

God's Story Your Story

January 25, 2015



Matthew 5:13

Faith 5 – A pattern for shaping a life of faith

SHARE:

What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?

READ: Reflect on the key verse from Sunday's reading, [Jesus said,] "*You are the salt of the earth.*" Matthew 5:13

TALK:

- What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?
- How do the guidelines in Jesus' sermon shape your community? Which are necessary today? Which have been adjusted to reflect the modern era? How can a community remain faithful to God's laws?
- Where do you see yourself in the hierarchy of your community? How does the impact of Jesus' sermon on your life change if you place yourself somewhere else in the hierarchical continuum?

PRAY:

Lord of abundant blessings, you promised hope and blessing for all people who appear not to have much. Help us to see the blessings in each of your children, and to receive whatever blessings you have in store for us, for the glory of the Lord. Amen.

BLESS:

God who blesses in unexpected ways, give peace to those who need it as your word is read. Give challenge to those who need it at the same time. Amen.

Some Background

Every culture has some variation of a hierarchical social structure that is critical, or even unjust to its weakest members. In Jesus' day, those who were meek, ill, grieving, poor, or perceived as weak were the ones most likely to suffer from social inequities. Jesus came to abolish the hierarchies that caused some to suffer at the hands of others. His sermon on the mountain promised those at the bottom of the social structure that there was a reward for them that would surpass any they could receive here on earth. The gifts of God's kingdom would be abundant for them. His words gave hope to those who may have long abandoned hope.

This story does not seek to condemn those whose lives appear blessed in the eyes of the world. Instead, it seeks to offer hope to anyone who suffers any affliction of body, mind, or spirit. It encourages us to be kind and gentle to those whose suffering is greater than ours, and gratefully to accept the help and care from those whose suffering is less.

Follow these stories of Jesus' sermon on the mountain.

Sunday, Matthew 5:1-20, *Beatitudes*

Monday, Psalm 1:1-3, *Psalm*

Tuesday, Matthew 5:21-26, *Concerning Anger*

Wednesday, Matthew 5:27-32, *Concerning Adultery and Divorce*

Thursday, Matthew 5:33-42, *Concerning Oaths and Retaliation*

Friday, Matthew 5:43-48, *Love for Enemies*

Saturday, Matthew 6:1-6, *Concerning Almsgiving*