

Christ Church Clifton

Spring Preaching Series – mornings and evenings

Vision for 2012

Sermon Two – Matthew 5:1-12

(Paul Langham, 15 January 2012)



Reading – Matthew 5:1-12

¹ Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them, saying: ³Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Introduction – recap on last week

- vision – what cannot yet be seen
- to see the Kingdom of God come
- Christlikeness: Freedom in Christ
- Clifton Bible Project
- Genesis: Paradise Lost (the big lie – ‘This is normal’)
- Matthew: The Kingdom of God is at hand (the big lie – ‘This can never be normal’)

Ezra & Matthew 1-8: Working for the Kingdom

If we are to see the Kingdom of God come, we have work to do.

Ezra & Nehemiah – seen by church for centuries as powerful reminders of our calling into partnership with God to build the Kingdom.

Ezra

Cost

- 7:8,9 – journey took Ezra 4 months
- 2:64-69: c. 50,000 people / 8,000 horses, mules, camels, donkeys (i.e. most of them walked)
- finance: 2:68, 69 (‘according to their ability’)

Matthew 1-8: ‘the Kingdom of God is at hand’ (3:2; 4:17)

Matthew describes what the Kingdom looks like in practice, and the characteristics of those who are members of the Kingdom

- repentance (3:2)
- water baptism (3:6)

- the call to bear 'good fruit' (3:10)
- baptism with the Holy Spirit (3:11)
- the call to follow (4:19)
- the call to evangelism (4:19)
- proclamation & demonstration (4:23-24; 8:1-17 & 23-34)
- turning the standards of the world upside down (5:1-12)
 - acceptance of who we are before God
 - mourning
 - meekness
 - spiritual hunger & thirst
 - mercy
 - purity of heart
 - peacemaking
 - persecution
- salt & light (5:13-16)
- higher standards than the religious leaders (5:17-20)
- moral standards (5:21 – 6:4)
 - tracing the roots of murder back to thought / anger
 - loving enemies
- prayer & fasting (6:5-18)
- heavenly perspective (6:19-24)
- refusing to worry (6:25-34)
- not judging others (7:1-6)
- pursuing God's presence (7:7-12)
- accepting the narrow rather than the broad way (7:13-14)
- integrity of speech and life (7:15-23)
- building on the truth of God's word (7:24-29)
- counting the cost (8:18-22)

Questions for further thought

This week, look over the passages from Matthew 1-8 as listed above, and ask the following questions

- to what extent do they describe me?
- to what extent do they describe Christ Church?
- what needs to change for the description to be more accurate?

Pray about what the Lord reveals to you as you study his word.

Paul Langham, January 2012