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The Invisible Kingdom

Key References: Matthew 5:1-16; Luke 6:17-26; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 31, pp. 298-309; *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, chap. 2, pp. 6-44; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 8, pp. 55-61; *Our Beliefs* nos. 22, 11, 10



powertext

"In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

Has anyone ever said anything to you that made you think differently than you had ever thought before? How did that change your life? Imagine a boy your age being on the mountainside and listening to Jesus.

Shading his eyes from the sun, the boy scanned the crowd for his family.

Last night his father had told the family they were going to come and hear Jesus speak today. At last the boy saw them.

"I was afraid I wouldn't find you," he said to his mother.

"Me too. I can't believe how many people are here," Mother commented.

"I heard that Jesus was going to take charge of His kingdom today," said the boy.

"Sh-h-h," his sister said. "I think Jesus is ready to speak."

The boy looked around and saw many people. He could tell from their clothing and speech that some had come from as far away as Jerusalem. He even noticed some Pharisees in the group.



Because God loves us, we accept His values and share them with others.



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Sunday

READ Read Matthew 5:1-5 and this week's story, "The Invisible Kingdom."

THINK Who are those who will inherit God's kingdom?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to set up His kingdom in your heart.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 5:6-9.

REWRITE In your Bible study journal, write the qualifications for God's kingdom (verses 3-12).

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Pray that you will have a hunger and thirst for God's kingdom.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 5:10-12.

THINK How can you rejoice when you are persecuted?

SING Sing a song that encourages you in tough times.

REVIEW Review the power text.


PRAY Ask God to give you the power to rejoice in His friendship when someone is treating you badly.

Turning his attention back to Jesus, he heard Him say that our behavior shows others whether we are a part of God's kingdom. Jesus helped His audience realize that they can do nothing of eternal value on their own. They needed to let God take control of everything in their life. By doing this they would find true happiness.

The boy thought, *I'd like to do that, but sometimes it is really hard.*

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Jesus said (Matthew 5:3). The boy thought of people who don't know God. *Could they be the poor in spirit?* he wondered. *If Jesus says that theirs is the kingdom of God, I may need to share with them the real happiness I found in knowing God myself,* he thought.



A painting of a hand reaching out from the right side of the page. The hand is rendered in shades of brown and tan, with visible brushstrokes. The background is a mix of light blue and yellow, also with visible brushstrokes, suggesting a sky or a bright, open space. The overall style is impressionistic and textured.

The boy leaned over and whispered, "Father, does He mean I need to tell my friends about Him?"

"Not just friends, son," Father replied. "He also means strangers."

Their attention turned back to Jesus.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

"What does that mean?" the boy asked.

"It means," the father replied, "that wanting to be right with God is like you are hungry for food. You can never get enough of what God has to offer you."

Jesus continued to speak.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

The boy squirmed. He knew this meant that when his friends try to start an argument or a fight, he would have to do all he could to stop it. Did Jesus know he had a

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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 5:13.

TASTE Find three salty foods and taste them. What would these taste like without salt?

THINK Why does God say we are like salt? How can we share the values of God's kingdom with others?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to give you the power to add "salt" to the lives of those around you.

Thursday

READ Read Matthew 5:1-16 and Luke 6:7-26.

COMPARE How are these passages alike or different?

CONTRAST What is the difference between Luke 6:20-22 and verses 24-26?

THINK Why do you think Jesus stated these ideas both ways (positively and negatively)?

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you rejoice when others insult, hate, or reject you because you believe in Jesus.

Friday

READ Read Matthew 5:14-16.

LIGHT Turn on a flashlight in a darkened room. Hold it at floor level, then above your head. Which position sheds more light?

SHARE Let your light shine by doing something kind for someone else today.

SAY Say the power text from memory.

PRAY Ask God for even more opportunities to let your light shine.

bad temper? He'd have to ask God to give him the power to change that.

His attention was drawn back to what Jesus was saying next.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:3-12).

The boy looked around the crowd. He could see some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. They didn't look very happy. In fact, maybe they didn't really know God.

"You are the light of the world," Jesus told the crowd. "A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14-16).

The boy leaned over to his father again and said, "I want to be the kind of person Jesus is talking about. I want to be a part of His kingdom."

"You understand that you can't do it on your own, don't you?" asked Father.

"Yes. Jesus said God will give me the power to do it," replied the boy.

"And He will," said Father. "According to Jesus, all you need is to open your heart for His kingdom and then to share it with others."

"Father, do you think I could be a prince in the kingdom?" the boy mused.

"I believe you already are," Father smiled.



JESUS' LESSON

Instructions: One of the lessons that Jesus taught His disciples is the Beatitudes. Draw a line connecting the two symbols that are the same. When the symbols are together, read them to get Jesus' words to His disciples (Matthew 5:3-10).

