

The Colony of Heaven in the Country of Earth: A Heavenly City

Matthew 5-7

Overview

- **God's Goal: Heavenly City**
 - God has always desired to have Earth reflect God who is in Heaven
 - Genesis 1: God creates
 - Sun, moon, sky, land, people in His Image...male and female
 - He also infuses the 'laws' that cause the world to work in a particular manner
 - Isaiah 28:23-29: Agriculture works the way it does because of the Lord's wisdom
 - This is a reflection of His character
 - He also infuses Creation with the "Laws of morality":
 - Likewise these are a reflection of His character
 - All of this was "very good" to God (1.31)
 - They were commanded to "be fruitful, multiply, fill the world, rule over, subdue, have dominion"
 - They were to fill the world with people (increase in population) that would image God by the way they ruled over and did something in the world
 - This was stained and they were exiled from Eden ("heaven")
 - God chose Abraham and his seed to set up Heaven on Earth (Gen. 12.1-3)
 - The place was Canaan where, like Adam & Eve, they had a home they did not build
 - They were given the presence of God and instructions on how to be distinct from the world
 - They disobeyed and, like Adam and Eve, were exiled from the Land
 - Jesus, the "Last Adam" (1 Cor. 15.45) came to finally make His own prayer possible, namely, that God's Will would be "done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6.10)
 - This is why Jesus talks so much about a Kingdom of Heaven/God (52 x's in Matt.)
 - The Sermon on the Mount is set inside of this larger story
 - Therefore, it is not simply a list of do's and don'ts, but a "charter for heavenly city" on "earth as it is in heaven"
- **The Sermon on the Mount: The Kingdom of Heaven/City on a Hill**
 - The Beatitudes describe those who have been access to the Kingdom by God (v 3-12)
 - God authored Adam & Eve as well as the city of heaven they lived in (Eden)
 - God authored Abraham and his seed (Israelites) as well as the city of heaven they were to live on earth (Canaan)
 - God authors Believers in Christ as well as the city they will one day live within (heaven)
 - They also explain the rewards of those who live in this city/kingdom
 - All of the teachings of the remaining portions describe the way things ought to be for those who have been granted access to the City in greater specificity since Christ fulfilled all righteousness for them (5.17-7.29)
 - This all happens under the Authority of Christ (7.29 & 28.18) as we trust His righteousness for us in order to be the salt and light of the world (5.13-16)

Questions

Discussion Starter: *In what ways have you been helped/encouraged/taught by this series in the Sermon on the Mount?*

1. Read Genesis 1:26-31, Matthew 3:2, 4:17-25, & portions of Revelation 21:1-8, 22-27; 22:1-5. What is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven/God? Why does God want this City?
2. Read Romans 5:12-19 & 1 Corinthians 15:42-49. In what way is Jesus the “Last Adam” that is contrasted with the “First Adam”?
3. The Sermon on the Mount makes up three chapters of a 28-chapter book, which is also set inside the canon of the Bible. How does the Sermon on the Mount fit into the larger picture of the Bible? Does this provide you another level of understanding for obedience?
4. Read Matthew 5:3-12. Where do you feel like you struggle to live out the Gospel of the Kingdom?
5. Looking back over the body of the Sermon, where do you feel like you struggle to live out the Gospel of the Kingdom?
6. How does seeing the sermon as a picture of a heavenly city/the Kingdom provide you another level of understanding for obedience?
7. How is Jesus both the Preacher and the Subject of this Sermon?
8. Read Matthew 5:13-16. In what ways can this sermon encourage Restoration Church to be a people “set on a hill” that cannot be hidden? Share ways you have seen that.
9. Spend time in prayer that Restoration Church would be these things in order that we would picture the coming reality of the restoration of all things (Acts 3.21).

Accountability Question: *Revisit questions four and five above and spend time in prayer for one another.*