

The Way of Jesus: A Better Way to Be Human

Part 1: Why Losing is Actually Winning

Matthew 5:1-12

Summary: Jesus flips the world's idea of winning, showing that true life, peace, and belonging come to those the world considers 'losers' in God's Kingdom.

Main Ideas:

It feels like more people care about winning than about finding a way to live together.

Jesus doesn't step into our chaos with better arguments. He offers a better way to be human.

The Kingdom of Heaven: God reigning as king in human hearts... restoring what humanity was always meant to be.

Jesus isn't against "winning." He redefines it.

The Kingdom belongs to people who know they need it.

Jesus doesn't offer "nice ethics." He announces a rival Kingdom.

What looks like losing in this world is often the clearest sign you belong to God's Kingdom.

The Jesus way transforms our view of God, the world, others, and ourselves.

We are invited to experience the Kingdom of Heaven in our lives right now.

Invitation:

Read these verses (Matthew 5:1-12) each day.

And ask:

What one quality stands out to me?

Where could I show that in a conversation or choice today?

Transcript:

IN: If you had to describe the world right now in just one word, what would it be?

For me, it's: chaotic.

- Loud. Combative. Anxious. Exhausting.

I feel constantly pulled in different directions by causes I'm told should matter.

The more I'm pressured to care about everything, the more worn out, and sometimes numb, I become.

TENSION: Every day, there's something new we're expected to be outraged about.

Some of these issues are real. Some matter deeply.

But the "facts" we're given usually depend on which side you already agree with.

- Winning has become more important than wisdom.
- Being right matters more than being loving.

- And finding a way to live together feels hopeless.

It feels like more people care about winning than about finding a way to live together.

It shows up everywhere: politics, culture, science, even in the church.

- We're told to have a strong opinion, speak louder, take a side, and fight to win.

RELIGIOUS ASSUMPTION: And if you follow Jesus, there's an added pressure.

If you don't speak loudly enough, quickly enough, or aggressively enough, your faith gets questioned.

So we're left asking:

- What matters most to God?
- Where does Jesus truly care about?
- And how are we supposed to live in a world that's always in conflict?

SOLUTION: The only solution that actually works is the Way of Jesus.

Because Jesus doesn't step into our chaos with better arguments. He offers a better way to be human.

Nowhere is that clearer than in the Sermon on the Mount.

- This is Jesus' blueprint for a new kind of humanity.
- If you're a Jesus follower, these are the core teachings of what it means to live under his leadership.
- If you're not sure what you believe, these are widely considered the most influential words on what it means to be human.
- Either way, we all need to listen.

Most scholars think this "sermon" records the essential teachings Jesus shared again and again... his core message.

What's amazing: He's not giving religious advice, not arguing deep theology, not proving Himself right.

He's inviting everyone into the Kingdom of Heaven

- Not just a distant hope, but a new reality available right now.
- The Kingdom of Heaven: God reigning as king in human hearts... restoring what humanity was always meant to be.

And he doesn't start with rules. He starts by showing who is invited into his kingdom.

Warning: What Jesus describes here is deeply different from how the world works.

- Not comfortable.
- Not convenient.
- But life-giving.

Jesus doesn't just give us better religious ideas. He transforms our view of God, the world, others, and ourselves.

- And that can be uncomfortable.

SOLUTION EXPLAINED: First, let's see who Jesus is talking to...

Matthew 5:1-2 NLT *One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, and he began to teach them.*

Jesus speaks to ordinary people:

- Not religious elites or rulers.
- But everyday men and women, people who are often overlooked or powerless,
- Who know they can't fix the world... or even themselves.

In the world's eyes, these are the losers. But Jesus shatters that and calls them the true winners in God's Kingdom.

Jesus isn't against "winning." He redefines it.

He shows that real winning in the real Kingdom is nothing like what anyone expects.

Let's read what Jesus actually says...

Matthew 5:3-12 NLT

God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.

God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.

God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.

God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

Now this passage has been misunderstood for centuries...

Jesus is not giving entrance requirements for the Kingdom

- This is not a checklist for spiritual achievement
- And it's definitely not Instructions on how to be miserable so God will like you

Jesus is announcing who is already experiencing life in the Kingdom of Heaven

- This is what human life looks like when God is actually reigning in someone's heart.

Jesus isn't saying... try to become these things. He's saying the people the world thinks are excluded, who have already lost... are not just included, they are the core of the kingdom.

Jesus completely flips religious expectations upside down.

“Blessed,” doesn’t mean easy or comfortable.

As Dallas Willard put it, “Blessed is the highest kind of well-being available to human life.”

In other words, it’s a way of living deeply rooted in God’s kingdom... steady, whole, and unshaken, whatever your circumstances.

And Jesus begins in a shocking place.

God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

- Not the impressive.
- Not the confident.
- Not the people who have life figured out.

The Kingdom belongs to people who know they need it.

People who know they cannot fix themselves... or the world.

Jesus starts by saying:

If you feel spiritually empty, you are not disqualified.

You are exactly who the Kingdom is opening to.

God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

- Not people who numb out.
- Not people who pretend everything is fine.

Kingdom people are honest about brokenness

- in themselves,
- in relationships,
- in the world.

And Jesus says:

- God moves toward people who refuse to pretend.

God blesses those who are humble[meek], for they will inherit the whole earth.

That word humble/meek doesn’t mean weak.

- It means strength that refuses to dominate.
- Power that chooses gentleness.

In a world where everyone is fighting to control outcomes,

- Kingdom people trust God to set things right.

Jesus makes an outrageous promise: The gentle will ultimately inherit the earth, not the aggressive.

God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.

These are people who ache for the world to be put back together.

They are not comfortable with injustice, cruelty, or selfishness...including their own.

They want God's goodness to invade real life.

And Jesus says that longing is not wasted.

- God fills people who crave his kind of world.

And when this kind of life begins forming inside someone...it starts showing up in how they treat others.

- They actually start becoming a part of the solution.

So Jesus says... **God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**

Kingdom people refuse to become cynical.

- They see pain... and move toward it instead of away from it.
- They don't help because people deserve it.
- They help because mercy is what they have received from God.
- They do for one what they wish they could do for all.

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

This is not about being perfect.

- It means having a life that isn't divided between loving God and loving image, status, or control.

Kingdom people live with one driving question: "God, what do You see in me?"

God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.

Not peacekeepers who avoid conflict.

Peacemakers step into conflict to bring healing.

They do the hard work of reconciliation.

Because this is exactly what God did through Jesus... reconciling humanity to himself and to each other.

Then Jesus ends with something surprising...

God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

Because when people actually live this way...

- it threatens systems built on domination,
- identities built on superiority,

- and righteousness built on comparison.

Jesus doesn't offer "nice ethics." He announces a rival Kingdom.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US:

Jesus is saying something almost impossible to believe... and very dangerous:

The people the world assumes have lost...are the ones most alive in God's Kingdom.

- The overlooked.
- The gentle.
- The honest.
- The merciful.
- The peacemakers.

These are the core citizens of heaven.

And here's what that means: What looks like losing in this world is often the clearest sign you belong to God's Kingdom.

The world says if you're not loud enough, not fighting hard enough, you're the problem.

- Sometimes, yes, silence is cowardice.
- Other times, more noise just adds to the chaos.

Jesus doesn't call us to silence or indifference.

Jesus gives us something better... a filter for when to speak, why to act, and how to love.

The Jesus Way...

- The world says: dominate. Jesus says: be gentle.
- The world says: protect your image. Jesus says: be pure in heart.
- The world says: crush your enemies. Jesus says: make peace.
- The world says: avoid weakness. Jesus says: bring your need.

True change doesn't start with volume... it starts with a change of view.

- The Jesus way transforms our view of God, the world, others, and ourselves.

And the more we see things through his view, the more we start looking like the people Jesus just described... not to earn his love but because we are becoming more and more like him. Becoming more and more pictures of what humanity was always meant to be.

- Whole and Confident in the love and care of our Heavenly Father.

So what does this all mean for us right now, tomorrow, this week... in real life?

- It means you don't need to fake strength for God.
- You don't need to control the world's chaos.

- If you feel powerless or overwhelmed, if you honestly see what's broken and can't fix it, Jesus says, "You're exactly who I'm here for. The kingdom is opening to you."

If you feel like you're not winning at life...

if you feel unseen...

if gentleness has cost you...

if integrity has cost you...

Hear this clearly:

- What looks like losing in this world is often the clearest sign you belong to God's Kingdom.

And that kind of life... rooted in God, steady in chaos, free from the need to dominate...

- Is the better way to be human.

INVITATION: So this week...

Read these verses (Matthew 5:1-12) each day.

And ask:

- What one quality stands out to me?
- Where could I show that in a conversation or choice today?

Let Jesus redefine what "winning" means

- Not by trying harder, not to prove yourself,
- But by letting him change how you see everything.

WHAT IF WE REALLY DID THIS:

Can you imagine if every person who said they were a Jesus Follower (not even the whole world) looked like these kingdom people?

- How much would the noise dissipate?
- What conflicts would disappear?
- Who would be seen, loved, protected, and honored?

What if your view of winning started to change?

- What would you worry and stress about?
- What would stop being a big deal
- Who would you start seeing, loving, protecting, and honoring?

You would begin to experience a life that is steady in chaos, courageous in conflict, and secure in God's love.

This is the life and the kingdom we are all invited to experience. Today.

If you are a Jesus Follower... this is who you are being made into.

If you're not there yet, Jesus is still inviting you... no matter who you are.

- You only have to accept his invitation, experience his love, and follow him.
- The invitation is open to experience the Kingdom of Heaven in your life right now.

We are invited to experience the Kingdom of Heaven in our lives right now.