

## Portrait of a Disciple (Matthew 5:1-12)

In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus describes what life looks like when it comes under the gracious and loving rule of God. Is it an unattainable set of values that leaves us frustrated and hopeless? Is this an idealistic pipe dream? No, it's a stunning portrait of a disciple of Jesus - a citizen of the kingdom of heaven whose countercultural way of life grows out of God's grace.

### 1. The countercultural way of the kingdom (Matthew 5:1-2)

Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount* is the life Jesus will form inside of those who follow him.

### 2. A portrait of a disciple of Jesus (a citizen of the kingdom) (Matthew 5:3-12)

*"beatitudes"* is taken from the Latin *beatus*; meaning *"blessed."* The Greek is *makarios* and it can be translated *"happy, fortunate, blissful or flourishing."* Some translate it *"the good life."* It describes someone who *is* experiencing God's favor and abundance; his blessing.

Jonathan Pennington: *"Jesus is offering and inviting his hearers into the way of being in the world that will result in their true and full flourishing..."*

V3 Blessed (flourishing) are the poor *in spirit* =  
those who come to Jesus with "empty pockets";  
who know they are spiritually bankrupt.  
WHY? *"theirs is the kingdom of heaven"*

The portrait isn't meant to frustrate us – it's meant to inspire, encourage and shape us.

Michael Wilkins: *"The individual characteristics of the Beatitudes...are the products of a life energized by the Spirit of God...they are a wholistic view of what the Spirit will produce in the life of a disciple of Jesus who is walking in his ways and being transformed into his image."*

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12. Describe the setting and the context. Who is Jesus teaching?
2. Briefly describe what Jesus' message was in Matthew 4:17 and 19. How does it relate to Matthew 5-7 which is commonly referred to as *"The Sermon on The Mount"*?
3. The term *"blessed"* describes someone who is experiencing God's favor and abundance. They are *"flourishing."* Some translate it "the good life". Every movie, TV show, or person we talk to has a vision of what "the good life" is/means. Who do people normally consider to be blessed or living "the good life"? What is that life usually based on?
4. The Beatitudes are not a self-help manual but a portrait of a disciple. In VV3-12 Jesus declares who the good life belongs to and its upside down from what the world says/tells us. Read all nine "beatitudes" – what is the upside-down statement Jesus makes on the front end of each one? What is the blessing or promise at the end of each statement?
5. To be "poor in spirit" is to acknowledge our own spiritual poverty and bankruptcy before God. Why is this an indispensable condition?
6. Which of the Beatitudes resonates most strongly with you at this moment in your life? Why?
7. Daryn used the image of restoring a masterpiece. What "soot and grime" might be covering the colors of Christlikeness in you? What steps can you take to allow The Spirit to restore you?