


A note from Kathy

I could not be more excited. I love time spent studying this chapter. Each of the principles listed is crucial to living a godly life. Each brings God's blessings. They will lead us in truth and keep us from evil. Ask God to speak to you as you spend time in his word, then stop and listen.

Observation

1. Fill in the chart on the last page of this study guide using Matthew 5:3-10 (I have filled in the first row). It may help to look up and read the related verses.
2. Read Matthew 5:11-12 again; what would you say is the key to the promise of God's blessing when we are being persecuted? What is the promise?


3. Should we be surprised when the world responds to us negatively? (Read John 15:18-20 before you answer)
4. In verses 13-16, Jesus referred to believers as "salt and light." What are some of the purposes and benefits of salt? _____, _____, _____
What are some of the purposes and benefits of light?
_____, _____, _____
5. In verses 17-20, Jesus stated his love for the Law and the Prophets and reassured those listening that he had not come to do away with either. Then he reprimanded the Pharisees and teachers of the law severely. Why would he do this? What did he know about their hearts? (Read Matthew 15:8)
6. Now we are going to look at verses 21-48. Go through these verses with a highlighter and mark the key repeated phrase in verses 21, 27, 31, 33, 38, and 43. Now go back through with a different color and highlight the key repeated phrase in verses 22, 28, 32, 34, 39, and 44. Bear in mind that the religious teachers of the law at that time were often more interested in self-glorification and admiration than leading others in truth. Jesus saw the need to clarify some of their teachings.

7. Fill in the chart below using Matthew 5:21-48.

	Murder	Adultery	Divorce	Oaths	Revenge	Love
Teaching "You have heard"						
Jesus clarifies "But I tell you"						

8. Matthew 5:48 has been a great concern to many who read it. Jesus calls us to "Be perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect." But how can we be perfect?

The Life Application Study Bible has wonderful notes on this verse. *We cannot be flawless, but we can aspire to be as much like Christ as possible; in character, in holiness, in maturity and in love. Our tendency to sin must never deter us from striving to be more like Christ.*

As I am writing this, the New Year is just around the corner. What could this look like in my life and in yours if we aspire to be as much like Christ as possible? I dare say next year we will not be the same if we do.

1 John 3: 2-3 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. **3** Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.

Application

1. Notice as you are reading these first 12 verses that Jesus did not give a list of possibilities, **he gave promises!** If you want something to work to its optimum, it is best to go to the creator and heed his instructions.

Unfortunately I learned this the hard (and expensive) way this week. I thought my vacuum was not operating to its fullest potential. I cleaned out the area that collects the dog hair and debris but still very little cleaning for all my effort. I was about to purchase a new one when the sales lady asked me which model I had. I pointed mine out and she revealed a filter that I did not know was there. She sold me a new filter and it now works wonderfully. Too bad I had not stopped to read the manual carefully, page 9 "maintenance and care" explained it in detail with pictures. 😊

Was there anything that God brought to your attention as you filled in the chart? If you did it a bit mechanically, stop now and ask him to speak to you as you go back over each one. The Lord spoke very clearly to me about the area of peacemaker. I will be searching his word for clear direction and anticipating opportunities to respond with his grace.

2. If we are aware that God is speaking to us about an issue of the heart, then we are at a crossroads: obey or continue going our own way. I am praying we all make wise choices that God can bless. Are you at a point of crossroads?

Ps. 128:1-2 Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways! You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be blessed, and it shall be well with you.

3. Do you experience persecution from time to time? Does it seem the world is a bit distant? If not, perhaps you need to do a bit of personal evaluation. How are we told to handle our relationship with the world? Read the verses below before answering.

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

Ephesians 5:15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,

Colossians 4:5-6 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

4. So often it is easier to avoid difficult relationships and situations when we know there is going to be conflict. Again, Colossians 4:5-6 will help us to handle them the best way possible. Salt must come in contact to be of any benefit. Light must be allowed to show if it is going to illuminate. Who could we make time for this week in order to be salt and light in a way that will draw them to Jesus? I have someone in mind right now. I will call them and invite them to go have coffee today. All journeys begin with a first step.
5. Are you living in such a way that it shines a light, revealing the true path of God's blessing? We cannot lead someone on a path we are not on.
6. Jesus took time to clarify what the crowds had already been taught by the religious leaders of that day. ("you have heard...but I tell you") In what way are you helping someone come to the truth?
7. Ask God to show you one area that with the Holy Spirit's help you will strive to live out Matthew 5:48.
8. Could someone actually follow you and find Jesus?

Matthew 5

Matthew	Related verses	Beatitude	Character of the heart	Opposite	God's Promise
5:3	Prov. 16:19 Is. 57:15	Blessed are the poor in spirit	Spiritually bankrupt Sees themselves as God sees them. One who is keenly aware of personal sin, unable to do anything about it	Self-sufficient and proud	Theirs is the kingdom of heaven
5:4	Lk. 7:36-38				
5:5	Gal.5:22-23				
5:6	Phil. 3:7-10 Prov. 8:17-19				
5:7	Ps. 41:1 Mk. 11:25				
5:8	Ps. 15:1-2 Heb. 12:14				
5:9	Romans 12:9-12				
5:10	1 Peter 4:12-14				