

FUSION Q's... A New Kingdom: Who's Upside Down?

Read Matthew 5:1-12 Discussion Questions (20 – 30 minutes)

Q1. Imagine that Jesus is offering you to take the red pill. If you were to take it, describe what the new world – the Kingdom of God – would be like. Does it exist on earth or only in heaven? If it is on earth and it exists today, where can people find it?

Q2. It is important to understand that the Kingdom of God exists right now right here on earth. How does knowing that the Kingdom of Heaven is present today change how you think about Jesus' teaching on the kingdom?

Q3. Which beatitude is the hardest for you to understand – which one makes you question, “how could they be blessed” (i.e. poor, mourn, persecuted, etc)? Discuss why you think Jesus is saying they are blessed.

Q4. In the Matrix clip, Neo declares that he doesn't believe in fate because he doesn't like the idea of not being in control of his life. Why is it hard for most people to give up control of their life?

Q5. In the beatitudes, Jesus' point is that humans have got “who is blessed”, or “who is successful”, backwards. Why do you think Jesus' words are so foreign to us today when we think about success?

Q6. Why do think it is hard for us today to give up our idea of who is blessed/successful for God's view of who is blessed/successful?

Q7. How much control does a person have to give up in order to be a follower of God? Explain why giving up control is difficult or easy for you.

Bible Passages

Matthew 5:1-12 (*The Message Bible*)

¶When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

³"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

⁴"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

⁵"You're blessed when you're content with just who you are--no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

⁶"You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

⁷"You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

⁸"You're blessed when you get your inside world--your mind and heart--put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

⁹"You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

¹⁰"You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.

¹¹"Not only that--count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. ¹²You can be glad when that happens--give a cheer, even!--for though they don't like it, I do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.