



The BEATITUDES

8-part Bible Study

Sundays 10:30am Aug-Sept 2024

Part 1. Blessed are the **POOR IN SPIRIT**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Just the Opposite

List what you have observed about the confusion over what constitutes a blessed life.

True Blessings often overlooked or despised	False Blessings often desired or coveted
➤	➤
➤	➤
➤	➤

Blessed Are...

Differentiate between “happy” and “blessed.”

Read and look at the context of Matthew 5:1-12 to **identify** Jesus’ target audience.

Explain why the target audience is so important to keep in mind. Compare this intended audience with another similar one (Lk 6:17-23).

Share some ways these verses (Mt 5:1-12) can be misapplied.

BEATITUDES

The title for these sayings, “Beatitudes,” comes from the Latin noun “Blessings” based on the Latin word used to translate the Greek word μακάριοι “blessed.”



Part 1. Blessed are the **POOR IN SPIRIT**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Poor in Spirit

Look at the following and **define** “poor in spirit.”

- Ps 51:17
- Isaiah 57:15, 61:1, 66:2
- Luke 18:9-14

False Teaching

A teaching developed in church that you could become holier if you took a vow of poverty. Give several reasons why we can say this teaching is false.

Explain: “All people are poor before God. Many, however, refuse to acknowledge it.”

Identify some ways we might be tempted to sinfully refuse to be poor in spirit before God.

Kingdom of Heaven

Read Mt 8:5-12 to find the outcome for a man who was rich (Lk 7:5), but still “poor in spirit.”

Describe what is meant by “the kingdom of heaven” based on this account.

On his deathbed in 1546 Martin Luther had a piece of paper in his pocket with a note he had written, “WE ARE ALL BEGGARS. THIS IS TRUE.”

Explain how that note ties in with his emphasis on salvation through grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone, and Christ alone?

What About the Poor?

In Luke 6:20,24 Jesus contrasts those who are presently materially rich with those who are materially poor. Explain why disciples of Jesus also need this type of encouragement. (See 1 Cor 1:26-29).

Christ For Us

Elaborate on how the Christ lived perfectly on our behalf as a man who lived poor in spirit.

Blessed Are You

We fall short of being what God requires. Yet we have the promise that in Christ we are blessed.

Explain how this promise of blessing:

- 1) Gives us courage to confess our sins.
- 2) Redefines the way a sinner is blessed.
- 3) Points Christians away from self to look towards Christ.
- 4) Gives us a part of the picture of what it means to live as a disciple of Christ.



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Part 2. Blessed are **THOSE WHO MOURN**, for they will be comforted.

In the House of Mourning

Share the last time you experienced a funeral. Describe how it made you feel and what emotions and thoughts were in the forefront of your mind.

Read Ecclesiastes 7:2-4. Explain why Solomon considers it so beneficial to attend funerals.

Many Types of Mourning; One Source

Identify several different reasons followers of Christ might weep and mourn.

- Gen 23:1-2
- Psalm 38, Mt 26:75, James 4:8-10
- 2 Cor 2:1-4
- Acts 20:36-38
- Phil 3:18

Review what Scripture says is the ultimate cause of all our grief.

NOT THE MARK OF WEAKNESS

“There is a sacredness in tears. They are not a mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than ten thousand tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition and of unspeakable love.” ~Washington Irving, ‘Father of American Literature’ (1783–1859)

Empty Solutions for Pain

Look again at the various reasons for mourning. **Share** some ways that we are tempted to dismiss or ignore each type of grief.

Share some sinful ways people might try to alleviate grief with a false remedy.



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They Will Be Comforted

Use 1 Thes 4:13-18 to **summarize** God’s solution for our mourning.

Explain why grief must be a part of the life of every disciple of Christ and **isolate** exactly what makes it different from the grief found in the rest of the world.

List some different ways you can respond when you see fellow Christians grieving.

Read John 16:20-22 & Rev 21:4 to **pinpoint** when Jesus intends to fulfill this promised blessing.

Evaluation Exercise

Evaluate and **rate** the way your church views crying in public. Is it a healthy acceptance with support of the gospel or an unhealthy stigma with nothing said?

1 Bad / Stigma	2 →	3 →	4 →	5 Accepted	6 →	7 →	8 →	9 →	10 Good
Nothing could be more embarrassing!	Crying is weakness or mind or faith.	Real men don't cry.	I'm not crying. Something's in my eye.		Don't cry too long.		People cry sometimes. You need to!	So sorry. Here's a tissue.	Let the tears come! Hear the gospel!

Make the same evaluation and rating for your own family culture. **Account for** any differences.

Christ For Us

Elaborate on how Jesus lived perfectly on our behalf as a man who mourned over sins' curse. (See Luke 19:41, John 11:35, Heb 5:7)

PROPHECY FULFILLED!

The living Christ Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 61:1-3. Read it and compare it with the promises in the Beatitudes.

Blessed Are You

How do we find this promised blessing already beginning to find fulfillment in our lives?

“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.” -Psalm 34:18.



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Part 3. Blessed are **THE MEEK**, for they will inherit the earth.

Meek and Lowly

Recall and list some of the people recorded in Scripture who would be considered meek and lowly. What circumstances put them in such a lowly state?

Share if you know someone who is meek and lowly but isn't necessarily a Christian or going to receive what Christ has promised.

Review: Why is it so important to keep in mind Jesus' target audience?

Defining "Meek."

Distinguish between "poor in spirit" and "meek."

Explain why these traits are different and yet one must lead to the other.

MEEK

Greek plural adjective *πραεῖς*: not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance, gentle, humble, considerate, meek.

(William Arndt: A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature)

Occurs in Mt 11:29, 21:5, 1 Pt 3:4

Use Proverbs 6:16-19 to **elaborate on** how seriously God views the sin of looking down on others.

Agree or Disagree: "It is possible to be both meek and wealthy." (see Ro 12:16)

Agree or Disagree: "It is possible to both be meek and hold a higher position of authority."
(see Mt 20:20-28)

How this World Treats the Lowly

Discuss when we are tempted to look down on others as beneath us.

- John 4:9, Jonah 1-4
- 1 Ti 6:17-18
- Mt 23:1-12
- Jude 16

PAUL'S MEEKNESS

Read 2 Cor 11-12

Who was looking down on the Apostle Paul and why?

11:16ff Read what things Paul could boast about. Explain why he wouldn't.

God's Plan for the Proud

Zeph. 3:6-8 **Describe** what God would do to all people in his fierce anger.

Zeph. 3:9-13 **Describe** the remnant who will survive his fierce anger.

God's Plan for the Meek

Pick one and identify what they trusted God would do for the meek.

David's Plea (Psalm 25)	Mary's Praise (Lk 1:46-55)	Pauls' Explanation (1 Co 1:26-31)	Job's Trust (Job 19)
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Use Galatians 3:28 **to explain** what happens to ethnic, gender, and socio-economic pride when we come to faith in Christ.

Christ For Us

Expound on all the ways that Christ was meek as he lived perfectly in our place.

(Lk 2, Lk 9:18-22, Lk 9:58, Jn 13:1-5, Mt 21:1-5)

Inherit the Earth

How is this already being fulfilled? (Zech 9:9-13)

How will it find ultimate fulfillment? (Zech 9:14-17, Mt 25:35)

COMPARISON EXERCISE

Compare the Beatitudes with the commands listed in Romans 12:9-21.



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Part 4. Blessed are **THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST** for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Seek First

Read Mt 6:31-33 and share some of the modern-day things many might run after besides just what we will eat, drink, or wear. **Contemplate and discuss** what Jesus means by, “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.”

Defining Righteousness

“What is right or just in matters of justice or weights and measures.” Slang for “excellent.” In the Scriptures it is an attribute of God and demanded of us.

RIGHTEOUS

“In accord with divine or moral law: free from guilt or sin.”
~Merriam Webster

How we lack it ourselves (Isaiah 59:1-13)

How all the fallen world lacks it (Is 59:14-16a)

Finish reading Isaiah 59 to **elaborate on** how God plans to provide what we lack.

Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

Pick one and **defend** your answer.

- A. To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to want the perfect holiness we ourselves lack.
- B. To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to want the world be brought back to perfect justice.

Read **Psalm 42** to discern one reason why we might hunger and thirst for the Lord and his righteousness.

Broken Cisterns that Cannot Hold Water

Many will search for satisfaction in places which are demeaning and degrading towards human dignity and which cannot satisfy (Jer 2:13). **Read** Jeremiah 2 to see where they were “digging”.

- **Share** some of the places that people in this world look for satisfaction when they forsake the “Lord, the spring of living water.”
- **List** some of the “broken cisterns” which believers can be tempted to turn to when they fail to trust in the Lord for his righteousness.
- **Discuss** what a “famine of hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11-12) might look like today. **Share** how you might see this happening.

Fulfilled and Filled in Christ

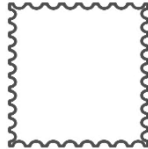
Pick one of these verses to **describe** how we are filled.

Is 12:2, Is 44:3, Jer 17:13, Jn 4:13–14, Ro 3:20-24

Summarize the significance of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lv 23:39-43), and then read Jn 7:37-38.

The Feast of Faith

Read God’s Invitation Card, Isaiah 55:1-7

<p>55:1 Why we are invited to “eat & drink”</p>	<p>55:5-7 Who is invited</p> 
<p>55:2 Why we should hunger and thirst for it.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>55:3 How we “eat and drink”</p>	<hr/>
<p>55:3b-4 Who carries the invitations to people?</p>	<p>55:7b What our God offers</p>

REJECT / BELIEVE

Scan through John 6:25-68.
List what Jesus offers. **Describe** the reactions people gave
Explain why we see the different responses. **List** ways you see the same things today.

The Means of Grace

Categorize the different ways God promises to pour out water to quench our spiritual thirst and spiritually feed us. (Mt 3:1-12, Mt 26:26-26, Mt 28:18-20)

APPLICATION

Read Psalm 63. Use what we studied today to **apply** each verse to our lives.



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Part 5. Blessed are **THE MERCIFUL**, for they will be shown mercy.

Mercy & Judgment

Briefly debate the pros and cons of a government enacting the death penalty. Explain why both sides of the argument might claim God would approve of their position.

Fix this statement by changing either of the underlined words:
“It is the government’s job to be merciful.”

Defining Mercy

Grace is giving someone what is _____.

Mercy is sparing someone from what is _____.

Scan through Romans 9 to reveal some sobering truths for anyone who has received God’s mercy. (note especially 9:14-16).

Distinguish between mercy towards evildoers and tolerance of evil. (Jude 20-23)

Vengeance is the Way

Summarize the story of Joseph (Genesis 37-50) to expound on why his brothers were living in dread when their father died.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Find and share any parallels between the Beatitudes and the Lord’s Prayer.

LIVING IN FEAR & HATE

Look at Genesis 34:1-29 to see how some of Joseph’s brothers responded when they had opportunity to get revenge. How much mercy do you think they expected to receive from Joseph after what they had done to him?

How Far Does Mercy Go?

Read Matthew 18:21-35. **Find out** how much the servant was in debt. **Enumerate** what our debt towards God must look like from his perspective.

Determine how much the fellow servant owed. List some examples of weighty sins against us which we might be enraged over and find hard to pardon.

Rate how severely God views the sin of mercilessness in his people. (see also James 2:13)

Explain how we might feign forgiveness while failing to forgive “from the heart.”

BE PATIENT WITH ME

Our grudges can at times truly be petty. Share examples of trivial things that can enrage us.

Vengeance is the Lord's

List the many reasons we have for showing mercy.

Rom 12:19-21



Gen 50:15-21



1 Peter 3:9



Mat 6:12-15



1 Tim 1:16



What produces mercilessness in us? (2 Peter 1:9)

ENTIRELY JUST & MERCIFUL

God is absolute in mercy and justice. (Ex 34:1-7) Explain how this is possible (Rom 3:25-26).

Christ For Us

Explain: “Joseph forgave his brothers, but that doesn’t mean their sin didn’t have a great cost.”

Expound on how Joseph foreshadows the Christ.

They Will Be Shown Mercy

What makes Jesus such a perfect high priest? (Heb 4:14-16)

Why can we be confident of mercy?

BRAINSTORM

“If (your gift) is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.” (Rom 12:8) Explain the opposite of cheerful mercy. Brainstorm some ways we can best display cheerfulness with mercy.



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Part 6. Blessed are **THE PURE IN HEART**, for they will see God.

What's Behind It All

List some of the artificial facades found on modern homes which are used to make them look more appealing. Does your home have any of these features? What matters most about a home?

God cares about more than how we appear on the outside. He cares about the thoughts of the heart. **Explain** why this ought to terrify every person.

The Pure in Heart Vs Outward Piety

Use the word study to **determine** what “pure in heart” means.

Explain why purity of heart is so vital.

- Psalm 24:3-4
- Revelation 21:27

WORD STUDY “PURE”

The Greek word καθαρός “pure, clean” is used very broadly in Scripture. It could refer to pure gold, pure oil, pure/clean water or ceremonial cleanliness. It carries the idea of being uncontaminated, unpolluted. “You must distinguish between what is holy and what is common, what is unclean and what is clean (טהור → καθαρός, pure).” (Leviticus 10:10. LXX)

Pick one of the following and **summarize** the major pitfalls of overly focusing on outward piety.

Mk 2:15-17

Mk 7:1-23

Mt 23:24-28

The Value of Purity

List some of the perceived benefits of having a deceitful heart and using hypocrisy.

-
-
-
-

Share what the pure in heart might be tempted to conclude about living a holy life. (Ps 73:1-14)

David's Prayer

Identify at least four things David knew was necessary for obtaining and keeping a pure heart.

- Ps 51:1-9
- Ps 51:10
- Ps 51:11
- Ps 51:12

THE MEANS OF GRACE

Expound on the dangers of rejecting or withholding baptism. (Compare Numbers 19:20, Luke 7:30, John 3:5)

It's Impossible

“Who can produce something pure from something that is impure? No one.” -Job 14:4

Defend the reasons why the pure in heart must give God all the credit. (1 Th 2:13, Ti 3:4-5, Mk 16:15-16)

Christ Fulfills

Describe how Christ fulfilled these promises from Ezekiel 36:25-29.

- ◇ “I will save you from all your impurity.”
- ◇ “I will sprinkle purifying water on you, and you will be clean.”
- ◇ “I will cleanse you from all your impurity.”
- ◇ “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you”.
- ◇ “I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh.”
- ◇ “I will put my Spirit within you.”

You Are Already Clean/Pure (καθαρίζω)

Use purity language to **expound** on the motto, GRACE ALONE, FAITH ALONE, SCRIPTURE ALONE, CHRIST ALONE

- “You are already clean/pure καθαροί because of the word I have spoken to you.” -John 15:3
- “He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith.” -Ac 15:9
- “The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” -1 Jn 1:7

They Will See God

“When he appears, we will see (Jesus) as he really is. Everyone who has this hope purifies himself.”

(1 Jn 3:2-3) **Share** what you are most looking forward to about eternal life.

OLD TESTAMENT PICTURES NEW TESTAMENT REALITIES

Recount the practices the priests had to go through before they could approach God's presence and serve in the temple. Use Hebrews 10:19-23 to explain why our Great High Priest Christ gives baptized believers confidence to approach and serve God.



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Part 7. Blessed are **THE PEACEMAKERS**, for they will be called children of God.

Great Peacemakers

Share some of the biggest names in history of people known for securing peace. **Discuss** how they ended up securing peace. **Describe** how widespread it was and how long it endured.

Peace vs Hostility

Use the following to **explain why** making peace isn't always a good idea or even possible.

- Gen 3:14-15
- Is 48:22
- Heb 12:14-16
- Pr 22:24-25/ 1 Cor 15:33
- Eph 6:10-17
- Lk 12:51

Use 2 Kings 9:14-24 to **explain** why at times peacemakers must first fight for peace.

God's Plan for His Peacemakers

Their value: Is 52:7-10; 1 Tim 3:1

Their commissioning: John 20:21, Eph 4:11-12, Mk 16:15

Their tools: Mk 16:15-16, Mt 28:18-20, 1 Cor 11:23-26

NO QUARTER

Share some reasons modern militaries might refuse to offer quarter. Expound on why God did not allow Israel to make peace treaties with the inhabitants of Canaan. Dt 20:10-18.

CIVIL PEACE & DIVINE PEACE

Explain how civil peace and divine peace are closely intertwined. (Jer 29:7, 1 Tim 2:1-15)

God's Plan for Peacemaking

Read Jeremiah 23 to **find**:

- ✓ God's Plan for Christ our Peace (23:1-8)
- ✓ The False Peace Problem (23:9-14)
- ✓ The Futility of the False Prophets (23:23-32)
- ✓ The Fate of the False Prophets (23:15-22, 33-40)

FALSE PEACEMAKERS

Discern the strategy of false preachers and the tactics they use to carry them out:
Micah 3:5
2 Peter 2:1-3
Ezekiel 13:1-23
Ezekiel 13:17-23

Failed Peacemakers

Identify several reasons why God's agents of peace might end up failing in their calling.

- Malachi 2:1-9
- Isaiah 30:8-11
- 1 Tim 4:1-2
- 1 Tim 4:12
- 1 Tim 4:16
- 2 Tim 4:1-5

WISDOM & PEACE

Read 1 Samuel 25 to see Abigail's wisdom. Explain what wisdom is needed for peacemakers to prevent fights.

Not in Vain

Review the various reasons why God's peacemakers might end up feeling rejected or at a loss. Use 1 Cor 15:58 to **explain why** their work is never in vain and always worth it.

They Will be Called Sons of God

Expound on how we become sons of God: Gal 4:4-7

Expound on how we reflect God's own heart: Mt 5:44-45

LIVE IN PEACE

Look at 2 Cor 13:11-14 and list the commands, promises, and blessings which allow peace to flourish between God's people. Note how each one can be done in your church and in your own life.

Peace in the Church

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." ~Ro 12:18

Share examples of times when you might find it most difficult to make peace with someone.

Pick one of the following and **discuss** how a peacemaker should resolve conflict with brothers.

1 Cor 6:1-9



1 Co 14:30-33



Eph 4:26-27



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Part 8. Blessed are **THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED** because of righteousness...

The Persecuted

Recount and briefly **list** people in Scripture who faced persecution.

Share some places where Christians face the most extreme persecution.

What type of persecution do you feel you are you most likely to face?

Because of Me

Jesus gives a double blessing for those persecuted.

Read the conclusion to the Beatitudes (Mt 5:10-12)

Explain the types of persecution he has in mind.

Expound on the implications of the following verses:

- ✓ “Do not be surprised, brothers, if the world hates you.” (1 Jn 3:13)
- ✓ “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you too.” (Jn 15:20)
- ✓ “Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (2 Ti 3:12)

Motivation for Persecution

Determine what drives persecution. Mt 24:9, Titus 3:3, 1 Pe 5:8

THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED

Explore online. Try persecution.org or visit opendoors.org and view their “world watch list.” Identify which of these places around the world you or your church supports mission work.

BUILT ON THE SCRIPTURES

When Christ pronounced these blessings, he was declaring that the promises of the Old Testament would be fulfilled. Review how each Beatitude is found throughout Scripture.

Temptation to Avoid Persecution

Read Luke 6:20-26. **Find** what Jesus warns against as the opposite of facing persecution. **Describe** who might fit this description well in today's culture.

Explain: The devil has essentially two tactics: lies and persecution.

Deep Roots

Discover how long persecution has gone on. (Gen 3:15, Gal 4:29)

Determine what type of Christian faces the greatest danger from persecution. (Mk 4:16-17)

God's Response

<i>To past sufferings</i>	<i>To present waiting</i>	<i>To provide future hope</i>
Hebrews 11:32-12:3.	Rev 6:9-11	Rev 7:9-17

Our Response

Expound on the implications of each verse:

- "What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution...?" (Ro 8:35)
- "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Mt 5:44)
- "He said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom you are persecuting.'" (Acts 22:8)
- "Bless those who persecute you; bless, and do not curse." (Ro 12:14)
- "When we are verbally abused, we bless. When persecuted, we endure." (1 Co 4:12)

Christ for Us

Jesus came to "fulfill all righteousness." (Mt 3:15) **Review** each of the Beatitudes and explain how Jesus perfectly displayed the traits he blesses.

Use this quote to **explain** our joy: *"The prophets died at the hands of those who hated them. Christ prayed for those who crucified him. Stephen forgave those who stoned him. Why? So we might know the love of God and so men like the apostle Paul would be welcomed into paradise by the very same people he once persecuted."*

REJOICE AND BE GLAD

The Christian life is a paradox to the unbelieving world. They mourn over sin while the world rejoices in it. They rejoice over persecution while the world regards persecution as a curse. Scan through Paul's letter to the Philippines to list what made him rejoice despite suffering.

YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN

Scripture speaks of two types of rewards on the Last Day. One is a reward of the law, judgment due to unbelievers. The other is a reward of grace, won by Christ. His gifts of grace are stored up for those who trust in him. When a reward of grace is mentioned in the Bible, it is to stave off discouragement for a believer.