

9-SESSION
BIBLE STUDY

JEN WILKIN

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

TGC THE GOSPEL
COALITION
WOMEN'S INITIATIVES

 LifeWay
Biblical Solutions for Life



SERMON ON THE MOUNT

JEN WILKIN

LifeWay Press®
Nashville, Tennessee

Published by LifeWay Press® • © 2014 Jen Wilkin

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photo-copying and recording, without express written permission of the publisher. Request for permission should be addressed to LifeWay Press®, One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0152.

ISBN: 978-1-4300-3228-1

Item: 005644876

Dewey Decimal Classification: 226.9

Subject Headings: SERMON ON THE MOUNT \ KINGDOM OF GOD \ SPIRITUAL LIFE

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by Biblica, Inc. All rights reserved worldwide. Used by permission.

To order additional copies of this resource, order online at www.lifeway.com; write LifeWay Small Groups: One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0152; fax order to 615.251.5933; or call toll-free 1.800.458.2772.

Printed in the United States of America

Adult Ministry Publishing

LifeWay Church Resources

One LifeWay Plaza

Nashville, TN 37234-0152

PRODUCTION TEAM

WRITER:
JEN WILKIN

EDITORIAL PROJECT LEADER:
BRIAN DANIEL

CONTENT EDITOR:
GENA ROGERS

PRODUCTION EDITOR:
MEGAN HAMBY

VIDEO PRODUCERS & DIRECTORS:

TIM COX
HAL SANDIFER

VIDEO ASSISTANT PRODUCER:
LISA TURNER

VIDEO EDITOR:
TIM COX

ART DIRECTOR:
JON RODDA

DIRECTOR, ADULT MINISTRY:
FAITH WHATLEY

DIRECTOR, ADULT MINISTRY PUBLISHING:
PHILIP NATION

CONTENTS

	<i>About The Gospel Coalition</i>	4
	<i>Foreword</i>	5
	<i>How to Use This Study</i>	10
	<i>A Message for Group Leaders</i>	11
WEEK 1	THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	12
	<i>MATTHEW 5:1-2</i>	
WEEK 2	WHO IS BLESSED?	14
	<i>MATTHEW 5:3-12</i>	
WEEK 3	A PEOPLE OF INFLUENCE	30
	<i>MATTHEW 5:13-20</i>	
WEEK 4	“YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID ...” PART 1	46
	<i>MATTHEW 5:21-30</i>	
WEEK 5	“YOU HAVE HEARD THAT IT WAS SAID ...” PART 2	60
	<i>MATTHEW 5:31-48</i>	
WEEK 6	SECRET RIGHTEOUSNESS	74
	<i>MATTHEW 6:1-18</i>	
WEEK 7	WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS	90
	<i>MATTHEW 6:19-34</i>	
WEEK 8	DO UNTO OTHERS	106
	<i>MATTHEW 7:1-12</i>	
WEEK 9	A FOUNDATION THAT ENDURES	122
	<i>MATTHEW 7:13-29</i>	
	<i>APPENDIX: Matthew 5–7</i>	138

WEEK 1

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

MATTHEW 5:1-2

*¹ Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain,
and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.*

² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: ...

MATTHEW 5:1-2

Why are there _____?

Who is Jesus' _____ for the Sermon on the Mount?

Primary: _____

Secondary: _____

Why does Jesus _____?

Psalm 80:1-2 Throne

Psalm 99:1 Throne

Hebrews 1:3 Right hand of Majesty

Why is Jesus _____?

Matthew 17:1-13 Transfiguration

Matthew 24 Olivet Discourse

Matthew 28:16-20 The Great Commission

Exodus 19–20 God speaks on Mount Sinai

WHO

IS BLESSED?

WEEK 2

Each week you will start your homework by reading through the entire Sermon on the Mount from start to finish. Then you'll focus in on a particular passage to discover its message and how it fits into the greater context of the sermon as a whole. By the time you complete this study, you will have read the Sermon on the Mount at least nine times. As it grows more familiar to you, watch for how your understanding deepens and expands. Your first task each week will be to note how this process is taking place. To help you read for detail, you'll be asked to mark certain words or phrases in the copy of Matthew 5–7 printed in the back of this book. Keep a set of colored pencils or markers handy as you read.

This week we'll focus our study efforts on dissecting the eight short statements that form the opening to Jesus' longest recorded message—statements commonly known as the Beatitudes. You may be familiar with some or all of them. We'll strive to look at them with fresh eyes, asking ourselves why, of all the ways Jesus could have begun His inaugural address to His disciples, He begins with a list of "blesseds."

DAY 1

Read Matthew 5:1–7:29 on pages 138-144.

As you read, circle each occurrence of the word “righteousness” with a blue pencil or marker. We will be considering its meaning and use on Day 3.

1. Which section of the sermon seems unclear to you?

2. Which section seems most straightforward?

3. Look up the word *beatitude* in the dictionary. Write the definition below:

4. Why do you think Jesus chooses to begin the Sermon on the Mount with a list of “blesseds”?

DAY 2

³ *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

⁴ *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

MATTHEW 5:3-4

1. Look up the following passages and note what each teaches us about being poor:

Psalm 40:16-17: _____

Psalm 69:32-33: _____

Psalm 72:12-14: _____

Isaiah 66:2 (*humble* is translated “poor” in the KJV): _____

What kind of poverty is addressed in these verses? _____

2. Webster’s Dictionary defines *poverty* as “the state of one with insufficient resources.”¹ Based on this definition, what does it mean to be “poor in spirit”?

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

3. What does Jesus say belongs to those who are poor in spirit?

In our video introduction in Week 1, we defined the *kingdom of heaven* as “the kingdom of grace here, and the kingdom of glory hereafter.” It’s the reign of God established at Christ’s first coming and consummated (completed) at His second coming. It’s the rule of God particularly over believers.

4. Why do you think Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven belongs to the “poor in spirit”?

5. Now look at the second Beatitude in Matthew 5:4. People can mourn for many reasons. What are some things that cause us to mourn?

6. Compare Joel 2:12-13 and James 4:7-10. What do we learn about the role of mourning in these passages?

7. In light of these passages and in light of the first Beatitude, what kind of mourning do you think Jesus is referring to when He says, "Blessed are those who mourn"?

8. How has recognizing your lack of spiritual resources been a blessing to you? What role has godly grief played in your repentance?

9. Give an example of a time each of these two blessings has operated in your life.

10. Rewrite (paraphrase) the first and second Beatitudes in your own words, getting as close to their intended meaning as you can.

DAY 3

⁵ *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

⁶ *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

MATTHEW 5:5-6

Webster's Dictionary defines *meek* as "enduring injury with patience and without resentment."² A meek person is someone who is not occupied with self at all, someone who does not insist on a set of rights.

1. Read Isaiah 53. Based on this prophetic passage and on Webster's definition of the word *meek*, how did Christ perfectly demonstrate meekness?

2. How would having a true estimate of ourselves in relation to God help us be meek?

3. What would the world say is a synonym for *meek*?

4. How does the third Beatitude contrast with the world's opinion of who will inherit the earth?

5. In what sense do you think the meek will inherit the earth?

6. If a meek person is someone who does not insist on a set of rights, how meek are you? What rights do you feel entitled to or take for granted in your home, church, workplace, or community?

7. How can a sense of entitlement stifle your relationship with God or skew your perception of God?

8. Now look at the fourth Beatitude in Matthew 5:6. On Day 1 you circled the word *righteousness* with a blue pencil or marker. How many times does it occur in the sermon?

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

9. Look up the word *righteousness* in the dictionary. Write the definition below.

10. Look up the following passages and answer the questions for each.

John 4:7-10:

Who is speaking? _____

What is offered? _____

What need is satisfied? _____

John 6:35:

Who is speaking? _____

What is offered? _____

What need is satisfied? _____

11. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31. According to verse 30, who is our righteousness?

12. We hunger and thirst after many things besides righteousness. What are you hungering and thirsting for right now that cannot satisfy? List your thoughts below.

13. In what ways are these things poor substitutes for Christ?

14. Rewrite (paraphrase) the third and fourth Beatitudes in your own words, getting as close to their intended meaning as you can.

DAY 4

⁷ *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*

⁸ *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

MATTHEW 5:7-8

1. How would you define *mercy*? How does justice relate to mercy? Use a dictionary or thesaurus to help with your answer.

2. Read Matthew 7:1-2. What concept is presented in this later passage of the Sermon on the Mount that is also presented in the fifth Beatitude?

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

3. Why do you think how we treat others will affect how God treats us?

4. To whom do you have difficulty showing mercy? How could you adjust your perspective so that showing mercy to that person becomes easier?

5. Now look at the sixth Beatitude, Matthew 5:8. Think about what Jesus means by “pure in heart.” How would you respond to someone who defined “pure in heart” as sinless? Look up 1 John 1:8 to help with your answer.

6. If being pure in heart is not being perfect or free from sin, what is it?

7. Why do you think the pure in heart will “see God”?

8. Read Isaiah 6:1-8. Was Isaiah “pure in heart”? Why or why not?

9. In what specific areas of your life do you battle impurity of heart?

10. How do these areas of sin cloud your ability to “see God”?

11. Rewrite (paraphrase) the fifth and sixth Beatitudes in your own words, getting as close to their intended meaning as you can.

DAY 5

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5:9-10

1. Look up the word *peacemaker* in a dictionary and write the definition below. Note any synonyms you think would fit with the way Jesus uses the word “peacemaker” in the seventh Beatitude.

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

2. Read Isaiah 9:6. Which of the titles given for Jesus relates to the seventh Beatitude?

3. Read Galatians 4:4-7. Based on these verses and your answer to the previous question, why do you think the peacemakers will be called the “sons of God”?

4. What are practical ways to be a practicing peacemaker? Think of specific ways we can use our speech and actions to be peacemakers, and note them below.

In our home: _____

In our church: _____

In our community/workplace: _____

In our country: _____

5. What is the contrast between the seventh and eighth Beatitudes? In other words, why would a peacemaker ever be the object of persecution?

6. For what reason does the eighth Beatitude say persecution will occur?

“for _____”

7. Look back at Day 3, question 11. Who did we learn is our righteousness (see 1 Cor. 1:30)?

How does Matthew 5:11 confirm this connection?

8. Have you ever been persecuted “for righteousness’ sake”? Think about how the experience changed you. Did you feel “blessed”? Share your thoughts below.

9. Rewrite (paraphrase) the seventh and eighth Beatitudes in your own words, getting as close to their intended meaning as you can.

WRAP-UP

What impacted you most in this week’s passage from the Sermon on the Mount?
How has Jesus challenged your concept of what it means to be “blessed”?

1. Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. “poverty.”
2. Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. “meek.”

GROUP DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION: Describe your most memorable encounter with someone who is famous and/or wealthy. How did you respond and why?

- 1. REFLECT:** Based on your Day 2 study this week, why should we desire to be poor in spirit and mourn?

APPLY: [Day 2, questions 8-9] How has recognizing your lack of spiritual resources been a blessing to you? What role has godly grief played in your repentance? Give an example of a time each of these two blessings has operated in your life.

- 2. REFLECT:** [Day 3, question 1] Based on Isaiah 53, how did Christ perfectly demonstrate meekness?

APPLY: [Day 3, questions 6-7] If a meek person is someone who does not insist on a set of rights, how meek are you? What rights do you feel entitled to or take for granted in your home, church, workplace, or community? How can a sense of entitlement stifle your relationship with God or skew your perception of God?

- 3. REFLECT:** On Day 4 we learned about being merciful and pure in heart. How are these two blessed qualities related to each other? Can we be one without being the other?

APPLY: [Day 4, question 4] To whom do you have difficulty showing mercy? How could you adjust your perspective so that showing mercy to that person becomes easier?

- 4. REFLECT:** What is a peacemaker? How was Jesus a peacemaker?

APPLY: [Day 5, question 4] What are practical ways to be a practicing peacemaker in your home, church, community/workplace, country?

WRAP-UP: What impacted you most in this week's passage from the Sermon on the Mount? How has Jesus challenged your concept of what it means to be "blessed"?

VIDEO

Watch the teaching video for Week 2. Use the space below to take notes.

NOTES

After the video concludes, close your study in prayer. Praise God for blessing those the world calls cursed. Ask God to help you walk toward Him in humility, meekness, repentance, and hunger for truth. Ask Him to help you walk toward others in mercy, purity, peace, and righteousness. Thank Him that He sent Jesus to become a curse for us, that we might be called blessed.