
MESSAGE SUMMARY

We all have a definition of what the “good life” looks like, but Jesus challenges us to consider whether our definition is actually right. Because Jesus is God, He, not our culture, circumstances, possessions, or desires, gets to define what is good. In Matthew 5:1–12, Jesus describes the kind of people who experience the good life in His Kingdom: people who humbly recognize their need for God, hunger for His righteousness, and live according to His ways. The Beatitudes are not a formula for earning God’s blessing; they announce who belongs to Christ’s Kingdom and the blessings that come from living under His reign. When you trust Jesus, your definition of the good life changes from pursuing what the world values to pursuing what God values. .

MAIN POINTS

- 1. Your CONDITION — Humility admits, “I need God.” (Matthew 5:3–5; Psalm 51:17; James 4:6)** Poor in spirit: You recognize your spiritual need and inability to save yourself. Mourning: You grieve over sin and brokenness and look to God for comfort. Meek: You surrender your strength and rights to God rather than demanding your own way. Practice: Begin each morning by praying, “God, I need You today.”
- 2. Your CHARACTER — Hunger desires, “I want what God wants.” (Matthew 5:6–8; Psalm 42:1–2; Romans 12:2)** Hunger for righteousness: You desire to live in a way that pleases God. Merciful: Because you have received God’s mercy, you extend mercy to others. Pure in heart: You pursue an undivided heart that desires God above all else. Practice: Choose one Beatitude and pray through it each day this week.
- 3. Your CONDUCT — Hope declares, “I’ll live God’s way.” (Matthew 5:9–12; Romans 12:18; 1 Peter 4:14)** Peacemakers: You move toward conflict and brokenness rather than away from it. Persecuted for righteousness: You remain faithful when following Jesus costs you. Rejoice in suffering: You remember that your ultimate reward is with Christ. Practice: Move toward one person or one broken situation this week.

Big Idea: If Jesus is God, He gets to define what is good

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why does Jesus have the authority to define the “good life”?** *Possible answer:* Because Jesus is God and is King over His Kingdom, His definition of what is good is true and authoritative not one opinion among many. (John 1:1, 14; Colossians 1:15–17; Matthew 4:17)
- 2. Are the Beatitudes instructions for earning God’s blessing, or are they descriptions of Kingdom people? Why does that matter?** *Possible answer:* They describe the character and blessing of those who belong to Christ’s Kingdom; salvation is received by grace through faith, not earned by good works. (Ephesians 2:8–9; Matthew 5:3–12)
- 3. Where are you tempted to live as though you don’t need God?** *Possible answer:* You may depend on your money, abilities, relationships, success, or control instead of trusting God. (Proverbs 3:5–6; Matthew 5:3)
- 4. Where is God asking you to live His way even when it may cost you?** *Possible answer:* You may need to forgive someone, pursue peace, speak truth, serve sacrificially, or remain faithful when others disagree with your commitment to Christ. (Matthew 5:9–12; Galatians 6:9)
- 5. What are you hungering for most right now, and does it reflect what God wants?** *Possible answer:* You can examine whether your strongest desires are centered on comfort, recognition, success, or control...or on knowing God and pursuing His righteousness. (Matthew 5:6; Philippians 3:7–10)

GOSPEL CONNECTION

The good life is not found by becoming good enough for God; it is found by recognizing that you need God and trusting in Jesus Christ. If you have never trusted Christ, repent of your sin, turn from your own way, and believe that Jesus died for your sins and rose again so that you can be reconciled to God. If you already believe in Jesus, continue to repent and believe turning from self-reliance and trusting Christ each day as your King. Because Jesus is God, He gets to define what is good, and true blessing is found in knowing Him, living under His reign, and looking forward to the eternal reward He promises.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

MONDAY — I NEED GOD

Key Verse: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)

Reflection: The good life begins when you recognize that you cannot live it without God. Being “poor in spirit” means you stop depending on yourself and humbly admit that you need God’s grace, wisdom, strength, and direction. When you acknowledge your need, you position yourself to live under the good and gracious rule of Jesus with His provisions.

Application Question: Where are you tempted to live as though you do not need God? *Possible Answer:* You may be relying on your abilities, finances, relationships, experience, or plans instead of depending on God. Today, surrender those areas to Him and pray, “God, I need You today.”

Prayer Response: Lord, help me recognize my need for You and trust You instead of relying on myself. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

TUESDAY — I WANT WHAT GOD WANTS

Key Verse: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” (Matthew 5:6)

Reflection: Jesus teaches that the good life is not found in getting everything you want but in wanting what God wants. Just as hunger and thirst create a deep desire for food and water, God calls you to develop a deep desire for righteousness and a life that pleases Him. Your desires reveal what you believe will truly satisfy you.

Application Question: What do you want most right now, and does that desire reflect what God wants for you? *Possible Answer:* You may discover that comfort, success, recognition, control, or security has become more important to you than knowing and obeying God. Ask God to reshape your desires so that you hunger first for Him and His righteousness.

Prayer Response: Lord, change my desires so that I want what You want and hunger for Your righteousness above everything else. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

WEDNESDAY — RECEIVE MERCY, GIVE MERCY

Key Verse: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” (Matthew 5:7)

Reflection: Because God has shown you mercy through Jesus Christ, you are called to extend that same mercy to others. Mercy does not mean ignoring sin or pretending that wrong does not matter; it means responding to people with compassion, forgiveness, and grace. When you remember how much mercy you have received from God, you become more willing to show mercy to others.

Application Question: Who is one person you need to treat with greater mercy this week? *Possible Answer:* There may be someone who has hurt, disappointed, or frustrated you, and God may be calling you to respond with grace rather than bitterness or retaliation. Ask God to help you see that person through His eyes and take one step toward forgiveness or reconciliation.

Prayer Response: Lord, remind me of the mercy You have shown me and help me extend that mercy to others. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

THURSDAY — MOVE TOWARD PEACE

Key Verse: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

Reflection: Jesus does not call you to avoid every difficult situation; He calls you to become a peacemaker. Peacemaking means moving toward broken relationships and difficult situations with humility, truth, grace, and love. As a follower of Jesus, you can reflect your Father’s character by helping bring reconciliation where there is conflict.

Application Question: Where is God asking you to move toward brokenness instead of avoiding it? *Possible Answer:* You may need to have a difficult conversation, apologize, forgive someone, or help two people move toward reconciliation. Pray for wisdom and take one humble step toward peace.

Prayer Response: Lord, give me courage and wisdom to move toward broken relationships and become a peacemaker for Your glory. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

FRIDAY — LIVE WITH ETERNAL HOPE

Key Verse: “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.” (Matthew 5:12)

Reflection: Following Jesus does not guarantee an easy life; sometimes faithfulness will cost you. But Jesus reminds you that earthly opposition and suffering are temporary, while your reward with Him is eternal. Because your future is secure in Christ, you can faithfully live God’s way even when it is difficult, unpopular, or costly.

Application Question: Where do you need to choose faithfulness to Jesus even though it may cost you something? *Possible Answer:* You may need to stand for biblical truth, refuse to compromise your integrity, forgive someone, serve sacrificially, or follow Christ when others disagree. Remember that your ultimate reward is not found in people’s approval but in Christ and the eternal hope He gives you.

Prayer Response: Lord, help me live faithfully for You even when following You is difficult or costly, knowing that my true reward is with You. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.

(Sources: D. A. Carson, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Matthew*, R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, David Platt, *Follow Me*, Matt Chandler, *The Explicit Gospel*.)