

'Living the Beatitudes' Introduction Matt 5:1-12

1. Some consider the 'beatitudes' to be *the most profound words every stated by anyone at any time*. Do you agree? **What are some other Scripture passages that could lay claim to this title?**
2. Jesus demonstrated the importance of regularly getting above the busyness of life. Getting above the worry level, beyond the noise level, away from the daily demands. **Do you have a quiet place where you can get away to like this?**
3. On a mountain we see a panorama of where we've been heading - rather than the blinkered view of what happens day by day. On the mountain we get to hear essential voices, we can listen to our lives...and most importantly to listen to the voice of God. **Discuss and relate this to your own life.**
4. In verse 1 there is a choice - to be part of the crowd - or to be one of Jesus' disciples who are determined to follow Him up the mountain and be one of his followers? What is the difference between these two groups. **In which group would you place yourself?**
5. The word Beatitude comes from the Latin *beatus*, meaning happy or blessed. The beatitudes begin with a promise of happiness. Jesus is saying '*Listen, I am telling you about the way to be truly happy and fulfilled*'. He reveals a God who wants to fill their life with satisfaction, contentment and delight. **Do you view God in this way? If not, why not?**
6. Many people spend their lives thinking, "*I could be happy if...*" They look for happiness in all the wrong places, associating it with all the wrong things. **What are some of the things that most people think will bring happiness?**
7. On first impressions this teaching seems upside down & confused. The beatitudes appear to be almost contradictory - containing oxymorons - expressions made up of combined contrasts. How strange it is to say things like: *Something is 'awfully good' or 'pretty ugly'*, to describe a '*deafening silence*', report something as '*found missing*'. **Name a few other oxymorons?**
8. These 8 blessings are primarily '*about being rather than doing*'. They're more about *best attitudes* than *best achievements*. Billy Graham called them the '*beautiful attitudes*' - they seem impossible! Meditate on them each day for the next few weeks. Allow these teachings to shape your being & change our behaviour. **Pray together.**