

# THE BEATTITUDES

## A Study Guide

*Over the next few weeks I hope and pray that these studies will sink deep into your heart and affect you as they were intended. The beatitudes of Jesus are the core foundations of both a deep, loving, dynamic relationship with God as well as incredible, loving, relationships here on earth! Let us place ourselves at Christ's feet daily as he challenges and exposes our heart and ultimately transforms us into his likeness.*

### **Helpful Hints to maximize the study:**

- Use a daily journal to write down your thoughts, questions, and action plan for that day's study
- Choose one person that you will share what you are learning on a weekly basis
- Choose one scripture each week and commit the verse to memory
- Each week evaluate in your journal your previous week's growth
  - How have you grown more appreciative towards God?
  - How have you grown more in love with God?
  - How has your Monday through Saturday worship of God been?
  - Has sin got a foothold on your heart his week? Which ones?
  - Are you joyful?

# UNDERSTANDING THE BEATTITUDES

## Hebrew Poetry: Parallelism

Much of the Old Testament is poetry. In fact one third of it is written in Hebrew poetic form, equivalent to more than the entire New Testament. Isaiah 40-66, Job and Lamentations are arranged poetically, as are the Psalms and Proverbs. Many of the prophecies are also poetic.

Hebrew poetry does not use rhyming words but rhyming ideas. Complementary or duplicate descriptions are written in parallel, line by line. This adds helpful insights for translation through word equivalence, and interpretation of difficult phrases by comparison with an easier to understand parallel phrase. Additionally, it acts as an aide memoire in that the idea when spoken twice is doubly memorable and like poetry or song is easier to remember than mere prose or narrative. Most believers know more hymns and choruses than Bible verses because more of their senses are involved in singing and dancing than in mere silent reading. At the very least we should get back to reading Scripture aloud so that we hear it twice, once with the mind and once with the external ear.

A good example would be Proverbs 31.20; there is no difference between poor and needy:

"She stretches / out her hand / to the poor;"

"She reaches / forth her arms / to the needy"

Here, each phrase is paralleled by a similar phrase of different wording but of equal meaning in the corresponding second half of the verse.

Thus, "ask, seek and knock", in the gospels, are three ways of saying 'inquire of God' not suggesting that if your prayer was unanswered it was because you asked and sought but forgot to knock.

This phraseology is poetic, which you should read and get the flow and drift, the heart of the message, not be distracted by small print. Alternatively, if you were reading the Ten Commandments, you would read the small print, as they are a legal document. Different styles of writing require different methods of reading.

## The Beatitudes and Parallelism

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10) are arranged in pairs which can help clarify the meaning of their corresponding phrase. Verses 4 and 5 are switched as it is in most modern manuscripts.

**Using the model below as a template, we will be studying 4 basic concepts:**

<p>Blessed [are] the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>	<p><b>HUMILITY</b></p> 	<p>Blessed [are] the meek: For they shall inherit the earth.</p>
<p>Blessed [are] they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.</p>	<p><b>REPENTANCE</b></p> 	<p>Blessed [are] those who hunger And thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled.</p>
<p>Blessed [are] the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.</p>	<p><b>FORGIVENESS</b></p> 	<p>Blessed [are] the pure in heart: for they shall see God.</p>
<p>Blessed [are] the peacemakers: for they shall be called The children of God.</p>	<p><b>DISCIPLESHIP</b></p> 	<p>Blessed [are] those who Are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>

**He began to teach them saying:**

<sup>3</sup>"Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup>Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup>Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for  
righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy.

<sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they will see God.

<sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they will be called sons of God.

<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted because  
of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## Blessed are the Poor-Blessed are the Meek “Jesus’ teaching on the heart of humility”

### Day One

*Focus of the day: To define what it truly means to be poor spiritually*

Please begin with these readings:

- Matthew 5:1-12
  - The focus of this study will be verses 3 and 5

Poor: to be in need, depending on help, humble

Meek: best understood as gentle or humble

What is poor in Spirit or meek?

- Revelation 3:17-18
- Luke 15:11-32
- Psalm 36:1-2

What Poor in spirit **IS NOT**:

- It is not mopey
- It is not poor-spirited or unmotivated

Personal reflection

- List some similarities between:
  - Matthew 5 verses 3 and 5
  - Revelation 3:17-18
  - Luke 15:11-32
  - Psalm 36:1-2
- How does the son in Luke 15 display being poor in Spirit?
- How did his attitude change from verse 12 to verse 21?
- Have you ever reacted more like the older brother?

## Day Two

*Focus of the day: To become poor in spirit, we must personally take ownership and responsibility of our sin. As you go through the scriptures today, identify specific areas of sin in your life. The more personal and honest you can be the better.*

Write down your thoughts regarding these scriptures

- 2 Timothy 3:1-5
- Romans 1:28-32
- Galatians 5:19-21
- James 4:17
- 2 Corinthians 13:5

Today in your journal, list as many sins as you can in 3 minutes

- How many of these required Christ's death to be forgiven?
- How many of these can you effectively change by yourself?
- What kind of help do you think you need?

*It has been said that the happiest and most satisfied people have a positive and accurate assessment of who they are. In Christ we can do the same, we can be positive, because in Christ we can be transformed daily. We can live honestly and assess our sin accurately because we do not need to meet any conditions or level of righteousness before God will work in us.*

## Day Three

*Focus of the day: Today the goal is to accurately assess how your life is showing neediness toward God.*

- Read Revelation 3:17-18
- If we are poor in spirit our life will show it, we will live in a way that shows God we need and depend on him. Here are a few practical's to pursue in order to grow more poor in spirit:
  - In Prayer
    - How healthy is your prayer life
    - Jesus prayed too! If he needed it certainly we do as well!
      - Read Matthew 26:36-42
      - What did Jesus' dependency on God lead him to?
        - Obedience to God's will!
  - In Confession
    - James 5:16
      - Confession means to agree with God. I missed the mark (sin) and God in his word is right!
      - How often am I stubborn? Not really agreeing God is right?
      - Is there sin in your life that, in your own opinion, you disagree with God about its seriousness? Re-read the scriptures from day one to review
  - In Advice seeking
    - Proverbs 12:15
    - Proverbs 14:12
    - Proverbs 15:12
      - Are you courageous enough to ask advice not just of those who agree with you, but possibly view things differently?
      - Is the advice you receive opinion based or biblical?
      - Do you have to give up your free will in getting advice?
        - The goal is to make the best choice as a follower and imitator of Christ

## Day Four

*Focus of the day: Let's examine today how pride can sneak in and burden us as disciples. We will examine ways in which we attempt to honor and glorify ourselves, and how that can make the life of a disciple quite a burden.*

Meek/Gentle/Humble scriptures

- Luke 14:7-14
- Matthew 11:28-30

Personal reflection

- How does the passage in Luke describe how our hearts should be?
- In what ways or in which settings do we like to have the place of honor?
  - Does Jesus say being honored is bad or prideful?
    - No- but he does say to allow him(Jesus) to honor you- take the lowest place first
- In the passage in Matthew- Do you view Jesus and his teachings as light and easy?
  - Which of Jesus' teachings are burdensome to you?
  - Why are they a burden?
  - Examine if there are areas where you are making his teachings heavy and burdensome through pride and independence

## Day Five

*Focus of the day: The reward! Blessed are those who are poor and meek for they will inherit something of unimaginable worth- The Kingdom of Heaven. This promise is both a future blessing (in heaven) and a current blessing (on earth).*

How great is the Kingdom of heaven?

- Matthew 13:44-45
  - The Kingdom is like fine pearls or hidden treasure
  - What would you do if you were to inherit fine gems or jewelry, or a great treasure?
    - Would you be filled with joy?
    - Would you be full of gratitude?
    - Would you be energized and enthusiastic?
  - When we are truly poor in spirit and meek this is what overflows in our heart!!
- Romans 14:17
- 1 Corinthians 4:20
- Hebrews 12:28

The world teaches that being poor or meek is not to be desired. God teaches us differently. Can you identify what is keeping you from growing more meek and poor in Christ?

## **Blessed are those who mourn-Blessed are those who Hunger “Jesus’ teaching on true repentance”**

### **Day Six**

*Focus of the day: Let’s define what it means to truly mourn in a way that God intends*

- Please begin today’s study by reading Matthew 5:1-12
  - This lesson will be devoted to verses 4 and 6

#### **Definition**

##### **Mourn:**

1. To feel or express sorrow or grief. .
2. To grieve or lament over.
3. to utter in a sorrowful manner

When we mourn, we realize a deficiency. We realize something is missing. When we mourn over sin, we realize we are in need of true spiritual nourishment. We hunger and thirst for this. Read the following scripture to see how this concept is explained in the bible

- 1 Peter 2:2

As we become poor in spirit, we realize the seriousness of our sin and the sin in the world. We realize that our personal sin put Christ on the Cross. The more clearly we realize the price that was paid for our sin, we mourn over hurting our most precious relationship...God

In the following passages, what is God’s definition and view of spiritual mourning?

- Ezekiel 9:3-6
- Amos 6:1-7
- Lamentations 3:40-51
- Jonah 3:6-10

#### **Personal reflection**

- Has your sin affected you in these ways?
- When was a time you hurt someone you loved?
  - How did that affect your heart?
  - How far were you willing to go to try and repair that relationship?
- Read and pray over Psalm 139
  - God truly is with you 24/7

## Day Seven

*Focus of the day: Let's look at our lives and see if we are repenting or if we are hungry to change our current mindset and lifestyle to be close to God! Perhaps repentance is not taking place as often as we think it is.*

Mourning leads to repentance:

- 2 Corinthians 7:8-13 (Even if I caused you sorrow)
  - Hungering and thirsting to deal with sin
- Joel 2:12-15
- Zephaniah 2:1-3 (mourning and seeking)
- James 4:7-10

Personal reflection

- How has your sorrow (Godly) lead you to repent?
- Describe ways in which you are seeking God. Are you seeking him still?
- Has your repentance been refreshing? (Acts 3:19)
- Go back to last week's sin list
  - Have you repented according to 2 Corinthians 7
    - Become indignant over it?
    - Ready to see justice done?
    - Accepting personal responsibility?
    - Have you hungered for righteousness?

## Day Eight

*Focus of the day: When we mourn as God intend it, when we hunger and thirst to be righteous the reward is truly great! We are comforted and filled with so much that we have been searching for: peace, joy, love and so much more!*

Mourning will lead us to seek God

- Zephaniah 2:1-3 (mourning and seeking)
- Psalm 51

Mourning leads us to comfort

- 2 Corinthians 1:3-7
  - Filled to overflowing in comfort
- Ephesians 2:14-18
- Philippians 4:4-7
  - Mind and heart **filled** with peace
- Psalm 32:1-7
- Hebrews 5:11-14
  - Hungering for and feeding on spiritual food trains us in righteousness

What does God intend to fill us with?

- Galatians 5:22-23
  - The spirit God gives us fills us with so much. Are you filled with:
    - Love
    - Joy
    - Peace
    - Patience
    - Kindness
    - Goodness
    - Faithfulness
    - Gentleness
    - Self-control
  - Which of these would you love to have more of?
  - When we hunger to repent and be righteous this is the promise of God; that we would be FILLED!

Personal reflection

- Do you have an appetite for God?
  - Are you seeking God daily in the word?
  - Are you seeking God daily among other disciples?
    - Advice
    - Confession, etc.
  - Are you seeking God in every circumstance?
  - Is your heart at peace?

**Blessed are the merciful-Blessed are the pure in heart**  
**“Jesus’ teaching on forgiveness”**

**Day Nine**

*Focus of the day: Today we will define what it is to be merciful and pure in heart.*

- Please begin today’s study by reading Matthew 5:1-12
  - This lesson will be devoted to verses 7 and 8

Let’s define these terms:

- Merciful: full of mercy; characterized by, expressing, or showing mercy; compassionate:
- Pure in Heart: clean, spotless, or unsullied
- Verses defining merciful and pure in heart
  - Proverbs 20:9- a pure heart = no sin
  - Psalm 51:10- God creates a pure heart
  - Luke 7:47- no forgiveness = no mercy given to others
  - Psalm 5:7- By God’s mercy we can enter his presence
  - Psalm 41:4- have mercy on me = purify my heart

In short, pure in heart is to be ***forgiven***; merciful is to be ***forgiving***

## Day Ten

*Focus of the day: Let's examine our personal attitudes. Do you easily show mercy to others? Do you tend to view others sin as so bad, yet perhaps you view your own sin as not being so terrible? The goal of these scriptures is to create a heart of mercy toward others as we understand how we have been purified.*

When we are forgiven for our sins (purified heart) we will grant mercy (forgive others)

- Please read Matthew 18:21-35
  - The first servant's debt was completely cancelled
    - Why then was he not merciful?
      - When you are baptized into Christ your heart is purified, sin is washed away
        - Why then do you not always show mercy?
          - Often times it is grounded in humility and repentance
          - Don't forget to continue living and growing in the first two principles outlined in the beatitudes
  - The debt was cancelled yet his unmerciful response ultimately lead him where?
  - How big was your debt
    - Take 5 minutes to write down once again a list of sins that you have committed.
      - Please read Ephesians 4:29-32 to review some sins that tend to hurt other people
      - You may also want to review 2 Timothy 3:1-5 and Galatians 5:19-21
    - This time please list next to these sins who **you hurt** by doing them
  - Have you ever wished people would give you a break? Be more merciful to you? Do you have an accounting of people who have hurt you in the past
    - Hopefully the above list shows that we all need mercy from God and one another
    - When I see that I too can hurt people and God, and that God has shown me great mercy in not punishing me as my sins deserve, My response should be to be merciful to others
  - Does having mercy mean not to deal with sin in others lives? Read these passages to get a greater understanding
    - Colossians 3:15-17
    - Colossians 1:28
    - Hebrews 3:12-13

## Day Eleven

*Focus of the day: Today let's take a look at how we will understand mercy in an even greater way. Today will you be sharing with others how God has been merciful with you?*

- Please read Matthew 23:23
  - The Pharisees neglected what 3 things?
  - What do you think God thinks when we neglect mercy?
- How do the following verses help us to get in touch with the mercy we have been shown?
  - Mark 5:19
  - Luke 1:58
  - Romans 15:9
    - Mercy is understood in greater ways when we share with others how God has been merciful to us!
      - Can you make this a habit in your life?
      - How can this be done on a regular basis?
      - Who do you think would be encouraged by hearing about God's mercy?
- Another response to God's mercy is found in the following:
  - Romans 12:1-2
    - In view of God's mercy how should we live?
- Making the connections
  - To show you how these principles in the beatitudes work together please read:
    - Luke 18:9-14
      - Do you see how Humility-Repentance-Forgiveness all work together
      - Which character are you more like?
        - The Pharisee
          - Proudful-Self Righteous-No Gratitude
        - The Tax Collector
          - Humble-Repentant-Forgiven

## Day Twelve

*Focus of the day: Once again we are promised both a current and future blessing from God! Those who are merciful and pure in heart will be shown mercy today and will see God one day in heaven!*

What does God's mercy look like?

- Psalm 103:1-12
  - This is forgiveness and mercy that we don't deserve!
- Psalm 32:1-5
- Psalm 78:37-39

Must we work and toil to be given a pure heart?

- Acts 2:38: A simple act of faith!
- Acts 22:16
  - If you have been washed of your sins are you living a life of mercy
  - If you have not been baptized and cleansed of sin: What are you waiting for?

Are you drawn to others who are merciful and pure? Would you describe your closest relationships as those who are merciful and pure?

- Other will influence us in this area
- 1 Corinthians 15:33
  - Bad company corrupts good character
  - Let us be drawn to those who are pursuing the heart of God!

## **Blessed are the Peacemakers-Blessed are the Persecuted** **“Jesus’ teaching on discipleship”**

### **Day Thirteen**

*Focus of the day: Please examine in your life if you are a peacemaker. Let’s first define how Jesus is the true peacemaker between God and us!*

- Please begin today’s study by reading Matthew 5:1-12
  - We will focus on verses 9 and 10

Blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are those persecuted for righteousness. Both terms describe disciples of Jesus. In this study we will exam the heart of True discipleship (Living like Jesus). The connection between these verses looks something like this:

Sons of God/those inheriting the Kingdom = disciples = peacemakers = persecuted for righteousness

- We were enemies of God. Fighting against him
  - Romans 5:10
  - Colossians 1:21
  
- God makes peace with us
  - Romans 5:1
  - Romans 12:17-18
    - Because of this peace how should we live towards others?
  - Romans 14:17
    - Does this describe your life as a disciple?
      - Peace, righteousness, joy?
  
- In what way are we peacemakers?
  - 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
    - Ministers of reconciliation
    - Christ’s ambassador’s
  - Ephesians 2:14-18
    - When we preach Jesus, we preach peace
    - What kind of peace do we need to preach?
      - World peace?
      - Family peace?
      - Peace between God and man?
        - Refer back to the scriptures above talking about the fact that without Christ we are enemies of God!

## **Day Fourteen**

*Focus of the day: To be an effective peacemaker I must know God's word and his gospel. Do I study my bible to become a more effective peacemaker and ambassador?*

Today, we will pick up where we left off yesterday. Please review your notes from yesterday's study.

- As peacemakers, what do I need to know to be properly equipped?
  - Understand who you are
    - Galatians 3:26-29
      - Sons of God through baptism
    - Galatians 4:6-7
      - You are sons/daughters with an inheritance
  - Ephesians 6:14-15
    - The gospel is about peace
      - Even though world peace, peace in families and marriages is great, Jesus died to make peace between us and God! This is the only peace that can affect the world, families, and marriages!
    - Are you sharing the gospel of peace?
      - As a peacemaker; ambassador and minister of reconciliation are you active in your world?
      - What is keeping you from this?

## Day Fifteen

*Focus of the day: Today we will define what it means to be persecuted and to examine persecution of disciples in the early church*

Can you define persecution? Simply put it is:

- oppression for the holding of a belief or opinion

Look up these verses to see if it helps you clarify your definition

- Matthew 24:9- Important to see why people will hate Christians- Jesus
- 2 Timothy 3:12- All believers will be persecuted
- John 15:20- If they persecuted Jesus...

It is important to keep in mind that Jesus' teaching was a persecution because of *righteousness* which is defined:

- Righteousness, as used in Scripture and theology, in which it chiefly occurs, is nearly equivalent to holiness, comprehending holy principles and affections of heart, and conformity of life to the divine law.
  - Persecution because we are rude, arrogant, unloving, or harsh is not the persecution Jesus was talking about
- Read about these accounts of early persecution
  - Acts 4:5-22
    - What was Peter and John persecuted for?
    - In verse 21 what were the people doing in response to Peter and John?
    - A righteous life brings both praise to God, and persecution!
  - Acts 5:17-42
    - What were these guys persecuted for?
      - Are you teaching about Jesus?
      - How much do you hold back in order not to be persecuted at work or school or even at home?
  - 1 Peter 2:12
    - What kind of lives ought we live?
    - What are some areas we falter in righteousness?
  - 1 Corinthians 10:23-33-
    - Do you seek the good of others?
    - Is everything you do constructive?
    - Does the way you live both privately and publicly glorify God?
      - This is a basic scripture on how to live righteously

## **Day Sixteen**

*Focus of the day: A definition and an overview of what true discipleship is. The challenge is to be deeply honest with ourselves to see if our lives truly follow Jesus' example*

Discipleship: The act of living as a disciple of Jesus. Accepting and growing toward the character and heart of Christ

In short, Jesus is teaching here on true discipleship which boils down to two main points:

- Spreading the gospel of peace- Peacemakers
- Living a life of Righteousness
  - Let's go over a few scriptures that will hopefully help further
    - Psalm 85:10- notice the relationship with righteousness and peace
    - Isaiah 32:17
    - Isaiah 48:18- obedience-peace-righteousness
      - List some areas where your obedience to Christ can grow?
    - 1 Timothy 6:11-12
      - How are you pursuing this lifestyle?
      - What could you change that would change how you are pursuing righteousness?

## Day Seventeen

*Focus of the day: Persecution is difficult but God reminds us of a common theme. We are reminded that God sees us today as his children, and we will one day see Heaven!*

How much does a parent love their child?

- Isaiah 49:15
- Matthew 23:37
- Ephesians 5:1- You are a dearly loved child!
- Colossians 3:12- God sees his children as holy and dearly loved!
- 1 Peter 2:9- God loves his children so deeply he calls us his Royal priesthood

Sometimes it is difficult to believe good things about ourselves. Often times as disciples we will face persecution and hardship. In order to persevere let us write these scriptures of love on our heart! How will you live each day knowing you are God's holy and dearly loved child!!

Concluding thoughts:

- Deuteronomy 30:11-16
  - *Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. <sup>12</sup> It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" <sup>13</sup> Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" <sup>14</sup> No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. <sup>15</sup> See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. <sup>16</sup> For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.*