

## Small Group Guide THE KING'S SERMON

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. Bart Box

January 29, 2012

Matthew 5-7

This guide is a tool to help you lead your group into spiritual transformation. Use it as a resource to train your group into potential disciple-makers and lead your group in discovering, owning, and applying the truths of God's Word. There may be aspects you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on an aspect of their relationship with God. Your role is to help facilitate this encounter with God in His Word with His Body, not just to complete the guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid group task list.

### **Relate . . .**

*Begin your group time by engaging in relational conversations and prayer that may include the following elements:*

*Welcome*—a simple, brief time to greet one another (especially new friends), enjoy refreshments, and make announcements.

*Review*—a time to review the truths discussed last week and report on how members have had success or frustrations in applying those truths during the week. (The leader will want to provide encouragement and shepherding during this time.) Periodically, the leader will also want to review the gospel and allow members to share reports about opportunities they've had to share the gospel. Occasionally, the leader will want to review the vision for the group and discuss ways to accomplish that vision better.

*Prayer*—a time of general prayer with the whole group praying for struggles regarding the application of truths, for those with whom the group is sharing the gospel, and for understanding of today's truths.

### **Reflect . . .**

*Use the following summary and questions to review this week's message and reflect on its implications for our lives. (As a training tool, leaders might want to have various members summarize the teachings in their own words each week sharing how they think the Scripture applied to the original hearers and how the principles apply to us today.)*

## THE KING'S SERMON Matthew 5-7

### The Setting of the Sermon

- We must remember the context of the sermon in the Gospel of Matthew.
  - Matthew begins by calling attention to the sins of God's people.
  - Matthew ends by calling attention to the death of God's Messiah.
- We must remember the context of the sermon in the history of redemption.
  - Jesus is the long-awaited Redeemer.

*"I will raise up for them a prophet like [Moses] from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him." (Deut. 18:18)*

- His is the long-awaited Kingdom.

### The Subject of the Sermon

- Jesus demands a righteousness exceeding that of the scribes and the Pharisees. (5:17-20)
  - Not more righteous deeds by human effort...
  - But more righteous hearts by divine grace.
- This exceeding righteousness should be evident in our...
  - Attitudes. (5:21-48)
  - Desires. (6:1-18)
  - Ambitions. (6:19-34)
  - Relationships. (7:1-12)

### The Seriousness of the Sermon

- The options are limited. (7:13-14)
  - One road leads to life.
  - One road leads to destruction.
- The fruit will be evident. (7:15-23)
  - One tree bears good fruit.
  - One tree bears bad fruit.
- The consequences are eternal. (7:24-27)
  - One house stands upon the rock.
  - One house crashes upon itself.

### **Message Summary**

Dr. Box began by providing the context of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Matthew starts his gospel by highlighting the sins of God's people (Matt. 1:21) as to the reason Jesus came. While the Pharisees and religious leaders of Jesus' day focused primarily on external adherence to the Law, Jesus explains that it has always been God's intention for His people to live with attitudes, affections, ambitions, and actions that worship Him. The Sermon on the Mount does not provide a laundry list of unattainable ideals, but instead shows us if we are in the Kingdom of God, how our lives, homes, and church should reflect Christ's teachings. Obeying Christ's teachings does not earn us righteousness. We are saved only by grace through faith in Christ, and it is only by His grace that we are enabled to live out this Sermon on the Mount.

Christ demands a righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees who focused on external actions (Matt. 5:20). Our righteousness can only exceed their stringent adherence to the Law by being internally transformed by Christ. Christ emphasizes a rightness of heart, and He is the only one who can bring about such change in our lives. How we live daily in this world is an overflow of our relationship with God, and it is through our

## Small Group Guide

### THE KING'S SERMON

---

*The Church at Brook Hills*

*Dr. Bart Box*

*January 29, 2012*

*Matthew 5-7*

relationship with Him that our attitudes, desires, ambitions, and relationships with others are changed and that change will be evident to others in our lives.

Christ concludes this sermon by distinguishing between two types of fruit, two types of paths, and two types of eternal outcomes. He calls for hearers to respond to His sermon by analyzing their hearts and their fruit in order to determine whether or not they are part of His Kingdom and then live in a manner that aligns with His gospel.

#### **Group Discussion**

Use the following questions to help review the application of God's Word to our Head (What does God want me to know?), to our Heart (What does God want me to desire/value?), and to our Hands (What does God want me to do?).

- How does the Sermon on the Mount fit into the context of Matthew, which begins by drawing attention to the sins of God's people and ends by focusing on the death of God's Son for our sins?
- Matthew is intent on showing Jesus as the New and Greater Moses. Why is this significant (see Hebrews 3)? How does this relate to the Sermon on the Mount?
- What is your motivation for how you live? How does the gospel affect your everyday life? What makes you different than those around you who don't know Christ?
- Read Matthew 5:1-16. What picture does this introduction to the Sermon on the Mount present to us about what it looks like to belong to the Kingdom of God? Are these descriptions evident in your life?
- Read Matthew 5:17-20. How are these verses the interpretive key of the Sermon on the Mount? What was significant about the righteousness of the Pharisees? (See Matthew 23:25-28)
- Knowing that Christ requires a righteousness exceeding that of the Pharisees, how does this make you feel? What was God's intent for how His people would live?
- How do you know if you have this exceeding righteousness? Have you ever in your own put the cart before the horse and put service to God ahead of a heart that adores God and is transformed by Him?
- Read Matthew 5:21-48. Jesus takes an internal view of the Law by looking at the attitudes behind the actions because the actions reflect the heart. In each of the six situations in these twenty-seven verses, what does Christ feature rather than the least that can be done or the most that can be permitted? Are faithfulness, forgiveness, purity, integrity, and love evident in your life?
- Read Matthew 6:1-18. As Jesus taught on giving, prayer, and fasting, what was a common thread of his teaching about each of these three disciplines? In what ways has the approval of man affected the way that you live out your relationship with Christ? What does this indicate about your heart and your relationship with God? As long as we live for the praise of men, we are at odds with the 'exceeding righteousness' of God. Which do you desire most – His praise or the praise of people?
- Read Matthew 6:19-34. What consumes your thoughts, attention, and time? How do you handle the competing desire of personal ambition or pursuit of the things in this

## Small Group Guide THE KING'S SERMON

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. Bart Box

January 29, 2012

Matthew 5-7

---

world and of seeking the righteousness of Christ? According to Matthew 5-7, what should be our strategy for handling these conflicting desires?

- Read Matthew 7:1-12. The Pharisees exhibited judgmental attitudes, criticism, and superiority over others, comparing themselves to them. In contrast, how do these verses teach us to act in regard to our relationships with others? How can we specifically exhibit humility, grace, and love to others, especially when admonishing them?
- Read Matthew 7:13-23. Is it obvious to others that your heart is changed by God? Which of the two paths are you likely on (Matt. 5:21-23)? How do you know which path you are on? What type of fruit do you exemplify? Is your fruit love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control? How will you bear good fruit in your life this week?
- Read Matthew 7:24-27. Are you living now the way that you will have wished when it comes time for you to die? What would it look like for you to live now in a way that reflects God's Eternal Kingdom and to do so for His glory and not for your own?
- When you measure your life by the plumb line of Matthew 5-7, is there an inward change in you through Christ? In your life, is there love toward God and one another? Do you fear God more than you fear men? Do you long for the things of God? Do you exhibit humility and grace toward others? If you lack in any of these areas, how will you respond?

### **Respond . . .**

*Encourage your group to break out into smaller, same-gender groups where they will respond to the truths of today's study. These groups will share with one another based on the following questions and then close in prayer:*

- What are some of the main truths that God wants you to know from this study?
- How do your thoughts need to adjust to align with these truths?
- According to the truths from this study, what does God want you to desire/value?
- How do your values need to change to align with His values?
- What actions does God want you to take according to the truths of this study?
- What is an action that you can start to implement today or tomorrow?
- What is going to be the most difficult aspect of this study to personally apply?

Close this time by praying for each other, specifically for strength to apply these truths, for personal needs, for the lost people with whom you are seeking to share the gospel, and for our weekly prayer focus as a church.

### **Weekly Prayer Focus ...**

- **Lives and Church:** *This week we are studying the "Sermon on the Mount". As we read this teaching of Jesus, we cannot help but be challenged in how we are currently living our daily lives. Pray that we would all be called "blessed" as God conforms us to each of the beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-11). Pray that we would all*

## Small Group Guide THE KING'S SERMON

---

The Church at Brook Hills

Dr. Bart Box

January 29, 2012

Matthew 5-7

*“shine” with good works so that others will see them and glorify God. Ask God to help us love not only our neighbors but also our enemies. Ask for God’s will to be done here on earth as it is in heaven. Thank God that, as our Father in heaven, he gives good things to us when we ask him. Pray that we would all take the words of the Sermon on the Mount to heart and live them out daily.*

- **Local:** *This week we are praying for the afterschool ministry of Discovery Clubs of Alabama, [discoveryclubsofal.org](http://discoveryclubsofal.org), as they seek to mobilize Christ-followers across Birmingham and platform the gospel to elementary students in afterschool Discovery Clubs. We are also praying for CrossWay Christian Fellowship in Pelham, Fred Muse, Pastor.*
- **Global:** *This week we are praying for Brook Hills’ church planters Andrew and Kim Arthur serving in Seattle. This year The Hallows Church in Seattle has birthed community groups in three surrounding neighborhoods in their area. Each group is thriving as they gather weekly to fellowship, study and serve together. We are also praying for our Short-Term teams serving in the Middle East.*