

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character

A 9-Session Study in Matthew 5:3–12

"What does it really mean to be blessed?"

— THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO —

My Name: _____

My Group: Emmanuel "Baust" UCC

We Meet: Thursday, 6-7 pm

*"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled." — Matthew 5:6*

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook

A Word to You

Welcome. We're genuinely glad you're here.

This little workbook is your companion for the journey ahead — a place to think, question, write, pray, and grow. You don't need to be a Bible scholar to get the most out of it.

You don't need a theology degree or a long history of church attendance. What you need is simply this: a willingness to show up and be honest.

That's it. Show up. Be honest.

Here's what you're holding in your hands: a guide through eight of the most surprising, countercultural, and life-changing sentences Jesus ever spoke. He delivered them on an ordinary hillside in Galilee, to ordinary men and women who had left their fishing nets and market stalls and family tables to follow someone they believed might be extraordinary. He sat down — which meant He was about to teach something important — and He began with the word *blessed*.

And everything He said after that turned the world upside down.

The Beatitudes are not a self-improvement checklist. They are not a ladder to climb or a standard to achieve. They are a portrait — of the kind of person the Kingdom of God produces, and ultimately, of Jesus Himself. As you spend these nine weeks with your group, our prayer is that something in you begins to shift — slowly, gently, the way real change always happens — toward the person God designed you to be.

Use this workbook freely. Write in the margins. Be messy. Be real. The "My Response" sections are just between you and God — no one else will read them unless you choose to share. The questions are meant to open things up, not close them down. If a question hits close to home, lean in. That's usually the point.

Jesus speaks these words still. He speaks them to you, right now, wherever you are on your journey.

Let's begin.

The Beatitudes

MATTHEW 5:3-12 (NIV)

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

*Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.*

*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely
say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad,
because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they
persecuted the prophets who were before you."*

These eight statements are our map for the next 9 weeks.

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook

Series Overview

Nine sessions. Eight Beatitudes. One journey toward Kingdom character.

Session	Title	Key Verse	Key Theme
Induction	Foundations: Getting Started Together	Matthew 5:1–12	What does "blessed" really mean?
Week 1	Empty Hands	Matthew 5:3	Spiritual poverty as the doorway to God
Week 2	Holy Sorrow	Matthew 5:4	Grief that leads to grace
Week 3	Strength Surrendered	Matthew 5:5	Power under God's control
Week 4	Desperate Hunger	Matthew 5:6	Longing for righteousness like life itself
Week 5	Mercy Given and Received	Matthew 5:7	Freely giving what we've freely received
Week 6	Single-Hearted	Matthew 5:8	Undivided devotion to God
Week 7	Bridge Builders	Matthew 5:9	Actively making peace in a divided world
Week 8	Standing Firm	Matthew 5:10–12	Faithfulness under pressure

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook

Our Group Commitment

"As we journey through this study together, we commit to one another to:"

1. **Show up** — We will make attendance a priority and let our group know if we can't make it.
2. **Be honest** — We will be real about where we are, not where we think we should be.
3. **Keep it here** — What's shared in the group stays in the group. Confidentiality is sacred.
4. **Listen well** — We will listen to understand, not just to respond.
5. **Pray for each other** — We will pray for one another between sessions.
6. **Engage the Word** — We will read the Scripture each week and come ready to discuss.
7. **Do the Challenge** — We will attempt the weekly challenge and share what we discover.

Signed: Date:

Keep this covenant somewhere visible this week as a reminder of your commitment to your group.

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook

Induction Session

Foundations: Getting Started Together

Matthew 5:1-12 · What does "blessed" really mean?

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:3–12

Theme:

What does "blessed" really mean?

This Week's Challenge:

Read Matthew 5:3–12 daily and journal one sentence each day.

Opening Question

"If you had to describe a truly flourishing, blessed person, what would that person look like? What does your culture say about who is 'blessed'?"

 **READ TOGETHER**

Matthew 5:3–12 (NIV)

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Did You Know?

The word "blessed" in Greek is *makarios*. It doesn't just mean "happy" — it describes a deep, settled well-being that isn't shaken by circumstances. It was used to describe the gods who lacked nothing. Jesus uses it to describe... people who appear to have nothing. That's the upside-down world of the Kingdom.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

As you read Matthew 5:3–12, what repeated pattern or structure do you notice across all eight Beatitudes?

Q2.

Make a list of the people Jesus calls "blessed." What do they have in common? What surprises you?

🕒 INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Jesus says "theirs IS the kingdom of heaven" (present tense) in verses 3 and 10. What does that tell us about when these blessings apply?

Q4.

How do the people described in these eight Beatitudes differ from the kind of person our culture celebrates as successful or blessed?

Q5.

Looking at all eight together, do you think Jesus is describing eight different types of people, or one complete portrait of a Kingdom person? Why?

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

Which of the eight Beatitudes feels most foreign or challenging to you personally right now?

Q7.

By the end of these nine weeks, what do you hope has changed in how you see yourself, God, or others?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Write freely: Where are you right now on your spiritual journey? Be honest — no one will read this but you. What brings you to this study? What are you hoping for?

Weekly Challenge

Each day this week, slowly re-read Matthew 5:3–12 and sit with it for two minutes in silence. Ask God: *"Which of these words is for me right now?"* Journal one sentence each day.

MEMORY VERSE

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

Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

 Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook | Induction Session

Week 1

Empty Hands

Blessed are the Poor in Spirit · Matthew 5:3

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:3

Theme:

Spiritual poverty as the doorway to God

This Week's Challenge:

Begin each prayer with "Lord, I come to you with empty hands."

Opening Question

"Tell us about a time when you had to ask for help with something you simply couldn't handle on your own. How did it feel to admit you needed help?"

READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

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

Did You Know?

The Greek word for "poor" here is *ptōchos* — not just "not very wealthy" but utterly destitute, like a street beggar crouching with nothing. Jesus chose the strongest possible word for poverty. Spiritually, this means coming to God with absolutely nothing to offer — no achievements, no spiritual track record, nothing. Empty hands.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

What does Jesus promise to those who are "poor in spirit"? When does He say this promise is fulfilled — now or in the future?

Q2.

Who is the "poor in spirit" person NOT? What might the opposite of this look like?

🕒 INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read Luke 18:9–14 (the Pharisee and the Tax Collector). Which man was "poor in spirit"? How can you tell?

Q4.

Why do you think spiritual poverty is the first Beatitude — the starting point of the whole list?

Q5.

Is being poor in spirit a one-time event (like conversion) or an ongoing posture? Explain your thinking.

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

In what area of your life have you been most relying on yourself rather than on God?

Q7.

What would it look like practically — this week — to come to God with "empty hands" in that area?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Honestly, on a scale of 1–10, how spiritually self-sufficient do I feel right now? What am I holding onto that I haven't surrendered to God? Write it down.

Weekly Challenge

Each morning this week, begin your prayer with this phrase: "Lord, I come to you with empty hands." Sit in that posture for one minute before asking for anything. Journal what this brings up.

 **MEMORY VERSE**

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

Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

 Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook | Week 1

Week 2

Holy Sorrow

Blessed are Those Who Mourn · Matthew 5:4

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:4

Theme:

Grief that leads to grace

This Week's Challenge:

Reach out to someone who is mourning — not to fix, just to be present.

 Opening Question

"What is one thing happening in the world right now that genuinely breaks your heart?

Why that particular thing?"

 READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

Did You Know?

The Greek word for "mourn" here — *penthountes* — is the strongest word for grief in the Greek language. It is the word used for mourning someone who has died. Jesus isn't talking about mild sadness. This is the kind of grief that cannot be hidden or suppressed. It comes pouring out.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

What is the promise attached to those who mourn? What does the word "comforted" suggest about God's response to grief?

Q2.

What different kinds of mourning can you identify — not just loss of a loved one, but other forms of deep grief?

INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read 2 Corinthians 7:10. What is the difference between "godly grief" and "worldly grief"? Which kind do you think Jesus is describing here?

Q4.

How does this Beatitude connect to the one before it — spiritual poverty leading to mourning? What flows naturally from seeing your own need before God?

 Did You Know?

The word "comforted" in Matthew 5:4 is *parakléthésontai* — from the same root as *parakletos*, one of the names for the Holy Spirit meaning "Comforter" or "Advocate." It means to be called alongside, to have someone come to your aid. God's comfort is not distant — it is a presence that comes close.

Q5.

Jesus says these mourners "will be comforted." Read Isaiah 61:1–3. Who is the Comforter, and what does comfort from God look like?

APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

Is there something in your own life — a sin, a loss, a broken relationship — that you have been avoiding mourning? What would it mean to bring that grief honestly before God?

Q7.

Who in your life is mourning right now? What is one way you could sit with them in their grief this week — not to fix it, but simply to be present?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Write a brief, honest prayer to God about something you are grieving. It doesn't need to be polished. Just honest.

Weekly Challenge

Choose one person in your life who is carrying grief right now. Reach out to them this week — not to fix anything, just to listen and be present. Notice how it feels to mourn with someone rather than away from them.

MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted."***

Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

Week 3

Strength Surrendered

Blessed are the Meek · Matthew 5:5

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:5

Theme:

Power under God's control

This Week's Challenge:

Identify one situation and choose meekness — then journal how it goes.

Opening Question

"Who is someone you would describe as genuinely gentle or meek — not weak, but quietly strong? What makes them stand out?"

READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:5 (NIV)

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."

Did You Know?

The Greek word *praus* (meek) was used in ancient times to describe a wild horse that had been trained and brought under control — not broken, but disciplined. All the power is still there. The difference is: now it is directed. Meekness is not weakness; it is strength submitted to God.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

What is the promise to the meek? The phrase "inherit the earth" is a direct quote from Psalm 37:11 — what does it suggest about the meek person's future?

Q2.

What might the opposite of meekness look like? What would a "non-meek" person do when they feel wronged or overlooked?

INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read Matthew 11:29 where Jesus describes Himself as "meek and lowly in heart." How does Jesus model meekness in His life and ministry?

Did You Know?

Meekness (*praus*) appears in Galatians 5:23 as a fruit of the Spirit. It is listed alongside gentleness. The point is significant: this quality is not manufactured through willpower — it is

grown by the Spirit working in us from the inside out. We don't become meek by trying harder; we become meek by staying connected to the Vine (John 15).

Q4.

Meekness is listed as a fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:23. Does that change how you think about who can be meek? Can it be manufactured, or must it be grown?

Q5.

In what ways does our culture celebrate the opposite of meekness? How does this Beatitude challenge those cultural values?

APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

In what situation are you most tempted to assert yourself, demand your rights, or react rather than respond? What would a meek response look like in that situation?

Q7.

What is one relationship or situation in your life where choosing meekness feels costly? What would it take to choose it anyway?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Describe your natural reaction when you feel overlooked, dismissed, or wronged. Then describe what a meek response might look like instead. What would need to change in you for that to happen?

Weekly Challenge

Identify one situation this week where your instinct will be to assert yourself or react defensively. Choose meekness instead — and journal how it goes. What happened? How did it feel?

✦ MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth."***

Matthew 5:5 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

 Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

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Week 4

Desperate Hunger

Blessed are Those Who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness · Matthew 5:6

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:6

Theme:

Longing for righteousness like life itself

This Week's Challenge:

Let physical hunger prompt prayer — and read one Psalm a day as spiritual food.

 Opening Question

"What is something you have wanted so badly that it consumed your thoughts — something urgent, something you couldn't stop thinking about? What made it feel so urgent?"

 READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

 Did You Know?

In the ancient world, most people experienced real, physical hunger and thirst regularly — not as mild discomfort but as life-threatening urgency. When Jesus says "hunger and thirst," He means survival-level craving. He is asking: Do you want righteousness the way a starving person wants food? That's the bar.

 OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

What does Jesus promise those who hunger and thirst for righteousness? What does "filled" suggest about how completely God meets this longing?

Q2.

The word "righteousness" could mean two things: being made right with God, or living rightly before others. Which do you think Jesus means here — or could it be both?

INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read Isaiah 55:1–2. How does God's invitation in this passage connect to the hunger and thirst Jesus describes in Matthew 5:6?

Did You Know?

In John 6:35, Jesus says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." The answer to the hunger Jesus describes in Matthew 5:6 is not a spiritual discipline — it is a Person. Jesus Himself is the food that satisfies. This Beatitude is ultimately a pointer to Him.

Q4.

Read John 6:35, where Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." How is Jesus Himself the answer to this hunger? What does that mean practically?

Q5.

How does this Beatitude connect to the three before it — poverty of spirit, mourning, meekness, then hunger? Do you see a progression or flow?

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

On a scale of 1–10, how hungry are you for God right now? What has been feeding you — and what has been dulling your spiritual appetite?

Q7.

What is one practical change you could make this week to increase your hunger for God and His righteousness?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Honestly: What are you most hungry for right now? Is it God — or something else? Write a prayer asking God to make you as hungry for Him as you are for the things that currently consume you.

Weekly Challenge

For three days this week, every time you feel physical hunger, stop and pray: *"Lord, make me this hungry for You."* Keep a simple note of what God stirs in you. Try reading one Psalm each day as spiritual "food."

MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled."***

Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

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Week 5

Mercy Given and Received

Blessed are the Merciful · Matthew 5:7

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:7

Theme:

Freely giving what we've freely received

This Week's Challenge:

Take one concrete step toward extending mercy to someone you've been withholding it from.

Opening Question

"Tell us about a time someone showed you unexpected mercy or forgiveness. How did it affect you — in the moment and afterward?"

READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:7 (NIV)

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."

Did You Know?

The Greek word *eleēmones* (merciful) comes from *eleos* — the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *hesed*, which means steadfast, covenant love. This is the word used over and over in the Old Testament for God's loyal, enduring love. Mercy is not just a feeling — it is an active, costly choice to withhold the judgment someone deserves.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

What is the promise to the merciful? Does Jesus mean that we earn mercy from God by showing mercy to others — or is something else going on?

Q2.

What's the difference between mercy, grace, and justice? (Mercy = withholding deserved punishment; Grace = giving undeserved favor; Justice = giving what is deserved.) How do all three appear in the gospel?

INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read Matthew 18:21–35 (the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant). What does this story reveal about the connection between receiving mercy and giving mercy?

Did You Know?

Micah 6:8 is one of the most famous verses in the Old Testament: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Notice that we are not just called to *show* mercy — we are called to *love* it. Mercy is to be something we delight in, not merely tolerate.

Q4.

Read Micah 6:8. How does this Old Testament call to "love mercy" connect to what Jesus says in Matthew 5:7?

Q5.

Is there a limit to mercy? Can mercy be abused or become enabling? How do you hold mercy and wisdom together?

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

Is there someone in your life right now to whom you have been withholding mercy or forgiveness? What is the cost of holding onto it — to you?

Q7.

What would it look like to take one step toward extending mercy to that person this week — not necessarily reconciliation, but mercy?

 My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Think of someone you find it hardest to show mercy to right now. Write honestly about why. Then write a short prayer asking God to give you His heart toward that person.

Weekly Challenge

Identify one person you have been withholding mercy or forgiveness from. This week, take one concrete step — a prayer for them, a letter you don't send yet, or a direct conversation. Start somewhere.

MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy."***

Matthew 5:7 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

Week 6

Single-Hearted

Blessed are the Pure in Heart · Matthew 5:8

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:8

Theme:

Undivided devotion to God

This Week's Challenge:

Spend five quiet minutes daily asking God what is dividing your heart.

Opening Question

"What tends to divide your attention or pull your focus away from the people and things that matter most to you? What competes for your heart?"

READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:8 (NIV)

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

Did You Know?

The Greek word *katharos* (pure) meant "unmixed" or "unalloyed" — like gold with no impurities, wine with no water added, or grain with no chaff. A pure heart is not a sinless heart (no one has that!), but an undivided one — a heart that wants one thing above all others. Jesus is describing single-minded devotion.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

What is the extraordinary promise to those who are pure in heart? What does it mean to "see God"?

Q2.

In the Bible, "heart" doesn't just mean emotions — it means the center of a person's will, mind, and desires. Knowing that, what does a "pure heart" actually refer to?

🕒 INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read Psalm 24:3-4. What does it say about who can "stand in His holy place"? How does this connect to Jesus' promise in Matthew 5:8?

💡 **Did You Know?**

James 4:8 says "purify your hearts, you double-minded." The Greek word for double-minded is *dipsychos* — literally "two-souled." It describes a person pulled in two directions at once, like a person trying to serve two masters. Jesus addresses this directly in Matthew 6:24. You cannot

worship God and something else simultaneously. Purity of heart means choosing — again and again — what comes first.

Q4.

Read James 4:8 — "purify your hearts, you double-minded." What does double-mindedness look like in practical life? What is its opposite?

Q5.

How does purity of heart differ from religious performance or moral appearance? Can you look "pure" on the outside while being divided on the inside? What does Jesus say about that in Matthew 23:25-26?

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

What is the one thing that most divides your heart right now — something competing with your devotion to God?

Q7.

What is one practical step you can take this week toward greater singleness of heart?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Pray Psalm 139:23–24 slowly and write what comes up: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Be honest.

Weekly Challenge

Each day this week, spend five quiet minutes asking God: "Lord, what is dividing my heart?" Use Psalm 139:23–24 as your opening prayer. Record one honest answer each day.

✦ MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God."***

Matthew 5:8 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

 Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

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Week 7

Bridge Builders

Blessed are the Peacemakers · Matthew 5:9

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:9

Theme:

Actively making peace in a divided world

This Week's Challenge:

Take one step toward being a bridge-builder in a broken relationship or conflict.

 Opening Question

"Think of a time when a conflict was resolved well — maybe in your family, your workplace, or your community. What made the difference? What did the peacemaker do?"

 READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Did You Know?

The Greek word *eirēnopoioi* combines *eirēnē* (peace) with *poieō* (to make or do). This is not passive — not just "people who avoid conflict" — but active peace-makers. The Hebrew concept behind *eirēnē* is *shalom*: not just the absence of fighting, but wholeness, flourishing, and right relationships. Peacemakers enter conflict redemptively to create shalom.

OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

Jesus says peacemakers will be called "children of God." Why this title specifically? What does it suggest about the character of God?

Q2.

What is the difference between a peacekeeper (avoiding conflict to keep the surface calm) and a peacemaker (entering conflict to create real resolution)? Which is harder?

🕒 INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Read Colossians 1:19–20. How did Jesus Himself make peace — and what did it cost Him?
How does that shape what peacemaking might cost us?

💡 Did You Know?

Romans 12:18 says: *"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*
Notice the realism in those two phrases — "if it is possible" and "as far as it depends on you."
God does not require you to achieve peace with everyone; He requires you to pursue it with everything in you. Some doors will stay closed. Your job is to knock.

Q4.

Read Romans 12:18 — "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." What does the phrase "as far as it depends on you" acknowledge about the limits of peacemaking?

Q5.

Where do you see the greatest need for peacemaking today — in families, churches, communities, nations? What does it look like for a Christ-follower to be a bridge-builder in those spaces?

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

Is there a broken relationship, a conflict, or a division in your life that you have been avoiding rather than engaging? What has kept you from stepping in?

Q7.

What is one concrete step you could take this week to be a bridge-builder in that situation?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Write honestly: Where is God calling me to be a peacemaker — and what am I afraid will happen if I try? What would it look like to trust God with the outcome?

Weekly Challenge

Choose one broken relationship or unresolved conflict in your life — family, friend, colleague, or church. This week, take one step toward being a bridge-builder: reach out, listen, apologize, or initiate a conversation. Even a small step counts.

MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God."***

Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

 Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

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Week 8

Standing Firm

Blessed are Those Who are Persecuted for Righteousness · Matthew 5:10–12

At a Glance

Key Verse:

Matthew 5:10–12

Theme:

Faithfulness under pressure

This Week's Challenge:

Pray for persecuted Christians worldwide — research one country and pray specifically.

Opening Question

"Have you ever experienced any kind of pushback, cost, or awkwardness because of your faith — even something minor? How did you respond in that moment?"

READ TOGETHER

Matthew 5:10–12 (NIV)

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Did You Know?

The Greek word *dediōgmenoi* (persecuted) is a perfect participle of *diōkō* — meaning "those who have been hunted and pursued like prey." It describes ongoing, sustained pressure — not a one-time incident. Jesus takes the possibility of suffering for His sake seriously. He doesn't promise it will be easy. He promises it will be worth it.

 OBSERVATION — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Q1.

Jesus gives two parallel statements in verses 10–12 — one in third person ("Blessed are those...") and then one in second person ("Blessed are you..."). What is the effect of that shift? Why does He make it personal?

Q2.

What does Jesus command His followers to do in response to persecution (v. 12)? How does that strike you?

 INTERPRETATION — WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Q3.

Jesus says persecution comes "because of righteousness" and "because of me" (v. 11). What's the important distinction here between suffering for faith and suffering for being difficult, arrogant, or obnoxious?

 Did You Know?

In 2 Timothy 3:12, Paul writes: *"In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."* Notice: not "might" or "could" — but "will." For the early church, opposition was not the exception; it was the norm. Our cultural comfort can make this passage feel distant — but for hundreds of millions of Christians around the world today, it is their daily reality.

Q4.

Read 2 Timothy 3:12. How does Paul's statement change how we view suffering for faith — is it exceptional, or should it be expected?

Q5.

This Beatitude closes with the same promise as the first (v. 3 and v. 10): "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Why do you think Jesus brackets the entire list with this same promise? What is He saying about the Kingdom?

 APPLICATION — WHAT WILL I DO?

Q6.

In your current context, what does it actually cost you to follow Jesus faithfully — socially, professionally, or relationally?

Q7.

Looking back across all eight Beatitudes, which one has most challenged or changed you through this study? Where do you see real growth, and where do you still have a long way to go?

My Response — Personal Reflection

This is just between you and God. Take your time.

Write a letter to yourself to open in one year. What do you want to be true about your character, your faith, and your life in 12 months? How do the Beatitudes describe the person you want to become?

Weekly Challenge

Pray specifically this week for Christians around the world who face real, violent persecution for their faith. Research one country where believers are persecuted (the Open Doors World Watch List is a great resource) and pray for them by name if possible. Consider writing a note of encouragement through Voice of the Martyrs or Open Doors.

MEMORY VERSE

***"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."***

Matthew 5:10 (NIV)

I will memorize this verse this week. ☐

Prayer Notes

This week I am praying for:

My personal prayer request this week is:

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook | Week 8

My Journey Through the Beatitudes

SERIES REFLECTION

You've made it. Take some time with these questions — alone, honestly, unhurried. This is your record of what God has done in you through this study.

- 1. The Beatitude that challenged me the most:*
- 2. The Beatitude where I saw the most growth:*
- 3. One way I have changed through this study:*
- 4. A truth I want to carry with me from this series:*
- 5. What I want to keep working on:*

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook | Series Reflection

Memory Verse Cards

Cut out these cards and carry one with you each week of the study.

Matthew 5:3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:5 *"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:7 *"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:9 *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:4 *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:6 *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:8 *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."* Memorized ☐

Matthew 5:10 *"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* Memorized ☐

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook | Memory Verse Cards

A Final Word

You did it. Nine sessions. Eight Beatitudes. And something — perhaps many things — has quietly shifted in you along the way.

Here is the most important thing to carry with you as you close this workbook:

"The Beatitudes are not a checklist. They are not eight items to tick off before you qualify as a serious Christian. They are a portrait — and the portrait is of Jesus."

Every quality described in these eight statements is found perfectly and fully in Him. He is the One who came with empty hands, who wept over Jerusalem, who was meek enough to ride a donkey instead of a warhorse, who hungered for the Father's will above His own comfort, who showed mercy to everyone who asked — and many who didn't. He is pure in heart, and He is the great Peacemaker, reconciling the world to God through His own blood. And He stood firm under the greatest pressure any human being has ever faced.

We don't become people of Kingdom character by trying harder. We become like Him by knowing Him — by spending time in His Word, in prayer, in community with others who are on the same road, and by allowing His Spirit to do what only He can do: change us from the inside out.

So keep going. Don't close this workbook and put it on a shelf. Keep coming back to Matthew 5:3–12. Let it challenge you, comfort you, convict you, and draw you forward. Find a community of people who are hungry for the same things. And remember:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."
— Matthew 5:6

The promise is real. The One who made it is faithful.

Keep going. He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.

— Philippians 1:6

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook
Matthew 5:3–12 (NIV)

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Participant Workbook | A Final Word

Memory Verse Cards

Print and cut the cards below — one per participant per week. Encourage group members to place them somewhere visible: a phone case, a wallet, a bathroom mirror, or a car dashboard.

Induction — Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

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

Week 1 — Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

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

Week 2 — Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

Week 3 — Matthew 5:5 (NIV)

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."

Week 4 — Matthew 5:6 (NIV)

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

Week 5 — Matthew 5:7 (NIV)

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."

Week 6 — Matthew 5:8 (NIV)

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

Week 7 — Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Week 8 — Matthew 5:10 (NIV)

"Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Series Evaluation Form

The Beatitudes: Kingdom Character — Series Evaluation

Anonymous — please be honest. Your feedback is genuinely valued.

1. Overall, how would you rate your experience of this study?

☐ Excellent ☐ Very Good ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Needs Improvement

Comments:

2. Which session impacted you most, and why?

Session: _____

Why:

3. How effective were the discussion questions in helping you engage with the Scripture?

☐ Very effective ☐ Mostly effective ☐ Somewhat effective ☐ Not very effective

What would have made them better?

4. How has this study changed the way you think about or live the Beatitudes?

5. What study would you most like your group to do next? Any other feedback for your leader?

Thank you for being part of this study. May the Beatitudes become less something you know and more something you are.
