:7

4. This particular portion of scripture is known as the Beatitudes. Which Beatitude comforts, challenges, or encourages you today? Explain your answer.

5. End your FIFTEEN by thanking God for his presence with you.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

6. Think about a time someone used the word “blessed.” Does it fit with how Jesus used the word “blessed” in the Beatitudes? Why or why not?

7. Reread Matthew 5:1-12. Describe how each of the Beatitudes plays out in modern day.
 - a. Poor in spirit (v. 3)
 - b. Mourning (v. 4)
 - c. Meek (v. 5)
 - d. Hunger and thirst for righteousness (v. 6)
 - e. Merciful (v. 7)
 - f. Pure in heart (v. 8)
 - g. Peacemakers (v. 9)
 - h. Persecuted because of righteousness (v. 10)
 - i. Insulted, persecuted, falsely accused because of Jesus (v. 11)
8. Read a translation of this from the Message.
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew%205%3A1-12&version=MSG>. How do you see God's blessing when you have been in a challenging time?
9. End your FIFTEEN in prayer. Ask God for eyes to see how he is helping you grow.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

10. What do you think of when you hear “kingdom of heaven”?
11. Skim Matthew 13:24-49. List out what the kingdom of heaven is compared to.
12. Look at your list. How is the kingdom of heaven like each of the items listed?

13. Read Matthew 6:9-13. When we pray the Lord's Prayer, what is the first request we make of God?
14. Is the kingdom of heaven a kingdom that you want to be a part of? Why or why not?
15. Finish your FIFTEEN by praying the Lord's Prayer today. Spend time in reflection by pausing after each sentence.

Our Father, Who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name.
Thy Kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
and the power and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

16. What do you think it means to be faithful?
17. Read 1 Corinthians 10:1-5. Paul gives a microhistory of the first half of the exodus where God's people are learning to depend on God as God leads them out of Egypt. What stories do you recognize in his list? (See Exodus 13:21-22; Exodus 14:22, 29; Exodus 16:2-36; Exodus 17:1-7; Numbers 14:29 for stories from 1 Corinthians 10:1-5 or watch <https://bibleproject.com/learn/exodus-1-18/>, a 7-minute video summarizing Exodus 1-18.)
18. How was God faithful to his people in spite of their unfaithfulness?
19. Read 1 Corinthians 10:11-13. How is God faithful to his people today?
20. Where do you see God fulfilling his promise to be faithful to you today? Has your idea of faithfulness changed? Why or why not?

21. End your FIFTEEN by listening to “O Come, All You Unfaithful” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C-QHbpYjuIg>. Reflect on what God has done for you. Thank God again for his faithfulness through the ages.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

22. When you think about having a relationship with God, what comes to mind? What spiritual practices do you use in order to develop your relationship with God?

23. Read Luke 18:9-14. Compare the Pharisee and the tax collector. Which character has a meaningful relationship with God? Why?

24. Why might the spiritual practices of the Pharisee get in the way of his relationship with God?

25. How can spiritual practices become more important than the relationship they are meant to be building?

26. Reflect on your spiritual practices. Are they doing what they were designed to do? Why or why not? How can they be strengthened?

27. Reread Luke 18:9-14. Who or what does each character rely on for forgiveness from God?

28. Read 1 John 2:1-2. Where does forgiveness come from?

29. End your FIFTEEN by thanking God for his forgiveness of sin through Christ’s work on the cross. Thank God that he desires a relationship with us and did all the work to make that a reality. Ask God to use your spiritual practices to deepen your relationship with him.

30. If you have time this week, listen to a previous message on different spiritual practices.

a. <https://pathfinderstl.org/messages/series/the-lost-ways-rediscovering-the-ancient-practices-that-anchor-our-faith/>

b. <https://pathfinderstl.org/messages/series/guideposts/>