



Good morning, students! How are you doing today? Make some noise!

Today, we are starting a new mini-series. It's called *A New Path*. Many of us have heard some things about how to live our lives, but how do we know whether what we've heard is right?

We are going to walk with Jesus, through Matthew Chapter 5, and look at how Jesus shows us a better way to live.

Every time I open Facebook, check my Twitter, or watch the news, somebody is telling me how to live.

Pretty soon, it will be time for the Super Bowl, and there are two kinds of people who go to Super Bowl parties. There are those who go to watch the game, and there are those who go to watch—the what?—the commercials

Business Insider looked at the top recent commercials, and we put a video together of all of these mashed together. Let's watch it.

[**Author Note:** If you can't edit a video of commercials, perhaps find some of the top 10 slogans, and have students guess what the company is. Another option is a DYM game about how much commercials cost: <http://www.downloadyouthministry.com/higher-lower>

[Here's the link to the *Business Insider* article: <http://www.businessinsider.com/ace-metrix-most-well-liked-ads-of-2016-2016-4/#10-apple--save-time-likeability-score-741-attention-score-743-1>]

What was your favorite commercial? Turn to someone by you or next to you and share it with them.

[**Author Note:** Our students sit at tables, so they talk around their tables.]

We can be so easily influenced. While binge watching our favorite series, the next thing we know, we want a Papa John's pizza, with Pepsi, while driving a Lincoln with Matthew McConaughey, who gives us the new iPhone and a bag of Doritos.

OK, be honest for a minute ... when was the last time you were influenced by a commercial? When was the last time you were influenced by your parents? How about a friend? Or a coach?

Like it or not, we are influenced by commercials. Otherwise, there wouldn't be commercials. This influence can lead us in good directions or down the wrong path, so it is important to know how we are being influenced, and if those influence are positive for life.

The same thing was happening in Jesus's day. It was happening to His disciples and the people around Him. So early on, Jesus set the standard for how to live, to minimize the negative influence from the culture the people were living in.

All through this series, we're going to see this recurring phrase, “You have heard it was said ...” Whenever this happens, Jesus takes something that was common people to believe, and he presents a new path, plan, or purpose.

Today, each of the Scriptures we are going to read we could spend an entire week on. I encourage all of you to review these Scriptures this week, and ask God to teach you as you read.

Matthew 5:1–2 (NIV)

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

As we get started today, here is the context. Jesus has left Nazareth to go to Galilee to launch His ministry. And His home base, so to speak, is this town called Capernaum. This is where He called His first disciples, and essentially began His ministry.

Jesus has gathered his disciples on the side of a hill, and His followers gather around Him. He is about to address His disciples publicly for the first time. Think of it like when we get a new president, and they have that first speech, the Inaugural Address. Or when you are selected to be a team captain, and you address your team for the first time.

The disciples were intrigued about what Jesus was going to say. And in just a few minutes, Jesus does not just give them rules on how to live, but He radically transforms their perception on how to live from the inside out.

Before we read through these, we should understand what it means to be blessed—and this video does an excellent job!

[**Author Note:** From Igniter Media – “The **world** tells us one thing about being blessed, yet the **Word** tells us something very different.”
<https://www.ignitermedia.com/products/3946-blessed>]

The lesson Jesus teaches here is known as the Beatitudes, which are eight blessings found in the first part of the Sermon on the Mount. Each reads like a proverb-type proclamation. They’re not fully explained, but they produce a basis for eight major biblical themes.

Beatitude #1: Poor in Spirit = Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew 5:3 (NIV)

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

This is probably the Beatitude I hear the most questions about. What does it mean to be poor in spirit? It’s actually a position of grace. To be poor in spirit is to be contentedly poor, willing to be emptied of the desire of the wealth of the world in order to be filled with Jesus.

Job was poor in spirit when he blessed God, even as God took things away from his life. He was poor in spirit when he recognized that everything that he *did* have came from God. To be poor in spirit is to be humble rather than proud, to be thankful rather than greedy, and to be filled with Jesus rather than the things of this world.

Often, when we go on mission trips, I hear students say things like, “The children were so happy, and all they had was a ball and a field.” Be thankful for what you do have, not jealous or envious of what you do not. Why does the kingdom of Heaven belong to people who are poor in spirit? Because in heaven, there is no possession. All is God’s, and we are filled with Him—and that is enough.

Beatitude #2: Mourn = Comfort

Matthew 5:4 (NIV)

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

[**Author Note:** Share about a time when you mourned.]

We don't often think of mourning as blessing. About 10 years ago, when my father passed away, I mourned. At first, I took it like a man! I was hopeful, encouraging to the family, and I picked up the ball and ran. And then, it hit. My dad was gone, and I cried hard like you girls do when you watch *The Notebook*.

Why are mourners blessed? They are blessed because they are like Jesus, who is called a “man of sorrows.” In understanding sorrow and mourning, we can better understand this thing called life. We will have times of mourning and loss in our lives, but when we mourn, we are comforted by Jesus.

Right now, on the back of your outline, take a moment and think. When was a time you mourned, and who was there for you? OR, when was a time someone else mourned, and you were there for him or her?

[After a few seconds] What did you write down?

If you're a Christian, you're never promised that if you come to Jesus, you will never experience mourning. However, when you mourn, you will be comforted.

Beatitude #3: Meek = Inherit the Earth

Matthew 5:5 (NIV)

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”

The meek are people who quietly do what they need to do. They quietly submit themselves to God, and they're often gentle people.

Who do you think of when you think of someone who is meek? There are many people we can think of who are NOT. But how about someone

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