

Day One: Matthew 5:1-11

1. What did Jesus do when he saw the crowds (1)? Whom did He teach (2)? Why does the kingdom of heaven belong to the poor in spirit (3)? What does it mean to be meek (5)? Compare and contrast what it means to be insulted, persecuted, and slandered (11). What outlook should those who are persecuted have (12)? Why (12)?
2. Which beatitude is most evident in your life? Which beatitudes are you most eager to experience? Each day this week, ask the Holy Spirit to impart those blessings to you. Have you been persecuted for your faith in Christ? If so, was it a struggle for you to “rejoice and be glad” in it? How can you discern when persecution happens specifically because of your allegiance to Jesus?

Day Two: Romans 5:1-5

1. Who and what justifies us (1-2)? What does it mean to be justified before God (1)? What two paradoxical things are we called to rejoice in (2-3)? Why does Paul encourage us to “rejoice in our sufferings” (3-5)? What is significant about hoping in Jesus (5)? What has God poured into our hearts (5)? How (5)?
2. What practices help you to feel most at peace with God? Is it difficult for you to see the greater purpose in suffering? Who in your life excels at enduring suffering and persevering? Who has great character? Who exudes hope? What can you do to become more like these role models of faith?

Day Three: Romans 8:28-39

1. For whom does God work all things for the good (28)? What has the Lord done to those he foreknew (29)? Why (29)? What are the characteristics of the foreknown (30)? What are the answers to the rhetorical questions posed in verses 31, 33, 34, and 35? What does it look like for God to give us “all things” (32)? What makes Jesus such a powerful adversary to the troubles we face (34)? Compare and contrast sheep to be slaughtered and conquerors (36-37). What makes us “more than conquerors” of our struggles (37)? What cannot separate us from the love of God (38-39)?
2. What purposes of the Lord has He called you to? How do verses 29-30 and 38-39 serve to boost your faith in God’s plan for your life? What challenges in verse 35 seem most daunting to you? Why? Do you need to repent of any tendency to believe that conflicts in life are bigger than God’s power? What has the Lord given you in order to be “more than conquerors?” Spend some time audibly thanking the Lord for the everlasting power of His love, as demonstrated in verses 38-39.

Day Four: Hebrews 11:24-28

1. What did Moses refuse to be known as (24)? What identity did he adopt instead (25)? Why (25)? What did Moses believe was of greater value than the treasures of Egypt (26)? Why (26)? Who and what allowed Moses to confidently leave Egypt (27)? Why did he keep the Passover and the sprinkling of blood (28)?
2. What markers in your life indicate that you value “disgrace for the sake of Christ?” During what specific times in your life has obedience to God made it necessary for you to make sacrifices and to endure hardship? How did your faith grow in the process? Are there any particular earthly treasures that are getting in the way of your ability to focus on eternal matters? Ask the Lord to give you strength to cut those things out of your life.

Day Five: 1 Peter 3:8-17

1. How are we advised to live together (8-9)? Why (9)? What must one do in order to see “good days” (10-11)? How does the Lord relate to the righteous (12)? What about those who do evil (12)? Does doing what is right guarantee us protection from harm (13-14)? Instead of fearing suffering, what are we to do (14-15)? How and why should we always be prepared to give the reason for our hope (15-16)? What may be God’s will for our lives (17)? How do you think healthy community and Godly suffering are connected?
2. Consider suffering for what is right. What emotions arise? Have you ever suffered for doing evil? How was that experience different from blessed suffering? Do you need to repent of failing to be gentle and respectful when sharing your faith? How would you encourage someone who struggles to believe in a God who allows suffering? Meditate on Jesus’ obedience to go to the cross. Ask the Lord for strength to follow Christ’s model of submission to suffering.