

## **The Disparity Gospel: Blessed are the Disillusioned.**

Text: Matthew 5:1-10

### **Warming Up**

#### **Questions:**

1. *What is your least favorite jellybean color/flavor?*
2. *What is something that you mourn?*

### **Digging In**

Read **Matthew 5:1-10**.

#### **Questions:**

1. *Which one of these “beatitudes” most resonates with you?*
2. *In what ways do you think Jesus promises to comfort those who mourn?*

Whenever we read the Greek Scriptures—the New Testament—we should always be on the lookout for echoes of the Hebrew Scriptures, or Old Testament. When Jesus promises comfort to those who mourn, he is likely pulling from the book of Isaiah, in particular Isaiah 61 and 40.

Read **Isaiah 61:1-11**.

#### **Questions:**

1. *What language do you hear in Isaiah 61 that you heard in Matthew 5:1-10?*
2. *What promises do you hear in Isaiah 61?*
3. *What role do you hear God inviting his people to play in their own comfort in this passage?*

Jesus begins his ministry by quoting this very same chapter of Isaiah 61: Read **Luke 4:16-21**.

#### **Question:**

1. *What might the significance be of Jesus attaching his own ministry to Isaiah 61?*
2. *In what ways might Jesus be promising to bring the people comfort in light of Isaiah 61?*
3. *What do you think it means that Jesus cuts off “and the day of vengeance of our God” from his reading of Isaiah 61?*

### **Sending Out**

There are also echoes here of Isaiah 40. When Jesus alludes to these ancient texts, he is also alluding to the fact that he is bringing these ancient promises into the lives of God’s people: Read **Isaiah 40:1-11**.

#### **Questions:**

1. *In what ways is Jesus promising comfort to his people in light of Isaiah 40?*
2. *Which image or idea of comfort in Isaiah 40 most resonates with you today?*
3. *How have you experienced the comfort of Jesus in the past?*
4. *In what ways are you hopeful to experience the comfort of Jesus in the future?*
5. *In light of these Isaiah passages, in what ways are we invited to comfort others as Christ’s ambassadors today?*

### **Closing**

Take a moment in silence to come before God and ask the question, “*What word or phrase or idea or moment does God want me to remember from this morning and carry with me this week?*”

Close with prayer.