

Sermon: The Good Life (according to Jesus) **Text:** Matthew 5:1-10

Opening questions: How is “the good life” defined in American culture? Is it any different in the church? When we use the phrase “I’m blessed” what do we normally mean?

Reflect on the sermon: Did you gain any new insights on this passage of scripture?

Examination: Read the text

- How does Matthew 4:23-25 sets the context for the Sermon on the Mount?
- How would you describe the *opposite* of the eight characteristics listed in verses 3-10?
- In your opinion, how seriously does the church take the beatitudes as characteristics of Christians? Do you think Jesus is *describing* who His followers are or *prescribing* who they should be?
- How do the promised blessings (kingdom of heaven, be comforted, inherit the earth, be filled, be shown mercy, see God, be called the sons & daughters of God) compare with what most people in the world prize?
- Take some time to discuss each beatitude: what it means, what it means **to you** and how it relates to the other beatitudes (how are they connected to each other?).
 - Poor in spirit
 - Mourn
 - Meek
 - Hunger & thirst for righteousness (justice)
 - Merciful
 - Pure in heart
 - Peacemakers
 - Persecuted
- How did Jesus exemplify and live these characteristics? Be specific.
- Can a follower live the beatitudes and experience joy?

Application:

- Living “the good life according to Jesus” is so counter-cultural. How do we as a church and as followers of Jesus keep these characteristics of a disciple “front and center”? Can you identify some practical ways?
- Is there a particular blessing (beatitude) that you would like to see developed more in your walk with the Lord? Share and pray for one another.