

Bible Study Applications

A Is there an **A**ttitude to adjust?

P Is there a **P**romise to claim?

P Is there a **P**riority to change?

L Is there a **L**esson to learn?

I Is there an **I**ssue to resolve?

C Is there a **C**ommand to obey?

A Is there an **A**ctivity to avoid?

T Is there a **T**ruth to believe?

I Is there an **I**dol to tear down?

O Is there an **O**ffense to forgive?

N Is there a **N**ew direction to take?

S Is there a **S**in to confess?

OUR PRAYER

Forgive me, Father, for being so distracted by my preparations and so little attracted by Your presence.

Guard my heart during these days from the many distractions that vie for my attention. And help me to fix my eyes on You...

*Not my rank in the Kingdom as did the disciples;
Not on the finer points of theology as did the scribes;
Not on the sins of others as did the Pharisees;
Not on a place of worship as did the woman at the well;
Not on the budget as did Judas;*

BUT ON YOU

Keep me ever aware that you are Lord. And ever aware that I am a sinful person. And in that knowledge keep me ever on my knees.

Help me to realize that the true battleground is the human heart. It is over this territory that the forces of good and evil draw their swords.

Knowing that, Lord, on this day this hour, I surrender my heart to You--

*---my hopes,
---my fears,
---my dreams,
---my desires,
---my ambitions,
---my anxieties,
---my love,
---my loyalty.*

May it be one more victory for the Kingdom of God. And one less battle you have to fight....

You are worthy to be adored, O Beautiful Savior... because You are worthy to be adored.

Beatitudes Lesson 1 Introduction ILBS

Is our culture moving closer to or further away from God's Word?

In what way is that happening? Give an example from your own experience.

Matthew 5:13-16 “*You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your father who is in heaven.*”

What does salt do? _____ **2Chronicles 13:5**

What does light do? _____

What's metaphor? Says one thing is another. Describes two things that are not alike

If our world is decaying and darkening, what needs to happen? _____

Who is responsible for that? _____

Jesus came to save us from our sin and therefore make secure our Salvation.

What is sin? _____ Describe Salvation _____

Jesus came for even more than that. He has a teaching ministry: “*Sermon on the Mount*” **Matthew 5-7** where He shows us how to be his disciples. Also, the “*Great Commission*” **Matthew 28:18-20**. This is a guideline to learn how to be better followers of Christ, while guiding others to do the same. **Read Matthew 28:18-20**

So, what are we being commanded by Jesus to do? _____

How are we to do that? _____ **Can** this mission fail? **How** does that happen?

Jesus's Moral instruction focuses on _____. This *blessedness* transcends (goes beyond) our circumstances. *Blessedness* is offered by God, only He can provide *blessings*. **Matthew 5:1-12**. The world cannot take them away.

Blessings; blessed; blessedness: A sense of well-being that transcends (goes beyond) our circumstances. A joy and peace the world can neither give nor take.

Jesus says, “*Blessed are ...*” These blessings are available each and every moment of our life. They are not reserved for heaven or even a more peaceful time on earth

Jesus states, “*Blessed are the...*” to describe those demonstrating these characteristics that form the only path to the blessings God wants us to have.

BLESSED Lesson 1 Introduction ILBS p2

Jesus warns us, John 16:33 "In this world you will have tribulation." (harsh afflictions; distresses of life) Clearly, he did not promise a life free from struggle. At times, living by the Beatitudes can even be *counterproductive* (having the opposite desired effect) to a feeling of happiness.

Happiness is how we feel about what is happening around us or a special circumstance. The joy of Jesus comes from an inner feeling from the Lord, and will not disappear when things are difficult. **The world cannot take it away. Happiness is about our circumstances .**

What is it that Jesus wants for us? _____

Jesus promises a life of purpose and fulfillment, sense of well-being that transcends (goes beyond) circumstances and makes a genuine (sincere) difference in our lives and the lives of others.

He calls us to invest ourselves (make a sincere commitment) in a relationship with Him today, tomorrow and for eternity. How do we do that? _____

With our _____, _____, _____, _____, _____.

Can this mission fail? Yes. Are we ever the hands and feet of the Lord in our actions but fail to demonstrate His heart? and mind? What does that look like?

Jesus began His moral instructions by focusing on *character* described in the first 12 verses of **Matthew 5:1-12**. *He gives us this guide to the kinds of blessings only God can provide.*

These blessings are only offered by the Lord and only He can deliver them!

Let's open our Bibles to Matthew 5:1

1) Jesus says "*Blessed are...*" These blessings are not reserved for heaven, or even a more peaceful time on earth.

2) Jesus states, "*Blessed are the,*" to describe those who are blessed, helping us to see the characteristics that form the only path to the blessing God wants us to have.

3) For God to accomplish the shaping of our character to conform (become like) each of these traits in the Beatitudes it will take a conscious effort to avoid focusing on those that are easier for us and paying less attention to those that require more effort on our part.

Jesus does not want that for us. Why? We will fail to grow _____, _____ not putting our best effort forward.

4) What are some practical consequences such an approach might have when it comes to living out the character of Christ at work, school, or in our homes?

The Beatitudes promise the necessary blessings to be a force for the kingdom in our culture. Is that the significance we really seek most?

BEATITUDES Lesson 2 Depend on the Spirit ILBS

The Lord called His disciples together on a mountain where He began to teach them, and also the crowd that had gathered around them. Read **Matthew 5:1-3**

How does our culture define poverty? The words for “poor” at the time of Matthew’s writing meant “nothing to _____,” or “_____”.

Is poverty only about not having any resources; money or possessions? Or can it mean something different? _____

How about spiritually starving? Starving for God’s wisdom, direction and to be obedient to it.

What do you think it means to be “poor in spirit”? _____

Those who recognize their absolute need for God and are not dependent on their own circumstances, are the only people in a position to receive God’s blessings.

The Lord Jesus calls the poor in spirit “blessed”. This describes someone as being a privileged and happy recipient of God’s divine favor. WOW! Think about that.

How does Christ rebuke (scold, reprimand, strong warning) *opposite actions and attitudes* of this “blessed” condition? **Revelations 3:15-21.**

HOW DO WE BECOME “POOR IN SPIRIT”?

- 1) See every blessing through the lens of God’s role _____.
- 2) Every bit of good leads us back _____.
- 3) Every experience of blessing fills us with _____ God.
- 4) Read **1 Corinthians 10:11-12** Discuss. **1 Corinthians 1:30** The poor in spirit are not wise in their own eyes or holy in their own sight, but obey and trust in Jesus Christ, who gives us wisdom, and righteousness (being right in the eyes of God) and redemption. (deliverance from the bondage of sin in our life based on the payment by Jesus Christ our redeemer)

We do not ignore the role we played in the process of achieving good, but the strongest emotion we should feel is gratitude for the opportunities, opening of doors for us, removing roadblocks, providing experiences, not self-satisfaction!

RECOGNIZE _____ AS KING

If your version of Jesus never disagrees with you, it’s not Jesus you’re worshipping

BEATITUDES Lesson 2 Depend on the Spirit ILBS P2

Read: **Luke 18:9-14** The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Luke 20:45-21:4 The Widow's Offering

Matthew 6:33 "But seek first His kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things will be given to you as well."

How do we demonstrate that God is King in our lives:

- 1) Embrace God's kingdom and not our own
- 2) Submit to Him, depend on Him
- 3) Obedience to His truth daily and consistently

What are the steps to accomplish (to do) this?

- 1) Submit to the power of the Holy Spirit by making the conscious decision to turn everyday over to the Lord.
- 2) Measure success spiritually and in accordance with God's priorities.
- 3) Measure spirituality by dependence on God.
- 4) Measure dependence by obedience.

Recognize our need for Jesus can be achieved either by our _____, letting our challenges drive us to God, getting so far down we have nowhere to look but up. Or, our _____ being truly dependent on our King, letting his omniscience lead us and his omnipotence empower us as we envision what our lives would be like trusting him.

Read "The Omniscience of God Assures Our Salvation"

In your table group please answer these questions with as many ideas as you can.

- 1) What personal challenges must we face in being "poor in spirit"?

- 2) In what way does our culture make submission to the Holy Spirit difficult?

"POOR IN SPIRIT" IS REQUIRED FOR ADMITTANCE TO HEAVEN. WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT TO GET US THERE!

John 6:60-70

Let's begin by reading together **Matthew 5:1-4**

Matthew 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Mourning is a kind of grief so deep that it takes possession of the entire person and cannot be hidden. Have you ever experienced mourning? Can you share an example of mourning? _____

To be *comforted* is to be invited in when we give God our grief over losses; be they personal, financial, physical, spiritual or emotional, our past mistakes and personal failures or even our sin, our moral failings. When we give them to Him, then we are invited in to receive His comfort, encouragement and peace.

For many Christians being forced to *confront the greatest single obstacle to faith* for many is the ever-present reality of evil and suffering.

What kind of *faith and character* do we need to show that God's knowledge, love, and power are relevant (closely connected) to our deepest needs. When we trust God with our pain then we experience His transforming (changing of mind) grace and strength. Have you ever experienced that for yourself? When or how?

Read **Isaiah 61:2-4** God provides to those who grieve in Him.

- 1) a crown of beauty instead of _____.
- 2) oil of gladness instead of _____.
- 3) garment of praise instead of a _____.
- 4) they will be called _____ vs oaks with fading leaves like a garden without water.
- 5) a planting of the LORD. Only the redeemed (transformed believers) will be there. 6) for the display of his _____. They are the evidence of God's redemptive (being delivered from the bondage of our sin in Jesus) work.

Mourning helps us align our hearts with the Lord. What does that look like?

Jeremiah 31:13 1Corinthians 5:1-2 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 Romans 1:18

Mourning over our shortcomings and crying out for Jesus. **Zephaniah 3:11-13**

Mourning in God or disappointed in ourself?

If we are not dependent on God for wisdom, guidance, healing and comfort as we mourn over our losses, our failures and our sins, then we will likely remain in our mourning and repeat our sin. Tell how you personally have experienced that.

Jesus' first beatitude laid the foundation for all the others.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." To be "poor in spirit" is to know how desperately we need God.

When we make God our king then we are "blessed" (a sense of well-being that transcends all circumstances) What are we blessed with? GOD'S BEST!

Philippians 4:6-7, 9 tells us what we must do to receive God's comfort.

V6 Do not be anxious _____ anything. But in everything, by _____ with thanksgiving, present your _____ to God.

V7 And the peace _____ which transcends _____ will guard your _____ and _____ in Christ Jesus.

V9 Whatever you have learned or _____ or heard from _____, or _____ in me—put it into practice. And the _____ will be with you.

1) What LOSSES do you mourn for today? Death of a loved one or beloved friend? A painful divorce? A prodigal child? A relationship?

2) What FAILURES do you mourn for today? We all have mistakes in our pasts we would pay a high price to correct. Things we did but should not have done; things we did not do but should have done. People we hurt; opportunities we missed.

3) What SINS do you mourn today? Of moral failures, things we thought, said, and did that violated the word and will of God

Psalm 51:3 "I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me."

We ALL know that feeling.

We must give our mourning to God to receive his comfort. Philippians 4:6-7.

Have you named your grief, your failure, your sin, and made him the king of it?

Have you put it in his hands? **And left it there?** If you do this GOD WILL COMFORT YOU. His Spirit will speak to your spirit, giving you "peace of God."

Scripture confirms his comfort:

Psalm 23:4 Isaiah 49:13 Psalm 34:18 Matthew 11:28-29

"God never made a promise too good to be true." Dwight Moody Expect to mourn.

Then, when you trust your mourning to God, expect to be comforted.

God redeems all he allows, redeeming our suffering by using it to help others suffering. *WE are to pay it forward, to be the wounded healers.*

Let us read **Matthew 5:1-5** *aloud together*. In the past few weeks, we discussed the countercultural (values, morals, attitudes opposed to current social norms) way *Jesus describes the kind of life that God blesses*.

1) Blessed are the poor in spirit; who are they? They need ____ in every part of their life. They are not dependent on _____ but have made _____ King of their life.

2) Blessed are those who mourn; those who experience grief so deep that it takes over the entire person and cannot be hidden. Why? Because of personal losses, failures in our lives, and our sins.

Today we look at Blessed are the meek. Meek is generally understood as *humility*.

What does it mean to be meek? _____, _____, _____.

What is the opposite of being meek? _____, _____, _____.

What images come to mind when you think of meek? Anyone you know? Why? AW Tozer says "For the Christian, humility is absolutely indispensable." Why? St Augustine says "Do you wish to rise? Then lay first the foundation of humility."

How does the Bible describe humility? **1Peter 5:6, Proverbs 11:2, James 4:10, Proverbs 18:12, Philippians 2:3** What biblical characters or person you may know are examples of these scriptures? *Do you think they will inherit the earth?*

WE ARE TO VALUE HUMILITY AS GOD DOES!

Jesus promised that such people will "inherit the earth", being blessed by God in every way. But, *how do we as humans try to inherit the earth?*

By: _____, _____,
_____.

Describe how these cultural goals make biblical humility hard?

Many people struggle with self-esteem issues.

Self-esteem is defined as having respect or high regard for yourself.

Self-worth is defined as belief that your life has value and significance.

How can worth or value be determined? Have you ever been at an auction? The worth or value of any given item is determined by one thing—what is it?

Consider this statement of psychologist Paul Tournier. Do you agree? Disagree?

Humans must be really fearful people, of everything!

Our author says the struggle with self-esteem issues makes the wrong kind of humility easy. How does that happen?

Ever been to a “Fun House” at a Fair? With its warped mirrors and distortions around every corner? Describe your experience. How did you see yourself?

Unfortunately, some people walk around with mental images of themselves that are as warped as these distorted mirrors. Over time, their inner mirror has become warped by criticism, pain and disapproval. Let’s look at a checklist of whether we might suffer from Low Self-Worth and how that might cause Relationship Roadblocks in our lives. **Deuteronomy 31:6, Proverbs 29:25**

What does scripture say concerning this? **1 Corinthians 13:12** “Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.” This is when we are in the presence of God. Not man.

Substitutes we turn to in order to make up for emotional deficits. **Mark 8:36, 1 John 2:15-17**

In what way does this *Sabotage Spiritual* growth? **Psalms 34:18, Ephesians 2:4-7**

You as a Christian were bought from the auction block of sin 2000 years ago when the heavenly father paid the highest price possible!

THE LIFE OF HIS SON JESUS CHRIST

By this one act your worth was forever established by God **1 John 4: 9-10**

We are to see ourselves as God sees us. How is that?

We are to see others as God sees them. How are we to do that? Can you release your anger, or need for revenge, or pain against someone who deeply hurt you? We are not to be easily provoked, enduring injury with patience and without resentment, no need for revenge, pain or malice. Choose to pardon them when they hurt you, for God has pardoned you. This frees us to be humble before every person we know. Even those we consider inferior to us, those we judge, criticize and condemn. God loves with agape love...wanting only what is in our best interest. We are to love others in the same way. This is a commitment to God and others.

See your gifts as God sees them; As His gifts, entrusted to you for His glory.

It is not biblical humility to debase yourself. Neither can you be humble when you exalt yourself. It is biblical humility to embrace and affirm the gifts, abilities, opportunities, education, and experiences God has given to you, and then use them to glorify your Lord. Develop them and engage them completely. Develop fully all God has given to you. But yield it to the control of God and use it for His glory. As Mother Teresa said “be a tiny pencil in the hand of God.”

Conclusion: God cannot do through us what we try to do for him. We must admit our need of his guidance and power, yield ourselves to his control, submit to his purpose in his power for his glory.

TB 31

Checklist for Low Self-Worth

To determine whether you are suffering with low self-worth, place a check mark (✓) by the statements below that are true about you.

Inner Insecurities

- ☐ I am self-critical and have feelings of self-loathing.
- ☐ I am fearful of failure and avoid risk-taking.
- ☐ I am overly impacted by the opinions of others and strive to meet their standards.
- ☐ I am undeserving of and yet desperate for the approval of others.
- ☐ I am unhappy with my personal appearance and personal achievements.
- ☐ I am negligent of my appearance.
- ☐ I am unable to set boundaries.
- ☐ I am ashamed of my background, and I often struggle with depression.
- ☐ I am controlled by a victim mentality.
- ☐ I am inferior and incompetent when compared to others.

If you struggle with insecurity, you need to take to heart these words of encouragement from the Word of God:

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid ... for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you." (Deuteronomy 31:6)

Relational Roadblocks

- 1 ☐ I am overly critical and distrustful of others.
- 2 ☐ I am demanding and unforgiving of others.
- 3 ☐ I am defensive when confronted.
- 4 ☐ I am argumentative and resistant to authority.
- 5 ☐ I am undeserving of and unable to accept compliments.
- 6 ☐ I am afraid to get close to people and establish intimacy.
- 7 ☐ I am a peace-at-all-costs people pleaser.
- 8 ☐ I am reluctant to express my true feelings.
- 9 ☐ I am hesitant to accept responsibility for my wrongs.
- 10 ☐ I am often afraid to defend myself.

If you struggle with establishing healthy relationships, you need to know that ...

"Fear of man will prove to be a snare,
but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe."
(Proverbs 29:25)

Not in TB.

Self-Worth Substitutes TB35

If you are suffering with low self-worth and think you may be pursuing a substitute to make up for an emotional deficit, place a check mark (✓) by the statements below that are true about you.

- 1 ☐ I am impressed with status symbols and often live beyond my income.
- 2 ☐ I am overly competitive and view losing as a reflection of my value and worth.
- 3 ☐ I am seeking approval and am envious of important people.
- 4 ☐ I am constantly striving for recognition.
- 5 ☐ I am perfectionistic in an attempt to earn approval.
- 6 ☐ I am addicted to substances, sex, food, and/or _____.
- 7 ☐ I am angry and intimidating at times in a zeal to accomplish my goals.
- 8 ☐ I am financially extravagant in an attempt to impress others.
- 9 ☐ I am obsessed with having certain possessions.
- 10 ☐ I am insistent on getting my way.

If you struggle with any of these substitutes, ask yourself this question:

"What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"

(Mark 8:36)

Spiritual Sabotages TB38

If you suffer with low self-worth and feel concerned about your relationship with God, place a check mark (✓) by the statements below that are true of you.

- 1 ☐ I have difficulty feeling acceptable to God.
- 2 ☐ I have difficulty admitting my guilt to God.
- 3 ☐ I have difficulty forgiving God.
- 4 ☐ I have difficulty trusting God.
- 5 ☐ I have difficulty accepting the forgiveness of God.
- 6 ☐ I have difficulty living in the grace of God.
- 7 ☐ I have difficulty feeling loved by God.
- 8 ☐ I have difficulty feeling wanted by God.
- 9 ☐ I have difficulty thinking God has designed a special plan for me.
- 10 ☐ I have difficulty believing the promises of God are for me.

If you are struggling spiritually, wondering about the reality and role of God in your life, you need to know that ...

"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."
(Psalm 34:18)

Write from the Heart

What are common substitutes that people look to in order to find their worth and value?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

What substitutes have you looked to in order to find your worth and value?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Read aloud: **Matthew 5:1-6** as a group.

These past few weeks we have studied the ways in which Jesus describes the kind of life that God blesses, counter to (different from) the culture then and now.

1) Matt. 5: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Who are they? *Those very aware of their need for God in every part of their life, and are not dependent on their own circumstances, they are the only ones positioned to receive this blessing.*

They've made Him King over every area of their lives.

How? a) by submitting to the power of the Holy Spirit b) measure success spiritually c) measure spirituality by dependence on God d) measure dependence by obedience.

2) Matt. 5:4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." Who are they?

Those who experience a grief so deep that it takes possession of the entire person and cannot be hidden. It is brought on by losses, failures, and our sins. Ex: baby Eli

3) Matt. 5:5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." How do we humans do this? *We are to value humility as God does.* How do we try to inherit the earth? By our performance, gathering possessions, and our perfectionism. Ex: status, ownership and control.

Matt. 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied."

What answered prayers (blessings) are you living in now? _____

When asked "How do you know there is a God?" How do you answer that? _____

Blessedness depends on character.

Hebrews 7:19 "(for the law made nothing perfect),(brought nothing to fulfillment) and a *better hope is introduced*,(the new covenant is better because it assures us of complete redemption and brings us into the presence of God.) by which we draw near to God". OT law gives promises. In the NT we see the fulfillment of many of those promises.

Hebrews 6:18 "God did this so that, by *two unchangeable things* in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to *take hold of the hope* offered to us may be greatly encouraged." (God's promise which in itself is absolutely trustworthy and God's oath confirming that promise.) **John 3:3** "In reply Jesus declared, I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."

Blessed: Enriched, to enjoy the favor of God.

Happiness depends on our circumstances and doesn't last. It is temporary and not eternal.

God Winks—an event or personal experience, often identified as a coincidence, so astonishing that it is seen as a sign of divine intervention, especially when perceived as an answer to prayer. *Give some examples from your own experiences.*

Hunger and Thirst What does it mean to hunger and thirst? _____

What do people of the world hunger and thirst for? _____,

_____, _____.

What is your ultimate (primary, first) concern today? _____

We pursue these things because we think that achieving them will bring us some level of *satisfaction* that makes them worth the cost. Jesus argues that the kind of *satisfaction* we really need can only come from the Lord, and he's quite clear on how to get it.

Satisfaction: Real satisfaction comes from the Lord. God's blessings fill us, we don't fill ourselves. Things of the world do not satisfy. Why? _____

Matthew 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." **Jeremiah 29:13** "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." What should we as Christian's hunger and thirst for?

Righteousness There is a righteousness of our flesh which is like filthy rags. **Isaiah 64:6** There is a righteousness that comes as a transformed heart which has the potential to glorify God. **Romans 4:6-7, Matthew 5:16** There is a righteousness that Christ gives us at the moment of salvation, this is the only righteousness that could make us worthy of heaven. Jesus gave us his righteousness in exchange for our unrighteousness. **2 Corinthians 5:21**

Our faith justifies us in the sight of God, but our works only justifies us in the sight of man.

Righteousness defined: Holiness; a person whose attitudes and motives are just—are Godly in character in private and public. This holiness is incomplete without pursuit of justice and caring for others. **Micah 6:8** "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God?"

Integrity: A state of being complete or undivided inside or outside. Terms in parallel with integrity: righteousness (**Psalm 7:8**), uprightness (**Psalm 25:21**), without wavering (**Psalm 26:1, Matthew 6:22, James 1:7-8, 4:8,**) blameless (**Psalm 101:2**), the opposite of blameless is perverse or "crooked"; a perverse heart and deceitful tongue are root and fruit. **Proverbs 11:20, 19:1, 28:6**, a reputation of evil deeds and those who promote them. **Ps 101:3b-4**, remove all slanderous and arrogant persons, **101:5,8**. Those with haughty eyes and a proud heart **Ps 101:2b-3a** a person follows the dictates of his heart—inner man—or the attractions of the eye—external influences.

What will produce integrity in our lives and our culture?

- A) We must be "poor in spirit" asking the Holy Spirit to control our lives daily.
- B) We must mourn for our sins and failures, asking God to transform us
- C) We must be meek, submitting every day to his Spirit's transformational leading and use.
- D) We must be examples of what we are encouraging others to experience.

How do we achieve righteousness?

- 1) Decide you want to be righteous! 2) Admit you are not righteous without God
- 3) Find satisfaction in the Lord.

THE ENEMY'S STRATEGIES

After polling a large cross section of women, asking them to reveal the primary ways the enemy attacks their lives, several common categories defined their responses. Below are ten of the enemy's favorite strategies to use against God's women as they pursue abundant life in Christ.

Strategy #1—Against Your Passion

He seeks to dim your whole desire for prayer, dull your interest in spiritual things, and downplay the potency of your most strategic weapons (Eph. 6:10-20).

Strategy #2—Against Your Focus

He disguises himself and manipulates your perspective so you end up focusing on the wrong culprit, directing your weapons at the wrong enemy (2 Cor. 11:14).

Strategy #3—Against Your Identity

He magnifies your insecurities, leading you to doubt what God says about you and to disregard what He's given you (Eph. 1:17-19).

Strategy #4—Against Your Family

He wants to disintegrate your family, dividing your home, rendering it chaotic, restless, and unfruitful (Gen. 3:1-7).

Strategy #5—Against Your Confidence

He constantly reminds you of your past mistakes and bad choices, hoping to convince you that you're under God's judgment rather than under the blood (Rev. 12:10).

(grace)

Strategy #6—Against Your Calling

He amplifies fear, worry, and anxiety until they're the loudest voices in your head, causing you to deem the adventure of following God too risky to attempt (Josh. 14:8).

Strategy #7—Against Your Purity

He tries to tempt you toward certain sins, convincing you that you can tolerate them without risking consequence, knowing they'll only wedge distance between you and God (Isa. 59:1-2).

Strategy #8—Against Your Rest and Contentment

He hopes to overload your life and schedule, pressuring you to constantly push beyond your limits, never feeling permission to say no (Deut. 5:15).

Strategy #9—Against Your Heart

He uses every opportunity to keep old wounds fresh in mind, knowing that anger and hurt and bitterness and unforgiveness will continue to roll the damage forward (Heb. 12:15).

Strategy #10—Against Your Relationships

He creates disruption and disunity within your circle of friends *and family* and within the shared community of the body of Christ (1 Tim. 2:8).