

“Oriented in God’s Way” based on Matt. 5:1-12

Orientations are common exercises to prepare us for a new situation – school, work, circumstance, etc. It shouldn’t surprise us that Jesus’ teaching in the Beatitudes is at the beginning of the Gospel according to Matthew.

- Disciples and followers are not to conform to the world, but be transformed by God’s will
- To be ‘blessed’ means to be given peace, assurance, and satisfaction
- Being ‘poor in spirit’ is to be struggling with our faith, to have doubts and questions. God lets us know that we all fall short, but Jesus’ teaching and life is there to elevate our spirits
- Our lives need to be marked by humility, mercy, purity, and peacemaking. Self promotion and ruthless behavior is often encouraged by the world, but that’s not how God wants it to be.
- We are promised God’s kingdom as we pursue the qualities that Jesus encourages.
- The ultimate destination of a ‘large banquet’ where sin, evil, and death are no more, leads us to a productive life

The ‘Beatitudes’ are beautiful words, but they are only empty platitudes if we don’t take them seriously in our daily lives.

- Do we struggle with our faith, or just say that we have it?
- Do we grieve and mourn for others, or are we unsympathetic to their cause?
- Do we seek to be right with God, or just popular with our friends?
- Do we act out of pure motives, or are we always seeking the best deal for us?
- Are we makers of peace and reconciliation, or do we ignore people’s feelings?

“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven!” This is a promise made to ‘you’ by Jesus.