



# Small Groups

## *Small Group Discussion Guide*

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### **If You Want to be Happy**

**Matthew 5:3-6**

**Part 2 of the sermon series The Sermon on the Mount**

*(Discussion Guide by Lisa Smith)*

**May 30-31, 2020**

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7 is considered one of his earthly teachings *par excellence* because of its combined depth and practicality. Within the Sermon on the Mount, we find what are commonly called the Beatitudes—eight short assertions from Jesus that each begin with the words, “Blessed are they who” and continue on to describe one key trait of godliness. These are Jesus' recommendations for a godly, blessed life. As Pastor Shawn taught, “if you want to be happy, learn what Jesus says will make you happy and build those traits into your life.”

**Opening Question: In Greek, the translation of the word “blessed” means “happy.” What are some other words you might use to describe being blessed?**

### **READ aloud Matthew 5:3-6**

#### **I. Building Blocks for a Happy Life**

The Beatitudes can be seen as “building blocks” for a blessed life because they present God's blueprint for how to live in a way that pleases Him.

*Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the one...whose delight is the law of the Lord.”*

*James K. A. Smith, Calvin College philosophy professor and author of You Are What You Love “You need to curate your heart. You need to worship well. Because you are what you love. And you worship what you love. And you might not love what you think.”*

*Henry Ward Beecher, 1813-1887, Congregational minister “The strength and happiness of a man consists in finding which way God is going and going in that way too.”*

- 1. The Beatitudes are seen as Jesus' “game plan” for a happy, blessed life. What are some elements of your “game plan” for your life? What are some of your goals or your priorities?**
- 2. Can you share a recent growth you have had in pursuing the Christian life? For example, have you engaged with Jesus in new ways, overcome a sinful habit, discovered a ministry you love, met a practical need, served sacrificially, become more patient, held your tongue in a hard situation, or had a meaningful conversation with a neighbor?**

## II. Four Important Building Blocks

In the first four Beatitudes, Jesus speaks to four “blessed” people—the poor in spirit, those who mourn, those who are meek, and those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

*Matthew 5:3-6 (NIV)* “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

*Matthew 5:3-6 (NLT)* “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied.”

*Matthew 5:3-6 (TPT)* “What wealth is offered to you when you feel your spiritual poverty! For there is no charge to enter the realm of heaven’s kingdom. What delight comes to you when you wait upon the Lord! For you will find what you long for. What blessing comes to you when gentleness lives in you! For you will inherit the earth. How enriched you are when you crave righteousness! For you will be surrounded with fruitfulness.”

3. **The first godly trait Jesus identifies is poverty of spirit.**
  - a. **What words would you use to describe someone who recognizes their “spiritual poverty?”**
  - b. **Do you think there’s a reason Jesus recommends this trait first?**
  - c. **Pastor Shawn linked living humbly and simply with recognizing our spiritual poverty. Are there any changes toward simplicity that you have made during the COVID-19 crisis that you want to make permanent?**
4. **Romans 12:15 tells us to “Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.” How does mourning help us align our heart with God?**
  - a. **Why do we find it difficult to grieve with those who are grieving?**
  - b. **Is there someone in your life who is grieving a loss in this season? Would you commit to reaching out and being present with them in their grief?**
5. **Pastor Shawn explained gentleness as “strength under control.” What role could gentleness play in our country’s long-standing struggle with racial justice and reconciliation, especially in light of recent events?**
6. **What helps you grow a “hunger and thirst,” a longing in your heart for righteousness (e.g., meditating on the Bible, hearing stories of injustice, empathizing with the suffering, studying the life of Jesus, praying for others, talking with fellow Christians)?**

**Pray together for the Holy Spirit to help us live out Micah 6:8 in our lives!**