

The Beatitudes

Huddle 1 - *Introduction to The Beatitudes*



SETTING THE ATMOSPHERE

As children arrive, collect the “In” slips and see which grade they are in for their huddle teams. Remember to check all slips to make sure children are to be in Up & Out this hour.

Team Time

Each team leader (student leader) should spend time getting a conversation started within the team to find out more about each child. Spend time today discussing the following questions up front...

- What did you guys do this week?
- Can you think of anything this week that brought you joy?
- Can you name something this week that you are thankful for?
- Is there anything that you are struggling with that we can pray for?

Huddle Teams

- 1st & 2nd grade girls
- 1st & 2nd grade boys
- 3rd & 4th grade girls
- 3rd & 4th grade boys

Opening Prayer

Leader prays for the group.

LESSON HUDDLE

Let's all come over together and get started this morning. Good morning, Up & Out! Where we look up (pause for the group to respond) **TO GOD** and look out (Pause) **TO OTHERS**.

What have we been learning about these past few weeks? (Give time for responses.) This week we are beginning a new unit. We are going to be studying The Beatitudes over the next several weeks. The Beatitudes teach us what it means to be blessed and show us the attitudes that followers of Jesus should have. The Beatitudes can be found in the book of Matthew (*chapter 5, verses 1-12*). Did you know that the book of Matthew is the first book in the New Testament of the Bible and that Matthew was one of the twelve apostles of Jesus? (*An apostle is a disciple, one of the early followers of Jesus who carried the Christian message into the world.*)

Before we read the scripture, let's imagine this...Jesus had been walking with His disciples, talking to them and teaching them. As they walked, more and more people saw Jesus and begin following Him to listen to Him. They could sense there was something special about Him. While on this walk, Jesus decided to stop on a hillside with His disciples and teach to all who wanted to listen. In

the bible, this teaching is called The Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes are generally the first part of Jesus' teaching on this hillside and we will be focusing on them the next several weeks. We will keep coming back to this passage over the coming weeks. Turn to Matthew 5:1-12 and follow along as I read. There is a word that is going to come up many times in this passage. See if you can catch it!

"One day as He saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around Him, and he began to teach them.

He said:

- God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for Him, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.
- God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.
- God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.
- God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.
- God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.
- God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
- God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers.
- Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way."

Did anyone catch that important word? (*Allow for responses*) Right! The most important word in this passage is *blesses*. Did anyone catch how many times the word appeared? (*Allow for responses*) It shows up nine times in these twelve verses. That means it is important. Like we said earlier, this passage is known as The Beatitudes. (*Write Beatitudes on a dry erase board*) Beatitudes is a really old word that means *blessings*. (*Write blessings under the word Beatitudes on the dry erase board*) So the Beatitudes are a list of *blessings* from God.

What is a blessing? (*Allow for responses*) Some people say a home is a blessing, others say that family is a blessing, and many people say God's love and peace are blessings. Do you think these answers are right? Yes! It is a blessing to have a home, a family, and God's love and peace in our lives. These things are all blessings, but being blessed means so much more. Here's a simple way to define a blessing: a blessing is a gift or favor given by God that brings us happiness, even when we don't deserve it. Because God loves us, He wants to give us good things.

Here's something to think about...

Do your parents love you? Of course! How do they show you they love you? (*Allow for responses*) They feed you, care for you when you are sick, play with you, hug you, and buy you things. Your parents give you good things out of love. So, if your mom and dad love you that much and they are imperfect sinners, how much more does our perfect heavenly Father love and care for us? God blesses us and gives us gifts because He loves us.

Let's think a little further...

Do you always get your way with your parents? Of course you don't. You can't stay up all night, you can't have ice cream for dinner, and you can't ride your bicycle on the highway. Why would your parents keep you from these things? (*Allow for responses*) It's because your parents know what you need to live a happy, healthy life.

How does that idea relate to our relationship with God? Do we always get what we pray for? No, we don't. Matthew 7:11 says that our Father in heaven will give us good gifts when we ask Him, but that God knows what a good gift is better than we do. Sometimes when we think of blessings we think of stuff. We may think about health, family, and friends when we think of blessings. These things can be blessings. But, what about people who don't have homes, are sick and in the hospital, or orphaned without a family? Are these people not blessed? Has God forgotten about them?

I want you to listen closely, because this is very, very important.

We can be homeless, family-less, and in the hospital, and still be very, very blessed. Let's have a sword drill to find out how we can always have God's blessings, even when it seems like we have nothing in life. Get out your bibles and hold them over your heads. When I say go, look up Psalm 29:11 (*On your mark, get set, go!*) (Have the child who found the verse read. You can also have a volunteer read the verse if there are not enough Bibles in the room for a sword drill.)

When we follow Jesus, God strengthens us and gives us peace. We don't have to have nice things or even be healthy to be blessed. We are blessed when God is with us. God is with us in our hearts when we choose to love Him and follow His commandments. Jeremiah 17:7 says, "Blessed are those who trust in the Lord and have made the Lord their hope and confidence."

Over the next several weeks, we will study the Beatitudes one by one. The Beatitudes are the blessings we receive when we have certain attitudes. These attitudes that we will learn about are the attitudes of people who follow Jesus. We're going to call them the "bee attitudes", (*write "bee attitudes" next to Beatitudes on the board*.) because they are what our attitudes should be. These are the opposite of the "me attitudes" (*write "me attitudes" on the board*) "Me attitudes" are what we have when we choose to make ourselves more important than Jesus and what He wants. To remind us to have "bee attitudes", a lot of our crafts and activities are going to be bumblebee related. So as we work on our craft, be sure to include a few bees in your drawing to remind you to think about what your attitude should be.

Let's pray and thank God for all of His blessings.

Huddle Up, Pray, & Break

ACTIVITY: Create an Invisible "Bee Attitudes" Garden

Materials:

- White crayons
- White construction paper or cardstock
- Watercolor paints
- Paint brushes

- Water cups
- "Guide for Drawing a Bee"

Instructions:

1. Use white crayons on white paper to draw a picture of a garden full of bumblebees.
2. Of course, they won't really be able to see their pictures. As they draw, explain that sometimes God's blessings can be invisible in our lives too. For example, we don't always see His mercy, peace, and strength in our lives.
3. Use watercolors to paint over the whole paper so the picture shows up. Remind them that when they cover their lives with Jesus, a beautiful picture of God's love and blessings will appear.
4. As the kids work, ask them to tell you ways that God has blessed them. Encourage them to look for the invisible things beyond the physical stuff.

Helpful hints:

- Pass around the "How To Draw a BEE" paper for help learning how to draw bees.
- If they use black paint somewhere on their bee and don't like it use just water on the paintbrush and spread out the black.
- The more they draw with the crayon, the better the picture.
- Don't use plain white copy paper. It is too thin.
- Use dark colors. The colors will dry to be much lighter than the actual paint color.



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