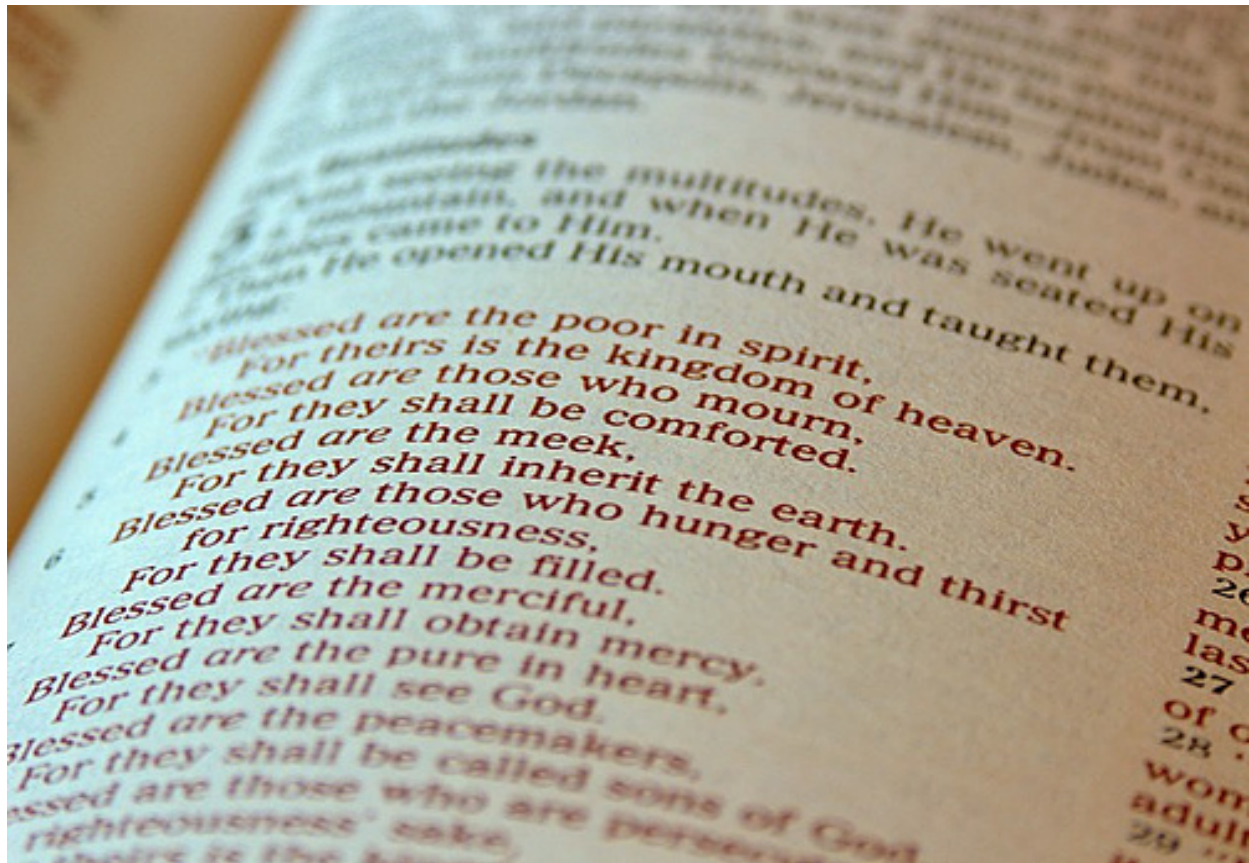


Real Happiness Comes To Those Who ...



A Study of the Beatitudes

By Bill Fairchild, Jr.



Uses For This Lesson Material

This lesson material has been designed for multiple uses. You will find below several of those uses. It is our intent through this material to lead individuals to a deeper appreciation for our God who made us ... appreciation for His revealed Word that serves to guide and comfort us ... and to help prepare our souls for eternity! May the Lord bless you as you study from His Word!

Individual Study: You can go through this series of lessons on your own at a pace that you are comfortable with. It would be suggested that you study one lesson per week to give you time to really consider the content of each lesson.

Family Study: This material can serve as a wonderful guide for a family to sit down and learn together what God expects of His own.

Group Study: You can use this series of lessons in a group setting such as a young people's devotion where each one who attends the class agrees to keep up with the study from class to class.

Bible Class Curriculum: This series of lessons is suitable for a 13-week or a 26-week quarterly system study and it contains sufficient material to be implemented both Sunday morning and Wednesday night if desired.

One-On-One Study: This series of lessons is suitable for you and a friend to study together from week to week. And both of you will experience personal growth in your faith and service to the Lord.



Practical Suggestions On Getting The Most Out Of This Lesson Series

If you want to really grow as a Christian ... you must be willing to spend the time necessary to know God's Word better and be courageous enough to apply what you learn to your own life! Sometimes ... there are truths learned in the Scriptures that can be most challenging to our hearts and our lives. This series of lessons will help you ... if you follow these suggestions:

- ☞ **Begin every Bible study with prayer. Ask the Lord to help you to have an open mind and a receptive heart!**
- ☞ **Use a good study Bible. You might want to consider the New King James Version or the New American Standard Bible. Also the English Standard Version.**
- ☞ **Really work through each lesson.**
 - **Look up every Bible verse that is referenced.**
 - **Think about each one of the questions that is being asked.**
 - **Answer each question ... don't skip any of them.**
 - **Make notes in the margin of the lesson sheet ... including any questions or thoughts you might have.**
 - **Start trying to memorize the text passages at the beginning of each lesson and those at the end of the lesson.**
- ☞ **Be brave enough to apply each Bible lesson to your own life.**
 - **Accept God's teachings as truth and be willing to obey Him in every relationship you have.**
 - **Be willing to change any attitudes that you may have that are not in keeping with God's will.**
 - **Determine to share the truths you learn from these studies with your friends, family and anyone else who will listen.**

Psalm 102:18

***“This will be written for a generation to come,
that a people yet to be created may praise the Lord.”***

The objective of the WalkingInSunlight.com literature is to help young people to acquire a better understanding of ... and appreciation for ... God, His Word, and the church He purchased with the blood of His Son.

Our goal is to prepare young people for their daily challenges of choosing what will bring them real happiness by arming them with the ability to use God's Word to answer every question.

Laying their own life questions and experiences alongside the proper scriptures will enable them to clearly see God's directions.

God's instructions are so clear that even children can understand how God wants them to behave and what He would have them choose when they look at the scriptures without prejudices.

- These studies are made age-specific by **Discussion**.
- **Read aloud every Scripture** – every student should look up every Scripture in their own Bible.
- Allow adequate time for students to think about and answer **every question**.
- **Listen** to what they say.
- **Point them to God's instructions**, written and preserved for their benefit.

Hosea 4:1,6 *“Hear the word of the Lord, you children of Israel, for the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land.” “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me. Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.”*

Each lesson may require several class periods.

It is an awesome privilege to help young people grow closer to God!

An Introduction ...

Can you imagine what it must have been like to be present when Jesus ... the Master communicator ... delivered the stirring lesson that has come to be identified simply as the Sermon on the Mount?

When Jesus sat down on the hillside with a group of His followers and talked about those things that really mattered in life ... truths about discipleship and character ... He distilled an enormous amount of truth in an incredibly brief period of time! And the people were simply astonished at what they heard (Matthew 7:28,29)!

What a wonderful opportunity it would have been to be there on that day ... on that hillside ... listening to the Son of God ... in person! Thanks to the Father's provision of divine revelation (2 Timothy 3:16,17) ... we have the record and preservation of the Sermon! And hopefully ... when we consider its truths ... particularly the Beatitudes ... we, too, will be astonished and moved to greater service in the Kingdom!

As we begin this series of studies on the early portion of the Sermon identified as the "Beatitudes" ... we need to open our hearts and minds to the fresh air of what really pleases our God! Matthew's account recorded in chapters five through seven encompasses the entire Sermon and this account can actually be read in its entirety in approximately 20 minutes! Each of you are encouraged to make the time in the coming days to sit down and read through the entire Sermon at one sitting ... and you will see why when you have finished the reading!

With the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) ... Jesus sets the tone for a significant message of change that both He and the Father are expecting of would-be disciples! Each of His statements is prefaced with the term "*blessed or happy.*" It is in these Beatitudes that Jesus identifies what brings about divine recognition ... recognition regardless of one's background, social standing, or educational accomplishments!

- To the poor ... to the mourners ... to the meek ... to the hungry ... to the persecuted ... and to the poor in heart ... Jesus offers assurance that their service to God and man would not go unnoticed by Heaven!

Each of these statements if believed ... accepted ... and practiced ... will help to shape both the behavior and the life of each person regardless of age! This is why the apostle Paul could say with such confidence in Philippians 1:21, *“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*

May you look forward to the joy and happiness you will discover that Jesus Christ offers each of us in this study of *Happiness Belongs To Those Who ...*

..... Bill Fairchild, Jr.

Table of Contents

Lesson One	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who ...
Lesson Two	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Poor In Spirit
Lesson Three	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Mourn
Lesson Four	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Meek
Lesson Five	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness
Lesson Six	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Merciful
Lesson Seven	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Pure In Heart
Lesson Eight	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Peacemakers
Lesson Nine	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Persecuted For Doing Right
Lesson Ten	Real Happiness Comes To — Those Who Are Blessed



REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

THOSE WHO ...

Text: Matthew 5:1-12

INTRODUCTION:

1. Questions: Are you a happy person?
Do you know anyone who is a happy person?
Do you like to be around them? _____

2. Questions: Do you know someone who is an unhappy person?
Are they much fun to be around? _____

3. The question that all of us must ask is:

“How may I really be happy?”

4. The wise man Solomon shares with us in Ecclesiastes 2:3 the fact that he tried to find happiness.
- a. He looked for happiness in the same places most everyone else looks for it ... in the world.
 - b. For example: business, power, money, fame, agriculture, construction, fun and games, etc.
 - c. And he reached the conclusion that, *“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and a striving after the wind.”* (Eccl. 1:14).

5. It is not wrong for us to want to be happy! _____

6. The Bible makes it clear that God wants His creation to be happy. And not only that ... He wants to provide happiness for us! Note Jer. 10:23.
He knows what is best!

a. Note the following passages of Scripture and discuss their meaning:

Psalms 144:15

Psalms 146:5

Proverbs 16:20

Philippians 4:4

7. In order for each of us to be truly happy, we must be living our lives to please God. Note Philippians 1:21; Galatians 2:20.

a. Question: What is the apostle Paul saying in these two passages of Scripture?

b. Question: Is it really possible for each of us to obtain this kind of faith and happiness in our lives? How? _____

c. When we do this ... then real happiness comes.

8. The word "*blessed*" means "happy, fortunate."

a. In the New Testament, this word was used by inspired writers to refer to the state of spiritual and moral prosperity which men could enjoy through Christ!

b. Some Biblical passages in which these expressions appear will make their meanings more meaningful.

(1) Psalm 84:4. Gladness came to David when he went into the house of the Lord (Psalm 122:1).

Question: Does gladness come to you through worshiping God? _____

Question: How would you describe your attitude when you come to worship God?

Question: When others are watching you in worship services ... and they are ... do they see someone who is attentive ... participating ... and obviously happy to be there? Discuss. _____

Question: Discuss the meaning of Jesus' statement to the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:24. _____

(2) Psalm 2:12. The ones "blessed" are those "*who put their trust in God.*"

Question: What does trust in the Lord represent? _____
Note Psalm 84:12 and Psalm 37:5 and discuss the meaning of these verses

Also note Proverbs 28:26. _____

Note: Those who put their trust in God commit their ways unto Him!

c. **Discuss** the examples of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-Nego in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:13-25), and Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6:10-23). Can you give some other examples of Bible characters who trusted in God? _____

9. Real happiness comes to those who seek to imitate Christ (we should all want to do this); who possess all of these qualities that we will be studying.

a. Please take a close look at the following passages of Scripture and make the application of these passages to our lesson:

- 1 Peter 2:21 _____
- 1 John 2:6 _____
- 1 Cor. 11:1 _____
- Luke 6:40 _____

10. Real happiness results from being in a right relationship with God and with our fellow man!

a. Only those people, whether young or old, who are poor in spirit, meek, hungry and thirsty for righteousness, merciful, and so on, are living in this right relationship!

11. So ... for this series of studies, we are going to be seeking to better understand how we can really be happy.

a. We're going to look at the Beatitudes more closely, to see where we each need to make some changes.

12. Therefore, let's begin this study with the kind of attitude which says, "**I want to do better, I want to learn and be what God wants me to be!**"

- Questions:
- Am I really different from the world?
 - Can my family, neighbors and friends clearly tell that God comes first in my life?
 - Do I really care if I'm different from the world?
 - Do I take Christ's Words seriously enough to want to change?

13. The apostle Paul urges us to "*examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.*" (2 Corinthians 13:5). May it always be so in each of our lives!



truth
for today's youth



REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

THOSE WHO ARE POOR IN SPIRIT

Text: Matthew 5:3

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

INTRODUCTION:

1. Pride was basic in the fall of man back in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3). Man thought that he, rather than God, knew what was best for him. **Discuss.** _____

Questions: Do we always know what is best for us? _____

Do we ever know what is best for us? _____

2. Humility is essential in man's return to God. Why? _____

a. What is humility anyway? Define. _____

3. This first Beatitude in the Sermon on the Mount is not only the first in point of time, but first in that out of it the others grow!

DISCUSSION:

1. Questions: Who are the "poor in spirit"?
What does the word poverty suggest?
What would be the opposite of "poor in spirit"?

2. Let's notice some examples of some folks during Jesus' day who were not displaying humility.
 - a. The Jews in Matthew 3:7-12.
 - b. The Pharisees in trusting in themselves. Luke 18:9-14.

3. How would you define pride?
 Give your definition and then notice this definition: _____

Pride ... is the effort of man to dethrone God and to enthrone self!

4. Is there a difference between pride and self-respect or self-esteem? _____
 If so, explain the difference. _____

5. Is it not possible to consider one's own moral goodness too highly? _____
 Note Matthew 15:7-9.

Questions: Do we ever think that we are better than we really are? _____
 Why do we do this? **Discuss.** _____

Note: True humility is the recognition of the fact that we are not only creatures created by God, but that we have imperfections and weaknesses (Romans 3:23), and are unable by any merit of our own to stand justified before God (Romans 5:8).

Questions: Do you look to God as much as you should? _____

 Why or why not? _____

6. How do we cultivate humility? _____

a. The greatness and goodness of God makes us aware of our weakness and uncleanness, doesn't it?

Note Isaiah 61:1-5 and Romans 11:22.

b. Spiritual growth contributes to an increase in humility. Note 2 Timothy 2:15. How?

c. Realization of our own smallness in knowledge, the brevity and uncertainty of life, and the need for the grace of God also contribute ... don't they? Note Ephesians 2:8,9.

Discuss. _____

7. Those who are "*poor in spirit*" are those who recognize that they are spiritually bankrupt without God in their lives!

Questions: What does bankruptcy mean in the physical world? _____

What does bankruptcy mean in the spiritual world? _____

8. "*Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" This kingdom is not a worldly kingdom, but a spiritual kingdom whose citizens have realized their own poverty of spirit and found the blessings in Christ!

APPLICATION:

1. The Mount of Blessings of Matthew 5 stands in sharp contrast to the Valley of Woes of Matthew 23 (verses 13,14,15,16,23,25,27,29). **Discuss.** _____

2. Concerning our own lives, each one needs to ask: **Is it "Blessed am I" or "Woe is me"?**

3. Being "*poor in spirit*" is simply being the opposite of everything that is summed up in the word "pride".

a. The heart that is filled with SELF simply has no room for God!

Question: How is a person's heart filled up with SELF? _____

Questions: Do you have room in your heart for God? _____
Do you want Christ ruling in your heart? _____

4. Why do the "*poor in spirit*" receive the kingdom of heaven?
 - a. The answer is very simple: **They are the only ones who seek the kingdom!**
 - b. The proud person feels no urgency to find God!
 - c. The humble person seeks Him constantly!
5. So ... which of the above describes you? _____
6. Solomon says it this way in Proverbs 29:23:

"A man's pride will bring him low, but the humble in spirit will retain honor."





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

THOSE WHO MOURN

Text: Matthew 5:4

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. In the first few Beatitudes, Jesus depicts people in some sort of destitution ... the poor in spirit, the mourners, even the hungry. Couched between the poor in spirit and the hungry for righteousness are those who mourn.
2. What type of mourners does Jesus have in mind? _____

 - a. Would it be those who suffer because of their misdeeds? _____
Note 1 Peter 4:15.

3. Only those who mourn in the service of Christ are the ones who are truly blessed!

DISCUSSION:

1. What does the word “*mourn*” mean? _____

 - a. The term “*mourn*” is a word used to describe a passionate crying for one who was greatly loved and suddenly lost.
 - b. The word conveys the idea of the deep sorrow of a broken heart, mental anguish and a penetrating ache in the soul.

2. An individual's grieving or mourning could include the following:

- ... mourning over wrong in the world
- ... mourning over personal loss
- ... mourning over one's own wrong and sinfulness
- ... mourning over the death of someone else.

Discuss each of these points. _____

3. Those who mourn, described by the Lord in this Beatitude, are those who mourn out of a penitent heart for their own sins and unworthiness before God!

Question: Do your sins ever bother you? _____

Question: What if your sins don't bother? What does this mean about your heart?
Read and discuss the thoughts being expressed in Hebrews 3:8, 15 ...

4. Only those who are truly grieved over their sins will find relief from them!
Only those who experience "*godly sorrow*" find repentance and salvation!
Note 2 Corinthians 7:10.

Question: Is there a difference between being sorry you got caught doing something you shouldn't have been doing ... and being sorry because you sinned?
Explain and **discuss**. _____

5. By the Lord's example we can see His concern for the plight of others.

Questions: What is compassion anyway? _____
Is it a sincere caring for others? _____

a. The two times Jesus wept in the gospels, He wept for his friends (John 11:34-35) ... and for his enemies (Luke 19:41).

6. Should we be touched with the misery and problems of others?

Note Rom. 12:15; Gal. 6:2. **Discuss.** _____

7. It is good to be able to feel pain. Dead limbs feel no pain. As long as there is sensitivity to pain, there is hope. Read and **discuss** 1 Timothy 4:2 and Ephesians 4:19.

a. When you can no longer hurt, you can no longer feel pleasure either!

This is true spiritually as well.

When you are no longer impressed with the ugliness of sin and its consequences ... you cannot experience or appreciate the real joy of being forgiven and of having the hope of eternal life! **Discuss.** _____

Questions: How do you look at your **own** sins?

How do you look at the sin in the world?

Does it bother you to see people disobeying God?

Note 1 Thess. 5:22 and Rom. 12:9. **Discuss.** _____

8. The mourning which Jesus pronounced "*blessed*" comes from deep concern. This type of concern comes from those who feel deeply.

Questions: Is it a contradiction in the Bible for one to be mournful and at the same time radiate the joy a Christian should possess?

Note Philippians 4:4. Answer: NO!

9. Mourning for one's sins turns into joy at forgiveness! Christ supplies our strength needed to relieve our inadequacies. (Philippians 4:13).

Question: Do you have such faith as displayed by Paul in Acts 16:25? _____

APPLICATION:

1. Have we done a very good job in causing people to mourn without showing them the joy that is in Christ?
2. Have we pricked their consciences with guilt without showing them the comfort in forgiveness?
3. What great comfort there is for those who mourn in Christ. The comfort of His approval and forgiveness is theirs ... the comfort in His continued presence and care over His children.
4. Question: What would you say is the purpose of mourning, and where will it lead a person? _____

What happens when we realize that we have deeply hurt the Lord, have disappointed the Father? _____

5. Note the words of 2 Corinthians 7:10 for they offer each of us the comfort that God alone can offer when we acknowledge our sins:

“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

Those Who Are Meek

Text: Matthew 5:5

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. Questions: What is meekness? _____

- Do you consider meekness to be a strength or a weakness? _____
- a. The term meekness is used to describe the following:
 - ... A wild stallion that has been tamed, brought under control, is described as being gentle or meek.
 - ... Carefully chosen words that soothe strong emotions (such as anger) are referred to as gentle words.
 - ... Ointment that takes the fever and sting out of a wound is called “gentle”.
- b. So then, meekness or gentleness includes such wonderful qualities as having strength under control, being calm and peaceful when surrounded by a heated atmosphere, emitting a soothing effect on those who might be angry.
2. The meaning of a term is sometimes better illustrated through the use of showing opposite terms as a contrast.
 - a. For example ...
 - the poor in spirit are those who are not proud,
 - and the meek are those who are not harsh.
3. Meekness is one of the greatest Christian virtues and has been possessed by great men of God in all periods of Biblical history.

Note Galatians 5:22,23; Ephesians 4:2; and James 1:21 _____

DISCUSSION:

1. Question: Of all Biblical characters, who would you say would best exemplify the quality of meekness? _____

Three times meekness is directly said to be characteristic of Jesus.
Note the following passages: Matt. 11:29; Matt. 21:5; and 2 Cor. 10:1.

- a. Jesus could be the tender forgiver and comforter of the adulterous woman (John 8:1-12) ... and at the same time, without changing his nature and personality, cleanse the temple in the name of God (John 2:13-17).
2. Note the man Moses and what the Bible says about him in Numbers 12:3. _____
-

3. Explain the difference between meekness and
- ... weakness _____
 - ... indifference _____
 - ... peace at any price. _____

4. Meekness is compatible with great strength, power and authority. It is persistent, patient and longsuffering in the face of opposition from men and events.
Note 1 Peter 2:21-24.

- a. It is submission to God!

Questions: Do we all need to submit to God? _____
Why? _____
How do we do this? _____

5. No person can safely lead others until he has mastered himself.

No one can serve others until he has subjected himself.

When we have meekness, we can treat all men with perfect courtesy, rebuke without being unkind, face the truth without resentment.

Question: Do you like to be told the truth?

Discuss. _____

6. The promise is the meek shall inherit the earth.

Question: To whom does the real enjoyment of earthly possessions belong?

Discuss. _____

Note Psalm 37:7-11.

a. Is it the ones who will do anything to obtain possessions ...or the ones who hold onto them lightly ... who will find them inferior to spiritual blessings? _____

Note: Too many people are worried and bothered by the fear of losing earthly possessions.

7. Which do you consider to be most important ... this world, or pleasing the Lord?
(BE HONEST, NOW!)

If you answer pleasing the Lord, you are making a commitment which you must honor
(Ecc. 5:4-7). **Discuss.** _____

a. Also note Matthew 6:19-21 and Matthew 16:24. _____

APPLICATION:

1. Selfish people may possess the earth, but it is the meek who inherit the real blessings of this earth in the spiritual kingdom.
2. In the end, Heaven will be their home. Don't you want to go there? Then be thinking about it more in the future than you have in the past!
3. Do you ever pray for the Lord to help you to become meek? You should.
4. As a person becomes "*poor in spirit*", he/she sees Jesus as their only hope and they come to believe in Him!
 - a. Having mourned over their sins and genuinely repented, they are then willing to "submit" to the will of God!
5. Can it be said of you that you are truly a meek person?

Meekness is the opposite of being out control ... it is strength under control





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS

Text: Matthew 5:6

“Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. Hunger and thirst are not lukewarm urges. They can soon become gnawing pains, and so intense that a bit of bread or a drop of water becomes more valuable than jewels!

Questions: Have you ever been really hungry? Thirsty?
Who took care of your needs?

- a. What is true with hunger and thirst in a physical sense is just as true in a spiritual sense with God’s Word.

2. Since Jesus pronounced a “blessing” for those who hunger and thirst, it is obvious that we can determine the extent of our spiritual interest.

3. Questions: Do you ever find yourself weak spiritually?
What do you do about it?
If we are weak spiritually, who is really responsible?

Discuss. _____

DISCUSSION:

1. Questions: Why are you here on this earth anyway? _____

What is our purpose for being here? _____

Note Ecclesiastes 12:13 and Acts 17:27. Discuss. _____

2. It is true that man cannot live without bread, but it is also true that "*man cannot live by bread alone.*"

a. There is more to this business of living than merely satisfying our legitimate appetites. Matthew 6:25. _____

b. Note 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. So ... if someone were looking at **your** life right now (they are, you know) ... would they see a person really trying hard to do what is right?

3. Just as a person may make a poor choice of physical food and have a poor diet, so may we starve our souls! **Discuss** how that is possible. _____

Question: If you could plan your own meals, what would you have?

4. We have the power to choose between the good and the bad ... the spiritual and the temporal. We fail many times to keep before us what really is important, don't we? Note 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. _____

Question: What makes the things of this world temporal? _____

a. Now, stop and think ... what really is most important?
Is it obedience to God or is it doing what you want to do?

5. Look at Colossians 3:1-3. Get the point?

6. We can become so absorbed with the “care of this world” (Matthew 13:22) that we lose our appetite for the spiritual. Note Luke 10:38-42 and **discuss**.

Questions: What was wrong with Martha’s attitude? _____
What was right about Mary’s attitude? _____
Which of these two attitudes best describes you? _____

- a. The result of becoming so absorbed with the world is that:
 - ... **we no longer find time to be reading the Bible!**
 - ... **we neglect our prayer life!**
 - ... **we don’t enjoy worship and Bible classes as we once did!**

Questions: Does any of the above sound familiar?
Discuss each of these three problems. _____

7. Jesus is the “*bread of life*” (John 6:38).

- a. When we become children of God through the new birth (John 3:5):
 - ... we desire the milk of God’s word (1 Pet. 2:2) ...
 - ... and then the meat (Heb.5:12-14)!

8. All sincere seekers of truth and righteousness will learn what God requires of them ... but only through His Word. Read and **discuss**:

Psalm 27:4 _____
Psalm 42:1-2 _____
Psalm 63:1 _____
Isa. 55:1-2. _____

9. Righteousness:

- ... Is it simply a matter of living a good, clean life?
- ... Is it just keeping one’s word and treating others fairly?

a. All of this is involved, but it is even more.

(1) It means "integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness of thinking, feeling and acting." (Thayer)

(2) It has to do with "whatever has been appointed by God to be acknowledged and obeyed by man." (Vine)

10. To be "*filled or satisfied*" means just what it says. In the original language of Greek, these words had reference to the feeding and fattening of cattle. The idea is contented!

a. **The person who has an appetite for righteousness will be filled!**

APPLICATION:

1. In the Beatitudes is the principle of "reaping and sowing".

What will result when we mourn ... is that we will be comforted!

What will result when we hunger and thirst ... is that we will be filled!

2. All of our spiritual needs for salvation and happiness will be met. We have the blessed assurance that we will be satisfied.

3. Are you hungering and thirsting after righteousness?

If not, it's an indication your priorities are wrong!

Why not change them now, before it is too late?

Make pleasing God and learning more about Him your **NUMBER ONE PRIORITY!**

Is going to Heaven **your** most important goal?

"If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:1,2)





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO –

THOSE WHO ARE MERCIFUL

Text: Matthew 5:7

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. Questions: How would you define mercy?
What does it mean to you?

Discuss. _____

2. Mercy is compassion for people in need; it is active concern for those who are hurting and suffering.
 - a. Being merciful includes the idea of compassion.
Mercy gives as well as receives.
 - b. Read the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

Questions: How did the Samaritan show that he had compassion for the wounded man on the road? _____

What did the priest and the Levite show? _____

- c. Note James 3:17 and Colossians 3:12 and **discuss.** _____

DISCUSSION:

1. Those who show compassion on the suffering and those who forgive those who trespass against them will in turn receive the same. **Discuss** this thought. _____

2. Read what Jesus said in John 14:1-3.
Has there ever been a man more compassionate than Jesus?

- a. It was His compassion for lost mankind that moved Him to leave the joys of heaven and to live and die on this earth. Note these passages:

Matt. 9:36

Matt. 14:14

Matt. 20:34

Luke 7:13

3. Ours is a fast-paced, unfeeling world. Sometimes in the haste of working and playing and living, we become blind to the suffering and the needs of others. **Discuss**.

- a. Define selfishness. _____

Questions: Are you ever selfish?
If so, how? _____

Read Luke 12:15-21. Note the number of times the rich fool used personal pronouns.

Questions: Have you ever known someone who needed help, encouragement, etc., but you were too busy to help them?
How did this make you feel?
Have you ever needed these same things yourself, but everyone seemed to be too busy to notice or help?

How did this make you feel?

GET THE PICTURE?

4. In hurrying to make ourselves happy, we often do not hear the weeping of others. Jesus was busier than all of us, wasn't He? **Discuss.**
Yet, he was never too busy to show compassion and concern!

5. Christ taught mercy to the erring both by His parables and by His example.

Note Matthew 18:21-35. **Discuss.** _____

Questions: Was the first servant in the parable shown mercy?
Was the second servant shown mercy?
What was wrong with the first servant's attitude?
How has God been merciful to you?
Can you think of some ways to be merciful to others?
Discuss. _____

6. Since Christ has shown so much mercy to man (How did He do this?) ... surely men ought to show mercy to each other in the relatively small debts they owe one another!

- a. Read Hebrews 4:15. Since Jesus has been where we are, He can sympathize fully with our predicament!

(1) He demonstrated divine mercy toward us when He took our sins upon Himself and died to reconcile us to God!

(2) In giving us the gospel, He was making mercy complete by offering us salvation through our obedience. What a marvelous thought to consider!!!

7. Questions: Are you willing to forgive as you should?
Do you hold any grudges right now?

Perhaps toward someone in this class?
What is keeping you from making things right? _____

8. Often a person will hold a grudge or hate another for years and even to the grave. Could this ever be right? **Discuss.** _____

APPLICATION:

1. Read and consider Matthew 18:35 again ...
2. Only if we are merciful to others for their sin against us can we hope for mercy from God. Note Matthew 6:12.

Do we really want to be forgiven just as we forgive others (James 2:13)? _____

3. Even on the cross, Jesus was merciful toward those who were crucifying Him (Luke 23:34). Consider just how difficult this would be.
4. Let us, His disciples, be merciful from the heart to those who trespass against us. Let us be merciful to those who need our help and encouragement, etc.
5. When we do these things, Jesus promises us that we "*shall receive mercy.*"

"For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment." (James 2:13)





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

THOSE WHO ARE PURE IN HEART

Text: Matthew 5:8

“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. The religion of Christ is a religion of the heart.

Question: What does this mean? _____

2. As a result of this principle, all obedience to Christ must come from the heart ... it must be genuine and sincere or it is worthless!
3. That person whose heart has been purified by the gospel (1 Peter 1:22) will be truly blessed.
4. What does the word *“pure”* mean when Jesus talks about the *“pure in heart”*?
 - a. The word *“pure”* has two meanings ... *“clean”* and *“unmixed”*.
 - b. It is the second meaning that Jesus has in mind in this Beatitude.
 - c. Being *“pure in heart”* involves being unmixed as well as being clean!
 - d. Milk that is pure is not adulterated (mixed) with water.
Gold with the dross removed is pure gold.
Wheat with the chaff removed is pure wheat.

- e. The basic idea is that of integrity, singleness of heart, in contrast with a double heart or a divided heart.

Question: How would you define a double or divided heart? _____

Now note how Jesus defines the problem in Matthew 6:24.

Discuss. _____

5. The "*pure in heart*" kind of person not only does the right things, he does them for the right reasons!

Question: Is there a wrong reason for doing right things?

Discuss. _____

6. Blessed is that person who maintains that purity of heart by continuing to walk by the direction of God's Word.

Question: How does one walk by God's Word?

Note 1 John 1:7. _____

DISCUSSION:

1. In thinking of those who have pure hearts, shouldn't we think of those who keep their minds concentrated only on pure things?

- a. Consider the statement by Paul in Philippians 4:8-9 ...

Discuss the meaning of these verses. _____

- b. If we were to follow this advice, wouldn't we find ourselves in much less trouble than we get into? Discuss. _____

c. Would this passage apply to the TV shows we watch, the movies we go to see, and the kinds of books, magazines, etc. we read? **Discuss.** _____

2. It is because the objects of one's love are so revealing of the heart that God's Word is concerned with setting the qualities of things that men love.

a. Contrast the following two passages: Colossians 3:1-3 and 1 John 2:15-17.

3. If you want to test the level of your own heart's purity, then examine the loves of your heart very conscientiously, and judge the spirituality of them!

Note Proverbs 23:6-7 and Matthew 15:19.

Questions: What do you think about the most? _____

What do you want to do the most? _____

Do you love to think about good things or about bad things? _____

Do you enjoy doing good things or doing evil things? _____

BE HONEST!!!

4. If a person has a spiritually pure heart, it must also be a heart that is undivided in its allegiance to God. (Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37)

5. A person who is trying to love both God and the world is a person who is in conflict!
Discuss. _____

Note Matthew 12:30 ...

Observation: This type of individual is torn between two worlds, is in constant distress and inner turmoil.

Why?

Because his loves pull him in opposite directions.

Questions: Can you think of some examples of this happening?

Discuss. _____

Can this person ever be at peace with God or with himself? _____

Why not? _____

Could you? _____

So, why do we try? _____

APPLICATION:

1. What is the grand outcome of achieving purity of heart?
"They shall see God!"
2. What the Lord is saying is that those of a pure heart are going to dwell forever in the divine presence and favor of God!
3. Our first and major concern should be the purifying of our own hearts before God!
4. Will it make any difference at judgment if our hearts have not been purified?
You tell me!
5. The most important part of your life is the part only God sees!
You see, He knows whether our hearts are pure or not!
 - a. Read and discuss Psalm 139:23-24. _____

I want to challenge you to become "pure in heart."

Think about what changes you would need to make.

Think about what habits you would have to break.

Think about what masks you would have to peel off.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

---- Psalm 51:10



REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO –

THOSE WHO ARE PEACEMAKERS

Text: Matthew 5:9

“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible is a book about peace!
There are nearly 400 references to peace within its pages.
 - a. The Bible speaks of either personal peace with God, or peace among men on an individual or a national level.

2. The Bible opens with peace and closes with peace.
 - a. The reason there is war in between the opening and the closing of the Bible is because of the opposition of Satan and the disobedience of man! **Discuss.**

3. The kingdom of God is supposed to be a peaceful kingdom.

Questions: Is it? _____

How come it doesn't always enjoy the peace it is supposed to? _____

4. The thought of a peaceful spiritual kingdom is in wide contrast with the kingdoms of this world. Note the following passages:

John 18:36

Matthew 20:25-27

Romans 14:17

Discuss. _____

5. Questions: What is peace? _____

Who are the peacemakers? _____

Let's take a closer look at what the Lord is talking about ...

DISCUSSION:

1. Question: What did Christ have to say about peace and His people?

Answer: Read John 14:27 and **discuss.** _____

- a. The peace which comes to men through Jesus Christ is not the same thing that men of the world seek in the name of peace.

2. Question: How is the Lord's idea of peace different from that of the world?

Answer: The world's concept is that of contentment in the sense of having everything go one's way and having everything one wants!

- a. The world many times views peace as something to be attained at the expense of compromise with the enemy!

(1) One man used to say that the only way to get rid of temptation was to give in to it!

Questions: Does that kind of thinking make any sense to you?
Will this kind of thinking help a person to be pleasing to God?

b. Peace at any price usually turns out to be a cruel introduction to slavery!

Discuss. _____

3. What particular type of peace is involved in this Beatitude? _____
Doesn't the kind of peace that the Lord is speaking of include peace in the sense of right relationships among men?

a. The blessing promised is not for those who merely love peace, but for those who **make** peace!

4. Some people are quarrelsome and contentious troublemakers.
They stir up strife in families, communities, and in the church!

Discuss. _____

Questions: Aren't these really doing the work of Satan? Note Proverbs 6:16-19 ...
If God hates these things, what should our attitude be toward them?
What happens to a family when it is peaceful?
What happens to a community when it is peaceful?
What happens to a church when it is at peace?
What is a family like when peace doesn't exist?
What is a community like when peace doesn't exist?
What is a church like when peace doesn't exist?
Which condition in each of these relationships do you prefer?
Why? _____

a. Troublemakers will always reap the fruits of their labors in strife and unhappiness (Galatians 6:7-9).

5. Shouldn't the people of God seek to keep peace among themselves?
Note the following passages of Scripture: Ephesians 4:3 and Hebrews 12:14.

- a. The word **peacemaker** is used only once in the New Testament.
A clear understanding of this word is important.

(1) It does not refer to those who avoid all conflict, those who are relaxed and easygoing, or those who compromise their convictions to appease those who disagree, or those who work for peace at any price!

Questions: Do you try to get along with others?
Can you ever please everybody?
If not, why not?
So, why do we even try?
Are you a troublemaker?
Do you know someone who is a troublemaker?
Do you enjoy being around them?
Do you think others will want to be around you if you are quarrelsome, etc?
Think about it!

- b. The **peacemaker** works actively to settle quarrels, rather than starting them!
Note Rom. 12:18; Rom. 14:19; and James 3:16-18.
- c. Jesus says that peacemakers, not troublemakers, are the happy and satisfied ones!
- d. You see ... other people will see in the peacemaker a quality that is godlike!

Questions: Do others see this great quality in you?
If they don't, do you want to change?
Then what are you waiting for?

6. The reward: "*they shall be called the sons of God.*"

- a. The New Testament refers to God as a God of peace. Romans 16:20; Hebrews 13:20.

- b. Since peace is so much a part of the character of God, could we be His children and not seek the same? **Discuss.** _____
-

APPLICATION:

1. Question: Is there really any happiness to be found in being quick to take offense, being eager to find fault and criticize others, or in being anxious to stir up trouble?

2. Question: Is a man or woman, young or old, happy while being a troublemaker at work, school, in the home or in the church?

- Answer: **Not if their heart is going to be right with God!**

3. Questions: Isn't happiness to be found in the spirit of love, gentleness and kindness? Which type of person have you been? Which will you be in the future?

4. Question: Do others see a **peacemaker** quality in your life?

*"If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men."
— Romans 12:18*





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO –

THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR DOING RIGHT

Text: Matthew 5:10-12

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. There are many reasons why men suffer. Can you think of several reasons?

Discuss. _____

2. At times, men suffer because of their own sins; while at other times, they suffer because of the sins of others. Note 1 Peter 4:14-16.

Questions: Did Jesus ever promise those who would be his followers a life of ease?
Did Jesus ever hide the possibility of suffering from his would-be disciples?

Do we? Discuss these questions: _____

- a. It is true in many cases, those who do what is right are often wronged!
Hebrews 11:35-38 ...

3. Jesus taught that suffering because one faithfully stands for Him and His Word (because of love for Him) is a source of great blessing. Just read the following verses: 1 Pet 1:6-9; 1 Peter. 4:12,13.

Note: If you were living in the early days of the church, consider how it might have been:

You are dragged out of your house and taken to a cold, dark dungeon. You stay there for a day or two, or a week or more. You can hear the sounds of death. Then — it's your turn. You're not taken to the arena where so many other Christians were taken, dressed to look like animals, and then eaten by wild, starving animals. You are put in a cart along with others and taken to a beautiful palace. But you're not there to have fun. They cover you with oil, hang you upside down, light you and use you as a lantern to light their party!

- a. That's the way it was back then.
- b. What's it like now? _____

- c. If you've never been made fun of —
you will one day, if you're trying to do what's right (2 Timothy 3:12).

DISCUSSION:

1. Suffering may be either beneficial or destructible to the one who suffers.
How is this true? _____

Note: The consequences of suffering depend upon how the sufferer reacts to it!

Question: How do you react to being made fun of for doing right? _____

2. Suffering drives some people away from the Lord. Why?
 - a. You see ... it often causes discouragement and even despair.

Question: How does this happen?
Answer: They allow it to happen!

3. Isn't it possible for suffering to cause the sufferer to turn to God even more?

Discuss. Note 1 Peter 4:16; 2 Timothy 3:12. _____

4. Have you been faced with the experience of having to stand up for truth in the face of sin?

a. Discuss some situations which would fall into this category. _____

5. It is easy to talk a good religion, isn't it?

Discuss. _____

6. What should be our attitude toward suffering and persecution?

Note: Christians will be persecuted for at least three reasons:

(1) Because they are different from the world (in the way they dress, their words, their goals and their actions). 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Peter 4:3-4.

(2) Because of the exclusive nature of their religion!

(a) We are to be patient and longsuffering with all men. 1 Thessalonians 5:14.

(b) But we are to be intolerant of false doctrines and evil actions. Galatians 1:8-9.

(c) We must make the distinction between the sin and the sinner!

Questions: What is the distinction?

Does God make this distinction?

Aren't you glad that He does?

Please discuss these thoughts. _____

(3) When we begin to press the claims of Christ on an unbelieving and wicked world!
Mark 16:15-16; John 15:18-21.

7. Suffering will among other things, help the child of God to:

(1) Know himself/herself!

(2) Be thankful for His blessings!

(3) See the value of prayer!

Application:

1. The blessing is promised for those *“who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.”* It is not promised for those who are persecuted for their own opinions.
2. Note Matthew 5:12. *“Great is your reward in heaven.”* The sufferings of this world are not worthy to even be compared with the glory of heaven. Romans 8:18.
3. As God’s people, let us always put Him first in our lives!
4. Questions: Are you willing to suffer for the kingdom of heaven?
(Be careful how you answer)
Are you willing to stand up for Jesus any place and at any time?
Who are you really more concerned about pleasing ...
others or God?

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before me, him will I also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:32, 33)





REAL HAPPINESS COMES TO —

THOSE WHO ARE BLESSED

Text: Psalm 1:1-2

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.”

INTRODUCTION:

1. We have studied the promises of blessings which are distinctly promised to the citizens of the kingdom of heaven!
2. In these Beatitudes, the Lord has taught us the characteristics of the citizen of His kingdom.
3. These are fundamental principles of the Christian character. We hope these lessons have helped you to better understand and appreciate the characteristics of God’s people and the corresponding promises.

DISCUSSION:

1. To bring this series of lessons to a close, let’s take a look in the Old Testament at how David, as he was guided by the Spirit of God, describes the righteous person (which is what we all should strive to be, regardless of age).
2. Read Psalm 1. Notice the contrast between the two types of individuals.
3. The expression *“walks not in the counsel of the ungodly”* ... what does it mean anyway?

Answer: The blessed man doesn't get his advice or direction from men, but from God who created him. Psalm 119:24, 97-100. _____

Question: Who do you look to for advice? _____

Answer: If you look to people of the world, even many of your friends ... they won't tell you what you need to hear, but what you want to hear!
Think about it!

4. Man is in need of direction (Jeremiah 10:23) and only God's Word can guide us safely (Psalm 119:105). _____

5. What does the expression, "*nor stands in the path of sinners*" mean?

Answer: He doesn't have anything to do with them.

He does not associate with them.

Read 1 Corinthians 15:33 and **discuss.** _____

Question: Would it be true that just as bad folks have a negative effect on our lives, that being around good folks will have a positive effect on us?

6. What does the expression "*nor sits in the seat of the scornful*" mean?

Answer: The scornful is one who mocks and ridicules things which are sacred and holy!

Note: One should observe in this passage the progressiveness of sin.

The passage speaks of:

a. walking ... _____

b. then standing ... _____

c. and finally ... sitting! _____

7. Now, discuss Psalm 1:2 ...

Question: Why would one delight in the law of the Lord? Note the following passages of Scripture: Psalm 119:104; John 14:6; John 8:32. _____

8. Note the advice of Paul to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:15.

Question: Do you enjoy reading and meditating on God's Word?

Note: If you don't, then things are not right between you and your Maker!

9. The blessed man(person) delights in the law of the Lord because it is a message from the One he loves ... his Father in heaven!

APPLICATION:

1. You will be blessed or happy if you will delight in God's law! **Read it regularly!**
Study it diligently!

2. Jesus said in John 12:48, "*He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him ... the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.*"

Note: There is nothing more important that you can spend your time in ... than offering service to the King!

3. As this series of lessons closes ... read to yourself the two questions asked by the Lord in Matthew 16:26, "*For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*"

Note: Then consider whether or not you are the blessed one described in Matthew 5 and in Psalm 1. You see ... you need to make it personal!

4. Serving Christ and following Him is greater than ... making straight "A's" ... making money to buy a car ... or having the right clothes!
5. Jesus says for each of us to ... *"Seek first the kingdom ..."* Matthew 6:33!

"...If anyone desire to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross , and follow Me." (Matthew 16:24)

