**Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5:1-6**

**If you were to stop someone on Tewkesbury high street and ask what they thought was needed for a happy life, how do you think they would answer?**

**Read Matthew 5:1-6**

**What immediately strikes you about Jesus’ teaching here?**

Jesus presents a list of unexpected characteristics which he says will lead to a ‘blessed’ life. These stand in contrast to the pharisees, who prioritised observing the law; instead, in these verses, Jesus emphasises the attitudes of the heart.

**How do the heart attitudes of ‘the Jesus lifestyle’ contrast with the way the world often operates?** (The table below may be useful for your discussion).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **The Jesus Lifestyle** | Poor in spirit | Mourn | Meek | Hunger and thirst for righteousness |
| **The World** | Self-confident, competent, self-reliant | Pleasure seeking, hedonistic, | Proud, powerful, important | Satisfied, well adjusted,  |

**How is the ‘happiness’ of the Jesus lifestyle different from the kind of happiness which others may seek?**

*This kind of happiness is not based on outward circumstances which may change, or temporary feelings, but a deeper contentment that comes from the knowledge of living under God’s blessing. There is distinct ‘now and not yet’ aspect to these beatitudes; there may be some level of happiness and experience of blessing now, but it will not come in its entirety until the Kingdom of heaven has come in its fullness.*

**Of the four beatitudes, which are the most difficult or uncomfortable for you?**

**Where are you tempted to look for happiness or fulfilment in other ways?**

**How are Jesus’ promises encouraging to each group he names? (see v3-6).**

**How can we be encouraged and challenged by this passage?**

These heart attitudes cannot be manufactured, but can only be developed as the outworking of an authentic relationship with God. Pray for Holy Spirit to be at work in each of our hearts, as well as anything which may have come up during the study. Consider how you might continue to support one another in cultivating a healthy ‘Jesus lifestyle’.