**Group Session**

Small Group Study

**Leader Overview**

*Reminiscent of Moses receiving the Law from God on Mount Sinai, Jesus delivered one of His most iconic messages in the Sermon on the Mount. A core part of that teaching is something we call the Beatitudes. They reveal the ethics of God’s kingdom and the kind of life His people are called to. Although Jesus shared this message over two thousand years ago, it remains just as applicable today as it did when He walked the earth.*

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| ***You Will Need**** *Index cards and a pen or pencil for every student*

***Getting Ready**** ***First time leading* Listen *for Youth? Look here for the* Facilitator Guide***.*
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*To access the Bible Engagement Project library from a computer, visit*[***App.BibleEngagementProject.com***](http://App.BibleEngagementProject.com)*.*

**Engage**

**Welcome**

*Take this time to welcome everyone, introduce first-time guests, learn names, and thank everyone for coming.*

**Opening Prayer**

*Prayer thoughts: Thank the Lord that He showed us greater meaning for our lives. Thank Him for His great love for each of us and how He desires that we love others. Pray for everyone present and their families. Pray for your church and the schools represented by the students in your group.*

**Introduction**

Throughout the Gospels, we read about Jesus teaching His followers the right way to live. This was born out of His tremendous love for people. He desires to see each person live an abundant, fruitful life. As we engage in today’s discussion, we’ll listen to one of the greatest sermons ever preached by anyone. Referred to as the Beatitudes, this message provides an extremely helpful foundation for living today. This list is called “the Beatitudes” because each statement describes a lifestyle that leads to blessings. And a *beatitude* is either a statement of blessing or state of being blessed.

Before we dive into this great sermon, here’s something interesting that you might not have known about Jesus.

**Did You Know?**

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| Luke 3:23 tells us that Jesus began His public ministry, which would have included His preaching ministry, when He was about thirty years old. That’s quite a lot of preparation for a ministry that lasted only around three years! |

**Group Activity**

**If Jesus Had Used Emojis**

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| **You Will Need:*** *Index cards and a pen or pencil for every student*

*No prep is needed for this activity.* |

I’m going to read eight of the Beatitudes of Jesus. As I read them, each of you will draw an emoji next to the number that corresponds with the beatitude. For example, the first one is, “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs” (Matthew 5:3).

On your index card, write number one, and then draw the emoji you think best represents that beatitude.

• *Give students time to draw their emoji.*

Let’s do the others.

• “God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted” (Matthew 5:4).

• “God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth” (Matthew 5:5).

• “God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied” (Matthew 5:6).

• “God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy” (Matthew 5:7).

• “God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God” (Matthew 5:8).

• “God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9).

• “God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs” (Matthew 5:10).

• *When you are finished with the eight beatitudes, have a few students share their emoji for each of the eight and why they chose the emoji they did.*

Today we’re going to talk about Jesus as our Teacher. Let’s see what we can pick up from the video.

**Watch**



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| **QUESTION**What stood out to you from this video? |

**Consider**

*Ensure each student has access to a Bible, preferably the same version.*

The Gospel of Matthew, chapters 5–7, make up the Sermon on the Mount. It’s one of the most impressive chunks of Jesus’ teaching. The beginning of the sermon is known as the Beatitudes. Remember, beatitudes are statements of blessing. Today’s session focuses on this list of statements that describe the way we should live in order to receive God’s blessing.

**Jesus, the Teacher**

Read Matthew 5:1–4.

Jesus saw a crowd gathering, and He decided to sit down at an elevated place on the side of a mountain. It wasn’t uncommon for Jesus to draw big crowds. If Jesus was speaking, there were always masses who wanted to listen. I don’t know about you, but if Jesus is teaching, I would want to know what He has to say.

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| **QUESTION**What do you think Matthew 5:3 means? |

To be clear, Jesus is not speaking about monetary poverty here. Rather, He is speaking of those who understand their deep need for relationship with and connection to God.

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| **QUESTION**What does Matthew 5:4 teach us about the heart of God toward people? |

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| **QUESTION**What does this Beatitude (Matthew 5:4) also teach us about how we should treat others going through a tough time? |

**Humble, Hungry, and Merciful**

Read Matthew 5:5–7.

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| **QUESTION**How would you define the word humble? |

Jesus promised a significant inheritance for those who are not proud or arrogant. This, as well as other beatitudes, helps us understand that it’s not just our actions that matter. Even our attitudes matter!

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| **QUESTION**What does it mean to desire justice? |

The kind of justice Jesus is talking about is what is right or wrong in God’s eyes. This is especially important today since there are lots of opinions about what is right and wrong. Followers of Jesus should be primarily concerned about God’s opinion.

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| **QUESTION**What does God do for those who show mercy to others? |

The definition of mercy is twofold. First, it’s the act of not punishing an offender. Second, it is compassion shown to those in difficulty and distress.

**Pure, Peace, Persecuted**

Read Matthew 5:8–10.

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| **QUESTION**How would you describe living with a pure heart? |

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| **QUESTION**Why do you think God blesses those who work for peace? |

In today’s culture, it seems like everyone wants to argue over even the smallest things. But Jesus called His followers to create peace. While a previous beatitude taught that we should desire justice, this beatitude should remind us that even in our struggle for justice, we should prefer to achieve it peacefully.

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| **QUESTION**Why are followers of Jesus persecuted? |

**Reflect**

In light of those beatitudes, let’s take a few moments to answer some questions that will help us process them.

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| **QUESTION**What are some ways you think Jesus might comfort those going through a tough time? |

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| **QUESTION**Would anyone here be willing to share a time Jesus comforted you? |

* *Be aware as this may be a time for ministry.*

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| **QUESTION**What are some issues of justice that Jesus cares about and wants us to care about? |

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| **QUESTION**Read 1 Samuel 16:7. How might this verse complement the beatitude in Matthew 5:8? |

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| **QUESTION**Do you think purity of heart matters more than what people see when they look at you? Why or why not? |

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| **QUESTION**What similarity do you notice between the first beatitude in Matthew 5:3 and the last one in Matthew 5:10? |

The kingdom of heaven is one connection. The more we realize our need for Jesus and turn to Him, the more we may be persecuted. Jesus explained that the result of that persecution is an inheritance within the kingdom of heaven.

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| **QUESTION**Have you ever been ridiculed or faced pressure from your peers because you did what was right or took a stand for Jesus? If yes, can you tell us a little about it? |

**Walking in the Beatitudes**

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| **QUESTION**What are some ways we can demonstrate the Beatitudes in our lives? |

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| **QUESTION**What is the one beatitude you feel is the hardest one for you to live out? Why? |

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| **QUESTION**What are some messages the world sends that are different from this teaching of Jesus? *(Never admit that you need help, only babies cry, throw it in your opponent’s face how much better you are, get all you can for yourself, bully others to get your way, show no mercy, etc.)* |

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| **QUESTION**How might our world be different if every follower of Jesus practiced the Beatitudes? |

**Digging Deeper (Optional)**

**The Sorrows on the Plain**

Luke 6 contains one of Jesus’ messages that is often called the Sermon on the Plain. It contains parts of the Sermon on the Mount, including some of the Beatitudes, but it also includes some verses that are quite different.

Read Luke 6:24–26.

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| **QUESTION**How would you describe the differences between these statements and the Beatitudes? |

While the Beatitudes declare blessing over those who live the right way, these statements declare sorrow for those who devote their lives to the wrong things.

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| **QUESTION**How might it be helpful to hear both positive and negative teachings about how you should live? |

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| **QUESTION**Which of these statements stands out to you? Why? |

**Activate**

This week, work on the one beatitude that you find the most difficult to live out. Begin each day by reading that beatitude and thinking of how you might apply it. If it’s based on an attitude, then try to be aware of how related situations affect your attitude. If it requires action, look for opportunities to make it happen.

**Conclusion**

Jesus is an amazing Teacher. You will see more of this during the week in your personal devotions. I encourage you to take about ten minutes each day to go through some of the teachings of Jesus provided on your app.

But Jesus is so much more than a Teacher. He is our Savior.

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| **Salvation Opportunity***Include this if you think there may be some in the group who do not have a personal* *relationship with Jesus.***Perhaps you’re not familiar with the idea that Jesus came to save us from our sins and the consequences of them. I want to give those who may have never put their trust in God a chance to receive Jesus as their personal Savior.****Is there anyone here that we can pray for who doesn’t have a relationship with Jesus or wants to renew their relationship with Him?***Take a moment to acknowledge those who respond, and thank them for their desire to make things right between themselves and God. Pray with them now or after the group time is over. Following group time, talk more about where they are in their walk with God and how you might be able to help.* |

In a moment, we will close in prayer. As we do, let’s pray for those who surrendered their lives to Jesus.

**Prayer**

Jesus, our Teacher, thank You for the times You teach us through Your Word and through the Holy Spirit. Help us to learn and grow. We want to listen and obey Your Word and the voice of the Holy Spirit. We pray that You would help us walk in the truths we learned today and walk as blessed people. Amen.

Next time we will listen to and discuss one of the most amazing stories in the entire Bible. This story shows us the incredible lengths God goes to in order to show us His love. No matter how far from God we find ourselves, He longs to receive us as His own.