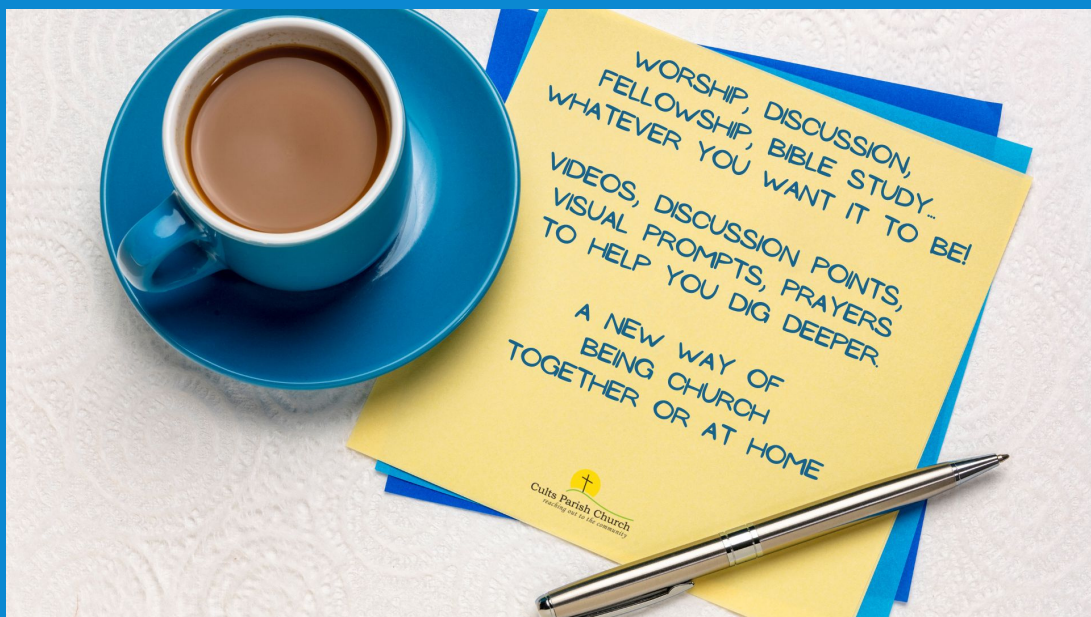


Having a Beautiful Attitude

Exploring the Beatitudes
with



Based on 'Life Attitudes' from Church House Publishing



Matthew 5:3-10



3 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:3-10 New Revised Standard Version

faith



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Welcome



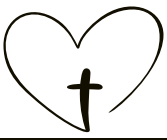
We are thrilled to introduce this new initiative from our Worship & Faith Journey Core Group. Cults Connections is a replacement for our Evening Services, which have run during the winter months for a number of years. The last few years has seen a marked fall in the number of people attending these services. Therefore we thought we would try something different. There will still be a gathering on the first Sunday of the month from November through to March, but rather than in the Sanctuary we will meet in the Kirk Centre. Instead of a 'live' church service we will watch a prerecorded worship video. This will be followed by a short time of discussion/exploration of the theme of the video, along with a cuppa. We will be using the book 'Life Attitudes' by Robert Warren and Sue Mayfield published by Church House Publishing. (ISBN 978-0-7151-4233-2)

For those not keen on coming out in the dark evenings, the videos will be available on the Cults Parish Church YouTube Channel, and this booklet can be used at home. Because the videos will be online, they can be accessed at any time. You could for example invite a friend (or friends) to join you and then use this book together to explore the themes over a cuppa. You may wish to obtain a copy of the book 'Life Attitudes' mentioned above.

We hope you find this a helpful new resource.

The Worship & Faith Journey Core Group

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Introduction

The Beatitudes

Faith

With the exception of Session 1, each session will look at two verses of the passage we know as 'The Beatitudes' from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Session 1 starts us off with an overview before we delve deeper in the latter sessions. Each session is made up of different elements to help us explore what the Beatitudes teach us about how to live a beautiful life. These elements are explained below. How long each session takes will depend on you. There is no right or wrong way to use this material. We simply offer it as a supplement to the prerecorded worship videos,

Encounter



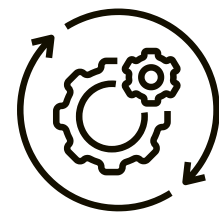
A short worship service for each session will be available on our YouTube Channel. You can find the channel here:
<https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

Talk about it



This is the time to talk and share thoughts on the theme of the session. There will be questions to help you and suggestions for other activities.

Get Real!



Each session, suggestions will be made for ways in which to put into practice the insights and values that have been explored during the session.

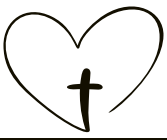
Go deep...



This section offers an extended meditation to close the session. Suggestions for resources to help with this will be given.



Having a beautiful attitude



Living well

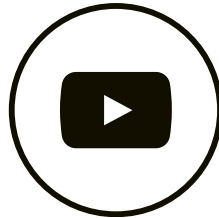
Matthew 5:3-10

1

This session is an introduction to Matthew 5:3-10 - The Beatitudes.

The Oxford English Dictionary gives the meaning of the word 'Beatitude' as '1. Supreme blessedness or happiness, 2. An ascription of special blessedness, especially on those pronounced by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.' Most versions of the Bible used the word 'Blessed', although some versions, such as the Good News, translate the word as 'Happy'. There is a wonderful beauty, order and rhythm in the eight Beatitudes, an assurance of God's blessing, a kingdom characteristic, and a promise of what lies ahead.

Encounter



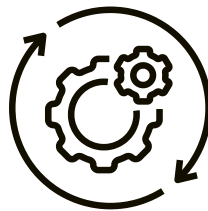
A short worship service for this session will be available on our YouTube Channel. You can find the channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

Talk about it



1. What strikes you the most?
2. What puzzles you the most?
3. What gives you the most hope?
4. What do the Beatitudes leave you wanting to discover or do?

Get Real!



During the coming month pick the Beatitude that challenges you the most. Collect examples from your own experience, the arts, the media, which demonstrate either the Beatitude being lived out or the opposite of this

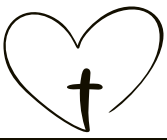
Go deep...



Use the Go Deep exercise on page 20 of the 'Life Attitudes' book. Close with one of the prayers.



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Living openly

Matthew 5:3-4

2

This session looks at the first two Beatitudes. We will consider what it means to live in an open way - open to God, to others, and the joy and pain around us.

Being poor in spirit means being open to God, rather than us playing God in our own lives, acknowledging our needs and being interdependent rather than independent.

Mourning in this context is not about bereavement rather it is about the pain and injustice in the world and feeling God's pain about how far things are from from God's purposes. It is also about owning the fact that we are part of the problem and refusing to run from pain.

Encounter



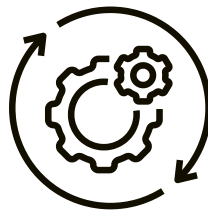
A short worship service for the session will be available on our YouTube Channel. You can find the channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

Talk about it



1. What do we think it means to be poor in spirit?
2. Did Jesus mean it is good to be poor?
3. What things do we mourn?
4. What is the effect on people and communities of refusing to mourn?

Get Real!



Watch the news on a daily basis and allow yourself to 'mourn'. Use this as a springboard to action and prayer.

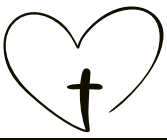
Go deep...



Create a still atmosphere. You could light a candle and play some music. Read Isaiah 61:1-3. Close with one of the prayers from the book on page 35 of 'Life Attitudes'.



Having a beautiful attitude



Living purposefully

3

Matthew 5:5-6

This session looks at the 3rd and 4th Beatitude. We will consider what it means to live purposefully, living life as a gift from God, and aligning ourselves with God's priorities and values.

According to Michael Crosby 'meekness means committing our lives to fulfil God's purposes.' (Spirituality of the Beatitudes, p113) Robert Warren said 'The biblical understanding of righteousness fully integrates the personal and the social, the inner and outer worlds. They become part of one single tapestry, woven together again and again.'

Encounter



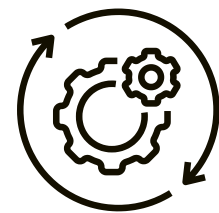
A short worship service for this session will be available on our YouTube Channel. You can find the channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

Talk about it



1. How would you define the quality of 'meekness'?
2. Is meekness the same as being amiable and undemanding?
3. What righteousness issues are you passionate about?

Get Real!



Identify a local or global 'righteousness' issue that you are concerned about. What practical action could you take in the coming month?

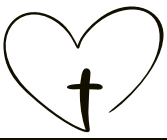
Go deep...



Create a still atmosphere. You could light a candle and play some music. Read the 'Christ Hymn' from Philippians 2:4-11. Close with one of the prayers on page 43 of 'Life Attitudes'.



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Living lovingly

Matthew 5:7-8

4

This session looks at the 5th and 6th Beatitudes. We will consider what it is to live lovingly, giving to others the same reckless generosity that we receive from God and being sincere. Robert Warren said 'Mercy is...about doing good to others and giving them what is needed for their fuller experience of life. Mercy is part of a 'virtuous spiral' or current of grace.' Of purity of heart he said it 'does not seem to be about any sort of practice. It is essentially a private, even hidden work...It is about the inner stillness, waiting and discerning that are at the heart of true justice...' (Living Well)

Encounter



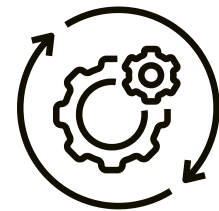
A short worship service for this session will be available on our YouTube Channel. You can find the channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

Talk about it



1. Does showing mercy encourage people to take advantage of you?
2. How and where have you experienced mercy?
3. Is 'pure' the same as 'nice'?
4. Is it naive to see the best in people?

Get Real!



Think of a practical way that you can 'live' mercy and/or purity of heart in the coming month.

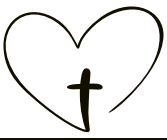
Go deep...



Create a still atmosphere. You could light a candle and play some music. Read 1 John 2:29-3:3. Close with one of the prayers on page 53/54 of 'Life Attitudes'.



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Living differently

5

Matthew 5:9-10

This final session looks at the 7th and 8th Beatitudes. We will consider what it means to live differently, being peacemakers and what being persecuted for righteousness sake means. Of being peacemakers, Robert Warren wrote 'It underlines just how central to the nature of God peacemaking is'. And of persecution 'The goal is not persecution, but holding on to the will of God. The Beatitudes alert us to the fact that there may be a real cost in following our vocation, but that problems and trials should neither come as a surprise nor knock us off our guard'. (Living Well)

Encounter



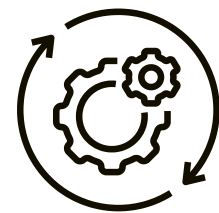
A short worship service for this session will be available on our YouTube Channel. You can find the channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

Talk about it



1. Is being a peacemaker the same as being passive or easy-going?
2. Why is peacemaking so important to God?
3. How do we discern when hostility is 'persecution' and when it is deserved criticism?

Get Real!



What is the main thing you have learned, grasped or re-grasped during our sessions? Which Beatitude has most changed or challenged you?

Go deep...

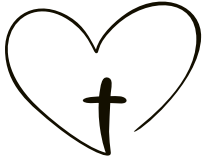


Create a still atmosphere. You could light a candle and play some music. Read the Beatitudes as a whole. Close with one of the prayers on page 62/63 of 'Life Attitudes'.



Having a beautiful attitude

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Conclusion

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We hope this resource has been helpful. Please do let us know how it worked for you. This is a new venture for us and any feedback we receive will help us in planning for the future.

We based this series on the book 'Life Attitudes' by Robert Warren and Sue Mayfield published by Church House Publishing. The book is available from their website www.chpublishing.co.uk

A reminder that we worship on a Sunday morning at 10:30am in our Sanctuary at Quarry Road, Cults, AB15 9TD and online on our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/@cultsparishchurch>

For more information about our congregation please visit our website: www.cultsparishchurch.co.uk

Our minister, the Rev Shuna Dicks, can be contacted at sdicks@churchofscotland.org.uk





Cults Parish Church

reaching out to the community

