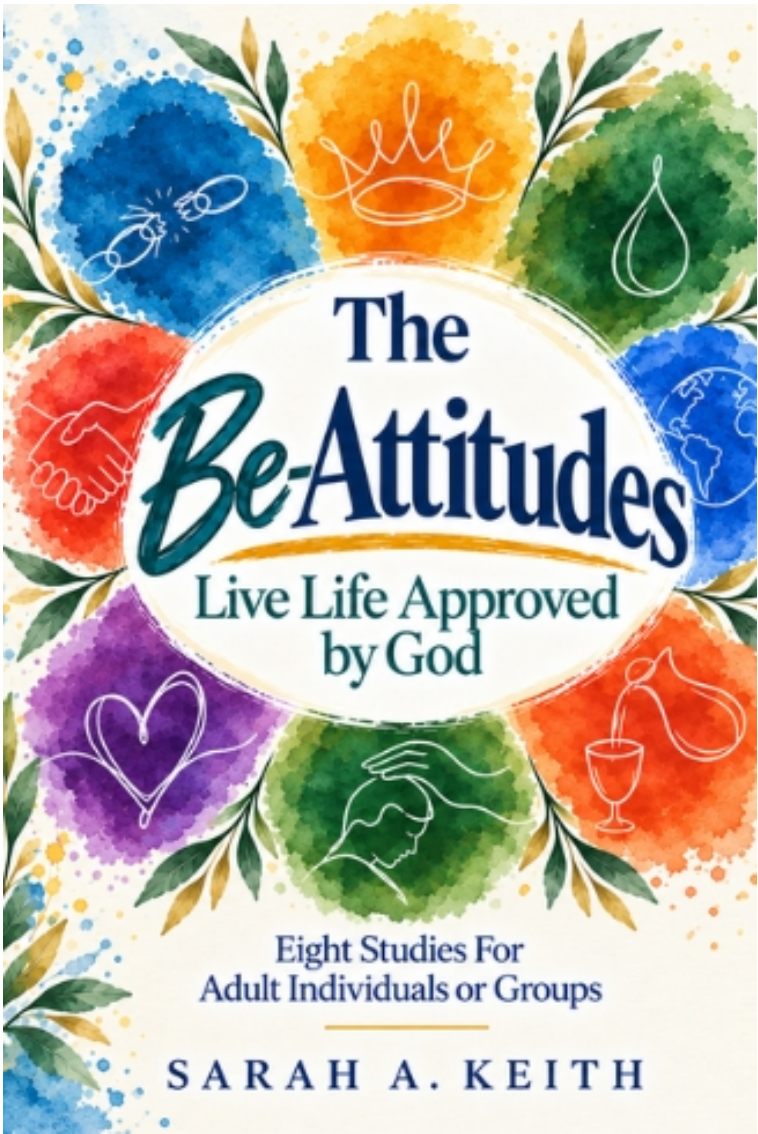




The *Be-Attitudes*

Live Life Approved
by God

Eight Studies For
Adult Individuals or Groups

SARAH A. KEITH

SAMPLE

THE BE-ATTITUDES

Live Life Approved By God

Eight Studies For Adult Individuals or Groups

Second Edition

Sarah A. Keith

Copyright © 2026 Sarah A. Keith
All Rights Reserved
SundaySchoolNetwork.com
Second Edition

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are
taken from the Berean Standard Bible (BSB).

Lovingly dedicated to my husband, Bob.

I especially want to thank Elizabeth Nielsen and the J.A.Y.
Women's Bible Study Group for their helpful insights.

“Have this attitude in yourselves
which was also in Christ Jesus...”

Philippians 2:5 (NAS)

Contents

Introduction: The BE-Attitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

In Closing

Getting Started

These lessons are designed for personal Bible study or groups. In a group setting, I recommend that one person facilitate the discussion.

To further enrich your study time, I encourage you to look up the Bible references marked “Read” and compare them in different translations. The discussion questions may be worked through privately or together as a group and then discussed. There is also a Personal Reflection section after each chapter to journal your thoughts.

My hope is that you will make the Beatitudes your daily attitudes, so you can live your life approved by God and become the person God intended you to be.

Jesus’ eight declarations of blessing are life-changing!

In His Loving Grip,
Sarah A. Keith

Introduction: The BE-Attitudes

“I just can’t get over it!”

Most of us, if not all of us, at one time or another have experiences from our past or present that cause us to stumble in our faith or leave us emotionally wounded. It could be something as severe as physical or sexual abuse as a child, or the feeling that our parents didn’t give us the attention we needed growing up. Maybe it’s a broken friendship, a business plan gone sour, or a disappointment so deep that we just can’t get past it.

Whatever “it” is, painful experiences can affect us for years, keeping us from becoming the people God intends us to be. Trying to simply “get over it” doesn’t work. We try and fail, and “it” goes round and round in our minds, keeping us from receiving what God has for us.

Thankfully, there is another way. God can heal our pain and help us move forward so we can live productive, God-approved lives.

If you feel powerless to overcome your pain, there is hope. The Beatitudes do not give us a formula for making life’s difficulties disappear. They do something far more important: they show us what the kingdom of God looks like and what it means to live as His people in the midst of a broken world. They shape our attitudes, our understanding of God, and the way we respond to the circumstances of life—past, present, and future.

I confess that before embarking on this study, I had never closely studied the Beatitudes. I think I did what many people do: I read them quickly so I could get to the “real meat” of Jesus’ sermon. What a mistake! The Beatitudes are

not simply introductory words to get through before Jesus begins His teaching. They show us what His kingdom looks like and establish the attitudes of the heart that underlie the rest of the Sermon on the Mount.

In the years since I first wrote this study, life has brought hardships I could not have imagined then. I knew suffering before, but these past twenty years have deepened my understanding of what it means to follow Jesus through it. And His words continue to show me how to live faithfully in the midst of it. In many ways, that is why I felt it was time to revisit this study.

The Beatitudes are the eight declarations made by Jesus at the beginning of His Sermon on the Mount, recorded in Matthew 5:3–12. Each one begins with the words “Blessed are” and describes those who live in relationship with God and His kingdom. They belong to those who have received His salvation and entered His kingdom—not yet in its fullness, but as a foretaste of what is to come.

The word “blessed” comes from the Greek word *makarios*, which can mean happy, fortunate, or favored. Some Bible translations use the word happy, yet happiness is often associated with our circumstances or emotional state and can be temporary. The blessing Jesus describes goes much deeper. It speaks of the favor and spiritual well-being of a person who belongs to the King of the universe.

As God’s children, we are blessed because we have received His favor and have a place in His kingdom.

Yet we live in the “already and not yet” of God’s kingdom. The Beatitudes teach us what it means to live as His people here and now. They address our inner lives and attitudes—

how we think, how we act, and how our relationship with God shapes the way we live. They prepare us to understand Jesus' teaching about being the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and they point us toward the promises awaiting those who belong to His kingdom. The Beatitudes help us understand God's purpose and plan for our lives.

1

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

Matthew 5:3

Is being poor ever a good thing? Don't we all want to be rich in spirit, rich in health, and rich in our bank accounts? We want the best of everything because we often measure success by what we have and what we accomplish—right?

When Jesus began His Sermon on the Mount by saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," He was not talking about the benefits of lacking money, clothing, or food. In God's kingdom, being poor in spirit is about recognizing our spiritual poverty. It is understanding that we cannot save ourselves and have nothing to offer God that could earn His favor. Apart from Jesus Christ, our condition is bleak:

As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one. There is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Romans 3:10–12

No matter how hard we try or how good we attempt to be, we cannot earn God's favor or approval:

"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags...."

Isaiah 64:6

Another way to understand Jesus' opening statement is: "Favored and approved by God are those who recognize their spiritual poverty, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Being poor in spirit is not about making ourselves worthless or believing we have no value. It is coming before God with empty hands, recognizing our complete dependence upon Him. We cannot rescue ourselves. We need a Savior.

Have you recognized your spiritual poverty?

Philippians 2:5–8 shows us the attitude of Christ:

"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Philippians 2:5–8 (NAS)

Can you imagine this? Jesus willingly laid aside the privileges of His divine status to become a lowly human being and servant!

This stands in striking contrast to what happened in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were tempted with the promise that they could "be like God," and in reaching to be like him, they disobeyed Him.

Read: Genesis 3:1–7, 14–15.

Genesis 3:15 gives us the first glimpse of God's promised victory over the serpent. The serpent would strike the heel of the woman's offspring, but her offspring would crush the

serpent's head. Christians have long understood this passage as pointing forward to Christ and His victory over sin and death.

Jesus came to redeem us—to buy us back. He humbled Himself and became obedient to death in order to save those who could never save themselves. And Scripture calls us to have that same attitude of humility and dependence upon God.

God's approval cannot be earned by our goodness. It is ours because of what Jesus has done. His crucifixion appeared to be defeat, but death did not have the final word. Jesus rose from the dead!

“Where, O Death, is your victory? Where, O Death, is your sting?”

1 Corinthians 15:55

We are not approved by God because we successfully follow Jesus' example. We are approved by God through Christ. Having received His grace, we are then called to follow His example—to humble ourselves, relinquish our claims to self-sufficiency, and depend upon God.

When we acknowledge that we are poor in spirit and cannot save ourselves, we come to God with nothing to prove and nothing to earn. We receive what only He can give.

This is where the journey begins. We are blessed—favored by God—not because we have made ourselves spiritually rich, but because the kingdom belongs to those who know their need for the King.

We have entered His kingdom now, though we have not yet experienced it in its fullness. That day will come when we see Him face to face.

Let the poor say, "I am rich in Him."

Discussion Questions

1) In your own words, what does it mean to be poor in spirit? How is spiritual poverty different from having a poor opinion of yourself?

2) Read Psalm 34:6; Psalm 40:17; 2 Corinthians 8:9; and Revelation 3:17–21. What do these passages add to your understanding of being “poor”?

3) Read Philippians 2:5–8. What attitudes do you see demonstrated in Jesus? Which of these is most challenging for you?

4) Why do you think Jesus begins the Beatitudes with “Blessed are the poor in spirit”? Why is recognizing our need for God the starting point for life in His kingdom?

5) Read Ephesians 1:3–8, 13–18. What riches or blessings belong to those who are in Christ? How does this contrast with being poor in spirit?

Personal Reflection

Where are you most tempted to depend upon yourself rather than God? What would acknowledging your dependence upon Him look like in that area of your life?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.