

The True Story of the Whole World, pp
The Kingdom of God – Part 1
Matthew 5-7

Promised Land	Exile and Return	Jesus of Nazareth	The early church
Joshua	Samaria falls	Birth	The Great Commission
Judges	Judah falls	The Kingdom of God	The Holy Spirit
Kings	Exile in Babylon	Suffering and crucifixion	The church together
Saul	Return to Judah	Resurrection and ascension	The church scattered
David	Intertestamental period		Inclusion of Gentiles
Solomon			“Into all the world”
Divided Kingdom			

In a nutshell...

Anabaptist Mennonites consider the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7, to be a very important part of Jesus’ presentation of the Kingdom of God. As one person wrote, “Jesus meant what he said and he means it for us today”. It is of note that this part of Jesus ministry is featured in the True Story of the Whole World commentary.

It is suggested that rather than either/or, Matthew 5-7 be read alongside the excellent commentary in True Story, pp 107 -122.

Sound familiar? (all to be found in the Sermon on the Mount texts

- “you have heard it said, but I say to you”
- “you are salt...yeast....light”
- The Beatitudes.....“blessed are...” (and a list follows)
- “Turn the other cheek, love your enemies”
- “be reconciled to your brother”
- “Do not worry”
- “Enter by the narrow gate”
- “do not judge”
- “ask, seek, knock”
- The ‘Lord’s Prayer’
- “Give to the needy”
- “Do not lust”

Main ideas from The Kingdom of God --- Part 1

- The law is not abolished but ‘fulfilled’ in Jesus, and goes even further than the Mosaic prescriptions
- The spirit of the law is more important than the letter of the law
- How we live together is important to Jesus, and is our relationship with God

Other Biblical references

You are encouraged to read through the 4 Gospel accounts as we work our way in this and following sections.

Did you know.....?

The only spoken prayer used by the Amish is “ Lord’s Prayer” as found in these texts.

(see question 4, “Specific to the texts...” on back side)

General questions for Biblical reflection

1. What do you notice about God in this text?
2. Is there any part of the text that is surprising? Why?
3. What in this text encourages, troubles, surprises, or confuses you?
4. Is there anything in this text you had never noted before? Why do you think it stood out to you this time?
5. How does the action in this passage fit into God's salvation plan?

Specific to the texts for this Sunday

1. Which Biblical themes come into sharper focus in these chapters?
2. How do you think those listening to Jesus received this message? Or, in the language of today, "what do you think they got out of the sermon?" What would applying these teachings meant for them in their setting?
3. Mixing the 'then and now', if you had been in a sermon response Sunday School class, what would you have liked to discuss with Jesus? Challenge him on? Questions you might have raised.
4. How might it be to devote an experimental 'season' (a week, month, etc.), to only praying the Lord's Prayer with reverence and meaning?
5. This text is often dismissed as an ethical guide, as standards that are too high to be actually followed in real life. Do you agree with that?
6. Which parts of the Sermon on the Mount have particularly guided you in your following of Jesus? In what way?
7. Which parts of the Sermon on the Mount have you tended to avoid? Why might that be?