

MONTHLY BIBLE STUDY



CALL TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

TEXT: Matthew 5:1-12

Matthew 5-7 is called the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus gave the discourse from a hillside outside Capernaum. It is the first of several discourses by Christ, and it is known as the **Messiah's Call to Righteousness**.

Paul understood and described **righteousness** in terms of God's saving acts through Jesus Christ and the individual's relationship with and standing before God.

Jesus uses the term for moral behavior that conforms to God's Will. Specifically, **righteousness** is doing the will of God as Jesus reveals it.

Are these two views of **righteousness contradictory** or **complimentary**? Explain your thinking.

Matthew 5:3-12 is known as the Beatitudes. Discuss the following questions from these verses.

1. Would you consider these verses a "code of **ethics**" for the early disciples and a "standard of **conduct**" for believers today? How so?
 - a. Do you think the rest of the world would agree? Give examples of how it works (or doesn't work) in our world today.
2. Explain how these verses contrast **Kingdom** values (what is eternal) with **worldly** values (what is temporary).
3. In what ways do these verses contrast "**superficial** faith" (like that of the Pharisees) with the "**genuine** faith" Jesus expects and demands?
 - a. Where do you honestly see yourself today in light of these verses?
 - b. What can you do to improve your relationship with Christ and others?
4. Do you think these verses show how the expectations of the old covenant are fulfilled in the New Kingdom brought in by Jesus? In what ways?
5. Do you see the Beatitudes as "**multiple** choice" (choose the ones you want to follow and forget the rest) or are they to be seen as a **unit** to be followed in their entirety?
6. These verses tell how to be **blessed** by God. Does being **blessed** by God simply mean happiness, or is it something more? If so, what does it mean to be **blessed** by God? Could it include things like **hope** and **joy**?
7. Do you believe that being **blessed** by God means **following** Christ no matter what the cost? Can you share any examples of how it has cost **you**?
8. Does God's way of living usually **contradict** the world's way? If so, how?

9. How do you **respond** to the following statement: “As followers of Christ and members of CMA, we must be willing to **give** when others **take**; to **love** when others **hate**; to **help** when others **abuse**; to **give up** our own rights in order to **serve** others.”

10. We usually think of persecution as an ugly word, but Jesus says we should be happy and glad when persecuted for our faith. Consider the following explanation – persecution can be good because:
- a. It takes our eyes off earthly rewards and focuses them on heavenly ones.
 - b. It strips away superficial belief.
 - c. It strengthens the faith of those who endure.
 - d. Our attitude toward suffering serves as an example to those who follow; just as it did to the prophets of old, (Daniel, Jeremiah) and those heroes of the faith mentioned in Hebrews 11.

Pray for courage to stop living like the world and to accept the call of Christ to live in righteousness. Pray for a deeper understanding and appreciation of what it means to be truly **blessed** by God.