

Blessings and Woes – A Lesson Plan on the Beatitudes

This Blessings and Woes lesson plan on the Beatitudes will help youth understand the good and bad things which Jesus warns people about in the Sermon on the Plain from the Gospel of Luke.

For background material to prepare for this lesson plan, read the article on [Why Do We Consume But Are Not Satisfied?](#)

Opening Game for Blessings and Woes Lesson Plan

Start by playing [Not So Happy Meal \(see the directions\)](#). If this game is too gross or not practical in your meeting space then [Would You Rather](#) is also a good choice.

Follow up with a couple of questions:

- Did you think it would be fun to eat a Happy Meal?
- How did you feel after you saw it blended?
- Have you ever had an experience where you thought something would make you happy and it did not?

Most of us have had times in our lives where we were looking forward to something and it was not nearly as good as we expected. Sometimes it even turned out to be really bad. In today's Gospel, Jesus warns us that good things can come from where we least expect. And that some things we spend time pursuing are not so good for us after all.

Scripture Reading for Blessings and Woes Lesson Plan

Read the Gospel:

[Luke 6:17, 20-26](#) (The Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Plain) – the Gospel Reading for the [6th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year C](#)

Jesus came down with the twelve and stood on a stretch of level ground with a great crowd of his disciples and a large number of the people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon.

And raising his eyes toward his disciples he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours.

Blessed are you who are now hungry, for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who are now weeping, for you will laugh.

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Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude and insult you, and denounce your name as evil on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice and leap for joy on that day! Behold, your reward will be great in heaven. For their ancestors treated the prophets in the same way.

But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are filled now, for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you, for their ancestors treated the false prophets in this way.”

[Luke 6:17, 20-26](#)

Discussion about the Beatitudes

It is important to understand the words when reading the Beatitudes. “Blessed” can also be read as “lucky” or “happy”. It can also have a sense of action, similar to “Growing closer to God”.

Jesus is looking on the world and seeing pain and suffering. He sees the poor, the hungry, the despair. But he offers some hope here also.

So Jesus is offering hope to those who have little. He is telling them that God has not forgotten them. And our hardships can bring us closer to God. Those who don't have it easy in life know they need God. This is a blessing.

The words “woe to you” can be read as “unlucky are you ” or “be careful you”. Jesus is putting up a danger sign for feeling comfortable and satisfied with ourselves. He is giving a warning about having plenty.

Wealth and status can be a curse if we use them only for our own benefit. These things are gifts from God. If we forget this, our hearts become hardened. We think that what we have is because we have earned it. We forget to take care of those around us.

When we think we are the source of all that is good in our lives, we think less and less about God. It becomes easier to drift away. And this will ultimately bring us misery and sorrow.

Throughout the Old Testament God has made it clear that those who have the means should take care of those on the outside. Widows, orphans, and foreigners were especially seen as vulnerable and there were many laws about caring for them.

The Church also instructs us to care for others. This is for their benefit, but also for our own. When we share what we have freely, we remember that we are all God's beloved children. We are reminded that we must treat every person with dignity and respect. There is not one group which is more deserving of God's grace and love. All must be loved and cared for as brothers and sisters.

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We move toward to that beautiful place which God dreams for us, the Kingdom of God.

Reflection Questions for Blessings and Woes

- Can you think of a time when a Scripture reading really had an impact on you?
- Do you think it might be possible to read the same passage a year later and be focused on a different word or phrase? Why?

Challenge for Beatitudes

This week, be conscious of the blessings and woes in your life. When you are having a difficult moment, ask God to bless you through it. Ask Him to draw you closer. When you are having a really good moment, think about how you can share that with someone else.

Prayer

Conclude by offering petitions and praying the [Litany of the Beatitudes](#).