

“So What Did Jesus Teach?”

Author Unknown

Introduction Lesson to the “Beatitudes”

Intention: To understand that Jesus presented a practical method for the development of the soul. Also to realize the spiritual message presented in the teaching of Jesus.

Resources, “Teens on the Quest” by the Association of Unity, “Sermon on the Mount” Emmet Fox
“The Revealing Word” Charles Fillmore

PreSession: A few weeks prior to this lesson you might want to ask teens to bring in pictures of Jesus that they might have at home. Hopefully with different pictures it would express the various attributes that depict our teacher, wayshower, counselor, comforter, friend, brother, etc.

Points to Ponder: For a visual, list following on board:

- Jesus presented a practical method for the development of the soul
- We have the power to overcome our human challenges
- Jesus did not teach a religion or theology, his teachings are entirely spiritual
- Jesus discouraged emphasis on outer observances and hard-and-fast rules, he insisted Upon a certain spirit in one’s conduct.
- Jesus devoted the greater part of his ministry to teaching of prayer, that it is both a science and an art – prayer does change things.
- That thoughts that occupy your mind, your Secret Place, as Jesus calls it, are molding your experience, one’s life experience is but the outer expression of inner thought.

Bible Verse: “The one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and in fact will do greater works than these because I am going to the Father”. John 14:12

In the book, Discover the Power Within You, Eric Butterworth says, “Unless we catch this point, unless we can appreciate and accept this greatest discovery of all time, we have lost the thread of the tapestry of the Gospels and we build our churches and our personal faith on shifting sands. If we recognize this vital and dynamic Truth of man’s spiritual unity with God, if we know that man is God’s beloved child, endowed with His intelligence, His life, His substance and that he is the inheritor of a kingdom prepared for him from the foundation of the world, then all the rest of the Gospel story—the miracles and teachings even the final overcoming in the resurrection becomes purely academic. This basic principle of man is the dynamism of Christianity that can save the world and lead mankind to a new level of “peace on earth, good will toward man.”

Affirmations: “I affirm that Divine Wisdom is enlightening me!”

Unity Statement of Being
God is All, both visible and invisible
One presence, one mind, one power is All
This One that is All,
Is perfect Life, perfect Love and perfect Substance

I am an individualized expression of God
I am ever one with this
Perfect Life, perfect Love and perfect Substance
Daily Word

Opening Prayer: “Father/Mother God, we open our hearts and minds to take in your Divine Wisdom, to enlighten our thoughts and clarify our understanding so that we may demonstrate Truth in our daily lives. We affirm your Presence working in and through us and give thanks for the opportunity to be your demonstration to bring peace, love and joy. Amen

Introduction of Theme

More than any other man that has ever lived, the life and teachings of Jesus has influenced the course of human history over the past 2000 years. So what did Jesus teach? What did he wish us to believe and do? Jesus presented a practical method for the development of the soul and shaping our lives and future. Jesus explains what the nature of God is and what our nature is, what is the meaning of life and death. With all the challenges in our human existence we have the power to overcome and can have a life of happiness. Jesus did not teach a religion or theology, his teachings are entirely spiritual. Do you realize that there is no system of theology of doctrine to be found in the Bible. All doctrines and theologies of churches are created by man to direct and control people. It is interesting to see how sincere men have appointed themselves Christian leaders with titles and clothed themselves in vestments to impress other people. But this is not what Jesus did. He spoke in plain language, dressed in simple clothes, discouraged outer observances, hard-and-fast rules and regulations. What he insisted on was a certain spirit in one's conduct and he was careful to teach principles only. When spirit is right, details take care of themselves.

What does Unity teach – it follows the direction of Jesus – teach and implement spiritual principle. Each and every day we celebrate by living the day in a spiritual light. Jesus said to those that study and practice his teachings “the works that I do, ye shall do and greater works.” **But notice he said study and practice.** We must do our part. Jesus taught a way of life, the potential of man and his spiritual unity with God, the Divinity of man – Christ in you.

Let's Examine

Jesus taught in parables, brief symbolic stories to illustrate Truth. Go over the following Parable and also ask the group what message do they hear in the story.

Matthew 13: 31-32 - Parable of the Mustard Seed

“He put before them another parable: “The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

Discuss what they hear as the message of the parable.

Now interpret the story using the following:

“The Kingdom” (spiritual realization)

“Field” (mind)

“Mustard Seed” (divine ideas – inspired by God)

“other seeds” (multitude of thoughts)

“birds of the air” (additional spiritual ideas)

Questions for Discussion

1. What is your understanding of the Kingdom of heaven? (kingdom is within man, realization of God's presence.)
2. What kind of seed thoughts are you planting in your consciousness?
3. Based on your seed thoughts what has your experience been, what have they grown into?
4. What kind of seeds are you planting for your future?
5. What kind of thoughts (seeds) do you see that are being planted in our world today?
6. How would you define Divine Ideas? (raise consciousness)
7. (Have a list of the 12 Powers Displayed) As we know, we all have the 12 Powers within us. Which of the Powers would you like to see grow stronger and demonstrated within you?

Guided Meditation and Imagery

I would like to invite you to close your eyes.....relax into your chair.....take in a deep breath.....feel yourself relax more and more fully into your chair.....release any tension or concerns.....this is a time for you to be in this moment.....just to be.....

Relaxed and fully present.....As you become relaxed visualize yourself with a brilliant white light surrounding you..... This light fills you with warmth.....you can feel the warmth from the top of your head all the way through your body and into your toes.....

As you feel this warmth filling your body you realize this is the warmth and the presence of God The presence that is always with you.....in every moment.....and in this moment You are fully aware of God's presence.....Now picture above your head these tiny shining brilliant seeds.....these are seed thoughts from God.....these are Divine Ideas from God.....you can feel them enter into you filling you

Filling you with love and peace.....this love and peace fills your whole being.....

Now be in this moment feeling love and peace as we experience the silence and allow ourselves this Time to be in conscious contact with God.....

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take in a breath, breathing in, God is.....breathing out, I Am.....

Breathing in, God is.....Breathing out, I Am.....

We express our gratitude and say thank you God for our time together.....thank you for being with me in every moment filling me with your peace and love.....I hold this experience in my mind and heart knowing I can bring it back into realization with a single thought.....

Thank you in the name and nature of Jesus The Christ.....I now invite you to bring your awareness back to this time and space.....

For future lessons you can use this as a springboard and invite the teens to use other parables of Jesus and create lessons. Make available for the teens to use: The Bible, The Bible Dictionary, The Revealing Word, Teens on the Quest, The Adult Quest and any of the other many resources to help them in their creation. If you do not have many resources, please contact the Association of Unity Churches and ask them for a list of the resources they provide.

Sermon on the Mount “The Beatitudes”

Intention: The intention is to present the “Pearls of Wisdom” contained in “The Beatitudes” taught by Jesus on Sermon on the Mount

Resources: Bible, “The Sermon on the Mount” Emmet Fox,
“Discover the Power Within” Eric Butterworth

Introduction:

Jesus taught that the thoughts that occupy our mind, the Secret Place, are molding our destiny; in fact, the truth is that the whole of life’s experience is but the outer expression of inner thought. Truth never changes but what we have to deal with on this plane is man’s apprehension of Truth. Jesus taught Truth completely and thoroughly and above all, demonstrated it in his own person. We can intellectually understand, but demonstration is a very different matter. Jesus proved and demonstrated everything he taught.

Jesus summarized his teachings in a series of lectures, which lasted several days, and he probably spoke 2 or 3 times a day. This has become known as “Sermon on the Mount” which is the only recorded sermon that Jesus gave that was completely recorded. It is a spiritual more than a literary teaching. Jesus does not say “You must do this” or “You shall not do that”. He speaks of transforming, “Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind”. He taught what to be and how to think.

When the true meaning of Jesus’ instructions is grasped, all that is needed is to immediately put them into action for immediate results. **So if you really wish to alter your life, be the person you were meant to be, then Jesus in his Sermon on the Mount shows clearly how it is to be done.** It is not rocket science and it is not easy but it can be accomplished. These principles have to be carried out in every corner of your life, every daily transaction, whether you wish to or not and more particularly where you would rather not.

There are some very important points to understand; terms, expressions and words are used in the Bible that are different from that of everyday usage. Certain English words have changed in meaning since the Bible was translated. The Bible is really a textbook of metaphysics for the growth of the soul. Many common terms are used in a wider sense from their common usage.

Example: “bread” in the Bible means not just physical food, but all things that man required—all physical things, clothing, shelter, money, education, companionship, etc. But above all, it stands for spiritual things; spiritual perception, spiritual understanding, spiritual realization. “Give us this day our daily bread” – so what do you hear in this?

Another example, “prosperity” which signifies a great deal more than material possessions. Success in prayer. From the point of view of the soul, success in prayer is real prosperity. Certain qualities of material things on this plane are essential, but material wealth really is the least important thing in life.

“BE attitudes”, attitudes of being, states of mind.

Each of the beatitudes begins with “Blessed”. It is important to understand that to bless is to “confer prosperity upon, it makes a wonderful promise telling you what will happen to you if you condition your mind to accept the attitudes.

Blessed is the one word definition of all the good that will come to you if you understand and live by these attitudes of being.

"The Beatitudes"

*And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain
(higher state of consciousness): and when he was set,
his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth
and taught them saying:*

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

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

* *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the
earth.*

* *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness: for they shall
be filled.*

* *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain*

mercy.

* *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they will see*

God.

* *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they will be
called children of God.*

* Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness
sake: for theirs is the
kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you, when people
revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner
of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and
be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven;
for in the same way they persecuted the prophets which
were before you.

1st Beatitude

“Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”

Review what “blessed” and “the kingdom of heaven” refer to from intro page

Story from Matthew 19, 21-23

A rich young man once came to Jesus wanting to be a disciple. Jesus told the young man that he must sell all of his possessions and give to the poor and then come back and join the group. The man “turned sorrowfully away because he had great possessions” and did not do as Jesus instructed. Jesus said, “it will be hard for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The root word that is translated “spirit” is more accurately and meaningfully translated “pride” – “poor in pride.” The word “Heaven” comes from the Greek root that means “expanding.” Thus, Jesus is talking about the expanding potential within the individual—within you.

If you look at this from the viewpoint that “great possessions” refers to material possessions, it sounds like Jesus is telling the man that in order to follow him he has to be poor. But this is not what Jesus is saying. Jesus referred to possession of the mind—mental baggage. Be willing to empty yourself of your present habits of thought, your present views and prejudices, your dysfunctional habits, your present way of life if necessary, in fact anything and everything that can stand in the way of your finding God.

The Rich Young Man was enslaved by his love of money, he thought his riches were the key to his security. It wasn't that he had great material possessions, his possessions had him. Be willing to be open with your mind and heart, be willing to be teachable, be willing to trust God's guidance, be receptive to the Truth. Then be willing to demonstrate Truth in your life.

Affirmation for 1st Beatitude: “I am open and receptive to God's guidance, God's love and Prosperity – God is my source.

For Discussion

1. Do you consider yourself teachable? What is it that you want to learn & understand?
2. What do you place your security in?
3. What negative old ideas/beliefs do you have about yourself or others?
4. What prejudice/judgements do you hold?
4. How would you write this story of the Rich Young Man in modern times?
5. What action can you take to implement the 1st Beatitude in your life?

Challenge

Here is the challenge, rewrite the first Beatitude in the words that would be clear and convey the message that Jesus was giving.

Activity (use activity whenever you think would work best)

Topic: Pursuing world values

Supplies: Two or three types of bubble-making wands and bubbles

As you blow bubbles over the group, talk about how fascinating bubbles are to watch—and how fun they are to make. They come in lots of sizes (depending on wand of course). All bubbles have this in common: they inevitable pop whether you try to hold a bubble or just let it fly free—sooner or later it will burst.

The world waves a wandful of fascinating, alluring pictures of fun, romance, happiness, and wealth and for a while the picture may actually seem real. But sooner or later just when you think you've finally gotten enough, had enough or become enough—just when you thought you might be lifted above the frustrations and difficulties of life, the bubble bursts. You reach out to grab it and it pops on you.

Discussion

1. What kinds of bubbles do teens at your school pursue?
2. What makes these bubbles look so appealing?
3. What bubbles are you chasing? What does it look like to “seek first the Kingdom”?

2nd Beatitude

“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.”

In days of old in many religions, it was taught that to suffer and have tragedy and sorrow in life was a blessing because you would be rewarded in heaven in the afterlife. This is not at all what Jesus had in mind. The will of God is that everyone experience happiness and joy. But unfortunately many people are not willing to open their minds to Truth and seek God until they are brought to their knees because their life is in chaos, sickness, failure, depression, sadness, etc. When we become desperate enough we are then willing to let go and turn to God for help. God does not send us problems. We can learn the hard way through painful experience or we can learn through spiritual unfoldment.

Jesus said, “the man who sorrows is fortunate, for in his sorrow, he may come to experience God’s presence in his life”.

One who truly knows the truth of his being, the truth of the Christ within, the Spirit of God, will not become a victim in life. With this right understanding, we can respond to life not “react” to it. But if we choose to operate strictly from our human consciousness and get to that point of desperation and finally seek God, be assured that God will comfort us. When we surrender our will, our stubbornness, we will experience comfort, the presence of God.

Divine Power really is the Source of man's supply, and all material objects but the channels.

Affirmation: "God is my source and supply, I choose to learn through spiritual unfoldment"

Questions for Discussion:

1. What challenges have you faced in your life that have made you strong?
2. What do you recognize from your past challenges what you may have done differently?
3. What did you learn from these experiences?
4. What can you do on a daily basis to better equip yourself to face your day?

Challenge:

Rewrite the 2nd Beatitude in the words that would be clear and convey the message that Jesus was giving.

Activity -- "Connect-the-Dots

Supplies: connect the dot pages from children's book

Give everyone a page and ask them to connect the dots but not in the right sequence. What kind of picture do you end up with? Does it make any sense? Of course not – now give everyone another sheet and this time ask them to connect the dots using the right sequence.

Say to the Group: As you begin to connect the dots you have no idea what it is, you begin by believing there is an image but you cannot tell what it is. You trust that an artist designed a picture that will be revealed if you continue to trace the sequence, dot-to-dot. If you don't connect the dots in sequence, or if you decide to stop drawing you'll never see the full design. So it is with God's guidance. We can choose to be open and receptive to Spirit, receive guidance and spiritual unfoldment or as with the first drawing, we can do it our way and end up with a real mess.

3rd Beatitude

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth"

If you consider this beatitude from the human standpoint it sounds ridiculous. It is the aggressive that possess the earth! This Beatitude is among the half dozen most important verses in the Bible. When you possess the spiritual meaning you have the secret to overcoming every difficulty.

The work "earth" in the Bible does not mean merely this terrestrial globe. Your "earth" means your outer experience. To "inherit the earth" means dominion over your outer experience, power to bring your conditions of life into harmony. We are masters of our own lives and destinies.

Jesus is referring to an **attitude toward God** when he says, "meek". Jesus was meek toward God. He knew he was a carpenter's son who found his spiritual unity with God and tapped into the secrets of the Universe. He knew the miracle working power did not come to Him but through Him. As long as he was in tune, he could do all things. Jesus said "I of myself can do nothing".

Meek consciousness is God centered. It is humble in the recognition of human limitations but confident in divine resources. An attitude that comes from a conviction that God is the answer to human needs and a willingness to submit to the flow of Spirit in and through us. The great source of wisdom is intuition, the great source of vision is

insight, and the great source of power is spiritual power. So with God centered consciousness, we become the master and will inherit our earth, our experience. Einstein said that great ideas came to him after he had relaxed and ceased from strenuous search for his objective. The meek or receptive mind invites God-ideas.

Affirmation: “I am in tune with God -- the power of God works in and through me.”

Discussion

1. How would you define true meekness?
2. Would you say there is a feeling that expresses meekness and if so can you describe it?
3. Discuss following: “Wisdom is intuition” “Vision is insight” “Power is innate spiritual power”

Challenge:

Rewrite the 3rd Beatitude in the words that would be clear and convey the message that Jesus was giving.

Activity (this activity will be a real stretch for the teens but hopefully they will be willing)

Surprise the group by announcing: “Let’s play Ring Around the Rosie” Depending on size of group, you may need to have more than one group. Listen and watch for people’s reactions, (groans, embarrassment, skepticism) Play a few times. If time permits, play London Bridge Coming Down

Discuss:

- How did you feel when you heard the announcement to play Ring Around the Rosie? (some may say, “I felt silly and stupid” or “I felt like it was going to be fun and crazy”)
- What were your feelings during the game? (Some may say “I was embarrassed and hoped no one would walk by and see us” or “I felt free and uninhibited”)
- How would you say this activity relates to “being meek”? Being willing, open and receptive?

This children’s game reminds us also when Jesus said, “You must become like little children to enter the Kingdom of Heaven”. What do you think he was trying to convey in this message?

4th Beatitude

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled.”

It is important to remember in this study that Jesus is dealing with one thing; “states of mind”. Righteousness simply means “right thinking”. The Great Law of the Universe, what you think in your mind you will produce in your experience. As within, so without.

It is the right attitude with all subjects in every department of life that makes a person successful, makes and sustains good health, enables a person to overcome addictions. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

What does Jesus mean when he says “hunger and thirst”. Hunger is to desire. To want to be helped. Help and healing are a matter of man’s faith, vision, desire and acceptance.

There is a story of a mystic teacher of India who used an interesting technique to impress his students with the importance of the “hunger and thirst for righteousness (right thinking)”. He would take a student into the river, plunge his head under the water and forcibly hold it there until his lungs were fairly bursting. Finally, after letting him up, the teacher would ask, “What were you thinking about?” “What did you want more than anything?” The student would always reply, “Air! I wanted air!” “Ah,” the teacher would say, “and when you want God as much as you just wanted air, you will be filled”. The fundamental idea of Jesus’ teaching is that man is a divine creature and the potential for wholeness is always within him. Thus help and healing are not dependent upon some special act of God. They are a matter of man’s faith, vision, his desire and acceptance, his “hunger and thirst after righteousness”. If men fulfill their part the promise is “they shall be filled”.

Affirmation: “I seek God with all my mind and heart and I am filled with God’s presence and love”.

Attitude

The longer we live, the more we realize the impact of attitude on our life. Attitude is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, education, money, circumstance, failures, and successes, what others think or say or do. It is significantly more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a person, a home, a church, an organization. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play the one string we have and that is our attitude. Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it. And so it is with you..... we are in charge of our attitudes!

Challenge:

Rewrite the 4th Beatitude in the words that would be clear and convey the message that Jesus was giving.

Journal Activity

Handout with the following questions for each person to journal. When completed, have everyone share if they choose to do so.:

1. What are you seeking in your life? What are your desires?
2. Is your relationship with God in your plan? How does your relationship with God play out in your everyday life experience?
3. How would you describe your attitude most of the time? Is it positive? Is it negative? Be detailed with your answer.
4. Is there a major shift in your thinking and attitude that needs to take place?
5. Are you facing a decision now? Write down your attitude and thoughts about it.

Set your framework for your day. Decide each morning what kind of attitude you will bring into your day:

- Today I keep it simple
- Today I give everything the light touch
- Today I keep it humorous
- Today I am understanding
- Today I am loving
- Today I am patient

List some others that you can use

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

5th Beatitude

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy”

In this Beatitude Jesus is emphasizing that the experiences that come to you is what your consciousness has drawn to you. You may not like what you see in your world, but it is your attitudes and reactions that have been the attracting force.

If you want to be loved, you must love. If you want friends, you must be friendly. If you want to be treated with respect, you must treat others with respect. It is a giving and receiving. Decide the kind of world you want to experience, the kind of friends you want to have, the goals you want to achieve, whatever it might be. Then begin to think the kind of thoughts that will draw them to you. Along with the thoughts we must align our feelings with the thoughts. How would you feel to be loved, how would you feel to have caring and trusting friends. Hold the feeling that goes with the thought, it works together. You can't think you would like to have good friends but feel as though it won't happen.

Also, are you a "caring" kind of person who warms up other people's lives? Are you quick to respond to need? Do you give without thought of getting something back?

Affirmation: "I keep my thoughts centered upon those qualities I want to see demonstrated in my life"

Challenge:

Rewrite the 5th Beatitude in the words that would be clear and convey the message that Jesus was giving.

From the Bible, read the Story of the Good Samaritan. Ask following questions for discussion:

1. **What is happening in this story? (not interpretation – just exactly what is happening)**
2. **How do you see this happening in our world?**
3. **How do you see this happening in your life?**
4. **Explain how you identify with each of these characters.**

Let's be Creative

Write the story of the Good Samaritan in today's world then have volunteers act it out. This is a lesson you could possibly present to your Uniteen Group.

Spoon Activity

1. Have a spoon for each person. Using a sturdy stick, put an extension of at least 24 inches on each spoon. Then you have a dish of pudding, cut up fruit, whatever your choice and have each person try to feed themselves using the long handled spoon. (try this ahead of time to make sure the spoon handle is long enough so that you cannot feed yourself).
2. Ask them if this was the only way to eat, how long before you would go hungry?
3. What about if you take your spoon and use it to feed someone else?
4. What is the message in this activity?

How can we serve?

Have a discussion with the group:

1. How are we helping each other in our group? Can this be improved?
2. How are we helping our church? Can this be improved?
3. How are we helping at home? Can this be improved?
4. How are we helping in serving our community? Can this be improved?

6th Beatitude

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they will see God.

The promise in this Beatitude is “to see God”. We know of course that we cannot see God in the ordinary physical sense in which we see a human or an object. Our contact with the world is through senses, mostly sight. So we see good and evil. But life is whole and we see only a part. What the eyes report are determined by what the mind beholds. Shakespeare’s concept, there is nothing either good or bad, thinking makes it so.

To see God is to see the “spiritual perception”. Heaven is all around us—not in a distant location but we need spiritual perception to recognize it. Heaven is the realm of Spirit, substance, without age or discord or decay. But our vision is everything aging, wearing out, born only to die, blossom only to fade. It is like being colored blind in a beautiful flower garden. It is our free will in opposition to the Will of God. So to “see God” is to apprehend Truth as it really is.

What is “pure in heart?” Purity here means recognizing God alone as the only real cause and the only real Power in existence. We must accept Truth not only with the conscious mind but also with the subconscious mind then Truth assimilates into our life. “There is “head knowledge” that people acquire and might not improve their life. It has to become “heart knowledge” which is incorporated into our subconscious. And how do we do this, by prayer and practice of the Presence of God

Jesus saw the “whole man”; he saw past the human condition and refused to believe in anything less and this seeing was the key to his healing power. To make a difference in this world we begin with ourselves and change how we “see”. Viewing life from the highest rather than the lower point of view.

So when we see conditions or people that are in dysfunction, error in their thinking and actions, can we see past the human condition, can we see the whole picture, can we see what the real intention for us and this world is? Can we see Truth? We do not deny the situation, but can we see past it and the potential of what it could be? Can we see the Spirit of God that is there in each person?

Affirmation: “I see the world, not as it is, but as I am, and I am in Spiritual Unity with God.!”

Challenge:

Rewrite the 6th Beatitude in the words that would be clear and convey the message that Jesus was giving.

Questions for Discussion

1. How do you see God without using the physical eye?
2. Do you think it is possible for us to not see good and evil?
3. What do you think of Shakespeare’s concept, “there is nothing either good or bad, thinking makes it so”.
4. How would you describe the difference between “head knowledge” and “heart knowledge”
5. What is conscious mind? What is sub-conscious mind? Is it important to understand the difference?
6. Do you think we tend to look for and see what is perceived as wrong rather than what is right?
7. What can we do to see things and people differently?

What do you see?

We are often mirrors for one another, for what we express is often reflected by other people. When we choose to express anger, we receive anger in return, yet when we express kindness we often receive kindness and compassion in return. When we see Christ in ourselves, we see the Christ in others.

Direction: (feel free to expand on this activity) Invite everyone to find a partner and sit facing each other. Invite them to look at the person they have chosen as if they were looking in the mirror and seeing themselves. Ask them to really see themselves in their partner, in their image, just as we all are made in the image and likeness of God. Give them a moment to connect this way. Ask them to repeat after you each affirmation: I am you.....You are me.....I see the Christ in your eyes..... I am God’s beloved child.....I am a good friend.....I have inner peace.....I am lovable.....I am worthy.....
I am creative.....I am wise.....I am compassionate.....I am a channel of God’s expression.....
I am more than I see.....I am Spirit.....Now looking in the mirror, give yourself a hug!!!

7th Beatitude

Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God

Man is a spiritual being, a true child of God when he is attuned to God's presence and expresses his God potential of love and peace. To accomplish, this we need to be in conscious contact with God. We bring the thought of God into our consciousness, we use prayer and meditation to better enhance our awareness, to get a very strong realization of the Presence of God within you. "**The realization of the Presence of God within**" comes with "prayer" which includes any form of communion with God, whether vocal, mental, affirmative and innovatory prayer, meditation and the highest of all forms of prayer, which is contemplation. Being in the silence and open to the realization of God's presence. "Serenity" is the grand passport to the Presence of God, tranquility of the soul, which Jesus refers to by the word "peace" – the peace that passes all human understanding.

The peacemakers spoken of in this Beatitude are those who make or bring about this true peace, or serenity in their own soul. This condition is the objective at which Jesus aims in all the instructions which he gives us in the Sermon on the Mount, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.....let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." As long as there is fear, or resentment or any trouble in your heart, you cannot attain this serenity and peace.

"Our thoughts are prayers and we are always praying, our thoughts are prayers, listen to what we're saying. Seek a higher consciousness, a place of peacefulness and know that God is always there. Then every thought becomes a prayer."

When the power of prayer is understood, healing can come about without even speaking. The silent thought of the All-Power of Love and Wisdom can cause any trouble to melt away.

Peace in our world will only come when all men become peaceful within themselves and live it. We cannot have a peaceful world until all men have that peace consciousness. We need to affirm that we are spiritual beings with the potential for peace and harmony. Call yourself a child of God and believe it and you become a true peacemaker. Bring the Beatitude into consciousness and be the bringer of light to the world.

Affirmation: "I am a Child of God, a radiating center of peace and love".

No Challenge here

This Beatitude is pretty self-explanatory. Probably doesn't need any rewrite!

Peace Quotient

Have group journal and answer following question:

1. When someone is mean to you and tries to hurt you, how do you respond?
2. If you are in a bad mood, how do you treat the people closest to you?
3. When you see people you don't like, do you reject them? Ignore them? Other?
4. Do you have peaceful thoughts about yourself? Do you put yourself down? Explain
5. Do you put others down? Make fun? Gossip?
6. How do you respond if someone criticizes you?

7. Are you willing to reach out to someone at school that has been rejected or made fun of by others?
8. Do you consider yourself a peacemaker?

When everyone is finished, share and discuss your answers.

8th Beatitude

*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake:
for theirs is the
kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you, when people revile you
and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you
falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad: for great
is your reward in heaven; for in the same way they persecuted
the prophets which were before you.*

This can be a very startling statement when we know that Jesus taught that the Will of God for us is harmony, peace and joy, and we are to cultivate “right thinking”. So after studying the previous Beatitudes, this one can be confusing.

There are challenges to living the “right way”. As an example, a youngster who is ridiculed by his friends because he will not engage in petty thievery is being persecuted for “righteousness” sake. A woman is required to engage in certain practices by an unscrupulous employer. She refuses and is summarily dismissed. She is being persecuted for “righteousness” sake. How often is someone shunned for not following the crowd and doing what is right?

The emphasis is on our attitudes, thinking. The persecution takes place within our mind. Whenever you set a course for “right thinking” you will run into your own static thoughts. You have an argument in your own mind of which course to take. When we are tempted to hold the wrong thoughts about ourselves, others or situations; give way to fear or anger, then we are being persecuted *for righteousness’ sake*. We are in a struggle within ourselves,

we are being persecuted by our own lower natures. These struggles need to be worked out sooner or later so the sooner they are worked out and over and done with, the better so relatively speaking, they are great blessings.

Jesus himself went through this when he went into the desert and was tempted by Satan, the human consciousness. And again in the Garden of Gethsemane and he overcame these temptations that was the struggle within himself between human consciousness and higher consciousness. Jesus says “there is nothing wrong with being tempted within yourself. It is a sign that you are growing, you are reaching for greater things even if the human man is pulling to keep you in lower things.” The completely negative person is not “tempted”.

When you take your stand in Truth and launch into a program of self-improvement and the disciplining of your thought, you will experience “slings and arrows” of human consciousness pulling against you. Jesus is saying in this BE attitude, “You have put your hand to the plow, so do not look back. You are on the way, and the inward persecution of the warring thoughts of human mind prove it. Press on past the inertial pull of your humanity to the releasement of your divinity.”

Affirmation: “In my quest for Truth I press on past my humanity to a deepening awareness and an Increasing releasement of my potential divinity.”

Challenge: Can this Beatitude be written to clarify the message of Jesus?

Questions for Discussion

1. In what ways are you tempted to follow the path of “Unrighteousness”?
2. Are you willing to stand up for what you believe is right when others are trying to convince you otherwise? Explain, possibly give some examples.
3. In what ways are you tempted by the world around you?
4. What can you do to stay on track with “right thinking” “right attitude”?
5. What kind of people do you surround yourself with to assist you?
6. Are you willing to say no to a situation even though your friends say otherwise?
7. Are you willing to give up the truth of who you really are to be a part of the crowd?