

LESSON 3

TRUE HAPPINESS

MATTHEW 5:1–48



1 Complete this sentence in as many ways as you can: Happiness is . . .

2 To what do people typically turn for happiness today?



Read Matthew 5:1–48, the chart “Key Lessons from the Sermon on the Mount,” and the following notes:

☐ 5:1ff ☐ 5:1, 2 ☐ 5:3–5 ☐ 5:3–12 ☐ 5:11, 12

3 Listed below are the attitudes that make a person “blessed” in God’s eyes (5:3–12). What do you think it means to . . .

realize your need for God? _____

mourn? _____

be gentle and lowly? _____

be hungry and thirsty for justice? _____

be merciful? _____

have a pure heart? _____

work for peace? _____

be persecuted because you live for God? _____

4 How are the Beatitudes related to each other?



5 What response to this part of the Sermon on the Mount do you think would have pleased Jesus the most?

Although Jesus’ disciples had left everything to follow him, they still had little idea of what he wanted them to do. With this list of Beatitudes, Jesus began their initiation. His description of the person whom God blesses surely cut across the disciples’ natural experience, as it does ours. We don’t expect happiness to come from being poor, pure, or caught in the cross fire while making peace. Yet those who follow and obey Christ are more than happy—they are *blessed*. They are blessed because they have a hope and joy that isn’t based on feeling or circumstance. Following Jesus means living by standards entirely different from public opinion. Rather than making us eminently popular and famous, it often means facing opposition and misunderstanding. Yet all of this makes us blessed.

6 In what ways is a person who lives out the Beatitudes blessed?

7 How can a person exhibit the Beatitudes in his/her life?



8 What natural tendencies go against the qualities that make a person blessed?

9 What qualities that Jesus mentioned in the Beatitudes are already a part of your life?

10 What Beatitudes are most lacking in your life?

11 What changes in your lifestyle or priorities would help you conform more to Jesus' description of the blessed person?

12 Which Beatitude do you want to be more evident in your life?



13 In what ways can you live out this Beatitude?

14 This week, pray that God will help you to value what he values. Use the chart “Key Lessons from the Sermon on the Mount” to shape your prayer.

A Describe what you imagine the scene was like when Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount. What characteristics of good teaching did Jesus demonstrate (5:1–48)? How do you think you would have reacted to the things Jesus said? What response do his words evoke in you now?

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B Describe in one sentence what Jesus taught about the following subjects (5:1–48): the identity of believers in the world; God’s law; anger; lust; divorce; the dependability of our words; revenge; relating to enemies. Which of these areas are you challenged to change? What change do you need to make?

C Why should Christ’s disciples be happy when they are persecuted (5:11, 12)? When are you persecuted? How can you be happy?

D What was Jesus referring to when he said that salt and light have a powerful effect on the world (5:13–16)? What can you do to have a significant effect on your part of the world?

E What did Jesus mean by saying he wasn’t abolishing the law but fulfilling it (5:17–20)? What steps can we take to avoid misusing or misapplying God’s Word?

F What is your understanding of Jesus’ statement “You are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect” (5:48)? How is God helping us toward this goal? What should you be doing in the process?

G As Jesus moved from subject to subject in this sermon, what phrase did he keep repeating (5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43)? What points did he emphasize with the repetition? Which of these points hits the area of greatest need in your life now? What can you do about this need?