

## Fighting Fire with Fire

What does it mean to “fight fire with fire”?

- Respond to an attack using the same tactics as the attacker

Examples

- Stop a fire by starting a “back fire”
- Other?

What are Jesus’ people to do  
in a world where God’s ways seem not to be happening?

- Fight with fire?
- Give up?
- Something else?

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### *The Lord's Supper*

- Our monthly celebration of Jesus death, resurrection, and His return to reign as King
- 6 different emphases
  - The One, Holy, Creator God
  - The reality of sin/rebellion against God
  - The sacrifice of Jesus for us
  - Our response of faith
  - The call to Mission: living like Jesus in the world
  - Jesus' return and the new heaven and new earth

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### **Setting of Matthew 5**

#### **In the Old Testament (before Jesus)**

- **Moses went up the mountain to hear from God**
  - God gave a statement of values: the 10 Commandments
  - What He wanted His people to be like in the world

#### **In the New Testament (Jesus and beyond)**

- **Jesus went up the mountain to speak as God**
  - Jesus gave a statement of values: the Sermon on the Mount
  - What He wanted His people to be like in the world

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*Matthew 5:1-16*

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said:

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

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

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*Matthew 5:13-16*

“You are **the salt of the earth.** But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

“You are **the light of the world.** A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

**What did Jesus mean by “salty”  
and “good deeds”?**

**Salt: improve taste, prevent decay**

**Light: bring sight & purity, reveal God’s ways**

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*Matthew 5:3-10*

Blessed are...	for...
the <b>poor in spirit</b>	theirs is the kingdom of heaven
those who <b>mourn</b>	they will be comforted
the <b>meek</b>	they will inherit the earth
those who <b>hunger and thirst for righteousness</b>	they will be filled
the <b>merciful</b>	they will be shown mercy
the <b>pure in heart</b>	they will see God
the <b>peacemakers</b>	they will be called children of God
those who are <b>persecuted because of righteousness</b>	theirs is the kingdom of heaven

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*Matthew 5:3-10*

Blessed are...	for...
the <b>poor in spirit</b>	theirs is the kingdom of heaven
those who <b>mourn</b>	<p><b>None of these is naturally blessed</b></p> <p>→ <b>Rather: likely to be overlooked &amp; taken advantage of!</b></p> <p>→ <b>They don't "work" in the kingdoms of people</b></p> <p><b>Jesus said: My kingdom is different!</b></p> <p>→ <b>Jesus</b> brings good news to the poor, those who mourn, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, ...</p>
the <b>meek</b>	
those who <b>hunger and thirst for righteousness</b>	
the <b>merciful</b>	
the <b>pure in heart</b>	
the <b>peacemakers</b>	
those who are <b>persecuted because of righteousness</b>	

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*Matthew 5:11-12*

“Blessed are **you** when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

**Rejoice and be glad,** because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**What Jesus proclaimed and what He showed are very different from our normal reactions and expectations  
His people live in the dramatic mismatch between “normal” ways and His Kingdom ways  
And they should be even pleased about living in that mismatch... not angry or self-righteous or attacking or...**

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“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot **be hidden.** Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and **glorify your Father in heaven.**

**Jesus’ concern here was not with how the world behaves**

**It was about His people:                      Unsalty salt                      Hidden light**

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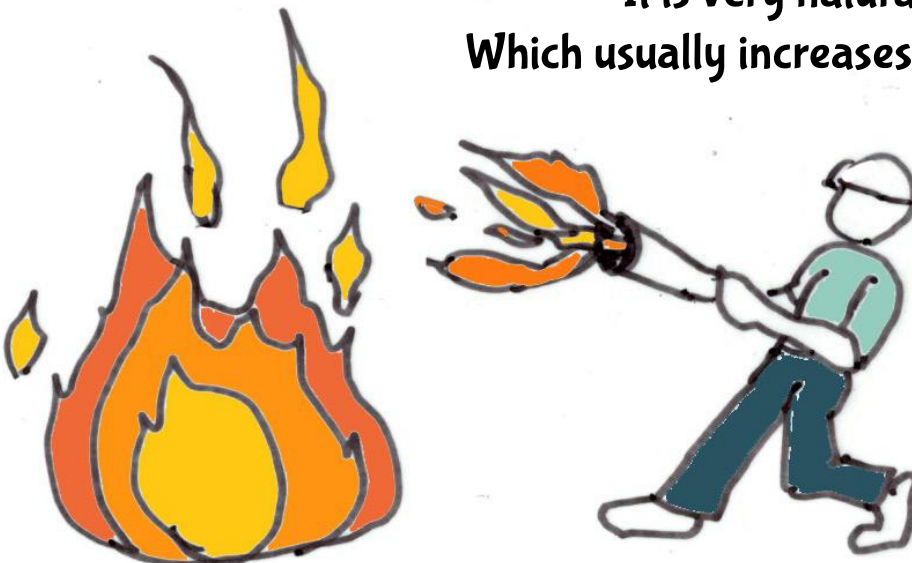
### The Big Idea

**Jesus pronounced blessing on those who  
long for the ways of God  
and choose to grow into the ways of God  
causing people to praise God for the beauty of His Kingdom**

- “Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”
- Not content until His ways are a reality
- Living according to the reality of that coming Kingdom

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It is very natural to fight fire with fire  
Which usually increases the size of the blaze!



**Respond to unkindness with unkindness,  
attack with attack, insult with insult, impatience with impatience, ...**

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Sometimes our responses  
fan the flames even bigger




Even our apparent kindness can cover a subtle attack  
Which fans the flames even more

The illustration shows a fire on the left with orange and yellow flames. To its right, a stick figure with a teal shirt and blue pants holds a yellow and black fan, blowing air towards the fire. The fire appears to be growing in size.

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Sometimes we just give in to the ways of earth



In our discouragement and despair  
thinking nothing will ever change

The illustration shows a fire on the left with orange and yellow flames. A single flame is being extinguished, with a small amount of smoke rising from it.

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### The Big Idea

**Jesus pronounced blessing on those who  
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causing people to praise God for the beauty of His Kingdom**

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## The beatitudes in Jesus as He was going to die

<b>Blessed are...</b>	In anguish, yet crying out to God
the poor in spirit	Abandoned & betrayed by those closest to Him, yet trusting God
those who mourn	Forsaken by God, yet crying out to Him
the meek	Weeping over the rebellion and the brokenness of the world
those who hunger and thirst for righteousness	Not conquering, judging, forcing, or violent
the merciful	Zeal for God's house and God's glory
the pure in heart	Gently yet clearly rebuking & correcting
the peacemakers	Not for His own defense or glory or honor
those who are persecuted because of righteousness	Appealing for repentance
	Dying as the sacrifice to bring rebels to God
	Persecuted yet boldly and peacefully following God's ways

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## The Big Idea

**Jesus pronounced blessing on those who  
long for the ways of God  
and choose to grow into the ways of God  
causing people to praise God for the beauty of His Kingdom  
Just as He did perfectly!**

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### Application

**Distinctly and publicly longing for the ways of heaven**

- Weeping over sin (in self and society)
- Weeping over the consequences of sin (on us and others)
- Crying out for God 's ways to be done in us and others
- **Like Jesus, deeply troubled**  
**by how far short we fall from the glory of God**
- "too few of us weep these 'Christian tears '" (John Stott)

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### Application

**Distinctly and publicly longing for the ways of heaven**

**Distinctly and publicly growing into the ways of heaven**

- Relating to others in meekness, mercy, and peace
  - Knowing our own needs (sin, weakness, poverty)
  - Compassionately knowing others ' needs (sin, weakness, poverty)
  - Pursuing peace (shalom) with all and for all
  - With boldness and courage, even when disregarded, seemingly unsuccessfully, or attacked

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### Application

**Distinctly and publicly longing for the ways of heaven**

**Distinctly and publicly growing into the ways of heaven**

- **Relating to others in meekness, mercy, and peace**
- **Relentlessly hoping for and anticipating being blessed by God in His Kingdom**

– “And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

*Hebrews 12:1b-2*

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**Our natural reactions to the disconnect between God’s ways and the ways of people**

- **Envy or blame**
- **Attack or anger**
- **Discouraged, self-absorbed, despair**
- **Withdraw and give up**
  - **Why try again for to be more like Jesus?**
  - **Why try again for justice?**
  - **Why try again for peace?**

**Jesus’ statement of blessing is a statement that brings the blessing into reality**

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 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
     for they will be filled.  
 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.  
 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
 Blessed are the peacemakers,  
     for they will be called children of God.  
 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,  
     for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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### Some possible steps

- **Memorize Matthew 5:3–10**
  - Meditate on it often, especially in the challenging times
  - Talk with others about these words
  - Pray for the power of the Spirit in us to make us like Jesus
  - <https://app.crosswaymchurch.org/Memory/>
- **Tell people the blessing of God in hard places**
  - Jesus said: “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor...the prisoners...the blind...the oppressed!” *Luke 4:16*
- **Live as meek and merciful peacemakers while passionately pursuing the ways of heaven on earth**

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## When we encounter fire...

We are to be meek, merciful, and hope-filled,  
mourning the present brokenness  
while rejoicing in the hope of the emerging and future kingdom  
by the Spirit of God  
powerfully living in us



**Just like Jesus!**