

Get Ready!

Blessed Are . . .
By Myra Montgomery

**Text**

Matthew 5:1-12

Key Quest Verse

Memorize the Beatitudes

Bible Background

Here is Matthew's understanding of the central points in Jesus' teaching. Just as Moses went up the mountain to bring a new law to the people, so Jesus from the mountain describes the way God wants us to live now. Jesus commends the meek, the merciful, those with undefiled hearts, and those who work for peace. These are virtues we have come to know throughout our whole history with God. Others in the list are more surprising. Jesus blesses the poor, the hungry, and the weeping as well as the virtuous, recognizing the injustice of their situation and assuring them of God's care.

*Get Ready!***Lesson Quest**

What I want my students to:

Know: The Beatitudes are one of the teachings of Jesus

Feel: They live a life pleasing to God

Do: Jesus' followers are gentle, kind and peaceful

Leader's Devotion

Lord Jesus, I am happy
When you are by my side.
You are my friend and teacher
My helper and my guide.
Comfort me, dear Jesus,
When I am feeling sad.
Let your love surround me,
Help me to be glad.

Teach me to be kind, Lord.
And I will grow like you,
Helping those who are in need;
Serving, as you would do.

When I follow you, Lord,
You make everything all right.
You make me feel so happy.
You fill me with delight.

When others are unkind,
In what they say or do,
Help me to forgive them, Lord,
Before the day is through.
Lord, help my eyes to look to you,
My hands to do your will.
Teach my ears to hear your word,
And my heart to love you still.
When others get upset, Lord,
Let my words, I pray,
Bring peace and happiness
To make a better day.
Lord, no matter what my friends say,
No matter what they do,
Give me strength to always say,
"I will follow you!"

*Get Set!***Option A**

Materials: Kerosene lamp, matches, wiping cloth
Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

When you bring the lamp to class have it all shiny and clean. Light the wick and replace the glass globe. Talk about how this light was the light of Jesus in our heart for all to see. Slowly turn up the wick and have it burn too brightly so that the glass will become sooty and black. Explain that it is the sin that creeps into our lives, bad language, stealing, lying, teasing others and things that hurt others and God. Try to wipe this away from the outside by saying I will do better, I'll try to stop, etc. . .but the dirt will remain deep down in our heart. Now our light is so dull and barely visible for others to see that we are Christians, and we can't shine for Jesus. The only way to clean this sin away is to ask God to forgive us, and to ask others to forgive us too. God then cleans the inside of our hearts (remove the globe and allow to cool for a moment while you talk and now clean the inside with a cloth). As it becomes clean, talk about how only God can forgive our sins and clean our hearts .We need to ask for forgiveness often and not let our light become so dull. We are examples for God and other people are watching us to see if we mean what we say. We need to keep our lives clean so others will be drawn to God by our example and love for Him, and we can tell others so they can have the light of Christ in their lives too!

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Option B

Write the following words on a board or piece of paper: disciples, poor in spirit, kingdom of heaven, meek/gentle, righteousness, mercy, peacemakers, pure in heart, and rejoice. Have the students give definitions of these words and write them on the board.

Today we are going to become familiar with the Beatitudes and how we can apply them to every day activities.

GO TO THE BIBLE STORY

Get Set!



Bible Story

Advanced Preparation: Provide markers for students to highlight portions of the story in their Bibles.

“Come”, Joshua called to his friend. "Jesus is up on the hill. Let us go hear what he has to say." Many people came to hear Jesus teach. Often Jesus would sit on the side of a hill so that people could see him while he shared with them how they could grow in God's way. The Beatitudes are some of the things that Jesus shared with the people. The word Beatitude means "blessings".

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

- God blesses those people who depend only on Him.

They belong to the Kingdom of heaven.

- God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort!
- God blesses those people who are humble. The earth will belong to them!
- God blesses those people who want to obey Him more than to eat or drink.

They will be given what they want!

- God blesses those people who are merciful. They will be treated with mercy!
- God blesses those people whose hearts are pure. They will see Him!
- God blesses those people who make peace. They will be called His children!
- God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right.

They belong to the Kingdom of God.

- God will bless you when people insult you, mistreat you, and tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of me. Be happy and excited! You will have a great reward. People did these same things to the prophets who lived long ago.

Get Set!

Bible Story cont.

Discuss each Beatitude with children, give or ask children to give examples of how a person would act who is following each Beatitude.

After discussing Beatitudes ask children to form small groups (2 to 3 per group). Each group can choose one to act out. They can look at the poster where ideas were written down for help. It does not matter if several choose the same one. They shouldn't tell which one they have chosen.

Next, the small groups develop a little skit or scene demonstrating their Beatitude. Give them about 10-15 minutes to practice. Wander about from group to group giving suggestions and encouragement. They can be acting out a modern or a biblical scene.

After practicing have children gather in a circle to watch each other's skits/scenes. Have each group perform without telling which Beatitude they are acting out. When they are done ask the audience to guess which one was demonstrated and why they thought so. Give praise and cheers (maybe a small prize such as a sticker) for right answers.

Go!**Don't Forget**

Materials: A tub of water, a bar of soap, a towel, and a banana

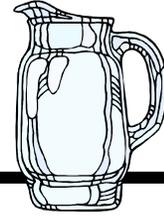
Quest Connection

Procedure: In very dramatic fashion, begin by washing and drying your hands. Then take out the banana, peel it, and take a bite before beginning your lesson). **Do you ever forget to wash your hands before eating? Oh, I think that we all forget occasionally. I am sure that it is a good thing to wash your hands before eating, but, according to Jesus, there are some other things that are far more important. The religious leaders during the time Jesus lived were very concerned about cleanliness. They had many religious laws and traditions which they followed to make sure that nothing unclean went into their mouth. One day some of these religious leaders asked Jesus why his disciples were not keeping their tradition of washing their hands before they ate. (I guess Jesus' disciples sometimes forgot like you and I do.) Jesus answered these religious leaders by telling them that what comes out of your mouth is more important than what you put into it. He said that the words that come out of your mouth come from your heart and those words show whether you are clean or unclean. Jesus talked about the importance of having a pure heart and many other things.**

Close

In the Beatitudes, Jesus gave us guidelines on how we should act and treat others. This activity helped us remember to be careful what we say and what words we choose to use. Are you sure that you use words that glorify God?

Go!



Blessings Flowing

SCIENCE

Materials: Bible, newspaper, water in a small pitcher that has a spout, a wide-mouthed container, three foot piece of cotton string

Quest Connection

Preparation: Spread newspaper over a table or on the floor. Place the pitcher of water and the wide-mouthed container on the newspaper.

What kinds of blessings does God give His children? We're going to do an experiment today that will help us see more about how God wants to bless His children.

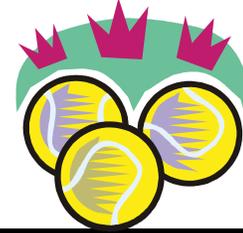
Dip the piece of string into the water in the pitcher, and tie one end of the string to the pitcher's handle. Pull the wet string through the pitcher's spout and over the empty container. Let the free end drop into the container. Carefully pour the water into the container so the water runs down the wet string. **Why do you think the water slides down the string? The water slides down the string because the molecules that form water are very attracted to each other. This makes them stick together. As long as I'm pouring water from the pitcher, the water will travel down the string this way.**

How is this like what God does when He gives you blessings? Just like the water continues to flow down the string, God gives you blessings constantly because He loves you.

What do you think will happen if I pour the water too fast? Pour the water faster and see what happens. Does God ever give you too many blessings?

Close

In the Beatitudes Jesus told us about the way we should act if we are to be blessed. What are some of the ways? Review the Beatitudes

Go!**Peer Pressure**

GAME

Material: Bible, sheet or blanket, balls like tennis balls, scissors, felt marker, name tags

Quest Connection

Ahead of time: Cut a hole slightly larger than the tennis balls, in the sheet.

Procedure: Give each student a ball and a name tag and have them gather around the sheet. I am going to place the balls on the sheet and we'll begin bouncing them. Imagine the bouncing balls are pressures you face in life to do the wrong thing. When one ball remains on the sheet, we'll see who survived the pressure and we'll all shout, "Good for you!

You survived!" Have kids place their balls on the sheet. Next, have students grab the edge of the sheet with both hands and begin pumping the sheet up and down. This action keeps the balls bouncing in the air and allows them to fall through the hole in the sheet, one at a time.

Bounce until one ball remains. Call out the number on the ball, and have that person raise both fists in the air, as in a victory gesture. Have all students shout "You survived!"

Close

Play several times, put away the supplies and gather the students in a circle.

It is VERY difficult not to always follow the crowd. Everybody wants to fit in, no matter what it takes. Too many times, it takes something that can change your life forever!

Jesus gave us guidelines on how to treat people in the Beatitudes. Do you think it would be a way to fit into the crowd you hang out with?

Play the game again, have the remaining person give a way we can have a positive influence on our friends.

Go!**Annie's Blessings****VIDEO**

Materials: DVD or VCR, a copy of the movie “Annie”

Quest Connection

A few words about the connection we're trying to make here. The Big idea throughout this lesson is that Jesus tells us of the sort of world God offers to us, despite the reality of injustice, hurt, and prejudice that exists in our world. As children of God we can choose to live in a different reality where we recognize the injustice around us and work to affirm justice and mercy in all things. The first 35 mins. (or so) of Annie contrasts the unjust world of the orphanage with the love and affirmation embodied in the Warbucks' mansion.

We are going to watch Annie because it might help us understand what Jesus was trying to tell his followers about God.

Play movie from beginning through end of “I think I'm gonna like it here” (song sung by Annie when she arrives at Warbucks' mansion).

(On the DVD you can skip opening credits by beginning with scene 2 and then play through scene 9. This is approximately 35 minutes.)

Feel free to pause during a scene and point out how Annie and her fellow orphans resemble those who mourn or those who hunger and thirst. As well, note contrasts to orphanage when Annie arrives at mansion.

Close

- **I wonder how people felt when they heard Jesus speak?**
- **I wonder how those who are poor can be blessed?**
- **I wonder how Annie felt when she lived at the orphanage?**
- **I wonder how Annie felt living in the Warbucks' mansion?**
- **I wonder if you have ever felt like the world wasn't fair?**
- **I wonder if you have ever seen something that made you think that God is good?**
- **I wonder how you can love your neighbor as yourself?**
- **I wonder who that neighbor might be?**

Go!**Circle Dance****GAME**

Materials: A dowel rod for each student, a thin ribbon of the following colors for each student a copy of the Resource Page “Circle Dance”

Poor in spirit = white ribbon
Mourn = black ribbon
Meek = tan ribbon
Hunger & thirst = green ribbon
Merciful = yellow ribbon
Pure in Heart = red ribbon
Peacemakers = blue ribbon
Persecuted = orange ribbon

Quest Connection

Read through the “Circle Dance with your class and have them act out the actions. Consider performing this for your church congregation.

Close

Today we acted out the meaning of the Beatitudes. What are some of the ways that you can live them?

Go!**Beatitude Bounce****GAME****Materials:** Playground ball, a copy of the Beatitudes**Quest Connection**

1. Have the class form a circle.
2. Have a volunteer read Matthew 5:3-12 while standing in the circle.
3. Give the ball to one child and have the narrator read Matthew 5:3a (Blessed are the poor in spirit).
4. The child with the ball tosses it to another who then must attempt to finish the verse (...for theirs is the kingdom of heaven) from memory. If s/he does not want to they can opt out by simply passing the ball on to another person.
5. Continue through the rest of the verses, excluding 11 & 12 because they don't fit the pattern.
6. Keep things positive! Encourage the group to work together to remember the Beatitudes.

Close**Let's see if we can say the Beatitudes.**

Worksheet

Examples of Beatitudes and what they mean for us

<i>Contemporary English Version</i>	What this means?
<i>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the side of a mountain and sat down.</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who depend only on him. They belong to the kingdom of heaven.</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort!</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who are humble. The earth will belong to them.</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who want to obey him more than to eat or drink. They will be given what they want.</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who are merciful. They will be treated with mercy!</i>	
<i>God blesses those people whose hearts are pure. They will see him!</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who make peace. They will be called his children!</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right. They belong to the kingdom of heaven.</i>	
<i>God will bless you when people insult you, mistreat you, and tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of me. Be happy and excited! You will have a great reward in heaven. People did these same things to the prophets who lived long ago.</i>	

Worksheet Key

Examples of Beatitudes and what they mean for us

<i>Contemporary English Version</i>	What this means/examples
<i>When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the side of a mountain and sat down.</i>	
<i>God blesses those people who depend only on him. They belong to the kingdom of heaven.</i>	God blesses people who humbly love Him and need Him. Perhaps this means people who are having an especially hard time in life and need to feel secure in God's love. Who do you know who especially needs God's love right now?
<i>God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort!</i>	God blesses people who are sad (lost or sick loved one) etc. or people who are sad about unhappiness in the world (floods, famine). God's comfort can be God guiding people who are sad about unhappiness in the world to help others.
<i>God blesses those people who are humble. The earth will belong to them.</i>	Humble people do not brag, they are gentle with others and nonviolent. A humble person wouldn't brag about how far he could kick a ball but would use his talents to teach someone else.
<i>God blesses those people who want to obey him more than to eat or drink. They will be given what they want.</i>	God will help people who want to know God's love and try hard to do what God and Jesus have taught us by giving them understanding and knowledge of God's love. Children who try to learn about Jesus and follow his teaching will be happy because they will know God's love.
<i>God blesses those people who are merciful. They will be treated with mercy!</i>	God asks us to be patient and kindhearted. An older child can be patient with a younger brother who breaks a toy.
<i>God blesses those people whose hearts are pure. They will see him!</i>	Our hearts are pure when we are only devoted to God, not distracted by money, TV, or too much "stuff".
<i>God blesses those people who make peace. They will be called his children!</i>	People who make peace try to live in peace and help others live in peace. A child who helps two friends make up after a fight is a peacemaker.
<i>God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right. They belong to the kingdom of heaven.</i>	Have you ever been teased for doing the right thing or not going along with the crowd? Jesus understood this and tells us that God is with us always.
<i>God will bless you when people insult you, mistreat you, and tell all kinds of evil lies about you because of me. Be happy and excited! You will have a great reward in heaven. People did these same things to the prophets who lived long ago.</i>	Jesus was treated badly by people who did not believe his teaching. Still today people can be treated badly for believing in Jesus. Christians need to take a stand for what is right even if at times it is unpopular.

Journal

Today I will show mercy or comfort to...

Today I will be humble about...

Today I will make peace with...

Today I will help the poor by...

When someone calls me a name or treats me badly I will...

Today I will follow and obey God better by...

Beatitude Circle Dance

Begin by saying: **Once upon a time, Jesus was teaching, and the crowd become so big he had to move to the top of a big hill so that everyone could see him.**

(Put your hand on your forehead as though shielding your eyes)

Can you see him?

Let's learn what he said. Repeat after me: **Blessed are the poor in Spirit**

Drop down and crawl to the white ribbons. Have every one take a white ribbon and tie it on their stick.

For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. (children repeat)

Jump up and skip back into the circle, waving your beribboned stick.

Blessed are those who mourn

Look sad, maybe even make crying/wailing sounds. Walk slowly to the black ribbons. Have everyone take one and tie it to their stick.

For they shall be comforted.

Wrap one arm across your front, giving yourself a hug and wave the stick as you return to the circle.

Blessed are the meek

Tiptoe to the tan ribbons, head down, looking side to side. Grab a tan ribbon and tie it on the stick.

For they will inherit the earth

Return to the circle spinning and waving your stick.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

Walk toward the green ribbons while rubbing your stomach. Tie on a green ribbon

For they will be filled.

Run back to the circle with a big smile, waving your stick.

Blessed are the merciful

Walk to the yellow ribbons while patting others' backs in an "it's okay" manner. Tie on a yellow ribbon.

For they will receive mercy.

Return to your place, waving your stick and giving others high fives.

Blessed are the pure in heart.

Walk to the red ribbons while patting your chest with one hand. Tie on a red ribbon.

For they will see God.

Run back to your place waving your stick and shielding your eyes.

Blessed are the peacemakers,

Grab another's hand and skip to the blue ribbons. Tie one on your partner's stick and vice versa.

For they will be called children of God.

Skip back to your place holding your partner's hand.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,

Head down, run in a random pattern, stopping every so often to hunker down and pretend to hide. Tie on an orange ribbon.

For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Gather everyone in the center and wave your sticks really hard. Shout "Amen."