

## PRAYER

- Thank God for how His ways are different from what the world dictates. Pray that your life would be a reflection of His righteousness and His Kingdom.
- Pray that you would be blessed and find your wholeness and security in Christ. Pray that you would follow Jesus no matter what the cost.
- Ask God to use your life as a reflection of Him to others. Pray for your family members and friends who don't know Christ yet—even those who persecute, insult, or falsely accuse you. Believe God for their salvation.

## NOTES

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WEEK 1

## A Christian's Character: The Beatitudes

### WARM-UP

- Recall the most difficult subject you ever had in school. What did you do to understand it?
- Tell us about the most memorable thing a parent or teacher has ever told you. Why do you still remember it?
- What makes you happy? Why?

### WORD

*<sup>1</sup>Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup>And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: . . .  
<sup>12</sup>"Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." MATTHEW 5:1,2,12*

(Read also **MATTHEW 5:3-11.**)

Matthew 5 to 7 is popularly known as the Sermon on the Mount. In these chapters, Jesus teaches His followers a new way of living—based on a new righteousness found in Christ alone. In this first passage of the sermon, Jesus identifies character qualities that should be reflected in His followers. He contrasts the blessing God gives with whom the world rejects, and He promises a reward for those who faithfully obey Him from their hearts. In this lesson, we will look at these beatitudes and summarize the qualities that each follower should have.

## 1 Humility

<sup>3</sup>*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* <sup>4</sup>*Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.* <sup>5</sup>*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*” **MATTHEW 5:3-5**

According to Jesus, those who are *poor in spirit*, *mourn*, and are *meek* will enter the *Kingdom of heaven*, receive comfort from God, and *inherit the earth*. Humility is acknowledging who we are before God, trusting Him to direct our lives, and longing for His will to be done. According to James 4:6, what does God give to the humble? What does He do to the proud?

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## 2 Purity

<sup>6</sup>*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.* <sup>7</sup>*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.* <sup>8</sup>*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*” **MATTHEW 5:6-8**

Jesus said that those who desire righteousness, give mercy, and have purity in their hearts and lives will receive great rewards. They will be *satisfied*, *they shall receive mercy*, and they will *see God*. Why does purity have to be complete? Why do you think we have to be pure in our hearts, words, and actions?

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## 3 Peace

<sup>9</sup>*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.* <sup>10</sup>*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* <sup>11</sup>*Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.*” **MATTHEW 5:9-11**

Jesus goes on to commend those who make peace, as well as those who are persecuted, insulted, and falsely accused because they are followers of Jesus. Christians are to make and love peace, even when they receive persecution and hardship for their faith. The reward of living this way is being *called the sons of God*, entering *the Kingdom of heaven*, and receiving the greater rewards of eternity. Have you experienced persecution for your faith? How have you learned to respond with peace and love?

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## APPLICATION

- If you are a follower of Christ, how are you called to live differently? If you are not a follower of Christ, are you willing to surrender your life to Him, trust Him for your salvation, and live according to His ways today?
- Which of the three character qualities do you need to develop in your life? What's one thing you will start doing differently? Choose one of the beatitudes and meditate on it this week. Ask God to let His Word come alive in your life.
- What will you do when you are persecuted for being a follower of Jesus? How will you respond to questions about your faith? How can you prepare for this starting today?