

Sharing the faith

session handout

The Beatitudes

The teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Gospel is introduced with these eight great promises of blessing. Together they describe the character of Christ and the character of Christ's people.

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



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

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

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

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.

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

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

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

Matthew 5.3-10

Each beatitude begins with good news of God's grace. Each contains a surprising character trait not valued by the world. Each ends with a particular gift from God.

Each beatitude is for all of us. Some are principally about our attitude to ourselves or to God. Others are about our attitude to God's world and about sharing in God's mission today.

The Beatitudes are about the present and the future: the people we are and the people God is calling us to be and giving us grace to become.

The end and the beginning: sharing the journey of faith

Look together at the story of the Emmaus road and the way in which the risen Jesus draws alongside two disciples who are moving in the wrong direction.

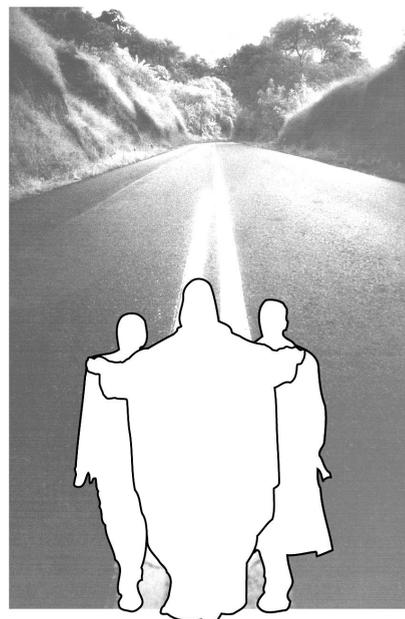
In the story there is:

- a time when Jesus draws alongside and listens;
- a time when Jesus teaches;
- a time when Jesus reveals himself in a new way.

Can you find these three elements in the story?

Can you find each of these elements in your own journey of faith?

What lessons can you draw from this story about how to share your own faith with others?



How do we share our faith?

Through prayer

How will you pray regularly for your family and friends?

Through our lifestyle

We are all ambassadors for Christ in the way we live. Jesus calls us to be servants to one another and to those around us.

Through what we say

If we are praying, and if our lifestyle is right, we may be given natural opportunities to share our faith. Often the best way to witness in words is to tell the story of how you became a Christian.

Through pointing people to others

Often we may not feel we have the words, or that we are very good at explaining what we believe. But we can lend a book or a tape that has helped us; we can invite people to special events and services; we can give people some idea of where to look if they want to find out more.

For reflection

Thank God for all you have received through this *Emmaus* Nurture course. Begin to pray regularly for your family and friends that their eyes may be opened to know the risen Christ.

