

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

BibleProject Journal



How To Use This Journal

Welcome to the Sermon on the Mount! Whether you plan to explore this collection of resources on your own or in community, here's how you can use this journal to grow in understanding of Jesus' core teaching.

BibleProject Scholarship Team Translation

Read our Scholarship team's translation of Matthew 5-7.

Ten-Part Video Series

Use the QR codes to access all ten videos in the series.

Reflection Questions

Think through these questions for each video individually or with a group.

Explore More Resources

Use the QR codes to find guides on each topic that include related resources such as podcast episodes, articles, and recommended books.

Journaling Pages

Each episode section includes space for recording your thoughts and observations from the video and reflection questions.

Thank you for going on this journey with us!
To learn more about BibleProject or to contact us with questions, visit bibleproject.com.



Sermon on the Mount

BibleProject Scholar Team Translation

The Sermon on the Mount translation by the BibleProject Scholar Team has two goals. First, it aims to consistently use the exact English words to represent its matching ancient Greek word counterparts, no matter how often it gets repeated. The text might sometimes seem clunky, but it's preserving the literal rendering of the Greek words into English. Second, it aims to introduce fresh terms and phrasing to passages that have become overly familiar to us as modern readers.

The Bible comes to us from a different time and culture, so any effort to render the biblical text into a new language involves a detailed process of interpretation. Because no two languages are the same, no single translation can capture every nuance of the original text.

With that in mind, engaging with multiple translations of the Bible is a great habit to develop. Reading the same passages and stories in different translations can help us see how one text can be understood from various angles, and it also encourages repeated listening and meditation



**Listen to the
Translation**

The Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3-16



THE NINE-FOLD GOOD LIFE

How good is life for the poor in spirit,
because theirs is the kingdom of the skies.

How good is life for those who grieve,
because they will be comforted.

How good is life for the unimportant,
because they will inherit the land.

How good is life for those who hunger and
thirst for right-relationships, because they
will be satisfied.

How good is life for those who show mercy,
because they will be shown mercy.

How good is life for the pure in heart,
because they will see God.

How good is life for the peacemakers,
because they will be called children of God.

How good is life for those who have been
persecuted on account of doing-what-is-right,
because theirs is the kingdom of the skies.

How good is life for you when they insult you
and persecute and speak any evil lies against
you on account of me.

Celebrate and shout for joy, because your reward is great in the skies, because this is how they persecuted the prophets before you.

THE SALT OF THE LAND

You are the salt of the land.

But if the salt becomes unsalty with what can it be made salty again?

It's useful for nothing, except to be thrown out and stepped on by humans.

THE LIGHT AND THE CITY

You are the light of the world.

A city that is set up on a mountain is not able to be hidden, and they don't light a candle and place it under a basket.

Rather, upon a candle-stand, and it will shine on everyone in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before people so that they can see your good works, and so they can give honor to your Father who is in the skies.



Jesus and the Law

Matthew 5:17-20



A GREATER RIGHTEOUSNESS

Don't suppose that I have come to do away with the Torah or the Prophets.

I have not come to do away with them but to fill them full.

Because, truly, I tell you: Until the sky and the land pass on, not one dot or one squiggle will pass on from the Torah, until all things have taken place.

Therefore, whoever undoes one of the least of these commands, and then they teach people to do this, that person will be called least in the kingdom of the skies.

And whoever does the commands, and then teaches people to do this, that person will be called great in the kingdom of the skies.

Because, truly, I tell you: Unless your doing-what-is-right far surpasses the scribes and Pharisees, you won't be entering into the kingdom of the skies.

Murder, Adultery, and Divorce

Matthew 5:21-32



MURDER AND ANGER

You have heard that it was said to the ancients, “You will not murder,” and “Whoever murders will be guilty by the court.”

And I say to you, that anyone who is angry with his brother will be guilty by the court; and whoever calls his brother “good-for-nothing!” will be guilty by the Sanhedrin; and whoever says “fool!” will be guilty of the fire of gehenna.

Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go, first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

Settle matters in a friendly way with your legal opponent while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent doesn’t hand you over to the court-judge, and the court-judge to the officer, so that you are thrown into prison.

Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid back the last coin.

ADULTERY AND LUST

You have heard that it was said, "You will not commit adultery."

And I say to you that anyone who goes on looking at a woman in order to cultivate lust for her, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes your downfall, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into gehenna.

If your right hand causes your downfall, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go off into gehenna.

DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

It has also been said, "Whoever sends away his wife, he must give her a certificate of divorce."

And I say to you that anyone who sends away his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, he makes her the victim of adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.

Oaths, Revenge, and Enemy Love

Matthew 5:33-48



OATHS AND TRUTH-TELLING

Again, you have heard that it was said to the ancients, “Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.”

And I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: not by the sky, because it is God’s throne; not by the land, because it is his footstool; not by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the Great King.

And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.

But let your word be “yes, yes” or “no, no.”

Anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

REVENGE AND RETALIATION

You have heard that it was said, “An eye in recompense for an eye, and a tooth in recompense for a tooth.”

And I say to you, do not resist-in-kind an evil person, but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.

Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two.

To the one who asks of you, give.

And the one who wants to borrow from you, don't turn away.

ENEMY LOVE

You have heard that it was said, "You will love your neighbor and you will hate your enemy."

And I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be children of your Father who is in the skies.

For he causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have?

Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others?

Do not even the nations do the same?

BE WHOLE

Therefore you are to be whole, as your Father in the skies is whole.

Warnings About Religious Practices, Pt. 1

Matthew 6:1-4



TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND REAL REWARD

Be careful about your doing-what-is-right.

Don't do it in front of people for the purpose of being seen by them.

If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in the skies.

GENEROSITY TO THE POOR

So then, when you do acts of generous-giving, don't signal with a trumpet before you, like the hypocrites do in the gathering places and alleyways for the purpose of being honored by people.

Truly, I tell you: They have fully received their reward.

But you, when you do acts of generous-giving, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your generous-giving is done in hiddenness, and your Father who sees what is done in a hiddenness, he will fully reward you.

Praying Like Jesus

Matthew 6:5-15



And when you pray, don't be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray while standing in the gathering places and at the corners of wide streets for the purpose of being visible to people.

Truly, I tell you: They have fully received their reward.

But you, when you pray, enter into your inner-room and shut the door, so you can pray to your Father in hiddenness.

And your Father, who sees what is done in hiddenness, he will fully reward you.

And when you are praying, don't use meaningless repetition like the nations, because they suppose that they will be heard on account of their many words.

So don't be like them, because your Father knows what you need before you even ask him.

Therefore, when you pray, do it this way:
Our Father who is in the skies, may your name be recognized as holy.

May your kingdom come, and may your will be done as it is in the skies, so also on the land.

Our daily provision of bread, give to us today.

And forgive us our debts, just as we also have forgiven those indebted to us.

And don't lead us to be tested, but deliver us from the evil one.

For if you forgive people their transgressions, your Father in the skies will also forgive you.

But if you will not forgive people, then neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.



Warnings About Religious Practices, Pt. 2

Matthew 6:16-18



FASTING

And when you fast, don't look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they make their faces look disfigured so that their fasting will be visible to people.

Truly, I tell you: They have fully received their reward.

But you, when you fast, anoint your head with oil and wash your face so that your fasting won't be visible to people, but to your Father in a hidden way.

And your Father, who sees what is hidden, he will fully reward you.

Wealth and Worry

Matthew 6:19-34

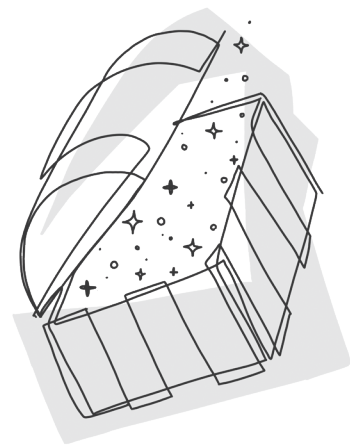


TRUE WEALTH AND REAL REWARD

Don't store up for yourselves stored-wealth on the land, where moth and nibbler can ruin, and where thieves break in and steal.

But store up for yourselves stored-wealth in the sky, where neither moth nor nibbler can ruin, and where thieves can't break in or steal.

For where your stored-wealth is, there your heart will be also.



THE GENEROUS OR GREEDY EYE

The lamp of the body is the eye; so then if your eye is genuine-and-generous, your whole body will be radiant.

But if your eye is bad-and-greedy, your whole body will be dark.

If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!

No one is able to serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.

You are not able to serve God and wealth.

WEALTH AND WORRY

Because of this I say to you, do not worry about your life-being, what you will eat or what you will drink, not even about your body, what you will put on.

Isn't the living-self more than food and the body more than clothing?

Look at the birds of the air, how they don't sow seed, and they don't harvest, and they don't gather into barns, and yet your Father in the skies feeds them.

Aren't you all much more valuable than they?

And who among you is able to add an hour to your life-span by worry?

And about clothing, why do you worry?

Pay attention to the lilies of the field, how they grow.

They don't labor, and they don't weave cloth.

But I say to you all that not even Solomon with all his honor clothed himself like one of these.

Now, if the grass of the field, which is there today and tomorrow is tossed into the furnace, is clothed this way by God, won't he much more clothe you all, who have so little trust?

So then, don't worry, saying, "What will we eat?" or "What will we drink?" or "What will we wear for clothing?".

For the nations, they constantly seek for all these things, and your Father in the skies knows that you need all that.

Rather, first of all seek for his kingdom and doing-what-is-right by him, and all these things will be added to you.

So then, don't worry about tomorrow.

Tomorrow can worry about itself!

Each day has enough trouble of its own.



Wisdom in Relationships

Matthew 7:1-12



ON NOT JUDGING OTHERS

Do not judge so that you will not be judged.

Because with the judgment that you judge, you will be judged.

And with the measure that you measure, it will be measured to you.

THE SPECK IN THE EYE

Why do you see the speck in the eye of your brother, but you don't perceive the beam in your eye?

Or how can you say to your brother, "Allow me to take out the speck from your eye," and look, the beam is in your eye?!

Hypocrite!

First take out the beam from your eye, and then you can see clearly the speck in the eye of your brother.

Do not give what is holy to dogs, and don't throw your pearls in front of pigs, so they don't trample them with their feet and turning around, they will tear you apart.

ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and it will be opened for you.

For everyone who asks will receive, and the one who seeks will find, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened.

Or what person is among you who, when their son asks for bread, will give him a rock?

Or when he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?

So then, if you all are bad, but you know to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in the skies give good things to those who ask.

THE GOLDEN RULE

So then, everything you desire that people do to you, so also you do to them, for this is the Torah and the Prophets.



The Choice

Matthew 7:13-27



THE TWO GATES AND ROADS

Enter through the narrow gate.

Because wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to ruin, and those who enter through it are many.

How narrow is the gate and constricted is the road that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

THE TWO TREES AND TWO PROPHETS

Watch out for illegitimate prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inside they are wolves who snatch.

By their fruits you will recognize them.

Do people gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?

Similarly, every good tree produces good fruit, but the diseased tree produces bad fruit.

A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a diseased tree cannot produce good fruit.

Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

So then, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Not everyone who says to me, “Master, master!” will enter into the kingdom of the skies, but rather the one who does the desire of my Father in the skies.

Many will say to me on that day, “Master, master, didn’t we prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty acts in your name?”

And then I will confess to them, “I have never known you; go away from me, you who act as if there is no Torah.”

THE TWO HOUSES

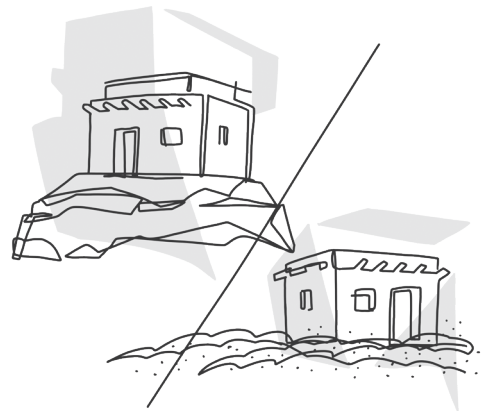
So then, everyone who hears these words of mine and does them, they will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

And the rain came down, and the rivers came, and the winds blew, and they fell upon that house, but it did not fall because its foundation was on the rock.

And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them, they will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.

And the rain came down, and the rivers came, and the winds blew, and they fell upon that house.

And it fell, and its falling was huge.

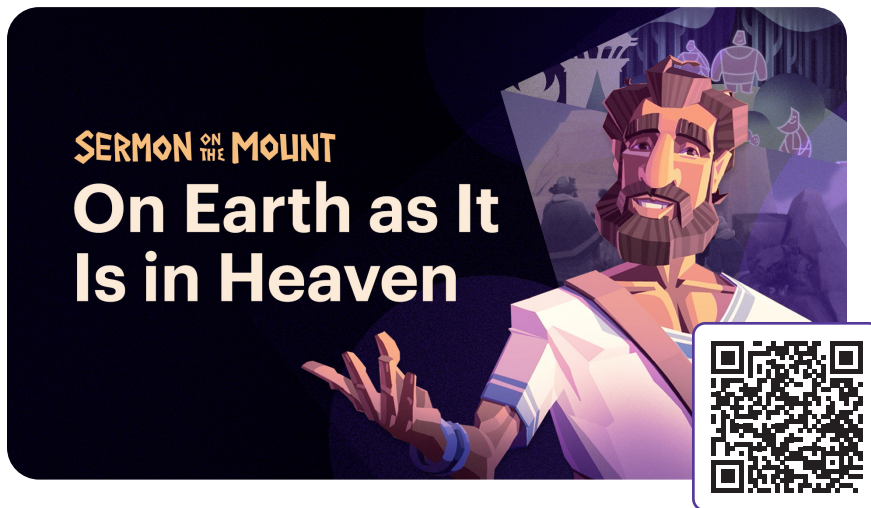


Episode 1: Introduction

Explore the larger historical and biblical context of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' largest collection of teachings.

Read Scripture: Matthew 3-4

Watch the Video



Reflection Questions

- Jesus opens his sermon with descriptions of people who are already experiencing the good life of God's Kingdom. What might this tell us about God's nature?
- Rather than speaking from the temple to the most powerful Israelites in Jerusalem, Jesus heads into rural Galilee to speak with oppressed, powerless people. Why might he have chosen this location and these people?
- Take some time to reflect on any themes or ideas that stood out to you from the video.



Explore More Resources
in the Episode 1 Guide



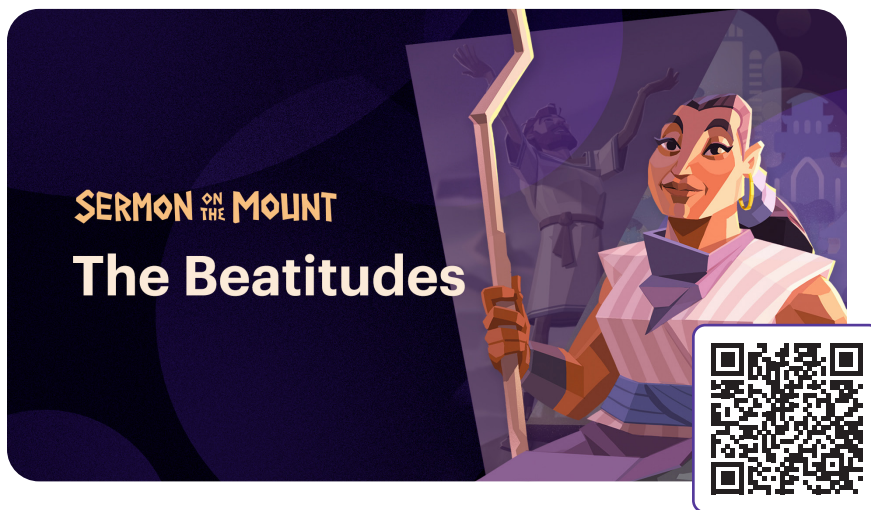


Episode 2: The Beatitudes

Jesus begins this collection of teachings with a section often referred to as the Beatitudes. Learn how these surprising statements describe the arrival of God's Kingdom.

Read Scripture: Matthew 5:3-16

Watch the Video



Reflection Questions

- What makes the Jesus-style revolution described in Matthew different from most revolutions?
- What does it mean for someone to be pure in heart? Why is it important for Jesus' followers to be pure in heart?
- According to Jesus, what does it mean to be a peacemaker?
- How are Jesus' followers similar to Israel's prophets? What kinds of attitudes and actions do they share?



Explore More Resources
in the Episode 2 Guide



Episode 3: Jesus Fulfills the Law

Jesus offers a bold vision of doing right, grounded in God’s wisdom. Learn how this vision fulfills the teachings of the Torah.

Read Scripture: Matthew 5:17-20

Watch the Video



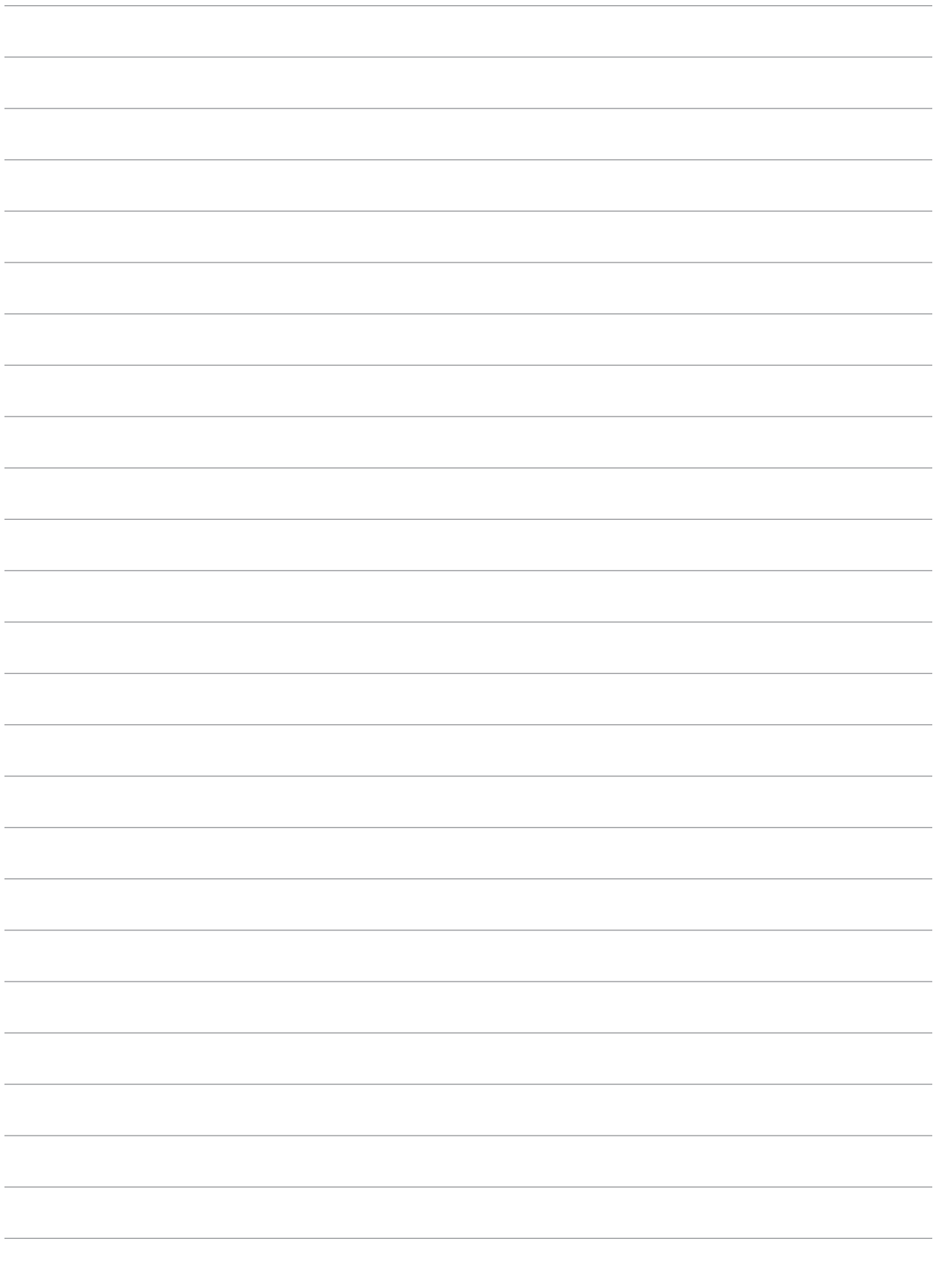
Reflection Questions

- How is the video’s description of righteousness similar to or different from the way you’ve typically understood it?
- In your own words, how would you describe the Torah and the Prophets as presented in the video?
- How might Jesus’ first audience have understood his claim that he was going to fulfill the story of the Hebrew Bible?
- What kinds of attitudes or actions could be seen as “doing right by your neighbor” for Jesus followers today?



Explore More Resources
in the Episode 3 Guide





Episode 4: Wisdom Within Laws About Murder, Adultery, and Divorce

Learn how Jesus teaches biblical laws on murder, adultery, and divorce by confronting the desires that drive our behavior.

Read Scripture: Matthew 5:21-32

Watch the Video

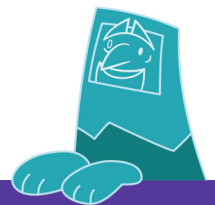


Reflection Questions

- Why does Jesus connect anger and name-calling to murder?
- How is looking at someone lustfully rooted in the same attitude as adultery?
- What does Jesus actually mean when he says to “cut off your hand” and “pluck out your eye?”
- When talking about divorce and remarriage, how is Jesus advocating for the fair treatment of women?
- When you consider Jesus’ words in Matthew 5:21-32, what does he seem to be saying about the value of humans?



**Explore More Resources
in the Episode 4 Guide**





Episode 5: Wisdom Within Laws About Oaths, Retaliation, and Enemy Love

Explore how Jesus reveals God’s wisdom underneath Old Testament laws about oaths, revenge, and enemies.

Read Scripture: Matthew 5:33-48

Watch the Video

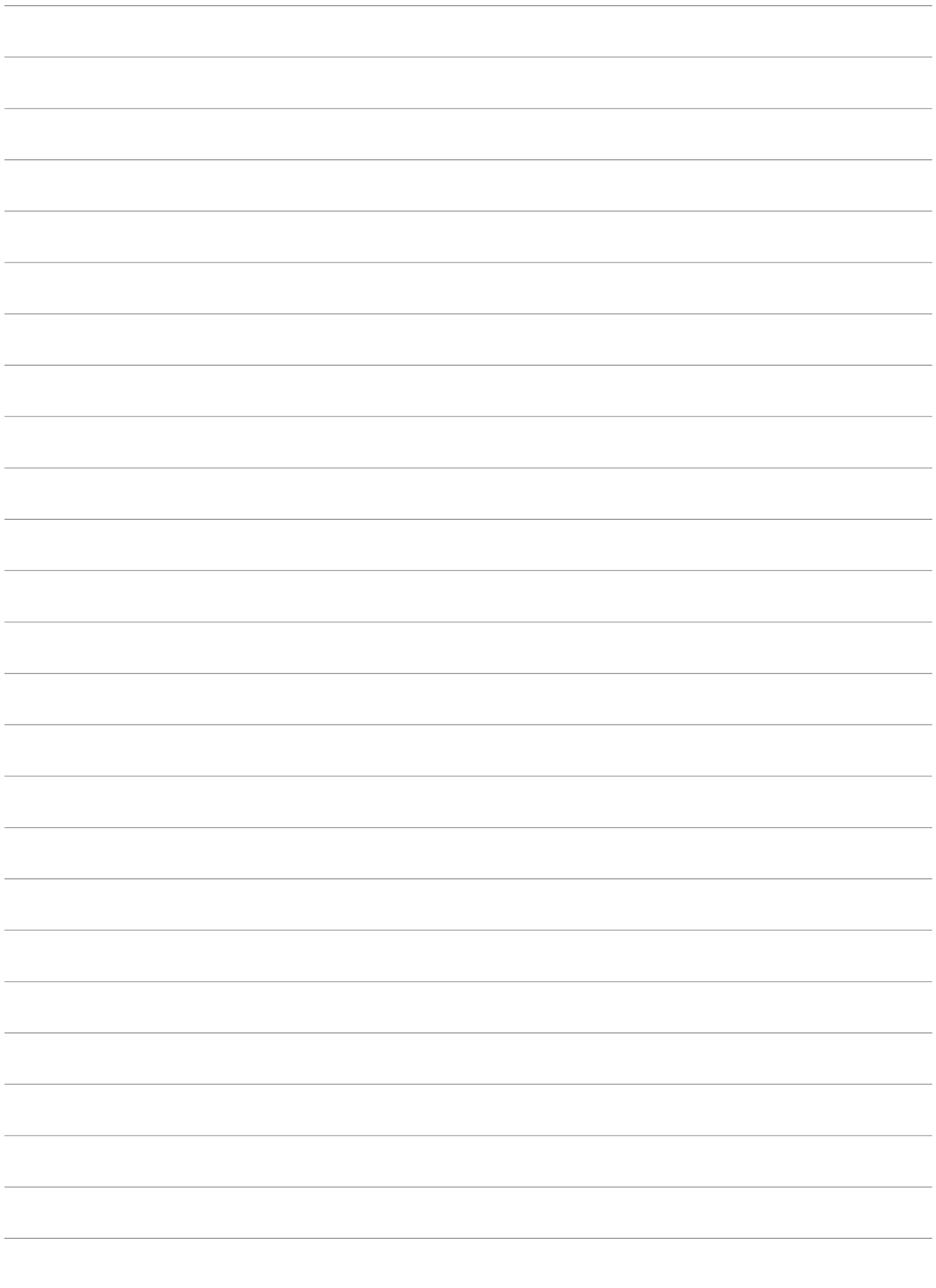


Reflection Questions

- Why does Jesus tell his followers never to swear oaths?
- Referring to retaliation and revenge, Jesus says, “don’t pay back an evil person,” or “do not resist-in-kind an evil person.” How would you summarize what he encourages his followers to do instead (see Matthew 5:38-42)?
- According to Jesus, why is it not enough to simply tolerate your enemies? Why is it better to love them?
- Jesus commands his followers to love their enemies because God—who is good to everyone, regardless of their behavior—also loves their enemies. What are some ways that God shows kindness to all people? How can this inspire us to love without partiality?
- How does making peace and loving others in these ways make us “whole” or “complete?”



**Explore More Resources
in the Episode 5 Guide**



Episode 6: Warnings About Religious Practices

Explore Jesus' teaching on three common religious practices of his day, where he warns his audience about the temptation of hypocrisy.

Read Scripture: Matthew 6:1-8, 16-18

Watch the Video



Reflection Questions

- In Jesus' day, what did it mean to be a hypocrite? How is this the same or different from what a hypocrite is today?
- Why does Jesus encourage private generosity?
- Whether we pray alone or with other people, what is the wisdom principle that Jesus is advocating for in his teaching about prayer?
- According to the video, what is the ultimate treasure for a human? When humans receive this treasure, what is their response?



Explore More Resources
in the Episode 6 Guide



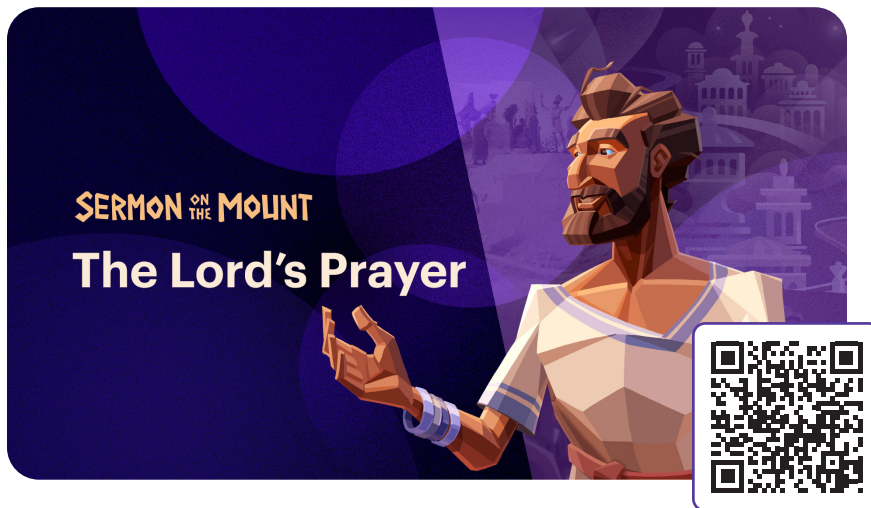


Episode 7: The Lord's Prayer

Discover how Jesus' short prayer aligns our desires with the purposes of God's Kingdom.

Read Scripture: Matthew 6:9-15

Watch the Video



Reflection Questions

- Why does Jesus tell his followers to address God as “our Father?”
- Why would someone pray for God’s name to be recognized as holy?
- When Jesus prays, “Your Kingdom come, and your will be done,” what is he asking for?
- What does praying “give us today our daily bread” remind us about in the Old Testament, and what might it instill within us?
- Why does Jesus so closely connect God’s forgiveness of us to our forgiveness of others?
- Jesus prays about temptation, or “testing,” and then prays about deliverance from the evil one. How do these concepts or ideas relate?



**Explore More Resources
in the Episode 7 Guide**





Episode 8: Wealth and Worry

Explore Jesus' teaching about wealth and possessions, where he encourages trust in God's provision and acknowledges the futility of worrying about stuff.

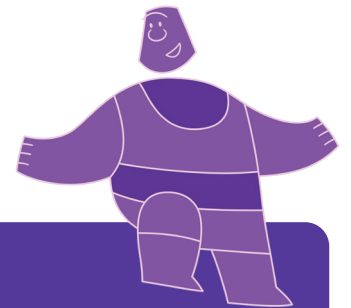
Read Scripture: Matthew 6:19-34

Watch the Video



Reflection Questions

- What are some of the false promises we might believe about possessions and wealth?
- In Matthew 6:19, what is Jesus trying to communicate about earthly possessions?
- According to Jesus, what are some examples of sky stuff (or heavenly treasure)?
- According to Matthew 6:22-23, how can our perception of wealth shape us?
- How can wealth or possessions be like tyrants?
- In Matthew 6:25-34, how does Jesus' mention of the birds of the sky and flowers of the field invite us to shift our perspective about worry and possessions?



**Explore More Resources
in the Episode 8 Guide**

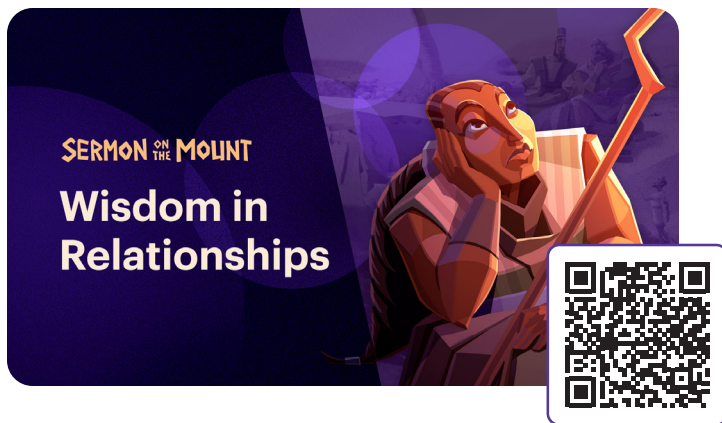


Episode 9: Wisdom in Relationships

Learn about Jesus' teachings on not judging others, throwing pearls to pigs, and dealing with the plank in your eye.

Read Scripture: Matthew 7:1-12

Watch the Video



Reflection Questions

- In this section of teaching, Jesus warns his followers about what kind of trap?
- When we feel the desire to judge others, what two things does Jesus encourage us to do instead? (See Matthew 7:1-5.)
- Jesus advises people against casting “pearls in front of pigs.” How would you describe the wisdom he communicates through that metaphor?
- People sometimes use Matthew 7:7-8 to support the idea that God gives us anything and everything we ask for. But in the larger context of Matthew 7:1-12, how might we interpret his words?
- In Matthew 5:17 and Matthew 7:12, notice the repeated phrase “the Torah and the Prophets.” What might these two bookend verses tell us about Jesus’ message in this section?
- Reflect on any other themes or topics that came up after watching the video. Jesus’ Golden Rule is a simple yet challenging way to live. What kinds of situations would make it most difficult to follow Jesus’ instruction?



**Explore More Resources
in the Episode 9 Guide**



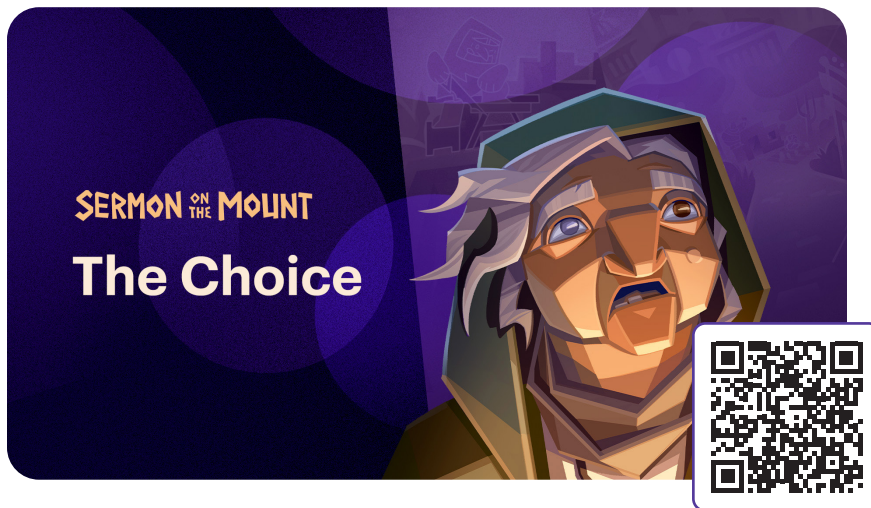


Episode 10: The Choice

Explore the three images Jesus uses to illustrate the choice his followers face in responding to his teaching.

Read Scripture: Matthew 7:13-27

Watch the Video

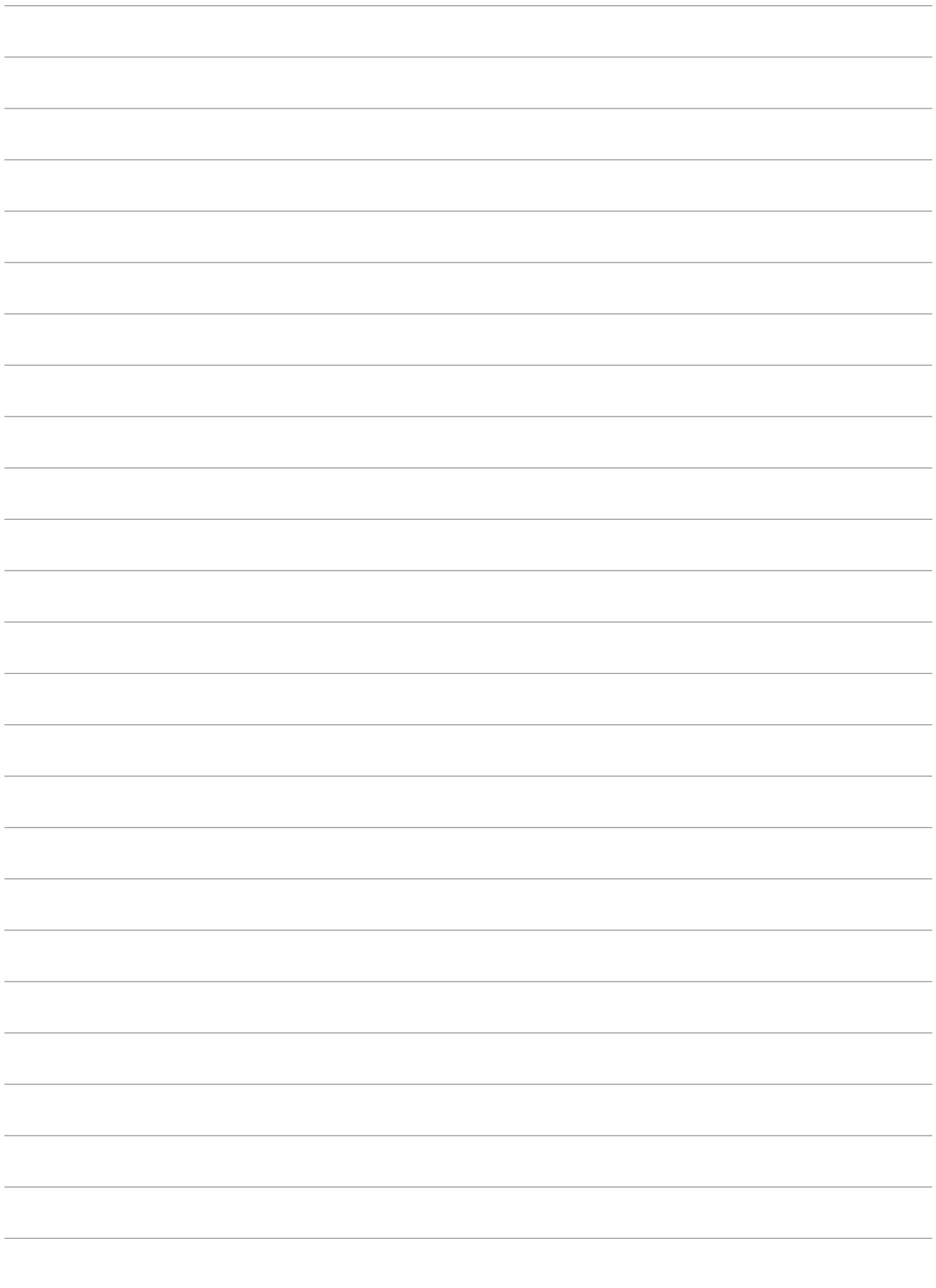


Reflection Questions

- The beginning of this video frames the story of the Bible as a choice between two paths: one leading to life and the other to death. How does this reframe impact your understanding of the Bible?
- According to Jesus, why does the path leading to life often feel narrow or constricting?
- Jesus says that we can identify illegitimate prophets by their fruit. What are some examples of bad fruit produced by a leader? What are examples of good fruit?
- How can people do things in Jesus' name but not actually be known by him?
- Why does Jesus compare our choices and lifestyle to building a house? How does this connect to the concept of Israel's temple as "the house of God?"



**Explore More Resources
in the Episode 10 Guide**





Keep Exploring With Us

Our resources on the Sermon on the Mount are just the beginning. Continue your learning journey on our website or app with videos, podcasts, classes, articles, guides, reading plans, and more. Get an overview of a book of the Bible or go deep on themes that run throughout the biblical story.



Website



App