



Discussion Guide

Date: 11/23/2025

Sermon Title: What does it mean to be blessed?

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy and gracious God, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that as we read and reflect upon your Word, we may discover anew what it truly means to be blessed in your Kingdom. Help us to see your love at work in small things, quiet moments, and ordinary faithfulness. Shape us into people who reflect Christ's love in all we say and do. Amen.

Opening Question:

1. When you hear the word “blessed,” what comes to mind? How do you think our culture defines blessing? What does it mean to be blessed?

Digging into the Word:

The Beatitudes are not just promises about the future; they describe the character and posture of God’s people today. Jesus proclaims a radically different understanding of what it means to be blessed—not wealth, power, comfort, or success, but courage, humility, mercy, justice, peacemaking, and faithfulness.

Read Matthew 5:1-12 (NRSV). Consider reading twice; once aloud, and once silently. Even a few different versions prior to digging into these questions.

1. Which Beatitude is most challenging for you personally? Why?
2. How does Jesus’ description of being blessed compare with how society defines blessing? How does Jesus's definition of blessing challenge our modern cultural understanding of success and fortune?
3. What does it look like to be “poor in spirit” in everyday life? What does it mean to be 'poor in spirit' and why would Jesus consider this a blessed state rather than a deficit?
4. How can mourning lead us into deeper compassion and hope?
5. Jesus blesses the meek—a word often misunderstood. What does true humility look like in following Christ?
6. What are examples of hungering and thirsting for righteousness in small, practical ways?
7. Where have you experienced mercy—from others or from God—and how has it changed you?
8. How can we be peacemakers, especially in divided or tense environments?

Other scriptures to consider:

Luke 6:20-23; James 1:12; Romans 5:3-5; Philippians 2:5-8

Sermon Questions:

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1. Pastor Clayton talks about being blessed in who you are not what you have, do you agree or disagree? What does this mean to you? If you asked others, what would they say about your character?
2. Where have you struggled with comparison of others in what you have or have not?
3. Pastor Clayton mentions that meekness is “strength under-control”. How does understanding meekness as strength under control rather than weakness change your perspective on humility before God?
4. Those who are pure in heart see God in others, who do you see God in? Who do you need to see them as God sees them?
5. In the scripture Pastor Clayton shares that we are blessed by God in the valley. Do you find this to be true? Can you identify a time when mourning actually revealed how blessed you were to have deeply loved someone or something?
6. In the sermon, we are told that we are blessed so that we can bless others. How are you blessing others because you are blessed?

Applying it:

1. What does it look like practically to hunger and thirst for righteousness in your workplace or daily life when others are cutting corners?
2. What character traits does Jesus emphasize in the Beatitudes and how do they differ from what you might list on a resume or value in society?
3. As we approach Thanksgiving, what blessings in your life have you overlooked that God might be inviting you to recognize and share with others?

Wesleyan-Theological Reflection:

John Wesley called the Sermon on the Mount “the sum of all true religion” and believed that it describes the inward and outward holiness God invites us into as transformed people. Wesley insisted that holiness is lived through both personal devotion and practical mercy—what he called “holiness of heart and life.” Being blessed is not about comfort or ease; it is about living in alignment with God’s Kingdom where love reigns, the last are first, and grace transforms suffering into hope.

CLOSING PRAYER

God of blessing and hope, thank you for calling us to live as citizens of your Kingdom. Help us to embody the Beatitudes in our daily lives, to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you. Give us courage to live out small acts of great love so that others may see Christ in us. Bless us so that we may be a blessing to the world, in the name of Jesus, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND (or challenges for you this week)

1. Choose one Beatitude and:
 - a. Pray daily asking God to cultivate this virtue within you.
 - b. Practice it in one small concrete action.
 - c. Reflect at week’s end where you saw God’s blessing in it.