

Retreat Summary

There is a section of scripture in Matthew that has been labeled “the beatitudes.” This section outlines the big picture of qualities and actions that should characterize the way believers live into the story of God. Our English translations of the Bible say that people who live into the beatitudes will be blessed. A better word here might be happy, not in the sense of the feeling of happiness but in the sense of deep fulfillment in having lived transformed lives because of our relationship with God. This does result in blessing, the greatest blessing we can know, but not necessarily the kind of material or physical blessing we might usually think of when we picture what it looks like to be blessed.

The message of the Gospel is two-dimensional. It is the good news that God in his extravagant love has given us an eternal hope through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and it is also an invitation to live here and now as people who are filled by the Holy Spirit. It is something we believe, and also something we practice. The forgiveness and grace of God saves us, and it also transforms our lives.

Being a follower of Jesus is all about living transformed lives because of our relationship with God, and being further transformed in the process. During each session of this retreat, we will invite you to wonder about one verse from Matthew 5. As you live into these qualities that characterize those who are a part of the story of God by joining where the Holy Spirit is at work in this world, may these words of Jesus challenge you, bring you encouragement, and move you toward a new, deeply fulfilling happiness.

Session Outline

Session 1: Blessed are the poor in spirit...

Session 2: Blessed are those who mourn...

Session 3: Blessed are the meek...

Session 4: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...

Session 5: Blessed are the merciful...

Session 6: Blessed are the pure in heart...