

THEME: WHO I AM IN CHRIST.

TOPIC: I AM EXCITED IN HIM.

TEXT: MATTHEW 5:11-12, 23-24

Introduction: *“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” Matthew 5:12.*

Matthew 5–7 contains Jesus’ famous “Sermon on the Mount” also called the Beatitudes. In the context of Matthew’s argument that Christ is the expected Messiah-King, this sermon takes on special importance. In giving His moral teaching, Jesus announced as mankind’s destined Ruler the lifestyle to be adopted by all who submit to Him.

1. Rejoice and Be Glad: Romans 5:2-5, 8:17, James 1:2-4.

Rejoicing comes from being counted worthy to suffer for/with Christ and being rewarded. Be careful of self-pity. Nothing “just happens” to God’s children. Suffering has a purpose in the plan of God.

Q: In this world where people are ready to do anything for acceptance. How excited are you to stand with Christ against the way of the world?

2. True Christian Character – Matthew 23:26

Character always comes before conduct, because what we are determines what we do. In **Matthew 5:1–16**, Jesus shows us that true righteousness is inward, and in verse **17–48** (*Conduct that grows out of character*), He points out that sin is also inward. Thus, He exposed the false righteousness of the Pharisees, who taught that holiness consisted in religious actions, and that sin was what you did outwardly. How many people make these mistakes today! God looks upon the heart, for there is life’s destiny decided.

Q: Why does God look more upon the heart as in 1 Samuel 16:7?

3. Beatitude or Attitude – Matthew 5:3-12

The word *beatitude* simply means blessing and comes from the Latin word for blessed (*beatus*). There is a definite progression in these verses. They show how the person begins with his or her own sense of sin and finally becomes a child of God and the results that then follow. Note that these verses deal with attitudes—what we think in our hearts, our outlook on life. “Beatitudes”—the *attitudes* that ought to *be* in our lives if we are true Christians.

Q: What should our response be to the Be-attitude as believers?

4. Kingdom of Heaven – Matthew 13:24, 30-50

The Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God is the central theme of Jesus' preaching.

- Kingdom is within you – **Luke 17:20-21**
- Kingdom is Righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost – **Rom. 14:17**
- Kingdom is not in word but in power – **1 Corinthians 4:20**
- Kingdom is Everlasting – **2 Peter 1:11**

The Kingdom of Heaven is not futuristic, but rather a present reality wherever God is ruling...

5. Kingdom of the Heart – Luke 17:21

The kingdom of Jesus Christ is a kingdom of the heart. Yes, it is a real kingdom, and Jesus is a real king. But the life of the kingdom is principally a spiritual life, a matter of the heart.

Q: What precisely concerning the Kingdom, should we really be excited about?

Conclusion

Life in the kingdom can be hard. Jesus does not call His people to follow Him with the promise of unbounded wealth or perfect health. He does promise blessings, but sometimes they will be experienced in the pain of rejection and loss.

Jesus is promising the greatest of all blessings to those who are part of His kingdom. These are blessings both for the present and for the future. And they are blessings of usefulness, for those whose lives are portrayed here as the salt of the earth (Matt. 5:13) and the light of the world (Matt. 5:14). They are in a position of influence and good in which they are able to stem the tide of corruption and darkness that engulfs a fallen world.

*And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **Romans 8:28.***