

Counter Rev Small Group Conversation based on Matthew 5:1-12

Keep this conversation no longer than 30-45 minutes. Do your best to draw out the contributions of everyone. If your group is big, use sub-grouping at different parts of the conversation. Land the time in prayer.

Getting to know each other

- Each family or neighbourhood has its own version of the blessed life. In the family(s) or neighbourhood(s) you grew up in, what was the version of the blessed life. Answer by completing the sentence, 'Blessed are ...' For example, a person may say, 'Blessed are those who excel in sports' or 'Blessed are those who don't say what they're really feeling' etc...

Understanding Christ's teaching in Matthew 5:1-12

- *If some of your group did not hear the Sunday message, then play the summary audio clip.*
- *1) Read verse 1 and 2. Why do you think it is so important we understand that the Sermon on the Mt is addressed to Christians, and not to non-Christians or to society as a whole?*
- *2) Read the eight beatitudes in verses 3 to 10. Sometimes the best way to really understand a verse is to try re-phrase it using your own words. Allocate one or two of the 8 beatitudes to different people and get them to write down, and then share, their re-wording of the respective beatitudes. If people get stuck they can use the following definitions to serve as spring-board:*

- *Poor in spirit = realizing our own spiritual insufficiency*
- *Mourn = being saddened (but not in despair) by the sin in and around us*
- *Meeek = being so secure in God that there is no need for pride, aggression or defensiveness in our lives*
- *Hunger and thirst for righteousness = desperate to see God's will being done in and around us*
- *Merciful = to be compassionate, forgiving and generous*
- *Pure in heart = to be single-minded and not divided by more than one life-focus; to be free from deceit, an open book before God and people*
- *Peacemaker = to actively seek deep harmony with God, with others, and between conflicting parties*

- *3) Read verses 11-12. Jesus speaks about reward. One theologian comments that though all Christians are equally loved and saved, not all are equally rewarded. Does this 'gel' with you? What do you think 'the reward' is anyway?*

Applying Christ's teaching in Matthew 5:1-12

- Which of the beatitudes have you seen Christ starting to develop in your life? Which of the beatitudes are you most lacking in? And what one thing can you do this week to develop it in your life?