

1 - Dependence



Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3

Meaning

"Happy are those who know they need God's help every day, because God's lives in them."

Discussion

The "poor in spirit" leaders, who admit they need help, does that make them better or weaker?

2 - Problems

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Matthew 5:4



Meaning

"Happy are those who are going through problems, because God will give them peace and comfort."

Discussion

Can you be "happy" and "sad" at the very same time?

3 - Gentle and humble



Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Matthew 5:5

Meaning

"Happy are the gentle and humble people, because the whole world will be theirs."

Discussion

In history, the "world" is usually taken by people with the biggest armies. Why does Jesus say it will go to the gentle instead?

4 - Righteousness



Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Matthew 5:6

Meaning

"Happy are those who want to do the right thing as God will help them do it."

Discussion

If you try your very best to do the right thing but it goes wrong, are you still "righteous"?

5 - Mercy

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

Matthew 5:7



Meaning

"Happy are the people who are kind and forgive others, because God will be kind and forgiving to them, too."

Discussion

Can you be merciful to someone who isn't sorry? Or does mercy require two people to work?

6 - Clean heart

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Matthew 5:8



Meaning

"Happy are those who keep their hearts focused on loving God and being honest, because they will see God."

Discussion

Can you have a clean heart if you have made mistakes in the past?

7- Peacemaker

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Matthew 5:9



Meaning

Happy are the people who help others get along, because they are being God's children

Discussion

Is it "right" to fight to bring about peace?

8 - Suffering for God

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:10



Meaning

"Happy are those who are treated badly for doing what is right, because they have a special place in heaven."

Discussion

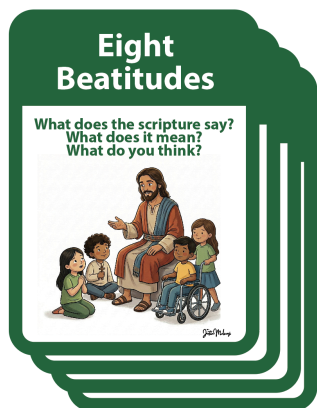
Can you be "unhappy" and "blessed" at the same time?

Eight Beatitudes

**What does the scripture say?
What does it mean?
What do you think?**



John McKinley



Catechist's Guide: Eight Beatitudes for Ages 8–11

Helping Children Live the "Upside-Down" Logic of Jesus

Dr.
Justin Maloney

These notes are designed to help you lead deep and prayerful discussions using the Beatitude cards. At this age, children are starting to understand that things aren't always what they seem. They are ready to learn that in God's Kingdom, things often work differently than they do in the world.

Your Teaching Style: The "No-Hands-Up" Approach

Instead of a standard "teacher asks, children answers" session, try to create a **Community of Inquiry**.

- **The "No-Hands-Up" Rule:** Encourage the children to listen and respond directly to each other. They might say, *"I agree with Sarah because..."* or *"I want to challenge what Ade said..."*
- **Keep the Chain Going:** Ask them to dig deeper. If someone makes a point, another can ask: *"If that is true, then what about when ...?"*

The activity can be based on one card at a time. The children can sit in several groups with a copy of the same card. Then the discussion can go into one large circle of the whole class. To cover all cards, this activity would have to be spread over a number of sessions. Alternatively, each group can have their own unique card to discuss and come up with a summary of main points to share with the whole class.

Card-by-Card Guide

1. The Poor in Spirit (Dependence)

- **The Big Idea:** Realising we aren't the "boss" of our own lives—God is.
- **Simple Lesson:** Think of your heart like a cup. If it's full of ego (pride), God can't put anything in. We need to keep our hearts "empty" of pride so God can fill us up.
- **Tip:** Talk about leaders like Pope Francis who admit they make mistakes and need God's help.

2. Those who Mourn (Going through Problems)

- **The Big Idea:** God doesn't just watch us feel sad; He feels it with us.
- **Simple Lesson:** Being a Christian doesn't mean you have to "fake happiness". It's okay to be sad. "God-joy" is a quiet peace that stays with us even when we are crying.
- **Tip:** Explain that we can be sad about a problem but peacefully happy knowing that we are not alone.

3. The Meek (Gentle and Humble)

- **The Big Idea:** Real strength is being "strong under control."
- **Simple Lesson:** The world thinks power is about taking things. Jesus says power is about looking after things. God trusts the gentle to "inherit the earth" because they are the ones who will take care of it.
- **Tip:** Compare a **Dictator** (who takes by force) to a **Gardener** (who is gentle but makes life grow).

4. Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness (Doing Right)

- **The Big Idea:** Wanting to be holy should feel as important as wanting food or water.
- **Simple Lesson:** God looks at what we *want* to do. Even if we try to be good and fail, the fact that we *tried* is what matters to God.
- **Tip:** Compare it to a runner. They might lose a race, but they are still a "runner" because they have the drive to keep training.

5. The Merciful (Mercy)

- **The Big Idea:** We get what we give.
- **Simple Lesson:** Mercy is a superpower. If someone is mean and doesn't say sorry, being merciful lets us drop our anger so it doesn't weigh us down.
- **Tip:** Read the **Parable of the Unforgiving Servant** (Matthew 18:21–35).

6. Pure in Heart (A Clean Heart)

- **The Big Idea:** Being honest and focused on God.
- **Simple Lesson:** A "clean heart" isn't one that has never been dirty; it's one that has been washed! We use the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** (Confession) to do the washing.
- **Tip:** Tell them that being honest is like wearing "God-glasses"—it clears the lenses so we can see God working in the world.

7. The Peacemakers

- **The Big Idea:** Peace is something we *do*, not just a quiet feeling.
- **Simple Lesson:** Making peace can be "messy." It means standing up for people who are being bullied or writing letters to help the poor. It isn't just "staying quiet."
- **Tip:** Explain the difference between "disturbing the peace" (being annoying) and "disturbing the status quo" (standing up for what is right).

8. The Persecuted (Suffering for God)

- **The Big Idea:** It is better to be "right" with God than "liked" by everyone.
- **Simple Lesson:** Sometimes people will think you are "uncool" for being kind or going to church. This is a small way of being a "martyr."
- **Tip:** Ask them how it feels to be left out of a group for being "too nice." Jesus says that's when we are closest to Him.