



NOTE: Our lesson questions are based on the NIV 2011 edition. Our preference is your first time through the questions, you answer without consulting commentaries - delight in what the Holy Spirit will reveal to you.

Lesson 2

Matthew 5:1-12; Psalm 1:1-3

1. What insight from the first set of verses covering the beginning of Jesus' ministry caught your attention and how did a verse or truth make you wiser?
2. In this lesson, we will explore what Jesus meant when He said "blessed are...." in His sermon on the mountainside. Read through **Matthew 5:1-12**, known as the Beatitudes. Blessed is one of those words we often use in a variety of different situations. What is your understanding of the meaning of the word blessed? When do you tend to use it?
3. The Greek word in our passage that's translated as blessed, or sometimes how happy, is "*makarios*." It describes a person who is viewed as fortunate or having the good life from the perspective of a third party. It is not the pronouncement of God's blessing over a person. From your subjective perspective, who would you say is fortunate or living the good life?

4. a) Read these other verses from the New Testament where the same Greek word, makarios, is used. What does the word mean in these contexts? *Feel free to read the verses before and after the verses below for added context.*

- **Luke 12:37-38** (it will be good)
- **Acts 26:2** (fortunate)
- **1 Corinthians 7:40** (happier)

b) Jesus uses a different Greek word for bless in **Luke 6:28**. What do you think is conveyed by the word bless in this verse?

5. a) The Hebrew equivalent of makarios is “ashrey” and also translates to blessed in Old Testament Scriptures. Read **Psalms 1:1-3** in which the psalmist describes a person who is blessed. What are your observations about the one who is blessed in this Psalm or in what ways is the blessed person described as flourishing?

b) To better understand the concept of “ashrey,” identify who is described as blessed in each of the following passages. How would you characterize the meaning of blessed from the following verses?

- **Deuteronomy 33:29**
- **1 Kings 10:8** (how happy)
- **Psalms 32:1-2**

6. In the Beatitudes, Jesus said that certain difficult or seemingly hopeless states of being are actually blessed, e.g., blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who mourn. We normally think of such people as the least likely to be living the good life. Read these other statements of Jesus and summarize how He reversed traditional notions of who is best suited or ready for the kingdom of heaven:

- **Matthew 19:29**

- **Matthew 19:30**
- **Matthew 20:26-28**

7. Another Hebrew word used in the Old Testament, also translated blessed, is "*baruch*." It is used when God pronounces a blessing on a creature or when one person seeks God's divine abundance.

a) Reflect on the blessing within each of these passages.

- **Genesis 1:27-28**
- **Genesis 24:59-60**
- **Numbers 6:22-27**

b) Write a blessing seeking divine abundance over someone for whom God has burdened your heart.

8. **JESUS SAID: BLESSED ARE THEY**

The blessed are among those people Jesus welcomed into the coming kingdom of heaven. They are people in a place to discover the power and reality of the kingdom which was being ushered in by Jesus.

What Jesus says changes our understanding of who the blessed are. Finish these sentences in your own words:

a) How good is life for _____

because they _____

b) How good is life for me because _____

MEMORY VERSE: "Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the LORD, and who meditates on his law day and night."

Psalm 1:1-2

NAME

PRAYER REQUEST