

# BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

YEAR: TRANSFORM / FOCUS: I AM GROWING  
SERIES: GOD IS THE TREASURE - I AM BANKRUPT

## BIG TRUTH: BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

Matthew 16:24-27; Philippians 3:7-10; Hebrews 12:1-2; Romans 12:1

## BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 5:3

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

## BIG IDEAS

- We are spiritually bankrupt, living for our own kingdom.
- God's blessing is found when we live for His kingdom instead of our kingdoms.
- Sacrifice is a willingness to lose everything the world has to offer to follow Jesus.
- Surrender is an intentional decision to let go of control and be ruled by God.

## BIBLE PASSAGE: MATTHEW 5:1-12

## TRANSFORM - I AM GROWING

The Transform Year is an exploration of what it means to become a "new creation" in Jesus. (2 Corinthians 5:17) In order for this to happen, we must first find our identity in Him. Many of us live in a consistent state of identity crises. We wrestle with questions like who am I, where do I belong, why do I exist? The answer to these questions is found in Jesus. Our prayer for this semester is that like the Apostle Paul we would be able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." (Galatians 2:20).

## SERIES AIMS



### Every student should know that...

- Life, joy, wisdom, and purpose are only found in our treasure, Jesus
- Apart from Jesus we are personally, relationally, and spiritually bankrupt
- The Christian life is about growth not arrival.



### Every student should feel...

- Encouraged that Jesus is the treasure our hearts desire
- The depth of their personal and spiritual bankruptcy
- Emboldened to live for God's kingdom alone



### Every student should strive to...

- Read the Sermon on the Mount
- Memorize the Bible Verse each week
- Begin practicing some of the basic spiritual disciplines



### Every student should want to...

- See the Beatitudes become their attitudes
- Put sin to death and live for God's kingdom
- Pursue Jesus by embracing and practicing spiritual disciplines

## GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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# BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

**BIBLE VERSE: MATTHEW 5:3**

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

**The poor in spirit recognize they need God's help.**

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit..."*

- Being poor in spirit means having recognized our inability to help ourselves and our great need for God's help. Jesus began His Sermon on the Mount with a statement about the poor in spirit. Those who have come to the realization that they are sinners separated from God and are in need of the salvation offered through Jesus are the poor in spirit.
- A person who understands their own spiritual bankruptcy is a person who realizes their need of God's help. We cannot save ourselves. We cannot do enough good deeds or be good enough to save ourselves from our own sin natures. We cannot reconcile ourselves to God. When we are poor in spirit, we understand that we need God's help to do this.

**Being poor in spirit yields a blessing.**

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit..."*

- Those who are poor in spirit, who have realized their own spiritual helplessness, receive a blessing from God. The blessing is an eternal relationship with God. Being reconciled to God brings blessing upon a person's life because they are united with the God of the universe who controls all things.
- Jesus' statement in Matthew 5:3 shows us that when we have humbled ourselves before Him and confessed our own spiritual bankruptcy, we do receive blessing from God. We live in communion with Him.

**The poor in spirit are part of God's kingdom.**

*"for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

- The poor in spirit are blessed because they belong to God's family. Those who belong to God's family inherit His eternal kingdom. Those who have confessed their own sinfulness and believed in Jesus are part of God's eternal kingdom.
- Jesus teaches this truth to His listeners in Matthew 5:3 when He says the kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit. Only those who have humbled themselves before Christ receive the blessing of living in His presence for all of eternity.

# BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

## BIG IDEA #1: WE ARE SPIRITUALLY BANKRUPT, LIVING FOR OUR OWN KINGDOMS.<sup>1</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Jesus begins teaching His disciples and followers on a mountaintop and these teachings are known as the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus begins this sermon with a statement on man's spiritual condition when He says that the poor in spirit are blessed. Every person is born spiritually bankrupt. No one is born sinless because we are all born with a sin nature and our sinful hearts lead us to reject and rebel against God. We are unable to change ourselves or even to save ourselves. This is our spiritual bankruptcy. We are poor in spirit when we realize this about ourselves.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What has the Lord used in your life to lead you to an understanding of your own spiritual bankruptcy?**

In Isaiah 6:5, when the prophet sees God's glory, he has an understanding of his own sinfulness and spiritual bankruptcy. He cries out as he realizes just how helpless he is against his sin when compared to God's glory. When we understand God's glory and perfection, we can truly understand how we fall utterly short of that. Titus 3:5 reminds us that our works cannot save us. When we realize this, we realize our own need of God's help.

### [ THIS ]

In our spiritual bankruptcy, we live for ourselves and not for God. Even after we have saving faith, we struggle with living for our own kingdom instead of living for God's kingdom. We resist sacrificing our own will for God's will. We resist recognizing our love of self and find it difficult to humble ourselves before God. Being poor in spirit comes when we fully understand we are nothing without God and we are in desperate need of Him.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How can we know whether we are living for God's kingdom or our kingdom?**

Romans 7:18-19 teaches us that we all struggle with doing what is right according to God's will and with our own desires. When we live to fulfill our own desires, we are living for our kingdom and not God's. Matthew 6:19 warns us to not store up treasures on earth because they will fade away. This reveals that living for our earthly kingdom is a temptation to every person.

**How does pride keep you from being poor in spirit before God?**

Proverbs 28:14 speaks to a person who is stiff-necked and unwilling to hear truth or reproof. Proverbs 16:18 teaches us that our prideful hearts lead to our downfall. When we are prideful, we do not truly see ourselves and our spiritual bankruptcy. Without understanding our spiritual bankruptcy, we are not poor in spirit before God.

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1. Matthew 5:3: The poor in spirit understand they are spiritually bankrupt.

# BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

## BIG IDEA #2: GOD'S BLESSING IS FOUND WHEN WE LIVE FOR HIS KINGDOM INSTEAD OF OUR KINGDOMS.<sup>2</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Jesus' sermon recorded in Matthew 5:2-12 teaches us how to live for His kingdom in this world. His words give the promise of blessing, but they also hold a warning for those who do not seek His kingdom on this earth. Inside of each person is a struggle to glorify ourselves by seeking our kingdom. Our kingdom is built on the foundation of our sinful hearts and its purpose is our glory and not God's. When we live for our kingdom, our focus is on us and not on Jesus. Our kingdom is not everlasting and will one day end, yet God's kingdom is forever. The people Jesus describes in His sermon are humble and live with the understanding that they are spiritually bankrupt without God. Their lives reveal that they know they are in desperate need of God's help and that God's kingdom is the only kingdom worth seeking.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Why is Jesus and living for his kingdom more satisfying to our hearts than living for the things of the world?**

In Philippians 3:7-10, Paul speaks of the futility of seeking earthly things. Earthly things are not eternal, but God's kingdom is. Hebrews 12:1-2 teaches us that we are like Jesus when we seek His kingdom and not the things of this earth.

### [ THIS ]

Matthew 5:2-12 reveals that blessing comes to those who do live as Jesus instructed in this sermon. Seeking God's kingdom does yield blessing in this life and the next. The blessing is not earthly, nor does it mean that a person lives an easy, good life on earth. The blessing that comes to a person who seeks God's kingdom is an eternal relationship with the God of the universe. When we seek God's kingdom and live humble, meek, grace-filled lives for Jesus, we are fulfilling our created purpose and this brings us joy. When we sacrifice for Jesus, as we seek His kingdom, we receive the blessing and honor of being like Him.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Matthew 5:2-12. How do the Beatitudes relate to your life, and how is Jesus reshaping the way you see your life?**

In Colossians 3:17, Paul instructs his readers to do everything they do on this earth for the glory of God. When we seek God's kingdom, His glory will be the purpose in everything we do. When we seek His kingdom, we will seek to become more like Him and not like this world. Lastly, Hebrews 4:16 shows us that when we are seeking God's kingdom, we will know Him, and approach Him with confidence because we will understand the grace that we have received.

**How do the blessings we receive from living for God's kingdom differ from the momentary satisfaction we receive from living for our own kingdom?**

1 Chronicles 16:11 reminds us that when we seek God, we receive the blessing of all that He is. Acts 17:27 also reminds us that those who seek God and His kingdom will know Him on this earth because He is near to those who seek Him.

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2. Matthew 5:2-12: When we live seeking God's kingdom, we are blessed because we live according to God's plan and purposes.

# BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

## BIG IDEA #3: SACRIFICE IS A WILLINGNESS TO LOSE EVERYTHING THE WORLD HAS TO OFFER TO FOLLOW JESUS.<sup>3</sup>

### [ THIS ]

Humility is an emptying of ourselves and of our rights. Humility involves denying ourselves and setting aside our own rights and desires. In Matthew 5:2-12, Jesus teaches how to live for Him and every statement He makes involves humility. When we humble ourselves, we express a willingness to sacrifice. Sacrifice is necessary to truly follow Jesus. Jesus set the example of sacrifice by humbling Himself to come to the earth and die on the cross in our place. When we truly follow Jesus, we become like Him by willingly giving up our rights and desires for His.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**Read Matthew 5:10-12. How can being persecuted, falsely accused, and hated be a blessing?**

In 2 Corinthians 12:10, Paul writes that he delights in his hardships and weakness because he is made strong in his weakness. The blessing we receive when we are persecuted is the power of the Holy Spirit at work in side of us. Romans 5:3-5 teaches us that our suffering has a purpose. It strengthens our faith and produces a godly character inside of us.

**In what ways do you struggle to humble yourself and sacrifice for Jesus?**

In Mark 10:20-22, Jesus tells a rich young ruler that in order to follow Him, he must sell all that he has. The rich young ruler is unable to give up his possessions and position. We all struggle to humble ourselves because of our earthly possessions and positions, or our desire for them. 2 Timothy 3:1-5 warns us of what a life not lived for Jesus looks like. It is a life full of pride and love of self over love for God.

### [ THIS ]

To truly sacrifice, we have to be willing to lose all that we have in this life. Sacrifice involves giving up what the world offers and giving up our desires. Sacrifice means seeking God's kingdom first, and giving up any ideas we have about our own lives. When we sacrifice ourselves, we can truly follow Jesus. When we seek God's kingdom, our desire for the things this world offers begins to fade. We no longer set our hearts and minds on this earthly life, and, instead begin living for our eternal life.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What do you need to sacrifice daily in order to seek God's kingdom daily?**

Colossians 3:2 teaches us the importance of controlling our thoughts and setting our minds on heavenly things and God's kingdom. Titus 2:11-12 shows us the way to live sacrificially for God is to not seek worldly possessions and not to give in to our worldly passions. Matthew 16:26 gives us the warning of the loss we experience when we gain the whole world, but lose our eternal lives.

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3. Matthew 5:10: Those who give up earthly things and suffer for Christ's sake receive a blessing.

# BLESSING COMES THROUGH SACRIFICE AND SURRENDER

## BIG IDEA #4: SURRENDER IS AN INTENTIONAL DECISION TO LET GO OF CONTROL AND BE RULED BY GOD.<sup>4</sup>

### [ THIS ]

When we live as Jesus teaches we should in Matthew 5:2-12, we are giving up control of our own lives. A life lived for God is a life surrendered to His plan and purposes in every way and every day. This isn't something that happens on its own. Surrender is an intentional and daily decision to submit ourselves to God's rule over every part of our lives. When we surrender our lives, we let go of the idea of control over our lives. Instead, we seek God's will and His purposes for our life and this world.

### [ THEREFORE ]

**How do you surrender your life to God daily? How has this changed the way you view your time each day?**

Proverbs 3:5-6 gives us a great formula for surrendering our lives to God daily. When we set aside our own ideas and thoughts about our lives and seek God daily, we will live under His rule and authority. Colossians 4:5 reminds us that our time is a gift and should be used wisely for God's kingdom and not our own.

### [ THIS ]

Surrender isn't just a releasing of control. It involves giving up control and giving control to someone else. When we live surrendered to God, we acknowledge that God is indeed in control and we submit to His leading. Surrendering to God involves being ruled by Him. Surrender means we are no longer struggling to be in charge of our future, but instead, we acknowledge that God's plan and purpose is best. As we seek to surrender to Him daily, we will seek His face daily, submitting to Him in everything. In order to truly be ruled by God, we must seek His rule in every part of our lives, not just certain parts. When we sacrifice and surrender for and to God, we will be blessed because Jesus says so!

### [ THEREFORE ]

**What areas of your life have you tried to control instead of surrendering to God?**

Luke 11:28 teaches us that blessing comes to those who live obediently to God's Word in all areas of their lives. When we try to retain control of our lives, we are not living in obedience to God's Word. Luke 9:23 teaches us that to live a truly surrendered life to God, we must give up all things.

**How do you struggle to be ruled by God?**

Proverbs 12:15 and 14:12 warns us that we may think we know a better way, but our way is not better. We may think we know the way we should live, but God's rule and His way are better and lead to eternal life. Proverbs 10:17 teaches us the truth that when we heed discipline in our lives, we are showing that we are choosing to be ruled by God and are on the path to life.

4. Matthew 5:2-12: The one who follows Jesus and seeks His Kingdom surrenders to God's plan and purposes.