

# WHAT ARE CHRISTIANS KNOWN FOR?

MATTHEW 5:3-6

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – SEPTEMBER 15, 2024

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## SCRIPTURE READING

*Matthew 5:3-6 ESV*

<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.

<sup>6</sup>“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

## ICE BREAKER QUESTION

What are some things that people often have in mind when they speak of the ‘blessings’ of God? How would you characterize these things?

## SERMON RECAP

In the Beatitudes, Jesus is preparing people for the kind of life He is calling them to live.

- The term ‘blessed’, as used in today’s passage, reflects an observation rather than a promise. It refers to someone who is flourishing according to God’s design, who is living the good life, the truly fulfilled or blessed life (vs. ‘flourishing’ according to worldly standards).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Observation: What does the passage say?**

1. Read Matthew 5:1-6 aloud as a group. Before interpreting or applying the passage, share observations about it.
  - Who did Jesus address in this passage? (Matthew 5:1)
  - Where did the events of this passage take place? (Matthew 4:12-17)
  - Overall, what was the core message of Jesus preaching? (Matthew 4:17, 23)
2. How would you explain or summarize today’s scriptures in your own words?

**Interpretation: What does the passage mean?**

1. What stands out to you most as you read and consider this passage?
2. Based on consideration of Matthew 4:17 and 23 and your own observations on Matthew 5:1-6, what is the main point God is making through today’s passage?
3. Share observations about Jesus’ words in each of the beatitudes in today’s passage in light of related Old Testament themes:
  - Consider Matthew 5:3, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, ...” in light of Isaiah 61:1a
  - Consider Matthew 5:4, “Blessed are those who mourn, ...” in light of Isaiah 61:2-3
  - Consider Matthew 5:5, “Blessed are the meek, ...” in light of Psalm 37:10-11

- Consider Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, ...” in light of Psalm 42:1-11 and Isaiah 55:1-2

***Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?***

1. How do the things that we often refer to as blessings compare to the blessings referred to and described in this passage?
2. To be ‘poor in spirit’ is to be totally and desperately dependent on God.
  - In what ways are you resistant to being ‘poor in spirit’? Why is this so?
  - What truths about the Lord and His kingdom can free you of this resistance and allow you to know the kingdom of heaven by becoming ‘poor in spirit’?
3. To ‘mourn’ is to grieve over suffering – not just our personal suffering, but also, at a deeper level, the existence of suffering as a symptom of a creation that has been fractured by the curse of sin.
  - What is your reflexive reaction to suffering, either yours or that of others? Why is this so?
  - What truths about the Lord and His kingdom can free you from this reaction and allow you to mourn in faith, receiving His comfort and sharing it with others? (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)
4. To be ‘meek’ is to be mild and gentle, to resist pursuing one’s own ‘rights’ and, instead, exercise God's strength under His control.
  - Based on this understanding, what does it take to be biblically meek?
  - What truths about the Lord and His kingdom encourage and enable you to be meek according to the Scriptures?
5. To ‘hunger and thirst for righteousness’ is to pursue a personal life and a broader world that is remade and built on the righteousness of God.
  - What truths about the Lord and His kingdom encourage and enable you to hunger and thirst for the manifestation of God’s righteousness in you and across the broader world?
6. How do you need to respond to Jesus?

## **LEADER NOTES**

**SUPPORT FOSTER CHILDREN** | While initial interest meetings at each location are now over, there are still many ways to learn more about serving foster children and families in our area. Check out [mcleanbible.org/foster](http://mcleanbible.org/foster) for information on fostering, mentoring youth aging out of foster care, providing support to a foster family, and other ways to get involved.

**GLOBAL OUTREACH PRAYER FOCUS** | We want regular global prayer to be a rhythm in our Church Groups. Throughout the year, the current week’s prayer focus is outlined at [mcleanbible.org/goprayer](http://mcleanbible.org/goprayer). Join us this week as we pray for Uzbekistan and that God would raise up young pastors to establish new churches.