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This term our Community Groups will be following The Beatitudes by Rich Villodas across February, March, and May (6 sessions in total, with 2 each month, and a break for April). Sessions are available to watch on RightNow Media:

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Each week has a study guide (found in the following pages) to help you as a group. It includes:

- A link to the video (via the link icon or episode title at the top of the page).
- A link to the key scripture for that session.
- A short recap of the main points.
- Discussion questions for your group.



Part 1 - Introduction & Poor in Spirit

Key Scripture: Matthew 5:1-3 

What Does “Blessed” Mean?

Jesus uses blessed to mean:

- Happy
- Fortunate
- Flourishing

Not a trouble-free life, but a life shaped by God’s kingdom.

Blessing Before Command

- Jesus begins with blessing, not rules.
- God’s favour comes before obedience.
- The Beatitudes show how God sees people and invites us into Christ-like living.

The First Beatitude

Poor in spirit means:

- A deep need for God
- Knowing you are not self-sufficient
- Coming to the end of yourself

The world values strength and independence.

Jesus blesses humility and dependence.

Why This Is Good News?

- God works powerfully in weakness.
- Brokenness creates space for grace.
- The kingdom belongs to those who know they need God.

To receive the kingdom, all you need is nothing.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does Jesus’ view of blessing differ from the world’s?
2. Where do you most feel your need for God right now?



Part 2 - Mour & Meek

Key Scripture: Matthew 5:4-5 

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

This does not mean grief is enjoyable. It is a promise, not a denial of pain.

- God sees every loss and sorrow.
- Comfort is coming, even if it is not felt yet.
- Mourning becomes blessed when grief is brought to God.

The Invitation

- Bring your sadness honestly to God.
- Share your grief with others.
- Do not numb, hide, or rush past sorrow.

God's comfort will overpower our deepest cries.

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

Meekness is not:

- Weakness
- Passivity
- Being a doormat

Meekness is:

- Strength under control
- Humility and gentleness
- Power used with care

The Kingdom Reversal

- The world rewards aggression and control.
- Jesus blesses trust and restraint.
- Meek people live without forcing outcomes.

Inheritance is received, not seized.

Why This Is Good News

- You don't have to prove, protect, or possess.
- You can live at ease, trusting God.
- In the end, God gives what we truly need.

Meekness means living freely, humbly, and gently — trusting God with the outcome.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where do you need God's comfort right now?
2. Where might God be inviting you to live with greater gentleness or trust?

Part 3 - Hunger and Thirst

Key Scripture: **Matthew 5:6** 

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Jesus speaks to people who knew real hunger and real thirst.

Their longing was not only for food, but for the world to be made right.

This beatitude is both:

- A declaration: God will set things right.
- An invitation: Live with a deep longing for God's justice.

What Is Righteousness?

In the Bible, righteousness includes:

- **God's saving action** — rescuing, forgiving, healing, restoring.
- **A new status** — declared righteous by God through Christ.
- **A way of life** — living in right relationship with God and others.

Our standing with God is based on what God has done, not what we do.

Justice and Righteousness

Justice is living in right relationship:

- With God
- With other people
- With the world God loves

God cares about dignity, compassion, and fairness for every person.

A Kingdom Reversal

- The world says blessing means escaping the world's problems.
- Jesus says blessing comes from engaging them.

It is human to seek justice for yourself. It is Christlike to seek justice for others.

Why This Is Good News

- God has not grown numb to injustice.
- A little offered to Jesus can go a long way.
- Our prayers are meant to grow feet.

Discussion Questions:

1. What injustices stir a hunger in you?
2. Where might God be inviting you to put action to your prayers?



Part 4 - Merciful and Pure in Heart

Key Scripture: Matthew 5:7-8 

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Mercy = extravagant kindness that goes beyond what is required.

We naturally **calculate compassion**:

who deserves it, how much, and when it runs out.

Life in God's kingdom is shaped by this truth:

we show mercy because we have already received mercy.

Mercy does **not remove consequences**, but it refuses:

• finger-wagging • shaming • condemnation

To live mercifully means **choosing grace** when we could:

• blame shame • criticise • condemn • seek revenge

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

Purity of heart = living from pure motives, not just right actions.

Jesus shifts the focus:

- not external behaviour
- but **internal transformation**

It is possible to:

- live the *right way* with the *wrong heart*
- do good things for self-serving reasons

A wrong heart will eventually lead us the wrong way.

Purity of heart means:

- integrity between inside and outside
- honesty, transparency, and a clear conscience
- willing one thing: *God's will*

Purity is not achieved — it is received.

A new heart is a gift given through the Holy Spirit, not earned through religious effort.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where am I holding back mercy instead of giving it freely?
2. Where do my actions look right, but my heart needs change?

Part 5 - Peacemakers

Key Scripture: **Matthew 5:9** 

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

Our world is filled with conflict, division, and tension — just as it was in Jesus' day.

Jesus calls his followers not to avoid conflict, but to **make peace**.

Peacekeeping avoids discomfort and creates false peace.

Peacemaking tells the truth with love and leads to true peace.

Peacemaking may involve **disruption**, but its goal is always **reconciliation**, **not disconnection**.

When we make peace, our lives **resemble God**, and we reflect the wholeness (shalom) Jesus offers.

Discussion Questions:

1. Where am I keeping the peace instead of making peace?
2. What relationship or situation might God be inviting me to approach with truth and love?

Part 6 - Persecuted

Key Scripture: Matthew 5:10-11 

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

Jesus ends the Beatitudes with a **promise that also carries a warning**.

Living the way of Jesus will not please everyone; faithfulness can lead to opposition.

Persecution only counts when it comes from living righteously, **not from being harsh, arrogant, or unloving**.

When opposition comes because we follow Jesus in love, mercy, justice, and peace, it is not failure but faithfulness.

Those who suffer for righteousness are **not forgotten** — God promises vindication and belonging in the kingdom of heaven.

Ultimately, the Beatitudes point not to our effort but to **Jesus himself**, who perfectly lived them, suffered unjustly, and was vindicated through resurrection.

Discussion Questions:

1. Am I facing resistance because I am following Jesus, or because of how I am acting?
2. Where might God be inviting me to remain faithful, even when it is costly?