

## Small Groups @ TBC

### Sermon Discussion Notes

**Date of Sermon:** 17<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**Speaker:** David Lawrence

**Title:** Sermon on the Mount: Kingdom School

**Introduction:** The aim of this talk was to set the wider context for Jesus' teaching that we call 'the sermon on the mount'. Specifically it was to understand the Sermon on the Mount as a 'curriculum' for citizens of God's kingdom - a description of what life looks like when God is allowed to be in charge within his community.

**Review:** (invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review)

**Read:** Matthew 4:17-22, 4:23, 5:1,2

**Reflect:**

- What is the 'good news', or 'gospel' that Jesus announces (4:17, 23)? How does this 'gospel' fit with other versions of 'the gospel' you might have heard?
- What is 'the kingdom' and why is it good news? Does Colossians 1:13 give any clue?
- The word that is often linked with 'kingdom' in the gospels is the word 'proclaim'. It is translated in different ways, often using the word 'preach'. Find it in these verses: (4:17, 4:23, 9:35, 10:5-8, 10:27, 24:14).
  - How can our lives 'proclaim' the Kingdom on our 'frontlines', where we spend time with non-Christians? Ask group members to describe their frontline, and then one way that they 'proclaim' the kingdom (that is, the Jesus way-of-life) by their actions, lifestyle, attitudes or words.
- The second word that is often linked with 'kingdom' is 'enter'. It is not enough to 'proclaim' the kingdom: people need to understand that they can 'enter' the Kingdom and become a 'citizen' of the Kingdom themselves (5:20, 7:21, 18:3, 21:31).
  - Read 4:18-22, and then 7:13,14. In 4:18-22 Jesus calls the first citizens of the Kingdom:
    - In what way is he inviting them to enter the Kingdom through a narrow gate, and to walk a narrow way?
    - How has people's own experience of coming to faith reflected:
      - Entering through a narrow door?
      - Walking a narrow path?
      - Becoming a citizen of a new kingdom?
- The idea that for a friend to come to faith we have to invite them to 'enter the kingdom' is pretty tough! The language would sound odd to them, so how could we express the idea but using language that people might 'get'? Are there better, more contemporary images, that would express the idea? Imagine a conversation

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**Leaders:** feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes. Don't feel you have to use all of the material, but do try to keep the shape of Review – Read – Reflect - Respond

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with a real-life colleague or friend: how would you communicate this idea to them?

- The final idea in the talk was that the Sermon on the Mount was addressed to Jesus disciples. In other words the expectation is that the Sermon is the subject matter for followers of Jesus *to learn*. We know from the rest of Matthew's gospel that sometimes the disciples were slow learners - but Jesus' love for them was tough enough to stick with them even when they failed to live the life of a Kingdom citizen.
  - According to the sermon, how do we know when we have 'learned' Jesus' teaching? Is it when we have understood it? When we agree with it? Or something else? (see 7:21, 24, 27).
    - How do people react to this?
    - What examples can people give of (a) a Kingdom lesson they've found hard to learn and (b) something they are working on at the moment?

### And finally:

As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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