

EFCDP SERMON NOTES • February 23, 2025

Series: *Did God Really Say?* # 4

“How to Find True Success” • Matthew 5:3-16 [updated]

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The Big Idea: *Every Christian can find true success by being a revolutionary for Jesus.*

**1. True success is understanding your personal spiritual bankruptcy.** **V. 3**

**2. True success is viewing your sin as God does.** **Vv. 4-6**

**3. True success is developing the heart of Jesus.** **Vv. 7-9**

**4. True success is being an ambassador for Christ.** **Vv. 10-16**

# *Digging Deeper*

A guide for personal and small group study for the week of February 23, 2025.



→ Was any part of the message unclear? Which aspect of the message do you think will be the most challenging to apply to your own life?

→ Do you agree with the “big idea” of this passage? Why or why not?

1. Has your personal definition of “true success” changed during your lifetime? If so, in what ways?

2. How do your friends define it? Is there a difference between how your Christian friends define success and your non-Christian friends? If so, what are the differences?

3. When you get to the end of your expected lifetime, how will you know if you have been truly successful?

4. In his commentary on Matthew 5, Pastor John MacArthur describes the concept of being “blessed” as: “...the divinely-bestowed well-being that belongs only to the faithful.... The worldly idea is that happiness is found in riches, merriment, abundance, leisure, and such things. The real truth is the very opposite.” Do you agree or disagree with MacArthur? Why or why not?

→ Does our definition of success even really matter? Why or why not?

5. What does it mean to be “poor in spirit?” How do you think the typical person on the street would define this?

6. What does it mean to have “the kingdom of heaven?” Jesus describes this in the present tense—Is it possible for someone to have this while they are still alive?

7. What does it mean to “understand your personal spiritual bankruptcy?” Is this important? Why or why not?

8. Read Matthew 7:13-23. In light of this sobering passage, what is the spiritual significance of Matthew 5:3?

9. Read Isaiah 29:13 and Matthew 15:8-9. How might these passages relate to the previous question?

10. Read Matthew 5:4 and answer the following questions:

- What are we supposed to mourn?

→ Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-13. How might this relate to the concept of “mourning” in Matthew 5:4?

- What does it mean to be “meek?” (How does this upend the conventional wisdom that the strong will “inherit the earth?”)
- How would a person know if they truly “hunger and thirst for righteousness?”

11. Read the following passages, then note how a person can find true satisfaction in life:

- Ecclesiastes 5:10
- Isaiah 55:2
- Jeremiah 2:13

12. Have you been shown mercy? If so, in what ways and by whom?

- Have you shown mercy to someone who didn't deserve it? If so, briefly describe. How did that impact your relationship with that person?

13. How does someone get a "pure heart?" Why does this matter?

14. Do you know someone who seems to always be the source of conflict and/or misunderstandings? If so, what do you think is the reason?

→ How might their life change if they followed Matthew 5:21-26; 18:15-22; and Philippians 2:3?

→ In the local church, what problems do you think might be avoided if the people consistently followed Hebrews 13:17?

15. What does it mean to be "the salt of the earth?"

16. What are some real-life ways a person can obey Matt. 5:16?

### **Application Ideas:**

1. Ask God to reveal any false ideas about success you may have embraced that come from the world rather than God's Word. Reject them to embrace the attitudes Jesus teaches in Matthew 5:3-16.
  2. Make sure you are not relying on any good works for your salvation, but trusting only in the finished work of Christ on the cross of calvary. (Eph. 2:8-9.)
  3. Read 2 Samuel 11-12, then Psalm 51. Is there sin in your life you have tolerated? Ask God to give you the desire to truly repent and turn from it, like David.
  4. Is your speech always in line with Eph. 4:29-32? Do you harbor anger or bitterness toward anyone? If so, follow Matthew 5 & 18 to resolve it, if possible.
  5. What can you do to live in a way that is obviously different than a non-Christian? How can you show Christ's love and mercy to hurting people around you?
- Which of these will be the most challenging for you to apply?