

**Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides!** If you’ve never used our Study Guides before, you’ll find some basic instructions at the bottom of page 2.

# Sermon-BASED Study Guide

for the sermon preached on October 3, 2021

“Body Rhythms” - Matthew 5:1-14



Finding *balance* in all the demands of everyday life can feel impossible, as we all have so many different commitments and are pulled in so many different directions. But if we can find *rhythm*, it might just bring beauty, order, and fulfillment to our everyday lives. So far in this series, we’ve learned that life works best when we find a rhythm between work and rest, and that to live well, our public life needs to be sustained by a vibrant private life. This week, we explore the rhythm between gathering and scattering.

**Group Discussion Questions**

Q – Invite one or two people to read Matthew 4:23-5:14 out loud. *[Reading Scripture aloud can be a good opportunity for an introvert to speak—those who aren’t normally comfortable sharing their feelings aloud are often willing, when invited gently, to read Scripture aloud.]*

* Who was Jesus teaching here? Why do you think he started teaching them that day?
* What does the word “blessed” mean?
* How would you summarize the overall message of the Beatitudes?
* In what ways does Jesus’s teaching here overturn the thinking of the world?

Q – As Pastor Tom noted, Jesus wasn’t just announcing a new Kingdom, he was inviting people into it. When we gather together as a community of believers, we remind each other of our membership in that Kingdom. He shared a quote from Ruth Haley Barton: “The purpose of journeying together in spiritual community is to **listen to one another’s desire for God**, to **nurture that desire in each other** and **to support one another in seeking a way of life that is consistent with that desire**.”

* Describe a time when members of this group have:
	+ **listened** to you as you shared your desire for God, your spiritual questions, or your hope for growth in faith;
	+ **nurtured** you in your desire for God, whether it was by their example, their prayer for you, or something they said; or
	+ **supported** you in living a life consistent with your desire for God, through conversation, study, or service.
* In what specific ways can membership in a faith community help us to live more Kingdom-centered lives?

Q – Pastor Tom spoke about how the Church has always been shaped by a rhythm of gathering and scattering—gathering to strengthen and encourage one another, then scattering to be salt and light to the world. He offered a series of questions, based on the Beatitudes and designed to help us reflect on how we are being salt and light in our own scattered spaces:

* *The poor in spirit:* Am I depending on myself or God today?
* *Those who mourn:* Is there anyone around me that is hurting today?
* *The meek:* Is there someone I can affirm today?
* *Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness:* Am I concerned about righteousness, both in my life and in the world?
* *The merciful:* Who can I show mercy to today?
* *The pure in heart:* Are my motivations pure? Is there something in my life I need to let go of?
* *The peacemakers:* Am I disrupting or contributing to the peace of those around me? Am an advocate for others’ peace?
* *Those who are persecuted because of righteousness:* Am I willing to do what is right even when it comes at a cost?

Which of these questions resonates most with you right now? How can you be more attentive to that area this week?

**How to Use These Study Guides:**

* Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
* Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
* You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
* Don’t feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
* If your group meets over Zoom:
	+ You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
	+ Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
* Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

**Group Leader Support:** Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.