Preschool–Grade 6

The Beatitudes

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: Jesus taught who is truly blessed in God's kingdom: people who know they need God, who are gentle and kind, and who make peace.
Bible passage: Matthew 5:1–12. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." *Matthew 5:9 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 8 picture cards (see "Before class"), 4 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: draw one simple picture on each of 8 cards: a crown, a teardrop, the earth, a bowl, a heart, an eye, a dove and another crown. Write the memory verse on the 4 paper strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Matthew 5.

1. Opening game: Climb and Sit (5 minutes)

Say, "Let's climb a mountain!" Everyone marches in place, lifting their knees high, getting slower as the mountain gets steeper. Then say, "Sit!" and everyone sits down right away, quiet, ready to listen. Play three or four times. Ask: *What did we do at the top?* (We sat down and got quiet.) Say: "Today we will hear a true story about the day Jesus went up into a mountain and sat down, and His disciples came to Him to listen."

2. Bible story: Jesus Teaches on the Mountain (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 5, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words, and hold up each picture card as you say its blessing:

Great **multitudes**, big crowds of people, were following Jesus (Matthew 4:25). When Jesus saw the multitudes, He went up into a mountain. "When he was **set**," that means when He sat down, His disciples came to Him (5:1). Jesus opened His mouth and taught them (5:2).

Jesus said over and over, "**Blessed** are..." Blessed means God is good to them and they are truly happy. Listen to who Jesus said is blessed:

- *(Crown)* "Blessed are the **poor in spirit**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:3). The poor in spirit are people who know they need God. God's kingdom is theirs!
- *(Teardrop)* "Blessed are they that **mourn**: for they shall be comforted" (5:4). To mourn means to be very sad. God will comfort them, help them and make them feel better.
- *(Earth)* "Blessed are the **meek**: for they shall **inherit** the earth" (5:5). Meek means gentle, not proud or bossy. To inherit means to be given something to keep.

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The story continues:

- *(Bowl)* "Blessed are they which do **hunger and thirst after righteousness**: for they shall be filled" (5:6). That means they want to do what is right as much as a hungry child wants food. God will fill them up!
- *(Heart)* "Blessed are the **merciful**: for they shall obtain mercy" (5:7). Merciful means kind and forgiving, even to someone who did wrong to you. To **obtain** means to get.
- *(Eye)* "Blessed are the **pure in heart**: for they shall see God" (5:8). Pure in heart means having a clean heart that loves God and wants what is right, with nothing to hide.
- *(Dove)* "Blessed are the **peacemakers**: for they shall be called the children of God" (5:9). Peacemakers help people stop fighting and be friends again.
- *(Crown)* "Blessed are they which are **persecuted** for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (5:10). Persecuted means treated badly. **For righteousness sake** means because they did what is right. Point out: this one ends the same way as the first one, so it has a crown too!

Then Jesus spoke right to the people listening: "Blessed are ye," that means "you," when people say mean and untrue things about you because you follow Me (5:11). "**Rejoice**, and be **exceeding glad**," be very, very glad, "for great is your reward in heaven" (5:12).

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. Where did Jesus go when He saw the multitudes? *(Up into a mountain, Matthew 5:1)*
2. What did Jesus do before He taught? *(He sat down, "when he was set," and His disciples came to Him, 5:1)*
3. What word did Jesus say again and again? *(Blessed, 5:3–11)*
4. What does Jesus say the meek shall inherit? *(The earth, 5:5)*
5. What shall the peacemakers be called? *(The children of God, 5:9)*

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4. Memory verse: Peace Line (5 minutes)

Write the verse on the 4 paper strips: *Blessed are the peacemakers: / for they shall be called / the children of God. / Matthew 5:9.* Explain the words: **blessed** means God is good to them and they are truly happy, and **peacemakers** are people who help others stop fighting and be friends again. Mix up the strips. Kids work together to tape them on the wall in the right order, then everyone says the verse. Take one strip down and say it again. Keep taking strips down until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Jesus said the poor in spirit are blessed: people who know they need God. We all need God. God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4). Jesus said that is how we are born again and enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: be a peacemaker. When someone is fighting or upset, help them make peace, and be the first to say, "I'm sorry."

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Beatitudes word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/beatitudes-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/beatitudes-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/beatitudes-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/beatitudes-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/beatitudes), or **Blessing Hunt:** hide the 8 picture cards around the room. When a child finds one, everyone sits down ("when he was set"), and you read that blessing from your Bible together. Ask what it means in plain words. Then hide them again.

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7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You that Jesus taught us who is truly blessed. We know we need You. Help us be gentle, kind and forgiving. Give us clean hearts, and help us make peace with everyone. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks about being persecuted (5:10–12): keep it gentle. Some people may make fun of us or say untrue things because we love Jesus and do what is right. Jesus said we can still be very glad, because God sees it and our reward in heaven is great (5:12). Tell a grown-up you trust if anyone is unkind to you.

About the pictures: the Bible doesn't give pictures for the blessings. The cards are only helps for remembering: a crown for the kingdom of heaven (5:3, 5:10), a teardrop for those that mourn, the earth for the meek, a bowl for being filled, a heart for the merciful, an eye for "they shall see God," and a dove for peace.

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