

STUDENT DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sermon on the Mount – Session 1

What Does Successful Living Look Like?

Matthew 5:1–12 (Sermon on the Mount Introduction)

SESSION FOCUS

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by redefining what it means to live a successful life. Instead of focusing on achievement, comfort, or status, He describes a life shaped by humility, dependence on God, and inner transformation. This session invites us to examine how Jesus' vision of the good life compares with our own assumptions about success.

OPENING REFLECTION

Take a moment to think honestly:

- When you hear the word *success*, what images or goals come to mind?
 - Where did those ideas come from (family, culture, faith, experience)?
 - How satisfied are you with those definitions right now?
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SCRIPTURE READING

Read **Matthew 5:1–12** slowly.

As you read, notice:

- Who Jesus calls “blessed”
 - How different His descriptions are from common ideas of success
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KEY IDEA

Jesus teaches that true success is not measured by what we achieve, but by who we are becoming under God's reign.

PART 1: JESUS REDEFINES SUCCESS

(Matthew 5:1–3)

Jesus begins His teaching by blessing those who are “poor in spirit.”

This opening sets the tone for everything that follows.



Reflection Questions

1. Why do you think Jesus begins with humility rather than achievement?
2. What do you think it means to be “poor in spirit”?
3. How does this challenge the way success is usually portrayed today?

Personal Notes:

PART 2: THE VALUES OF GOD’S KINGDOM

(Matthew 5:4–9)

Jesus describes people who:

- Mourn
- Are meek
- Hunger for righteousness
- Show mercy
- Have pure hearts
- Work for peace

These are not commands to perform, but descriptions of a transformed life.

Reflection Questions

4. Which of these qualities stands out to you the most? Why?
5. Which one feels the most difficult or uncomfortable for you?
6. How are these values different from what our culture rewards or admires?

Personal Notes:



PART 3: SUCCESS THAT LASTS

(Matthew 5:10–12)

Jesus includes suffering and rejection as part of the blessed life.

Following Him does not always lead to ease, but it leads to something deeper and lasting.

Reflection Questions

7. Why do you think Jesus includes persecution in His description of blessing?
8. How does this shape your expectations of the Christian life?
9. What kind of “reward” do you think Jesus is pointing toward?

Personal Notes:

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Take a few quiet moments to reflect:

- How do I currently define success?
- Where do my values align with Jesus’ teaching?
- Where do they conflict?
- What might God be inviting me to rethink or surrender?

Personal Response:

CLOSING PRAYER

Ask God to reshape your understanding of what it means to live well.

Pray for openness to Jesus’ teaching and trust in His vision of a truly successful life.



OPTIONAL TAKE-HOME PRACTICE

This week:

- Read Matthew chapters 5–7 slowly
 - Pay attention to how Jesus describes life in God's kingdom
 - Ask yourself daily: *What does success look like according to Jesus today?*
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FINAL THOUGHT

Jesus does not invite us to chase the life the world applauds.
He invites us into the life God blesses.

