



**Text:** Matthew 5:1-16; 9:9-13

**Lesson Themes:**

- The overflow of who we are becoming in Christ impacts the world through personal relationships.
- The end result of approaching the culture in love will impact our ability to share the gospel with those who are lost.
- PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL

**Theme Verse:** Matthew 5:14-16

<sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.

<sup>15</sup> Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

**Outline of Text:**

- I. Who God Calls Us to Become (5:1-12)
- II. How God Calls Us to Relate (5:13-16; 9:13)
- III. Who God Calls Us to Reach (9:9-13)

## **'How' to Lead a Bible Study Discussion Group**

- This discussion guide is designed for just that... discussion. When I lead discussion group Bible studies, I do not have answers anywhere in the material, nor do I use a leader's guide with all the answers written in.
- This is INTENTIONAL! I believe that the discipleship process should be an encounter with God, not just listening to someone else tell you what words to write down to fill in the blanks.
- Our goal is to help you facilitate discovery learning for your students. As the questions are asked, every participant (including the leader) is required to search God's Word to discover the appropriate morsel of truth. When facilitators are 'armed' with all the answers, they are less likely to allow the time needed for individuals to process the question and formulate an answer.
- Don't be afraid of silence! That discovery process is the key to the success or failure of this process. It is in those moments of silence that we stop teaching and the Holy Spirit takes over!
- We cannot forget what Jesus said in John 16:13: *“when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”*
- A “Lesson Commentary” has been included with this packet. We encourage you to study the material contained in the commentary, but do not try to teach (or lecture) your group from that material. Let it serve as a source of information for you to draw upon to help give context and perspective to the group discussion.
- For a deeper discussion of how to lead an inductive style, Bible discussion group, please download the “Leading Small Group Bible Studies” resource by clicking [HERE](#).

# Ice-Breaker Options

## Paperclip Links

A fun icebreaker that starts as the students first enter the room for class, this game is guaranteed to get the group mingling. You will need a great number of paperclips for this icebreaker game, so be ready. Give each student ten (or more!) paperclips when they arrive. Tell the first three students who arrive that they are the team leaders and cannot connect with each other. The goal is to get the teens to join their group and create the largest chain of paperclips. The team with longest chain of paperclips wins, but do not tell them what they will win.

In all likelihood, the students will be very zealous in recruiting their fellow classmates to join their team. Let them be zealous, but don't allow the activity to get out of hand!

Once all the students have found a place on a team, measure the links of paperclips to see which team has the longest strand. Recognize the team with the longest strand and inform them that they are the winners but that there is no prize. Remind them that you did not promise them a prize. Allow them to complain momentarily and then explain the meaning and purpose behind this activity

The Bible says:

- “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).
- “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

With a prize like that, why don't we do more to get people to follow Jesus?

## Sharing My Story

Encourage several students to share for each of the following scenarios:

**Scenario #1:** What event, occurrence, or circumstance in your life led you to become a Christian? Was there a major turning point that led to acceptance?

**Scenario #2:** What Christian person that you have met and known has had the most influence in your life and why? That person could be a pastor, close friend, stranger, or mentor. Think about whether that individual caused a turning point in your Christian walk.

# Bible Study Discussion Guide

In our study today, we are focusing on the beginning of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The first section of Matthew 5 is referred to as the Beatitudes. The word beatitude comes from a Latin word that means “happy” or “blessed.” In our English Bibles, each of these beatitudes begins with the word “Blessed.” These nine statements define the kind of person that God wants us to become.

## Who God Calls Us to Become

Read Matthew 5:1-12. What is the meaning of and specific blessing for each of the nine beatitudes?

[The goal of this question is to get the students discussing these nine attitudes that ought to be present in our lives. The answers provided below are there to help steer the discussion. Be careful to not spend too much time dealing with this one question!]

Blessed Attitude	Meaning	Blessing
Poor in Spirit	To be poor in spirit means to be humble, to have a correct estimate of oneself... It is not a false humility that says, “I am not worth anything.”	Inheriting the Kingdom of heaven was promised to those who are humble—not those who try to take it (Mt 11:12), or those trusting in wealth (Mt 19:23), or those who are self-righteous (Mt 23:13).
Mourn	The idea behind this attitude is to mourn over sin—despise it and repent of it. Those who try to hide or cover their sin have the wrong attitude.	Being comforted is both a present experience and promised future. Those who mourn (repent) of their sin experience comfort—or relief from guilt—through repentance; and ultimate comfort in Christ’s return.
Meek	To be meek refers to power under control. It is a picture of a horse that has been bridled and broken. Meekness is not weakness—it is submitting to God.	Inheriting the earth refers back to the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 15:7. The promise of this blessing would bring hope to the nation of Israel to one day regain the land that was promised to them.
Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness	The concept behind this attitude is to have an insatiable, spiritual appetite—a continuous desire to live a life of righteousness that is pleasing to God.	Just like “mourning,” the blessing of this attitude is current and future. Those who desire to live rightly will be able through the power of the Spirit. It also refers to the prophetic hope found in Isaiah 25:6.
Merciful	To be merciful means to extend mercy to others, just as God—through Christ—has extended mercy to you.	Those who are merciful will also receive mercy. Luke 6:36—“Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful”—is the assurance that God will show mercy upon His people (cf. Exodus 34:6).
Pure in Heart	The pure in heart are those who are inwardly clean from sin through faith in Christ (Acts 15:9) and who continually recognize their sinful condition (Rom 7).	This promise alludes to the promises in Psalm 24:3-4, “Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart...”
Peacemakers	Peacemakers are those who are able to show others how to have peace with God and how to be instruments of peace in this world.	God, through Christ, has brought peace into the world (John 14:27; 16:33). As a child of God—adopted into the family of God—I should also be an instrument of His peace on display for the world to see.
Persecuted	While not specifically an attitude, portraying a Christ-like attitude in the midst of persecution should be the goal of every believer (cf. Romans 5:1-5; James 1:2-4).	Like the first, the blessing of persecution is inheriting the Kingdom of heaven. In Romans 5 and James 1, we discover that persecution brings, endurance, character, hope and spiritual maturity.
Reviled and Slandered	The same is true for this last item in our list. The attitude portrayed during times of ridicule and mocking will impact those who do these things to you.	Jesus concludes this section on the Beatitudes with an exhortation to “rejoice and be glad” because we are in good company if we are being ridiculed and lied about. Our blessing will be revealed someday in glory.

In light of all these things, what kind of person does God want us to become? (Colossians 3:9-17)

### **How God Calls Us to Relate**

Read Matthew 5:13-16. In these verses, Jesus utilizes two illustrations to demonstrate our role in the world for His kingdom. What are those two illustrations?

What was the purpose of salt in the time of Christ's teaching?

What was the meaning behind Jesus referring to His followers as salt and light in the world?

Based on all that we have learned from the Sermon on the Mount about engaging our culture with truth and love, what is our responsibility to our community in light of Jesus' teaching here in Matthew 5:13-16?

### **Who God Calls Us to Reach**

Read Matthew 9:9-13. In this passage, Jesus calls Matthew to follow Him. Who was Matthew and why is it surprising that Jesus would call him to be one of His disciples?

After Matthew chose to be one of Jesus' followers, where did they go and what did they do? Who was there with them?

Who are the people in your life that are "spiritually sick" and in need of Jesus' healing? How can you reach them with the good news of the gospel?

## God's Message for Me Today

Matthew 5:16 says, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."  
How can I let God's light shine for my friends and family?

When we shine God's light in the darkness it allows people to see Jesus in us. How can we engage those around us with the gospel? One way to do this is to share stories of how God has impacted your life! Let people see how God changed...

... the way you talk...

... the sense of purpose you have in life...

... your anxieties into peace...

... your guilt into forgiveness and joy...

... your destructive habits into clean living...

Who do you know that needs to be changed by the gospel? Who's in your circle?

