

Merciful

This is a verb. That is, it is a doing word. It is compassion in action. But it is *undeserved* compassion in action. Christ says that if we sow mercy, we will reap mercy.

9. To whom in particular does God expect us to be merciful?

(Note Matthew 6:14-15)

Purity

We *can* hide from men what we *can not* hide from God. God knows our hearts (1Sam. 16:7; Mat. 9:4; John 2:24-25)

10. How is Matthew 5:8 similar to Psalm 139:23?

Peace Making

All of these conditions for God's blessing, reflect His character. God is the God who gives peace. He expects us to reflect His peace. He delights in those who make peace (Prov. 16:7).

11. What is the motivation of those who do not make peace according to Proverbs 10:12?

Responding To Persecution

The early disciples had an interesting way of dealing with persecution: *they rejoiced!* (Acts 5:41).

12. Note the kind of persecution that Christ is referring to in verses 10-12. Despite such harsh treatment, what did He also tell us to do? (Mat. 5:44)

Do you still want God's blessing? These are high standards, but Christ wants us to live up to them with His help. *Amen.*

LIVING DIFFERENTLY

Part One

This study series on the Beatitudes is designed to show us how Christ expects us to live. Nicky Gumble has written on the Beatitudes in his book "Challenging Lifestyles". He refers to them as the most challenging pursuit any person can engage in. He makes mention of the incredibly high standard that they set. As we study these, let's remind ourselves that we can not possibly attain to these standards without God's help (Gal. 2:20).

1. Living in the blessing of God
2. Called to be different
3. The value of Law
4. Controlling anger
5. Avoiding immorality
6. Honest to God

LIVING IN THE BLESSING OF GOD

Read Matthew 5:1-12

To be blessed means to be *well off, happy, and fortunate*. It is a state of well being that brings with it peace, contentment, and the knowledge that God is in control. It is something that all strive for. And even though some find wealth and fame, they never find or enjoy God's blessing. Yet, discovering and enjoying God's blessing is not a secret! God's Word has revealed it already.

1. What was the first thing that God did to mankind after He created them? (Gen. 1:22)
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Some people believe that once God created mankind He left them to fend for themselves. But this first act of God towards mankind shows that God wants to be actively involved with His people by _____ them.

2. What kind of lifestyle will *not* bring the blessing of God according to Proverbs 3:33?
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To be evil or wicked in this sense is to live without regard for God even though what He requires is known. To live wrongly is bad, but to live that way while knowing it is wrong is very bad!

3. What kind of person will enjoy the blessing of God? (Prov. 28:20) _____

What Jesus Had To Say...

If living a *good* life brings the blessing of God, how do we know if we are living a life that is good enough? While the Pharisees had established a long list of regulations for living a good life, Jesus came and made several short statements that simultaneously surpassed the standards of these Pharisaic regulations, and, yet cut right to the centre of the human heart in simplicity.

Poor in Spirit

Matthew 5:3

4. What is the first thing that is necessary to receiving the blessing of God based on what Jesus said here, and also found in Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:10, 23?
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“Poor” in this sense is *bankrupt with no possibility of even making one payment on the interest*. Jesus said that we need to recognise this as

our true spiritual and moral condition. We need to come to God and acknowledge that we have failed to meet His standards.

5. What is the promise of Scripture to all those who acknowledge their spiritual poverty, confess it to God, and repent? (1Jn. 1:9; Prov. 28:13)
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Mourning Over Our Spiritual Condition

Once we recognise the true condition of our hearts, we will be moved to sorrow and grief.

6. Without Christ in our lives, how are we described? (Ephesians 2:1) _____

Being Meek (and Mild Mannered)

Jesus said that there was blessing in being, *quiet, well-mannered, and humble*. This is what *meek* means. The same Greek word is used to describe Christ in Matthew 21:5.

7. Peter tells women not to devote themselves to outward beauty, but to be committed to inward beauty. How does he describe the kind of inner beauty that a woman should have? (1Pt. 3:3-4)
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Hungering For Righteousness

Some people like to know how much they can get away with. As far as the things of God are concerned, they are minimalists. They only want to do the minimum. But this does not command the blessing of God.

8. The same Greek word is used in Mat. 4:2, as is used in 5:6. How does it describe Christ, and what does this tell us about the real meaning of what Christ was saying?
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