

## The Blessed Life Small Group Guide

**Warm-up Question:** (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part all together, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. What is one hope you have for 2022?
2. What is one of your favorite quotes or sayings?

**Read the following passage:** Matthew 5:1-10.

Jesus went up on a hill and gave his disciples revelation from God. In many ways, Jesus was like a new Moses. Just as God established a covenant with the Israelites through Moses, Jesus's life, death, and resurrection established a new covenant between God and his people. This famous "Sermon on the Mount" was Jesus's program for how we should live. This sermon is as relevant for us as it was for Jesus's first followers.

**Questions for Discussion** (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. Many first-century Jews were expecting the Messiah to lead a revolution to throw off Roman domination. With this (and other relevant cultural realities) in mind, explain some of the ways in which Jesus's beatitudes would have been considered counter-cultural.
2. Jesus told the people that the poor in spirit were blessed by God. What might it look like to put our confidence in God's power rather than the various forms of power we typically rely on?
3. One way to think about meekness is a lack of obsession with human power. How can embracing meekness, in this sense, help us to be more generous and gracious people?
4. Two of the most common responses to pain are revenge and escape. What is the benefit of choosing to mourn our pain in the presence of God?
5. God is not going to judge us based on how much we accomplish, how much influence we acquire, or any other cultural standard of success. He's going to ask us, "Did you do what I asked you to do?" As best as you can tell, what is Jesus asking you to do with your life?
6. Jesus's death and resurrection effected "vertical" reconciliation between God and human beings and "horizontal" reconciliation in our relationships with one another. Jesus is the ultimate peacemaker. During his earthly life, however, the Jews and Romans conspired together to crucify him. Why is it often so challenging to be a

peacemaker in a polarized world?

7. Explain how the concept of living for God's approval rather than human approval might be used as an excuse to disregard people. What does it mean to live a life genuinely dedicated to pleasing God? How does this connect with being pure in heart?
8. What is one of Jesus's beatitudes that is significant for you in this season of your life? Explain.

**Pray**