



## Week 3: God's Present and Open Kingdom

### Opening Practice:

*Notice something from God's creation, either around you or in a photograph. Take some moments to truly consider it, its intricacy and beauty. Let yourself be amazed at the majestic imagination, creativity, and goodness of God.*

### Opening Prayer:

*Abba Father, Daddy, you love me and invite me into your world this day. Your presence fills your creation. Thank you for Jesus who brings the good news of your Kingdom. Thank you for the Holy Spirit, my guide, who walks with me today giving grace and power to do what I can not, and loving mercy as I imperfectly learn. In your name I pray, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### Weekly memory verse(s):

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

*"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."*

*"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."* - Matthew 5:3, 13, 17.

**Scripture Reading:** *Read slowly. Imagine what you are reading. What did God do? What did people do?*

### Daily: Matthew 5:1-20

Monday: Isaiah 55:1-5

Tuesday: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

Wednesday: Isaiah 61:1-4

Thursday: Mark 5:(1-14) 15-20

Friday: Isaiah 60:1-7

Saturday: Psalm 107:1-9 (10-43)

### Daily Practice:

*Day 1-2. Beatitudes: Jesus invites you to experience the goodness of the Kingdom that meets our deepest desires for a good and abundant life and which confronts, overcomes and/or redefines our hurts and difficulties. On the blank page write a list of where you don't feel you are experiencing the good life—the questions, frustrations, and/or difficulties— as a way of releasing them to Jesus.*



*Day 3-4. Salt and Light: When we give hurts, wounds, and difficulties to Jesus we make a space which God's Kingdom fills with flavor and radiance. On the blank page, next to the list of challenges, write what God is showing you about himself in the midst of that issue, habit, or situation. Look for opportunities to share with someone what God is showing you.*

*5-6. Righteousness: Go through half of the list you made on Day 1. Over each item confess: "God, you make me righteous not by what I do but what you do as I give this to you. Show me the Kingdom way of moving forward"*

## Closing:

*Jesus, you bring blessing, the good life I want. I bring all of my life, my hopes, my fears, my brokenness, and my joys before you. It is you who give my life flavor and radiance. May I be humble and open to share what you are doing in me. You make me righteous. I will practice what Jesus says to grow in the right way of your Kingdom.*

## Quotes:

- *The Beatitudes are illustrations of God's staggering blessing in the midst of suffering, "Forgiveness and redemption are available to all, regardless of circumstances. Once the soul is set free, the imagination can reach beyond one's limited circumstance and imprisonment. The prison cell can then become a tea house for contemplation; the light coming through the cell windows can carry the aroma of hope." - Makoto Fujimura<sup>1</sup>*
- *Speaking to these common people, "the multitudes," who through [Jesus] had found blessing in the kingdom, [he] tells them that it is they, not the "best and brightest" on the human scale, who are to make life on earth manageable as they live from the kingdom. God gives them "light"—truth, love, and power— that they might be the light for their surroundings. He makes them "salt," to cleanse, preserve, and flavor the times through which they live. These "little" people, without any of the character or qualifications humans insist are necessary, are the only ones who can actually make the world work. It is how things are among them that determines the character of every age and place. - Dallas Willard<sup>2</sup>*

## Go Deeper:

- Book: [The Hiding Place](#) by Corrie ten Boom
- Testimony: [Chaz Smith](#)  
<https://www.iamsecond.com/film/chaz-smith/>
- Song: ["Salt and Light"](#) by Lauren Daigle  
<https://bit.ly/3kQJUbD>

<sup>1</sup> *Silence and Beauty*, ch7 'the appendix', kindle.

<sup>2</sup> *The Divine Conspiracy*, p141, kindle.