

THE STUDY GUIDE



BLESSED

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Beginning Sunday, June 7, Pastor Bobby Griffith will lead us through "Blessed," a new sermon series on the Beatitudes from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. In a world that often defines blessing through success, comfort, control, and certainty, Jesus offers a surprising and deeply hopeful vision of life in God's kingdom. Week by week, we'll explore what it means to be poor in spirit, to mourn, to practice meekness, to hunger for righteousness, to show mercy, to pursue purity of heart, to make peace, and to remain faithful even in the face of opposition. This series invites us to see blessing not as something we achieve, but as something we receive as we learn to live more fully in the way of Jesus.

SERIES SCHEDULE:

June 07

Matthew 5:3

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

June 14

Matthew 5:4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

June 21

Matthew 5:5

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth

June 28

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied

July 05

Matthew 5:7

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy

July 12
Matthew 5:8
Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God

July 19
Matthew 5:9
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God

July 26
Matthew 5:10-12
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Selected Bibliography/Suggested Readings

NT Wright, Matthew for Everyone: Volume One

F. Dale Bruner, The Christbook (Matthew 1-12)

John Calvin, Sermons on the Beatitudes

John Stott, The Message of the Sermon on the Mount

Bonnie Pattison, Poverty in the Theology of John Calvin

Tim Keller, Walking with God through Pain and Suffering

Alan Noble, On Getting Out of Bed: The Burden and Gift of
Living

Bessel van der Kolk, The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind
and Body in the Healing of Trauma

Lesson Number 1:

Matthew 5:3

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

- When you hear the phrase “blessed are the poor,” what expectations or assumptions does it challenge in your understanding of blessing and success?

(Why might Jesus’ audience have found this statement surprising—or even unsettling?)

- In what ways can “poverty” be understood both materially and spiritually in this verse?

How do these two dimensions relate to each other rather than compete?

- Why might those who are materially poor be especially positioned to receive or recognize the kingdom of heaven?

What realities of dependence, vulnerability, or injustice come into view?

- What does it mean to be “poor in spirit”?

How is this different from false humility or self-deprecation, and how might it reflect a genuine dependence on God?

- Jesus says the kingdom of heaven already belongs to the poor in spirit (“theirs is...”). Why is this present-tense promise significant?

What does it reveal about how God’s kingdom operates differently from worldly systems?

- If this blessing is truly “shocking,” what does it expose about our own values, church culture, or assumptions about who is favored by God?

How might this reshape the way we see and engage with both material poverty and spiritual need?



Lesson Number 2:

Matthew 5:4

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

- When Jesus says, “Blessed are those who mourn,” what kinds of grief or sorrow do you think he includes?

How might this extend beyond loss (death) to include anxiety, depression, burnout, or emotional pain?

- Why might it feel surprising—or even uncomfortable—that mourning is called “blessed”?

What does this reveal about how God views our emotional struggles compared to how we often view them?

- What does healthy mourning look like in contrast to avoiding, suppressing, or being overwhelmed by emotions?

How can faith create space for honest lament rather than forcing positivity?

- Jesus promises that those who mourn “will be comforted.” What kind of comfort do you think he is describing?

How might this include God’s presence, community support, and practical care for mental and emotional health?

- How can the church become a place where people feel safe to bring their grief, mental health struggles, and emotional burdens?

What barriers might need to be addressed to make that kind of community possible?



Lesson Number 3:

Matthew 5:5

*Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth*

- When you hear the word “meek,” what images or assumptions come to mind?

How does defining meekness as “strength under pressure” challenge or reshape that understanding?

- How does Jesus’ view of meekness differ from the world’s definition of strength and power?

What examples do we see in culture that equate power with control, dominance, or self-assertion?

- In what ways does Jesus model meekness throughout his life and ministry?

How do moments of restraint, humility, or surrender reveal a deeper kind of strength?

- What does it look like to live with “strength under pressure” in real-life situations—conflict, stress, injustice, or criticism?

Where is the line between meekness and passivity?

- Jesus promises that the meek “will inherit the earth.” Why is this surprising?

What does this promise suggest about how God ultimately defines victory, authority, and inheritance?



Lesson Number 4:

Matthew 5:6

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied*

- What does it mean to “hunger and thirst for righteousness”?
How is this different from simply wanting to be a good person or doing the right thing occasionally?
- Why does Jesus use such intense physical language—hunger and thirst—to describe spiritual desire?
What does this reveal about the depth and urgency of the longing he’s describing?
- How might this hunger include both a personal desire for holiness and a longing for justice in the world?
How do these two aspects of righteousness belong together?
- What are some things in our lives or culture that compete with or dull our hunger for righteousness?
How can we recognize when our spiritual appetite has been replaced or numbed?
- Jesus promises that those who hunger and thirst “will be filled.” What kind of fulfillment do you think he means?
How is this promise different from the temporary satisfaction offered by success, comfort, or achievement?



Lesson Number 5:

Matthew 5:7

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall receive mercy*

- What comes to mind when you hear the word “mercy”?
How is mercy different from kindness, forgiveness, or justice?
- Why might it be surprising that Jesus says the merciful “will be shown mercy”?
How does this challenge the instinct to withhold mercy from those we feel don’t deserve it?
- How does experiencing God’s mercy shape our ability to show mercy to others?
What happens when we lose sight of the mercy we’ve received?
- What are practical ways we can show mercy in everyday life—especially toward those who have hurt us or wronged us?
Where do you find this most difficult?
- How do mercy and justice work together in the kingdom of God?
How is this different from how the world often separates or opposes the two?



Lesson Number 6:

Matthew 5:8

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

- What does Jesus mean by “pure in heart”?
How is this different from outward religious behavior or simply “being a good person”?
- Why do you think Jesus connects purity of heart with the promise of “seeing God”?
What does it mean to “see God” in both present experience and future hope?
- What are some things that can divide or clutter our hearts—mixed motives, distractions, hidden sin?
How do these affect our ability to recognize God’s presence?
- How is purity of heart less about perfection and more about integrity or single-minded devotion to God?
What might that look like in everyday life?
- In a world full of noise, comparison, and competing loyalties, how can we cultivate a “pure heart”?
What spiritual practices or habits help us remain focused on God?



Lesson Number 7:

Matthew 5:9

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

- What does Jesus mean by “peacemakers”?
How is peacemaking different from simply avoiding conflict or keeping the peace?
- Why do you think Jesus connects peacemaking with being called “children of God”?
What does this reveal about God’s character and the family likeness believers are meant to reflect?
- How does biblical peacemaking go beyond surface-level harmony to address deeper issues like justice, reconciliation, and restoration?
Where do we see this modeled in Jesus’ ministry?
- In what situations is it most difficult to be a peacemaker?
What risks or sacrifices are often required to pursue true peace?
- If peacemakers are identified as God’s children, how should that shape the church’s role in a divided and polarized world?
What might it look like for your community to live this out practically?



Lesson Number 7: Matthew 5:10-12

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

*Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account
Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is in heaven,
for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you*

- Jesus says those who are persecuted “because of righteousness” are blessed. What does it mean to suffer for righteousness rather than for our own mistakes or behavior?
Why is that distinction important?
- Why would faithful obedience to Jesus lead to opposition or rejection?
What does this reveal about the values of God’s kingdom compared to the world?
- Jesus repeats, “theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” How does this promise (also in v.3) frame both the beginning and end of the Beatitudes?
What does it say about who truly belongs to God’s kingdom?
- “Rejoice and be glad” in persecution feels unrealistic. What kind of hope or perspective makes that response possible?
How does the promise of “great reward in heaven” reshape present suffering?
- Jesus connects his followers to the prophets who were persecuted before them. How does this sense of shared story and identity strengthen believers today?
What does it mean to stand in that same line of faithfulness?



Share Your Story

Invest in Others

Read the Word

Pray Faithfully

Worship Passionately

Serve Community

Give Generously



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ADDITIONAL NOTES

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