

A New Testament women's bible study on the Beatitudes (Read Matthew 5:1-12):

Have you ever felt like you are forgotten by God? That God's blessing follows everyone around, but carefully steps past your door? Well I have great news for you; God's blessing is there for everyone.

EVEN FOR YOU!!!!!!

(The rest of the bible study follows the pattern of questions and answers, first answer each question, by yourself, before you turn to the answer)

Can it be that you have a wrong perception of what it entitles to be blessed?

Nowhere in the Bible God promises no hardship, but rather that He will be with us in the tough times. In beatitudes 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> we read:

*Those who are treated badly for doing good are happy, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them. "People will insult you and hurt you. They will lie and say all kinds of evil things about you because you follow me. But when they do, you will be happy. Rejoice and be glad, because you have a great reward waiting for you in heaven. People did the same evil things to the prophets who lived before you. (Matthew 5:10-12 The Message Bible)*

Jesus spells it out that for His sake we'll be treated badly. A Christian attitude of love and meekness will always be misused, but Jesus says, in the above text, that we should rejoice and be glad since our reward/blessing is in heaven. Who wants a spectacular house in this world, if you can have a mansion in heaven?

Do you think the blessed of God will be high-spirited the whole time?

When Jesus says

*Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!* (Matthew 5:4 The Good News Translation)

He encourages you to find comfort in God. When last have you poured out your heart before God in tears, because of your sorrows? Someone once said "tears are the spiritual windows of our souls".

When you pray the Lord's Prayer "Let thy Kingdom come", what do you expect?

Jesus says

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.* (Matthew 5:6 NIV).

The prayer of God's Kingdom should be for righteousness in your own life. That will saturate your desires not to look over the fence to 'keep up with the Joneses'. Keeping up with the Joneses will

never fill you, but rather suck you dry from inside.

Have you ever considered that more people have less than you than more than?

This should motivate you to kindness towards the ones with less than you.

*Happy are those who have mercy: for they will be given mercy.* (Matthew 5:7 The Bible in Basic English)

Mercy is to do to others what they don't deserve. The tramp on the street corner might not deserve anything, since he or she is too lazy to work, but mercy should be when you anyway give him or her something.

Do you confuse meekness with humbleness?

Jesus says

*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.* (Matthew 5:5 KJV).

Meekness is the same word being used for a tamed animal. A tamed horse would obediently take his owner into a fierce battle without shunting away. So we should be like tamed animals in the hands of God, taking the good and the bad God sends or allows our way (see The Complete Word Study New Testament). The new heaven and new earth belongs to the meek.

When Jesus says that we have forsaken ourselves to follow Him, what does He mean?

To forsake ourselves is to do things for God, because God is God, and not with the hidden agenda to actually do it for ourselves to earn God's favour somehow. Jesus says:

*"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God".* (Matthew 5:8 RSV)

Purity of heart is single mindedness – a single mind for God. This will bring us into the throne room of God.

Does it take guts to be a peacemaker?

Yes, especially if the other part is actually on the wrong side and you have to take the blame to bring the peace, but that is what a Christian attitude is about. Many moms know that bringing peace between the children is to through your life on the line. Jesus says:

*Blessed are those who make peace. They will be called God's children.* (Matthew 5:9 GOD'S WORD Translation)

What beatitude is missing?

*"Blessed are those who recognize they are spiritually helpless. The kingdom of heaven*

*belongs to them*". (Matthew 5:3 GOD'S WORD Translation)

This beatitude is actually the heading of all the others. All the other beatitudes are only possible when we are in 100% need of God.