

Living the Beatitudes

Teaching Plan

Teaching Tips

Ahead of introducing *Living the Beatitudes* to the children, take time to familiarize yourself with the contents. Review this handout and how it correlates to the children's resource.

The resource is designed for children to interact with. Have the children follow along as you read aloud, and engage them in hands-on interaction with the resource, as suggested in the teaching steps below.

Background

Presented in the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) are key teachings of Jesus that describe how to live a life of true happiness—the happiness which God intends for us, and for which he has made us. Living this blessed, happy life of Beatitude contrasts with worldly pursuits of happiness, which can be fleeting and self-centered. But the Beatitudes are our Christian destiny; they fulfill and expand God's promises to Abraham by describing the rewards of God's kingdom for those who follow Christ.

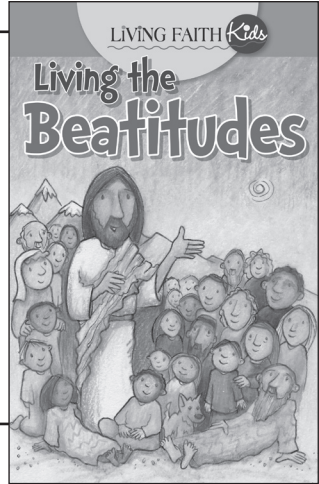
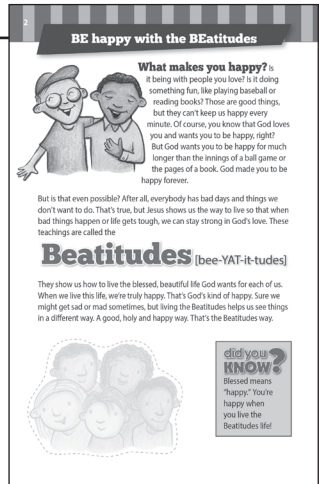
A starting point for teaching the Beatitudes is sharing the essential truth that God has created us to be happy. Help children understand that Jesus promises this happiness when we live the life of Beatitude he teaches.

Opening Prayer

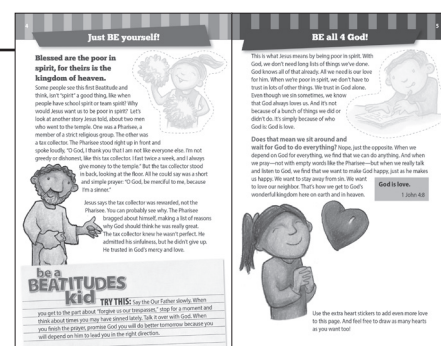
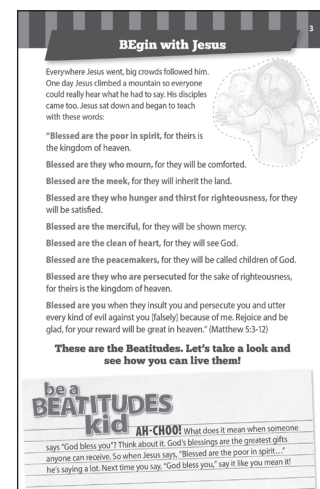
Begin your lessons with prayer. Use the following or modify it each time you pray it with the group.

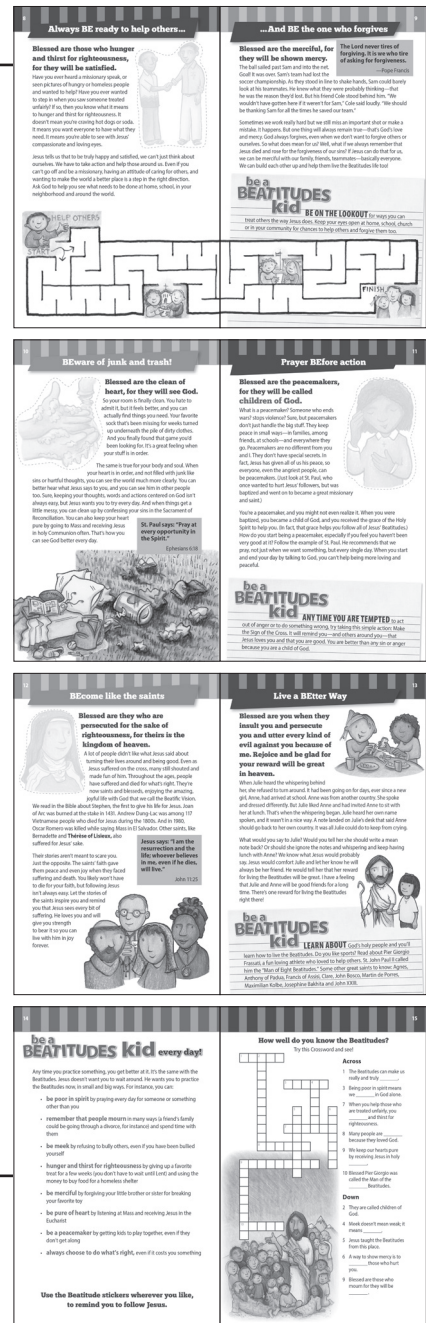
Good Jesus, you bring purpose and happiness to our lives. Teach us how to find the lasting joy you want for us by following you and your teachings every day. Amen.

Teaching Steps

Page(s)		
COVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the children to look at the cover of their booklets. Ask, <i>What can you tell me about what's happening in the picture?</i> (Jesus is on a mountain teaching a crowd of people.) Explain that we will be learning about what he is teaching. • Discuss the art. Ask, <i>How do you think the people are feeling? Do they look happy or sad?</i> Guide children toward observing that the crowd is made up of people of all ages, because we are followers of Christ no matter how old we are. 	
2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the header on page 2 aloud. Ask the children what they notice about the words. (BE is repeated.) Refer to the pronunciation key if children need help. • Read the first paragraph and invite the children to share what makes them happy. • Continue reading as the children follow along. Repeat any sentences about God's love. Ask, <i>What kind of life makes us truly happy?</i> (Living the blessed, beautiful life God wants for us) Say, <i>Are you wondering how we can know what that is? Let's keep reading to find out.</i> • Read "Did You Know?" together. Ask, <i>What other words can you think of that mean happy?</i> (Joyful, glad, jolly, etc.) Write them on a board or sheet of paper. Repeat the sentence: "When we live the Beatitudes life, we're ____ forever." Have the children fill in the blank as you point to each of these "happy" words. 	

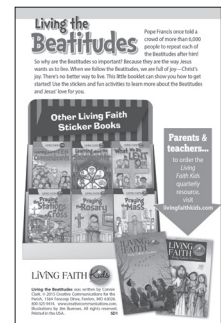
2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the header on page 3. Point out that the <i>BE</i> theme is repeated. • Read the first paragraph about Jesus. Ask, <i>Does this story sound familiar?</i> (Note that it is depicted on booklet cover.) • Use a read/response format for the Beatitudes. Have the children follow silently as you read aloud until you “cue” them to join you. For example, say, <i>Blessed are the...</i> Pause and prompt the children to finish the sentence aloud: <i>poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</i> • Read “Be a Beatitudes Kid.” Ask, <i>Who do you think needs to hear the words “God bless you” right now?</i> • Help the children with sticker placement, if needed.
4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the header on page 4. Ask, <i>What does it mean to “be yourself”?</i> When have you experienced a time that you could truly be yourself? • Read the paragraph while the children follow along. Ask, <i>Why is the tax collector rewarded?</i> (He knows he isn’t perfect, but he trusts in God’s mercy and love.) Ask, <i>Which of the two people are “being themselves”?</i> • “Be a Beatitudes Kid.” Help with the meditation by turning down the lights and lighting a candle if you have one. Invite the children to breathe in and out slowly and deeply. Say the prayer together and stop at the prompt. Invite the children to close their eyes and speak to God in their hearts. Give them a few moments to complete the meditation. • Read the first paragraph on page 5. Emphasize these sentences: <i>When we’re poor in spirit, we don’t have to trust in lots of other things. We trust in God alone.</i> Ask, <i>What are some ways we can trust in God?</i> • Read the second paragraph. Repeat the sentence: <i>When we depend on God for everything, we find that we can do anything.</i> Ask, <i>What does it mean to depend on someone? Who do you depend on in your life?</i> Discuss ways we depend on God. • Invite the children to read the scripture quote aloud as they complete the sticker activity.
6-14	<p>For each page from 6-14, follow these steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the header aloud and discuss its meaning. For example, you might ask, <i>What does it mean to be beloved by God?</i> (Page 6) <i>How can we be ready to help others?</i> (Page 8)





Lead the children in prayer. Close with "Amen. Alleluia."

Jesus, show us the way to live your Beatitudes every day. Teach us to be poor in spirit and a comfort to others. Teach us to be meek and merciful peacemakers who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Teach us how to live this life of joy so that we might rejoice with you forever.



Living Faith Kids

Living the Beatitudes was written by Connie Clark and corresponding Teaching Pages developed by Connie Clark, David Dziena, David Mead, and Lindsay Taylor. Illustrations by Jim Burrows. Design by Jamie Wyatt. © 2020, 2015 Creative Communications for the Parish, a Division of Bayard, Inc., 1564 Fencorp Drive, Fenton, MO 63026, 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. **SD1-TG**