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Insurmountable : The Sermon on the Mount

12 Week Study Guide

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During the Week

- Watch or listen to the three INSURMOUNTABLE episodes for the week
- Read the assigned scripture passages
- Complete the journal questions
- Memorize the weekly verse
- Try the recommended practice for the week

When You Meet

- Open in prayer
- Recite the memory verse for each other
- The facilitator for that week leads the discussion using the journal prompts
- Share how the weekly practice went
- Close by praying for one another

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Insurmountable : The Sermon on the Mount

WATCH ON YOUR OWN

12 Week Study Guide

Welcome to the Become New Study Guide: INSURMOUNTABLE.

This guide is designed to help you engage John Ortberg's teaching as you grow spiritually, reflect on Scripture, and explore key themes in spiritual formation.

Each week, you'll watch or listen to three episodes, work through journal questions, and practice memorizing Scripture. **You can use this guide in one of two ways:** participants may engage **all episodes on their own** and use gathering time to discuss what stood out from the teaching, Scripture, and journaling, then pray for one another. Or, you may choose one episode from the weekly teachings to **watch together as a group** during your gathering and have participants watch the other two on their own during the week. This packet is designed to work well for both approaches.

Please print a copy of this guide (2-sided) for each participant so everyone has space to reflect and write. You'll also find room to note meeting dates and who will facilitate discussion each week. We've found rotating leadership helpful, but it's optional. Please scan the provided QR codes to access the teaching links.

This format works well for individuals, pairs, or small groups who engage the teaching independently and come together for conversation and prayer. We hope this guide helps you grow in Christ, one day at a time.

If you have questions or need support, please reach out to us at connect@becomenew.com.

– The Become New Team

Insurmountable : The Sermon on the Mount

Weekly Map

12 Week Study Guide

wk1 *date:* *leader:*

1. **The Most Impactful Speech in History**
2. **How to Understand the Sermon on the Mount**
3. **Is God's Blessing Only for Good People?**

wk2 *date:* *leader:*

4. **The Advantage of Being Meek - Winning at a Different Game**
5. **What does righteousness mean?**
6. **How to See God**

wk3 *date:* *leader:*

7. **This Prayer Has Unexpected Strength**
8. **You are the Light of the World**
9. **What Jesus Actually Meant by 'Fulfilling the Law'**

wk4 *date:* *leader:*

10. **How to be GREAT in the Kingdom of God**
11. **Stop Trying to NOT be Angry**
12. **What Jesus Said About Sex**

wk5 *date:* *leader:*

13. **The Most Important Quality Impacting Your Marriage**
14. **Is it Bad to Swear an Oath?**
15. **Here's what Jesus really meant by 'Turn the Other Cheek'**

wk6 *date:* *leader:*

16. **Overcome Approval Addiction by Living in Secret**
17. **What Piano Chords Teach Us About Being Generous**
18. **Taking off the Mask of Hypocrisy**

Insurmountable : The Sermon on the Mount

Weekly Map
12 Week Study Guide

wk7 *date:* *leader:*

19. **How Giving Will Help You Overcome Hypocrisy**
20. **How to Bring Your Whole Self to God in Prayer | Part 1**
21. **How to Bring Your Whole Self to God in Prayer | Part 2**

wk8 *date:* *leader:*

22. **Why the Unseen Matters in Prayer**
23. **Understanding the Lords Prayer**
24. **The True Meaning Behind 'Lay Up Treasures in Heaven'**

wk9 *date:* *leader:*

25. **Ruminating is Killing Your Sense of Self**
26. **The Shocking Relationship Between Shame and Anxiety**
27. **The True Meaning Behind Pearls to Pigs**

wk10 *date:* *leader:*

28. **Why Asking is One of the Most Spiritual Things You Can Do**
29. **Why Does God Make Us Wait?**
30. **How to Seek the Kingdom of God**

wk11 *date:* *leader:*

31. **God's Pet Peeve**
32. **The Golden Rule Explained: Origins & 5 Reasons Behind Its "Golden" Moniker**
33. **How to Walk the Narrow Way**

wk12 *date:* *leader:*

34. **Tolerance in the Church**
35. **What Does Faith in Jesus Actually Mean?**
36. **How Should We Respond to the Sermon on the Mount?**

Week 1 : The Sermon That Still Changes Everything

Reading: Matthew 5:1-4, Psalm 1, Psalm 121

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these words/phrases stand out to you?

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3. What do you think Jesus means by being "blessed"?

4. What “scoreboard” (beauty, success, control, recognition) quietly tells me who has the good life?

5. What’s a problem in your life that currently seems insurmountable?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week ONE:

Matthew 5:1 (NIV)
Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said:
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Find a way to bless someone who is on the margins of your life.

Week 2 : Winning at a Different Game

Reading: Matthew 5:5-12, Numbers 12:1–9, Philippians 2:1–11

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. Where have I learned to be "John Wayne" when Jesus is inviting a different strength?

4. John quotes Barton Stone, "Righteousness and justice go together like air and breath." What do you think he meant by this statement?

5. Matthew 5:8- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. What are some characteristics of a pure heart?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week TWO:

Matthew 5:4-5 (NIV)
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Embrace meekness. Find three opportunities to sincerely apologize, not have the last word, or not get your way.

Week 3 : Mercy for Today (and Enough to Give Away)

Reading: Matthew 5:13-17, Micah 6:6–8, Acts 10:34–43

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. Describe a time someone was merciful toward you when they didn't need to be. What was the impact?

4. What does it mean to glorify God?

5. If Jesus didn't abolish the Law, how does that change the way we read and value the Old Testament today?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week THREE:

Matthew 5:6-7 (NIV)
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Each day this week pray this under your breath: *"Lord, have mercy."* Morning, noon and night.

Week 4 : Love From the Inside Out

Reading: Matthew 5:23-28, Proverbs 4:20–27, Ephesians 4:25–32

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. What are three virtues you would like to grow in?

4. Where am I tempted to objectify people — using them to gratify something in me?

5. What tends to "spill out" of me under pressure and what does that reveal about what's inside?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week FOUR:

MATTHEW 5:8-9 (NIV)
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Make a choice to not look lustfully this week. Replace, don't merely resist: turn attention toward a "better, fuller, richer thing."

Week 5 : Open Hearts, Honest Words, Unbreakable Love

Reading: Matthew 5:31-37, Malachi 2:13–16, 1 Peter 3:8–12

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. What is the best advice you've received for cultivating a good relationship?

4. Where do I exaggerate, spin, flatter, intimidate, or "perform sincerity" to get my way?

5. Of the four illustrations (turn the other cheek, give more than is required, go the extra mile with an enemy, don't turn from the one who asks of you) which one is most difficult for you? Why?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week FIVE:

Matthew 5:10 (NIV)
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

This week practice no "oathy spins". Let your yes be yes and your no be no.

Week 6 : The Secret Life of the Kingdom

Reading: Matthew 6:1-8, 1 Samuel 16:1–13, Psalm 139

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. *Where do you most crave approval and acclaim from others right now?*

4. Why is hypocrisy is so much easier to spot in others sometimes than in ourselves?

5. What "mask" do you put on most often (smart, strong, chill, holy, unbothered, successful)? Why is this "mask" your go-to?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week SIX:

Matthew 5:11-12 (NIV)
"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.

Do one meaningful good deed that cannot be traced back to you.

Week 7 : The Unveiled Life

Reading: Matthew 6:5-8, 1 Samuel 1:9–18, Hebrews 4:14–16

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. What interruptions do I resent and how might those become part of my prayer instead of a threat to it?

4. Are there specific emotions (like anger or shame) that make you feel like you've been "cut off" from His presence, even though He promised never to leave?

5. Where did you “learn prayer”? What was helpful? What contaminated it?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week SEVEN:

Matthew 5:13 (NIV)
"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.

Practice financial honesty. Write down how much you gave away last year and your goal for this year. Bonus: Share with a trusted friend.

Week 8 : Our Father, Our Treasure

Reading: Matthew 6:9-14, Daniel 6, 2 Corinthians 4:6–5:10

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. How is my current "treasure" shaping my heart, habits, and anxieties?

4. When I say "Our Father," who am I tempted to exclude from "our"? Why?

5. Why do you think Jesus links our forgiveness from God so closely to our forgiveness of others?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week EIGHT:

Matthew 5:14-15 (NIV)
"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

Each day this week choose a private place to be completely alone for 10 minutes (no screens) with the sole purpose of praying. Start with the Lord's Prayer.

Week 9 : More Valuable Than You Think

Reading: Matthew 6:25-32, Isaiah 43:1–7, Proverbs 26:4–12, Philippians 4:4–9

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. Where do I currently going down the "rabbit hole" of worry or brooding?

4. What "club" do I feel ashamed to belong to (anxiety, depression, ego, addiction, doubt)?

5. Where do I tend to push advice that hasn't been asked for (at home, work, ministry)?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week NINE:

Matthew 5:16 (NIV)
In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Start each day with this mantra: "I am not what I do. I am not what I have. I am not what others think. I am what God thinks of me. I am beloved."

Week 10 : Ask, Seek, Knock

Reading: Matthew 6:33-7:8, Matthew 15:21–28, James 4:1–12

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. Is there something you are currently waiting on God for?

4. Where have I been trying to influence others through pressure instead of asking?

5. Where do you see God working in the ordinary parts of your life right now?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week TEN:

Matthew 5:17-18 (NIV)
"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. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Find an opportunity to clearly ask someone for what you need and/or want.

Week 11 : Golden Rule People

Reading: Matthew 7:9-14, Proverbs 6:16–19, Luke 10:25–37

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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3. Who is someone you know that lives the Golden Rule? What are some of the ways they show this in their life?

4. Where do I tend to belittle people or ignore suffering I could help with (even small help)?

5. Where am I tempted to relax truth to avoid tension—and where am I tempted to weaponize truth to feel superior?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week ELEVEN:

Matthew 5:19 (NIV)
Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Make each day a "Golden Rule Day" by putting thought and effort behind your interactions and choices with others.

Week 12 : From Amazed to Apprentice

Reading: Matthew 7:15-29, Deuteronomy 6:4–9, John 15:1–17

1. Write down key words/phrases that stood out to you from the reading or the teaching.

2. Why did these word/phrase stand out to you?

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4. Where have you found joy in obeying Jesus' commands?

5. What part of Jesus' teaching do I most admire but least practice (anger, enemies, sexuality, truth-telling, anxiety, secrecy)?

6. Faith is about leaving your way, your objectives, yourself, and adopting his way of life in the Kingdom of God. How have you starting to adopt the Jesus way through this series?

Pause. Listen for God's voice in your heart. What is He saying to you?

Write your personal prayer of response to God for this week:

memorization & practice week TWELVE:

Matthew 5:20 (NIV)
For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Ask a trusted Christian friend who knows you well:
"Where do you see me following Jesus faithfully? And where do you see opportunities for growth in my walk with Him?

MEMORIZATION

Become New : INSURMOUNTABLE

Week 1

Matthew 5:1 (NIV)
Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said:
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Week 2

Matthew 5:4-5 (NIV)
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Week 3

Matthew 5:6-7 (NIV)
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Week 4

MATTHEW 5:8-9 (NIV)
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Week 5

Matthew 5:10 (NIV)
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Week 6

Matthew 5:11-12 (NIV)
"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.

Week 7

Matthew 5:13 (NIV)
"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.

Week 8

Matthew 5:14-15 (NIV)
"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

Week 9

Matthew 5:16 (NIV)
In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Week 10

Matthew 5:17-18 (NIV)
"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. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Week 11

Matthew 5:19 (NIV)
Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Week 12

Matthew 5:20 (NIV)
For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Practices

Week 1
Find a way to bless someone who is on the margins of your life.

Week 2
Embrace meekness. Find three opportunities to sincerely apologize, not have the last word, or not get your way.

Week 3
Each day this week pray this under your breath:
"Lord, have mercy." Morning, noon and night.

Week 4
Make a choice to not look lustfully this week.
Replace, don't merely resist: turn attention toward a "better, fuller, richer thing."

Week 5
This week practice no "oathy spins". Let your yes be yes and your no be no.

Week 6
Do one meaningful good deed that cannot be traced back to you.

Week 7
Practice financial honesty. Write down how much you gave away last year and your goal for this year. Bonus: Share with a trusted friend.

Week 8
Each day this week choose a private place to be completely alone for 10 minutes (no screens) with the sole purpose of praying. Start with the Lord's Prayer.

Week 9
Start each day with this mantra: "I am not what I do. I am not what I have. I am not what others think. I am what God thinks of me. I am beloved."

Week 10
Find an opportunity to clearly ask someone for what you need and/or want.

Week 11
Make each day a "Golden Rule Day" by putting thought and effort behind your interactions and choices with others.

Week 12
Ask a trusted Christian friend who knows you well:
"Where do you see me following Jesus faithfully? And where do you see opportunities for growth in my walk with Him?" Listen and do not defend yourself. Take notes.

Books Referenced During this Series:

- The Divine Conspiracy — Dallas Willard
- Exclusion and Embrace — Miroslav Volf
- The Practice of the Presence of God — Brother Lawrence (Nicholas Herman)
- Purity of Heart Is to Will One Thing — Søren Kierkegaard
- Wandering in Darkness — Eleonore Stump
- Taking the Word to Heart — Robert Roberts
- Knowing the Heart of God — George MacDonald
- Exclusion and Embrace — Miroslav Volf
- Alcoholics Anonymous — Alcoholics Anonymous World Services
- Love, Henry: Letters on Life and Love — Henri J. M. Nouwen
- Inspired — Rachel Held Evans
- The Weight of Glory — C. S. Lewis
- The Happy Hypocrite — Max Beerbohm
- Gratitude: An Intellectual History — Peter J. Leithart
- The Gift — Marcel Mauss
- Willpower — Roy F. Baumeister & John Tierney
- Determined — Robert M. Sapolsky
- You Are Your Brain — Jeffrey Schwartz & Rebecca Gladding
- The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry — John Mark Comer
- Unchristian — David Kinnaman & Gabe Lyons
- Divorce and Remarriage in the Bible — David Instone-Brewer
- Divorce and Remarriage in the New Testament — David Instone-Brewer
- Republic — Plato
- The Death of Ivan Ilyich — Leo Tolstoy
- Resurrection — Leo Tolstoy
- Elmer Gantry — Sinclair Lewis
- How Green Was My Valley — Richard Llewellyn
- King Lear — William Shakespeare
- The Merchant of Venice — William Shakespeare
- George Wingfield's Curate — George W. E. Russell
- Servais Pinckaers — The Pursuit of Happiness—God's Way