

This is part of the conversation we are engaged in at this point in the life of our church. We started the year recognising the new chapter in our life and reaffirmed our mission from Matthew 28:19, to “*go into the world and make disciples.*” We might want to reword it, but that is what we are about. So, the next step is our Vision, which I think should be something that lets us see how well we are achieving our mission.

Read Matthew 5:1-16

I don't advise you do this, but if you go up to someone who is grieving and say “Cheer up! You are blessed.” They are not going to be feeling it. In fact that would be really insensitive. Please don't do it. So, what do you think Jesus meant in verses 3-10?

- Some say that this is a list of qualities Christians should have. What do you think?
- Others have suggested that if you are poor in spirit, mourning or meek you should open yourself to the blessings Jesus offers. Is that how you see it?
- The way we looked at it was to say, we will have people in the situations described in vv 3-10 around us all the time. What will happen to these people within the Kingdom of God?
- When Jesus talks about us being salt and light vv 13-16 what is he saying about our witness to others?

The beatitudes describe what it looks like when the followers of Jesus are fulfilling their mission.

This raises questions for us.

- What do we need to do to be the blessings described in Matt 5:3-10?
- How can we make the kind of difference salt makes in our community?
- Where can we most effectively bring light into the darkness?

In deeper

These are the conversation points and they will lead us into thinking about the next step which is to look at our Model. The way we do things. Models change. Sometimes they just get out of date. Has anyone ever heard someone lament the passing of overhead projectors? Some in our congregation may never have seen one. Some models we hold onto, “because we have always done it that way”, but of course when you think about it, it was not the way it has always been done. At one time even our most old fashioned practices were new, bright innovations of their time. Just like OHP's. But now, if we are to see the Kingdom of God grow again, we are going to need to be open to change.

Read John 14:1-17

There is so much in this passage, much of which we will save for another time.

- What does Jesus say about his relationship with his Father (14:10-11)?
- Jesus suggests that the miracles are evidence of his relationship with his Father. What does he promise in verse 12?
- Jesus promises a Counsellor in verse 16 and where will that be (v17)?

The model of ministry was about to change. Jesus was leaving his disciples. The old model of Jesus bringing the Kingdom of God would not end, but it would change (v20). And just like us, the disciples were anxious, confused and had loads of questions.

We look back and cannot imagine the church without Pentecost.

When the disciple heard Jesus, they could not imagine Pentecost.

The challenge for us is to find the ways that best communicate the good news of the Kingdom of God and bring those blessing into people's lives. To invite people to follow Jesus and become disciples.