

# FATHER KNOWS BEST

## LESSON TEXT

Matthew 5:1-12

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will describe God's vision of happiness for life, based on the Beatitudes.
- The students will explain how and why God's directions bring us happiness.
- The students will apply one of the Beatitudes to their lives this week.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

*For the teacher:*

- 8 pens or pencils
- 4 items such as tube of toothpaste, bottle of shampoo, can of coffee, cake or muffin mix
- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world
- extra Bibles
- 16 sheets of white paper
- 8 sheets of construction paper/cardstock
- 2 clear cups or glasses of water
- dirt
- spoon or stirrer

*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page A, 8 copies for the teacher
- Page B, 1 copy for each student
- Page C, 1 copy for each student

## LESSON PLAN

### *Getting Ready*

Faithful Instruction  
 Teacher Focus  
 Teacher Tips  
 Preclass Activity: Directions?  
 Starting Up  
 Welcome and Singing  
 Opening Prayer  
 Victories  
 Good News from the Kingdom

### *Getting into God's Word*

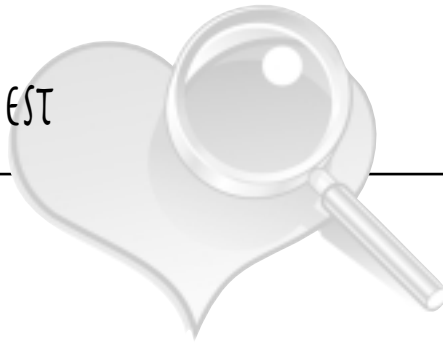
Activity #1: Directions for Happiness  
 Scripture Study  
 Activity #2: My Beatitude

### *Getting It to Others*

Scripture Memory: Matthew 5:8  
 Weekly Challenge and Snack Time  
 Conclusion

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"Blessed are the pure in heart,  
 for they will see God."  
 Matthew 5:8



## FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

### TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing this lesson. Read and meditate on Matthew 5:1-12. Decide to be what Jesus says in the Beatitudes. Are you happy as a disciple (with a "Can Do" attitude) or are you a martyr? Pray about the things in your heart and character that need to change as a result of your study of these verses. Understand that the goal is not happiness, but rather, happiness is the result of having the goal of pleasing God. If you seek after happiness, it will elude you. But if you apply and live the Beatitudes, you will be full of joy. Help the preteens to understand this. The world around them does everything and anything just to be happy, yet nothing except a relationship with God ever really satisfies long term.

### TEACHER TIPS

You will be talking about "directions" that result in happiness and how Jesus wants us to be happy. Make sure the Beatitudes are familiar to you. Get to know them well. Think about what they mean to a preteen in their language. Be thinking about how you could explain each one. Keep the activities that they do here fun and upbeat.

## PRECLASS ACTIVITY

### DIRECTIONS?

The students will research the adequacy of the directions on certain everyday products. Their findings will be referred to later in the lesson.

### MATERIALS USED

*For the teacher:*

- 8 pens or pencils
- 4 items such as tube of toothpaste, bottle of shampoo, can of coffee, cake or muffin mix

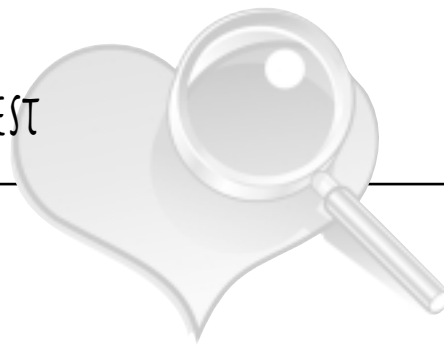
*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page A, 8 copies for the teacher

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place the four items at various stations around the room.
2. Divide the students into eight groups, assigning them to a group as they come into the class. Give the first person assigned to each group a copy of Reproducible Page A (Directions?) and a pen or pencil. That person will be the group recorder.
3. Instruct each group to go around the room, reading the directions for each item and then filling in the sheet.
4. Close out the Preclass by having the recorder from each group share what they wrote and why they evaluated the directions (good, bad or none) as they did. Have them share in an orderly way, listening to each other carefully. Have the recorders keep the sheets for their groups.





## STARTING UP

### WELCOME AND SINGING

Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

### OPENING PRAYER

*Who would like to say a prayer to start today's time together?* Let a few students lead the prayer. Encourage the students to mention missing students, special church activities, illnesses, and to be especially thankful that God knows what is best for us and helps us to be happy.

### VICTORIES

Take the time to have the students share about the challenge they were given at the end of last week's class. *Did everyone complete their challenge? How did it go? What fears did you face as you met the challenge to put the lesson into practice? How did everyone do with having consistent quiet times? Who would like to share something they learned this week?*

Praise and encourage all the students' efforts, especially noting any area of significant growth. Offer help and suggestions so they can have even more victories in the coming week.

### GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGDOM

#### MATERIALS USED

*For the teacher:*

- 1 copy of "Good News from the Kingdom"
- globe or map of the world

#### INSTRUCTIONS

*Now let's take a few minutes to share "Good News from the Kingdom."* Be excited as you read about what is happening around the world. Have a globe or map ready, pointing out the location as you share. Remind your students that the kingdom of God is worldwide and the victories of our brothers and sisters on other continents can inspire us and spur us on.





## ACTIVITY 1

### DIRECTIONS FOR HAPPINESS

After having considered several manufacturers' directions on their products in the Preclass Activity, the students will write directions from a spiritual perspective about how to be happy.

#### MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- extra Bibles
- 8 sheets of white paper
- 8 pens or pencils

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have the students divide into the same eight groups from Preclass.
2. Have them select a new recorder in each group.
3. Give the recorder a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil.
4. Give the following instructions to the students: *I want you to think of each of these groups as "think tanks" in an advertising company. Does anyone know what happens in a think tank? (Take responses—explain that a think tank refers to the creative brainstorming process that goes on in an advertising group who is coming up with the best way to promote their product.) In the course of the class today I will give you two assignments to brainstorm and come up with the best approach to describing, explaining, advertising or selling. In a think tank, all brains are needed. Take responsibility to help the group come to its conclusions.*
5. *The first assignment is to think about the directions you read during the Preclass Activity and then to come up with some directions yourselves. These will not be directions for how to use a product; they will be spiritual directions that let people know how to find happiness. (Hint: God wants to give all of us happiness.)*
6. Give them 8-10 minutes to work together on the assignment, and then have them share their directions with the rest of the class members in a persuasive manner.

## SCRIPTURE STUDY

#### MATERIALS USED

Reproducible Pages:

Page B, 1 copy for each student

*God wants so much to bless us and to make us happy that he gave us special directions to follow. They are called the Beatitudes. As a matter of fact these Beatitudes were among the first life instructions that Jesus gave us when he started to preach! Let's turn to Matthew 5:1-12 and read these special directions.*

Ask for a volunteer from each group to read the beatitude for their group, divided as follows:

teacher	introduction	vv1-2
group #1	poor in spirit	v3
group #2	mourn	v4
group #3	meek	v5
group #4	hunger and thirst for righteousness	v6
group #5	merciful	v7
group #6	pure in heart	v8
group #7	peacemakers	v9
group #8	persecuted	vv10-12 –point out that these are actually 2 beatitudes so there are 9 beatitudes in all

*Remember that Jesus is speaking spiritually here. We are going to try to figure out what Jesus means in his "directions" to being blessed and being happy. To help us understand we are going to read the Beatitudes again, but this time we are going to use the Phillips translation of the Bible.*

Hand out a copy of Reproducible B (Beatitudes in the Phillips translation) to each of the students.

Have the same readers read aloud the corresponding beatitude from the Phillips translation. After each beatitude is read, stop and discuss the meaning with the students. See suggested explanations on the next page:



## ACTIVITY 2

- A. Poor in spirit: are humble / know their need for God / can't do it all on their own / need help on how to be a Biblical friend, how to be confident in God, etc.
- B. Mourn: those willing to cry / not afraid of how they look, but not crying for self—sorry because they hurt God and others / desire to change and be different / willing to be real about how they feel about themselves
- C. Meek: eager to learn / easy to teach / humble / not thinking they are better or smarter than others
- D. Hunger and thirst for righteousness: want to do what would make God happy / not people-pleasers / want to understand the Bible and God first / just desire to know God
- E. Merciful: kind-hearted toward others / not seeking revenge when hurt / forgive easily / do not hold grudges
- F. Pure in heart: utterly sincere / honest / real / not fake or trying to impress / open about what they think and feel
- G. Peacemakers: don't try to get even / willing to not get what they want so that others will feel loved / unity more important than having things go their way
- H. Persecuted for right living: ignored or overlooked / made fun of / lied about because doing what is best / others are jealous of them because they do not understand about God (Be sure to point out that beatitudes 8 and 9 are combined in this one.)

Have each group look at the directions they wrote in Activity #1 about how to be happy. Have them evaluate how their directions compare with Jesus' directions in the Beatitudes. Then have them share their evaluations with the class.

### MY BEATITUDE

The class will stay in their "think tank" groups. They have to come up with a way to "sell" their beatitude in a way that makes it attractive to people. They can do this through a poem, rap, picture, skit, etc.

### MATERIALS USED

*For the teacher:*

- 8 sheets of white paper
- 8 sheets of construction paper/cardstock

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Have each group take "their" beatitude and come up with a rap, story, sketch, billboard, drawing or skit about their verse to explain what it means and how it helps us be happy. Then have them share with or present to the class the result of their "think tanking." They might or might not use the materials provided.
2. After 10 or 15 minutes, have the groups start to present. Make sure all the students are respectful of each group.





## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

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

Matthew 5:8

### MATERIALS USED

For the teacher:

- 2 clear cups or glasses of water
- dirt
- spoon or stirrer

Reproducible Pages:

- Page C, 1 copy for each student

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill two clear cups or glasses with water.
2. Put dirt in one and stir with the spoon or stirrer.
3. Place both cups so the students can see them.
4. Ask two volunteers to come up. Have them stand on opposite sides of the cups. Have them stoop to eye level with the glass filled with the dirty water. Ask if they can see each other through the glass. (They should not be able to see each other.) Then have them do the same with the glass with the clear water. Through which can they see each other?
5. Have fun with this activity. It will help them remember the memory verse. We cannot see through impurity. If we are pure in heart, we will see God. Talk about the fact that this does not only mean seeing God in heaven, but even seeing him on earth. If we are pure in heart, we can see God in all the situations around us. (Possible applications: *Think about a strict teacher you have.*)

*Through that teacher you learn the most and become more disciplined, etc. You can see God using that situation for your good. / You can see God in nature also. / You have a different view of life when your heart is pure.)*

## WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat it while you explain to them the challenge for the week.

The challenge this week is for the students to apply one of the Beatitudes to their lives. Have them consider which beatitude they would like to work on and then sign a commitment saying how they are going to apply this beatitude in their life. Remind the students that this should not be just a one-time application. Because these are Beatitudes, we understand that these are attitudes that we need to live, not just things we do.

## CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer.



## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Think about one of the Beatitudes that you would like to practice in your own life this week. On the back of your Scripture Memory sheet, write a commitment explaining which beatitude you will be working on and how you will go about putting it into practice in your life. Sign your name at the bottom. Share your victory with the class next week.

# FATHER KNOWS BEST

## LESSON TEXT

Matthew 5:1-12 and other references from the Old and New Testaments

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will explain that God has given us many scriptures to help us as we try to live the Beatitudes.
- The students will make practical application of the Beatitudes to their lives.
- The students will apply one of the Beatitudes to their lives this week.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

*For each student:*

- pen or pencil
- paper

*For the teacher:*

- extra Bibles
- 14 index cards for every 6 students (team), different color for each team if possible
- rubber bands
- pen or marker
- 1 pen or pencil per team of 6
- 1 sheet of paper per team of 6

*Reproducible Pages:*

- Page D, 1 copy for each student
- Page E, 1 copy for each student

## LESSON PLAN

### *Getting Ready*

Faithful Instruction  
 Teacher Focus  
 Teacher Tips  
 Preclass Activity: Crossword Puzzle  
 Starting Up  
 Welcome and Singing  
 Opening Prayer and Review  
 Great News Sharing

### *Getting into God's Word*

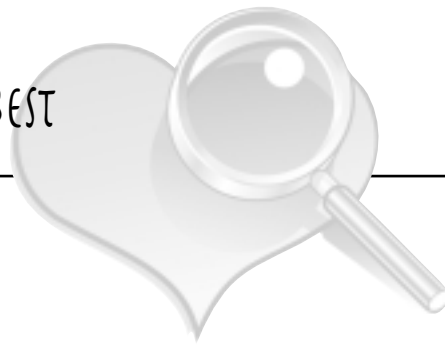
Scripture Study  
 Activity: Beatitude Reference Race

### *Getting It to Others*

Scripture Memory: Matthew 5:8  
 Weekly Challenge and Snack Time  
 Conclusion

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

Blessed are the pure in heart,  
 for they will see God.  
 Matthew 5:8



## FAITHFUL INSTRUCTION

### TEACHER FOCUS

Pray before preparing this lesson. Read and meditate on the references from the Activity part of the lesson as well as Matthew 5:1-12. Decide to be what Jesus says in the Beatitudes. Are you happy as a disciple (with that "Can Do" attitude) or are you a martyr? Pray about the things in your heart and character that need to change from your study of these verses. Remember that as disciples, the Beatitudes must be part of our lifestyle, not just something we do out of legalism or obligation. Your students will look to your attitude and lifestyle as an example of living out the Beatitudes.

### TEACHER TIPS

Make sure the Beatitudes are familiar to you. Try to get to know them well. Think about what they mean to pre-teens in their language. Use any opportunities, in and out of class, to encourage your students to incorporate the Beatitudes in their lifestyle. In a positive way, help them to make a great "attitude adjustment."

## PRECLASS ACTIVITY

### CROSSWORD PUZZLE

This worksheet will help the students with their Bible skills as they refer to the verses and answer the clues.

#### MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pencil

Reproducible Pages:

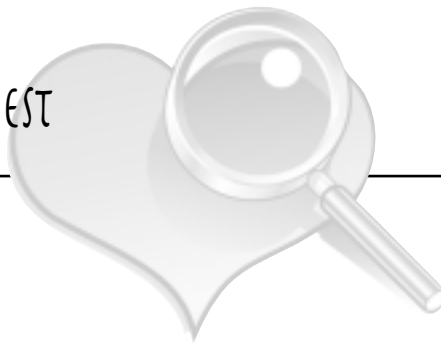
- Page D, 1 copy for each student

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page D (Crossword Puzzle) and a pencil as they come into the room.
2. Make sure they have Bibles to use as they complete the worksheets.
3. Allow the students to help each other as needed.
4. Review the answers after all the students have completed the puzzle. (See answer key at right.)







## STARTING UP

### WELCOME AND SINGING

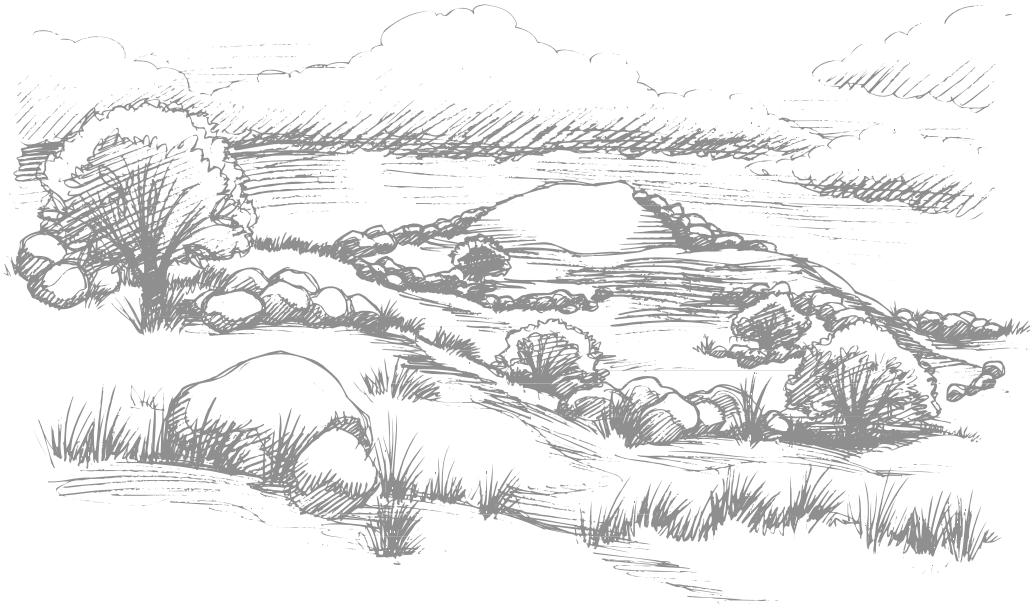
Call the students together in a circle. Welcome everyone by name, being sure to recognize anyone who is visiting. Let them know how glad you are to see them and how much you looked forward to being with them. Sing a few great songs.

### OPENING PRAYER AND REVIEW

- Open with one of the students praying for each student to live out the Beatitudes and to want to know God and be close to him.
- Have one student recite the memory verse for this lesson: Matthew 5:8.
- Have a student briefly review the previous lesson.

### GREAT NEWS SHARING

Allow several minutes for the students to share great news about their lives. This could be about a family member who became a disciple, someone healed from an illness, someone studying the Bible, great grades, etc. Remind the students to be brief so as many as possible can share.





## SCRIPTURE STUDY

The students will be given a short matching worksheet to get them ready for the race activity, which will use other Bible verses.

### MATERIALS USED

For each student:

- pen or pencil

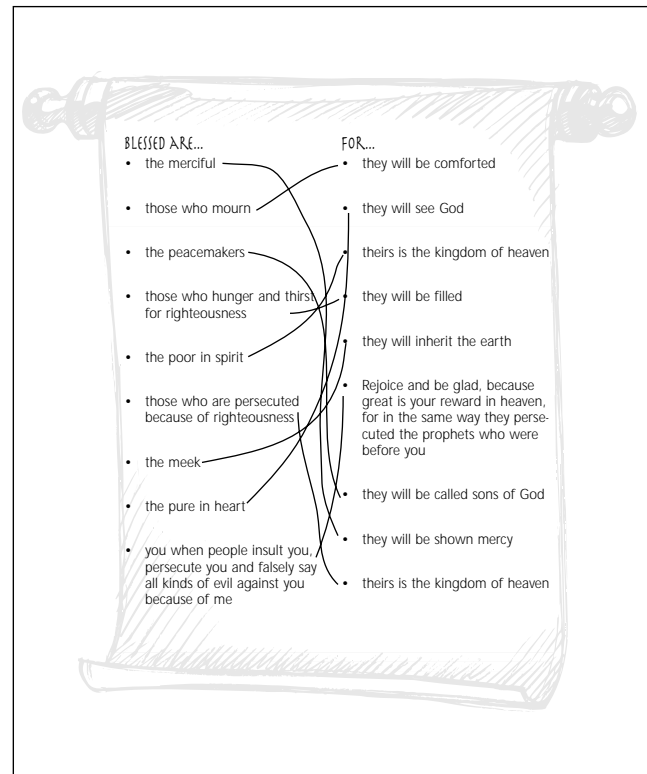
Reproducible Pages:

- Page E, 1 copy for each student

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Give each student a copy of Reproducible Page E (Matching) and a pen or pencil.
2. Have them turn to Matthew 5:1-12. Select a volunteer to read the passage aloud.
3. Tell them they have only four minutes to complete the sheet. Have them work alone, unless you have a new visiting student. Giving them a time limit will challenge them and keep the class moving instead of dragging.
4. Go over the sheet at the end of the time. (See answer key to the right.)
5. Ask the students to tell you what each of the Beatitudes listed on the worksheet means in their own words. How is the beatitude practical in their daily lives? Ask for real-life examples and be ready to share some yourself.
6. Discuss any questions the students may have regarding the meaning of any of the Beatitudes. See suggestions below:
  - A. Poor in spirit: are humble / know their need for God / can't do it all on their own / need help on how to be a Biblical friend, how to be confident in God, etc.
  - B. Mourn: those willing to cry / not afraid of how they look, but not crying for self—sorry because they hurt God and others / desire to change and be different / willing to be real about how they feel about themselves
  - C. Meek: eager to learn / easy to teach / humble / not thinking they are better or smarter than others
  - D. Hunger and thirst for righteousness: want to do what would make God happy / not people-pleasers / want to understand the Bible and God first / just desire to know God

- E. Merciful: kindhearted toward others / not seeking revenge when hurt / forgive easily / do not hold grudges
- F. Pure in heart: utterly sincere / honest / real / not fake or trying to impress / open about what they think and feel
- G. Peacemakers: don't try to get even / willing to not get what they want so that others will feel loved / unity more important than having things go their way
- H. Persecuted for right living: ignored or overlooked / made fun of / lied about because doing what is best / others are jealous of them because they do not understand about God (Be sure to point out that beatitudes 8 and 9 are combined in this one.)





## ACTIVITY

### BEATITUDE REFERENCE RACE

The preteens will form teams and compete in looking up references of verses that describe the characteristics of the Beatitudes.

#### MATERIALS USED

*For each student:*

- pen or pencil

*For the teacher:*

- extra Bibles
- 14 index cards for every 6 students (team), different color for each team if possible
- rubber bands
- pen or marker
- 1 pen or pencil per team of 6
- 1 sheet of paper per team of 6

#### PREPARATION

1. Copy the following references only (not the beatitude) onto index cards (one reference per card). Make one set for each team of 6 students.

#### on the index cards

#### answer key

1 Peter 4:13,14	(persecution)
1 Peter 2:24	(hunger for righteousness)
1 Peter 5:6	(poor in spirit)
1 Peter 3:12	(hunger for righteousness)
James 4:8-9	(mourning)
James 1:25	(hunger for righteousness)
James 2:13	(mercy)
James 3:18	(peacemaker)
2 Timothy 3:12	(persecution)
Psalms 119:9	(pure in heart)
1 Corinthians 4:12	(persecution)
1 Corinthians 10:33	(peacemakers)
Proverbs 19:20	(meek)
Psalms 51:10	(pure in heart)

2. Put rubber bands around each set to keep them separate. Use different colored index cards for each set if possible.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide the students into teams of six. Have them sit together in small circles. One student from each group should have a pen or pencil and paper. Everyone must have a Bible. They can also use the worksheet that they just completed as a reference for the Beatitudes.
2. Tell the students that they will be given cards with scriptures written on them. They must find the verse in the Bible and figure out which of the Beatitudes it is about. Then they must have one person on their team write the reference and the beatitude (in just a few words) down on a sheet of paper. They continue through the set of cards this way, and the team that finishes first (with correct answers) wins.
3. You may need to go through one example first. A good sample one would be for them to look up Psalm 37:11. It is obviously about being meek. (Warn them that some of the other references are not as obvious.)
4. Give each team a set of index cards with the references on them, and tell them to begin when you say "Go."
5. As each team finishes, check for accuracy.



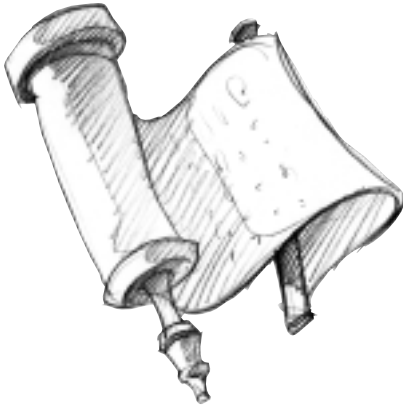
## SCRIPTURE MEMORY

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

Matthew 5:8

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Verbally assign each word in the memory verse in random fashion to a student: see, pure, Matthew, are, they, God, the, heart, in, Blessed, for, will, 5:8.
2. Tell them to line up correctly and to recite the memory verse with each person saying his or her word in correct order.
3. Repeat several times if time allows.



## WEEKLY CHALLENGE AND SNACK TIME

If your students bring a snack, allow them to eat it while you remind them of the challenge for the week.

The challenge is for the students to apply one of the Beatitudes in their lives this week. Each student signed a commitment regarding which beatitude they were working on and how they would implement their plan.

Have volunteers share how they are doing with the challenge.

As they discuss their goals, ask the students if they are happy. If they are not, give suggestions of how they could put the Beatitudes into practice and become happier. If they are happy, then ask how they see themselves putting the Beatitudes into action. (But remember, preteens can be happy one minute and not happy the next! So be patient as they learn.)

## CONCLUSION

End the class with a prayer

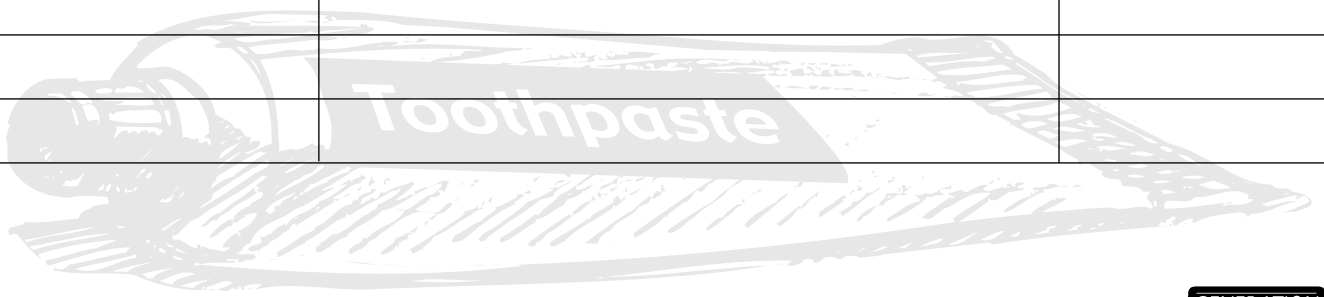
## WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Think about one of the Beatitudes that you would like to practice in your own life this week. On the back of your Scripture Memory sheet, write a commitment explaining which beatitude you will be working on and how you will go about putting it into practice in your life. Sign your name at the bottom. Share your victory with the class next week.



DIRECTIONS? Fill out the chart below as you look at the items placed around the room. Write the exact instructions given on the package for each item, not what you think they are. Then decide whether items have good, bad or no instructions.

ITEM	DIRECTIONS	GOOD, BAD OR NO DIRECTIONS
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		



MATTHEW 5:1-12

(J.B. Phillips version)



When Jesus saw the vast crowds he went up the hillside and after he had sat down his disciples came to him. Then he began his teaching by saying to them,

"How happy are those who are humble-minded, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

"How happy are those who know what sorrow means, for they will be given courage and comfort!

"Happy are those who claim nothing, for the whole earth will belong to them!



"Happy are those who are hungry and thirsty for true goodness, for they will be fully satisfied!

"Happy are the merciful, for they will have mercy shown to them!

"Happy are the utterly sincere, for they will see God!

"Happy are those who make peace, for they will be known as sons of God!

"Happy are those who have suffered persecution for the cause of goodness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs!

"And what happiness will be yours when people blame you and ill-treat you and say all kinds of slanderous things against you for my sake!



Be glad then, yes, be tremendously glad—for your reward in heaven is magnificent. They persecuted the prophets before your time in exactly the same way."

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

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

MATTHEW 5:8

WEEKLY CHALLENGE

Think about one of the Beatitudes that you would like to practice in your own life this week. On the back of your Scripture Memory sheet, write a commitment explaining which beatitude you will be working on and how you will go about putting it into practice in your life. Sign your name at the bottom. Share your victory with the class next week.

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ACROSS

1. the blessing that will come to those who mourn
7. The Beatitudes are the beginning of Jesus' longest recorded sermon, commonly referred to as the \_\_\_\_\_.
9. what God shows when he forgives
11. This is a word that is at the beginning of every beatitude (not the Phillips translation)
13. How many beatitudes are there?
15. Who will see God?
16. Where did Jesus give the Sermon on the Mount? (HINT: Matthew 5:1)

DOWN

2. This is the response we need to have when being persecuted for our faith
3. Who will be called "sons of God"?
4. This phrase is found in Matthew 5:3 and it means "humble-minded" and knowing your need for God.
5. Matthew 7:28 describes the crowds' response to Jesus' teaching.
6. Matthew 7:29 describes why people were

so impressed with Jesus. He taught with \_\_\_\_\_.

8. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_."

10. This word, found in Matthew 5:5 means "strength under control."

12. a ten-letter word describing how Jesus' followers have been treated

14. the result of hungering and thirsting for righteousness

## MATCHING

Directions: In the chart (scroll) below, the Beatitudes have been broken apart and mixed up. Draw a line to re-connect the first half of each beatitude (*the "Blessed are..." part*) with the second half of each beatitude (*the "For..." part*).

The scroll contains two columns of text. The left column is titled "BLESSED ARE..." and the right column is titled "FOR...". Each column contains a list of phrases from the Beatitudes, some of which are mixed up between the columns.

BLESSED ARE...	FOR...
• the merciful	• they will be comforted
• those who mourn	• they will see God
• the peacemakers	• theirs is the kingdom of heaven
• those who hunger and thirst for righteousness	• they will be filled
• the poor in spirit	• they will inherit the earth
• those who are persecuted because of righteousness	• Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you
• the meek	• they will be called sons of God
• the pure in heart	• they will be shown mercy
• you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me	• theirs is the kingdom of heaven