

VISION 2015

A DANGEROUS DECLARATION Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus' manifesto was unusual. The Sermon on the Mount offers a radically different take on the world – it is a dangerous declaration that upends our status quo and human nature. The teaching of Jesus is dangerous because it establishes our world on love and selflessness instead of hate and self-interest.

Jesus represents the possibility of an unusual kingdom, an unusual power, an unusual glory and an unusual peace. Our dangerous declaration is professing "Jesus is Lord" and living in the love and humility of his manifesto. We unite around our Saviour Jesus and announce his living, breathing kingdom of grace that welcomes all the world to find hope in him.

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

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven

for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you (NIV).

Questions to promote conversation and connection:

Q: What differences stand out to you between our world and the kingdom Jesus proclaims?

Q: Which beatitude resonates most with you?

Q: What is particularly *dangerous* about Jesus' teaching to our culture today? To your world?

Q: What hope and promises do the beatitudes give us today?

Q: Share what you are believing God to outwork in 2015. Spend time in prayer together.

Nation Builders:

At the start of the year we have the opportunity as Connect Group to set the Faith Goal for what we are believing to give towards Nation Builders. Nation Builders is the Missions Giving of Hillsong Church. Together as Connect Groups we are believing for UNUSUAL things to happen. Take the time during your next meeting to inspire your group to set a Faith Goal for 2015, and let's believe together for our Nation Builders to spark UNUSUAL miracles!