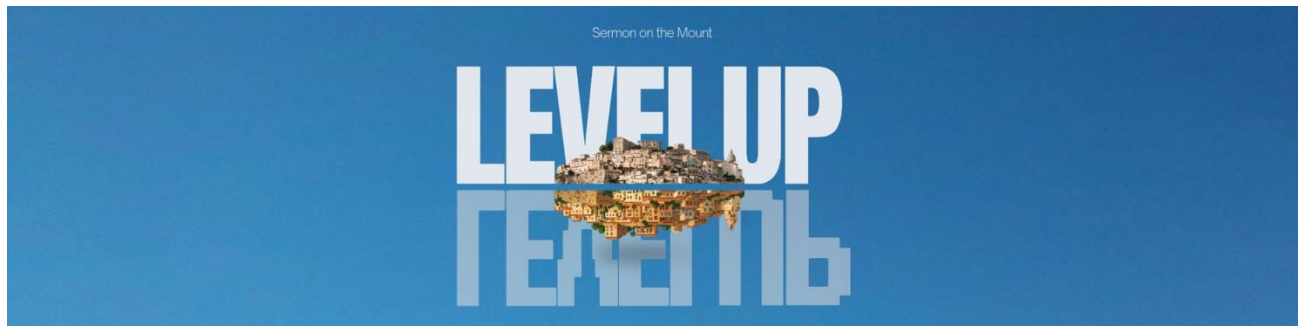




Week 1 – The Beatitudes

Opening: Begin with a brief welcome and prayer to set the tone for the group time. Ask Jesus to teach and form the group through His words.

Overview: In the Beatitudes, Jesus redefines who is truly “blessed.” They are not eight ways to earn God’s favor or eight life hacks to master, but a portrait of the kind of person God’s Kingdom is forming - from dependence on God to mercy, purity, peacemaking, and faithful endurance.

Discussion Questions

CONNECT

- When you hear the phrase “a blessed life,” what do you instinctively picture? How is that picture similar to or different from Jesus’ list?
- Which Beatitude feels most surprising, confusing, or difficult to desire? Why? (Feel free to jump ahead and read Matthew 5:1-12 together)

DISCOVER

Read Together: Matthew 5:1-12

Initial observations + Interpreting Scripture:

- **Initial Thoughts:** What stood out to you from this passage or from the sermon?

The First Four: Empty hands before God

- **Poor in spirit:** recognizing our spiritual need. The Kingdom begins with dependence, not self-sufficiency.
- **Those who mourn:** grieving sin, suffering, and what is broken rather than numbing it. God promises comfort.
- **The meek:** echoing Psalm 37:11, meekness is strength that refuses to grasp, retaliate, or force outcomes because it trusts God.
- **Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness:** longing for God to make things right in us and around us. Our deepest hunger directs our lives.
 - Which of these four most exposes your current posture toward God? Where might Jesus be inviting deeper dependence, grief, trust, or hunger?

The Next Three: Grace moving through us

- **The merciful:** people who know they need mercy become willing to extend it. Mercy refuses to reduce someone to their worst moment.
- **The pure in heart:** purity is an increasingly undivided heart - one allegiance and the same person before God in public and private.
- **The peacemakers:** biblical peace is more than keeping things quiet. Peacemakers move toward fracture with truth, repentance, forgiveness, and a desire for wholeness.
 - Which of these feels most counter-cultural or unnatural to you?
 - Where might God be inviting you to move toward someone with mercy or peacemaking rather than judgment, avoidance, or control?

The Final Beatitude: Faithfulness when it costs

- Jesus does not call us blessed whenever people dislike us. The blessing is connected to suffering “because of righteousness” and “because of me.” Resistance is not always proof we are right, but it’s also not always proof we are failing.
 - How can we tell the difference between resistance that comes from faithfully following Jesus and resistance caused by our own pride, harshness, or poor judgment?
 - How do you think the Church as a whole is handling this?

APPLY – Formation, not performance

Do not leave with eight more things to try harder at. Ask instead: “Is Jesus increasingly making me into this kind of person?”

- Which Beatitude do you sense Jesus putting His finger on in your life right now?
- What is one concrete response this week - dependence, confession, loosening your grip, extending mercy, seeking reconciliation, or choosing obedience when it costs?

RESPOND

Read Matthew 5:3-10 slowly one more time. Sit quietly for two minutes, then complete this prayer:

“Jesus, form _____ in me by helping me _____.”

Share if you are comfortable. This week, reread the Beatitudes each day and ask, “Jesus, what are You forming in me today?”

GROUP PRAYER

Pray for dependence on God, comfort in grief, hunger for righteousness, mercy, undivided hearts, courage to make peace, and faithfulness when following Jesus is costly

CLOSE