

Bible Study: Apprenticing to Jesus in the Kingdom (Matthew 5:1-16)

Objective

To explore Matthew 5:1-16, understand the Beatitudes as a portrait of a heart transformed by Jesus, and embrace our call to apprentice under Him, living as salt and light in God's Kingdom.

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for inviting us to follow Jesus into the Kingdom. Open our hearts to Your Word today. Teach us to apprentice under Jesus, living life with you. In His name, Amen.

The Beatitudes: A Transformed Heart

In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus delivers the Beatitudes, describing a heart transformed by God's grace, thriving in His Kingdom. As Dallas Willard writes in *The Divine Conspiracy*, these aren't rules but a portrait of the "with-God" life. James Bryan Smith, in *The Good and Beautiful Life*, says, "An apprentice learns from a master how to do their craft. We learn from Jesus how to live in the Kingdom of God." Jesus invites us into a relationship with Him, apprenticing under His teaching to live in God's Kingdom now.

Beatitudes	Jesus' Kingdom	The World's Beliefs
Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (v. 3)	Humility; admitting we need God's grace	Be self-sufficient; rely on your own strength
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted (v. 4)	Grieve sin and injustice; find comfort in God	Avoid pain; stay happy at all costs
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth (v. 5)	Strength under God's control; trust His timing	Dominate others; assert your power
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled (v. 6)	Crave God's justice and will	Chase personal success and wealth
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy (v. 7)	Show grace and forgive others	Get even; seek revenge

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God (v. 8)	Love God authentically, without pretense	Fake it to gain approval
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (v. 9)	Build bridges; reflect God's reconciling love	Win at all costs; prioritize your agenda
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (vv. 10-12)	Stand firm for Jesus, even at a cost	Fit in; avoid conflict or rejection

1. Which beatitude resonates with you the most? Why?
2. The world values money, power and prestige. How do the Beatitudes change how you view the world, your life and the people around you?

Discussion: Salt and Light

In Matthew 5:13-16, Jesus declares, “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.” As His apprentices, we’re called to live in a way that flavors and illuminates the world, pointing others to God. This isn’t about striving to earn God’s approval—it’s the natural overflow of a relationship with Jesus.

1. What does it mean to be salt and light in your everyday life?
2. How can we “stay salty” and avoid “hiding our light?”

Closing Challenge: Read the Sermon on the Mount Daily

To grow as Jesus’ apprentices, commit to reading the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) every day for 6 weeks. It’s only three chapters, and it will take about 10-15 minutes. As you read, ask: “Jesus, how are You teaching me to live in Your Kingdom?” Let His words shape your heart, like an apprentice learning from the Master. Take notes and be prepared to testify about your experience!

Closing Prayer:

Lord Jesus, our Master, thank You for inviting us to apprentice under You. Transform our hearts to reflect Your Kingdom, not the world’s values. Help us live as salt and light, learning from You each day. Guide us as we read Your Sermon on the Mount over these 6 weeks. In Your name, Amen.