

## Bible Study Outline

### Radical

#### Questions:

**Radical** - rad·i·cal | \ 'ra-di-kəl

a: very different from the usual or traditional : EXTREME

b: favoring extreme changes in existing views, habits, conditions, or institutions

#### Today’s Culture – Postmodern

**Postmodern** - Marked by skepticism, self-consciousness, celebration of differences, and the digitalization of culture.

#### Common Aspects of our Modern Culture

- Society worships youth, fame, and wealth
- Casual sex outside of marriage is ok, and actually encouraged
- A person’s gender is fluid and changeable, not dependent upon biology, but how the person feels
- The humanity of those we disagree with is devalued
- Truth is relative to the circumstances, there is no real, absolute truth
- The end is justified by the means
- Don’t just subdue your enemies, destroy them
- Resolving problems/differences with violence and unrest is ok and often justified
- Narcissism and pride is applauded and rewarded (social media)
- Those who are humble are considered to be weak and voiceless.
- If you are persecuted assume the role of a victim

#### Jesus was the Greatest Counter-culture Radical in History!

**Remember:** a radical is someone who is/was very different from the usual or traditional, even viewed as extreme; or, it is someone who favors extreme changes in existing views, habits, conditions, institutions, cultural norms, or attitudes

Jesus was radical when it came to what He taught:

**One of Jesus’ Most Radical Collection of Teachings: Matt 5:1-10** (*Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount*)

- This section of Scripture is known as the, “Beatitudes.” Why would they be called by this name?

**Answer:** from Latin *beatitudo*, meaning “blessedness.” Each phrase starts with, “Blessed are...”

**Key Question:** Are You a Radical for Christ?

- How do you become a radical for Christ?

**James 1:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like someone looking at his own face[b] in a mirror. (CSB)

**Key:** Just by the mere fact that you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, means that you have been called out of the world to be different from the world.

**Question(s):**

- Describe some ways that Christians are often undetectable, indistinguishable, or just no different from the rest of the world.
- Why is this a problem when it comes to sharing the Gospel?
- What is one of the “traps” of being different from the world that seems to also create a problem when sharing the Gospel? (Hint: it is the thing that some Christians do that often makes non-Christians despise them )

**Read:**

- Ezek 20:32-34
- I John 2:15-17
- John 17:14-18

**Question:** What is the consistent message about you in all of these passages?

**Quote:**

*“So the followers of Jesus are to be different from both the nominal church and the secular world, different from both the religious and the irreligious.” ~John Stott*

## Approaching the Beatitudes

- 1) The Sermon on the Mount, as a whole, (Matthew chapters 5,6, and 7) is the closest thing to a manifesto provided by Jesus. (define manifesto)
- 2) If we live according to the Beatitudes, we become the true, modern-day disrupters.
- 3) Jesus tells us that as His true followers, the citizens of God’s kingdom, we are to be entirely different from others.
- 4) The Beatitudes are foundational to the spiritual “happiness” of Jesus’ follower (RESEARCH “blessed” Greek Makarios)
- 5) Approach the Beatitudes not as ethical duties, but as a series of emotional attitudes. If we react to our environment in the spirit of them:
  - a. Our lives will be happy ones
  - b. We will have discovered the basic formula for mental health

### 1: “The poor in spirit...” (Matt 5:3)

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.”*

#### Question(s):

- On the surface how does the lesson in this verse differ from the world’s view?
- Describe “the poor” in this verse.
- **Read:**
  - Psalm 34:6-8
  - Isa 57:15
  - Poverty/Poor = Humble dependence upon God—afflicted, unable to save themselves
  - Luke 4:18 – In His own words, Jesus specifically speaks to His ministry to “the poor”

Therefore, to be *poor in spirit* is:

- To **acknowledge our spiritual poverty**, our spiritual bankruptcy before God
- To **acknowledge that we are sinners** under the holy wrath of God, underserving of nothing but judgment
- To **acknowledge that we have nothing to plead with** that we can use to buy the favor of heaven

**Question:** How is this radically different from the world’s thinking?

## Blessing / Promise

“the kingdom of heaven...”

**Question:** Is this promise a future or current promise?

- At the beginning of His ministry Jesus proclaimed “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.’ Matt 4:17
- Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom.
- The Sermon on the Mount, and mention of the kingdom should be seen in this context. Repentance (metanoia, the complete change of mind)
- Righteousness ***belongs to the kingdom.***
- The kingdom describes what human life and human community look like when we ***fully submit*** and live under the gracious rule of God.

## Final Questions:

- If ***you*** make being poor in spirit a part of your everyday life, how will you be different?
- What difference would it make in ***your relationship*** with your family?
- How would it help ***us as a church on a mission?***