



Darkwood Brew.org

Wherever You Are, We'll Meet You There

New to the role of facilitator? Here are a few tips to help you get started.

- First of all, a facilitator's job is to coordinate the flow of each session. View the video segment ahead of time and make your own notes and observations.
- Prepare the meeting place so that it is comfortable. Arrive early; help organize any refreshments and test your video player/computer.
- Getting to know one another helps the discussions flow. Welcome all, catch up and reflect a bit on last week's session in the first few minutes.
- You don't have to be the expert. You are not expected to provide answers to questions provided. So let the questions ignite the conversation and see where it takes the group.
- It's everyone's responsibility to make sure everyone else gets an equal amount of time to talk.
- Listen first; evaluate later. Make sure you understand a comment, then ask questions or pose other options.
- Encourage participants to bring a Bible or other resources.
- If you feel so moved, start, and/or end your session in prayer.

Leaders Guide

"The Be@itudes"

This nine part series digs deep into a revolutionary exploration of some of Jesus' most often quoted – and misunderstood – teachings. Lead by Rev. Eric Elnes, Ph.D. this is one of Darkwood Brew's most popular video series. *The Be@itudes* brings together scholars, theologians, activists, authors and even a scientist to approach the text in surprising new ways.

Welcome to the Darkwood Brew journey!

We are glad you can join us. Our primary resources for small group study are condensed versions of Darkwood Brew's weekly one-hour episodes. These are called GUIDED EPISODES. Each Guided Episode is 25-30 minutes in length. There are pause points with questions provided for each Episode, intended for group discussion or individual reflection.

On the following page, you will find information on the Series Topic, Skype Guests, Scripture passage, and Questions posed during the episode.



Questions:

1. Can our poverty of spirit contain a blessing?
2. Which phrase from David Whyte's poem resonates for you?

EPISODE TITLE: "Blessed Are The Poor In Spirit"

The Be@itudes, Episode 1

Featured Guest: Jeff Cook

Jeff Cook teaches philosophy at the University of Northern Colorado. He is the author of *Seven: The Deadly Sins* and *The Beatitudes*. He pastors Atlas Church and longs to front a funk band again. He lives with his wife and two sons in Greeley, Colorado.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:3 and Sweet Darkness

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

When your eyes are tired the world is tired also.
When your vision has gone no part of the world can find you.
Time to go into the dark where the night has eyes to recognize its own. There you can be sure you are not beyond love. The dark will be your womb tonight. The night will give you a horizon further than you can see. You must learn one thing. The world was made to be free in. Give up all the other worlds except the one to which you belong. Sometimes it takes darkness and the sweet confinement of your aloneness to learn anything or anyone that does not bring you alive is too small for you.

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Questions:

1. If heaven is now, what place is there for mourning?
2. Where have you found blessing in mourning?
3. Why is it impossible to mourn what you do not already have?
4. What stood out for you in Kimberly's story?

EPISODE TITLE: "Blessed Are Those Who Mourn"

The Be@itudes, Episode 2

Featured Guest: Kimberly Knight

After working for decades in the technology sector, Kimberly Knight graduated from Candler School of Theology with an M.Div in 2009. During her time at Candler she served as an intern in the office of Religious Life at a small liberal arts college in the south where she facilitated worship services and faith formation study groups. Also while at Candler she launched an online congregation where she led progressive Christian worship, bible study and community events in Second Life. The merging of her theological training and technology background led her to serve as the online organizer for The Beatitudes Society for two years and then later as a marketing and social media consultant for The Center for Progressive Renewal. Kimberly has led social media workshops for communities of faith across the nation as well as presented a paper at the AAR, was a featured speaker at Big Tent and organizer of a round-table like event at Wild Goose 2013. Kimberly returned to that small liberal arts college in the fall of 2012 where she currently serves as the Director of Digital Strategy.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:4

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

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Questions:

1. What does meekness mean to you?
2. Why did Hebrew scriptures consider Moses to be meek?
3. What does it mean to be “of the humus” in today’s world?
4. How did Robert’s reply to the archbishop reframe meekness?
5. What brings you fully alive?

EPISODE TITLE: “Blessed Are The Meek”

The Be@itudes, Episode 3

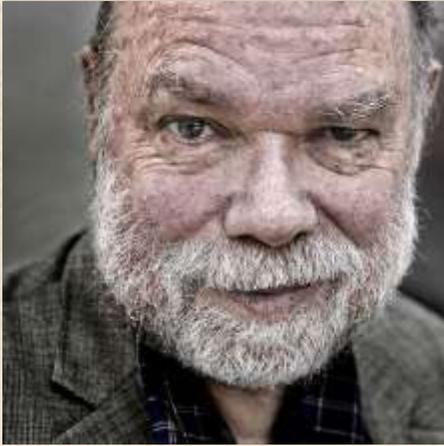
Featured Guest: Robert V. Taylor

As a nationally known leader who is an openly gay, white South African Episcopal priest, Robert V. Taylor has navigated being part of the religious establishment while also being an outsider. Discovering his own voice and crossing the lines which society often draws has brought him insights into compassionate living. Experiencing life as both an insider and outsider, Robert understands that the courage to be who you are, the freedom to discover your voice and trusting your imagination are keys to becoming full human. He lives by his own belief that goodness and kindness are possible each day as we show up for life.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:5

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

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Questions:

1. What do you hunger for?
2. What images does the word “righteous” bring up for you?
3. What does the term “God’s Righteousness” mean to you?
4. What does the fable have to say about living in giftedness?
5. What does Jim mean by finding righteousness in people, not in dictionaries?
6. What does the story of Dorothy Day and the diamond day say about righteousness?

EPISODE TITLE: “Blessed Are Those Who Hunger and Thirst For Righteousness”

The Be@itudes, Episode 4

Featured Guest: Jim Forest

Jim Forest is the author of numerous books and a contributor to many publications. He also serves as International Secretary of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship. His books include *The Road to Emmaus: Pilgrimage as a Way of Life*, *Ladder of the Beatitudes*, *Praying with Icons*, *Living With Wisdom: A Biography of Thomas Merton*, and *All Is Grace: A Biography of Dorothy Day*. Due out in the Fall of 2014: *Loving Our Enemies: Reflections on the Hardest Commandment*. He is also the author of several children’s books. His photographs have been widely published.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:6

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

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EPISODE TITLE: “Blessed Are The Merciful”

The Be@itudes, Episode 5

Featured Guest: Jared Littleton

Rev. Jared Littleton is an Ordained Elder in the United Methodist Church. He graduated from Methodist Theological School in Ohio with a Masters of Divinity. Jared has served as a parish pastor and currently serves as a Chaplain in Residence at the Cleveland Clinic.

Questions:

1. Is there an instance when you received mercy?
2. How do you think it felt to enter the Holy of Holies?
3. What does it mean if God cares more about the relationship than the rules?
4. How does being merciful create a sense of blessing?
5. In what ways can practicing mercy transform us?

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:7

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

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Questions:

1. What does it mean if heart and mind are not separate?
2. How can alternate narratives provide deeper meaning?
3. Do you agree with Michael that purity and integrity are related?
4. What are some other ways that science can complement faith?
5. How can practicing gratitude for our nature help us live more fully in Christ?

EPISODE TITLE: "Blessed Are The Pure In Heart"

The Be@itudes, Episode 6

Featured Guest: Michael Dowd

Michael Dowd is a bestselling evolutionary theologian and evangelist for Big History and an honorable relationship to the future. An outspoken New Theist and Religious Naturalist, he is author of the bridge-building book, *Thank God for Evolution*, which was endorsed by 6 Nobel Prize-winning scientists, noted skeptics, and religious leaders across the spectrum. His work has been featured in *The NY Times*, *LA Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, *Wired*, *Skeptic*, *Discover*, and on *CBC*, *CNN*, *Fox News*, and *ABC News*. In 2012 he delivered a TEDx talk and in 2009 was a Distinguished Lecturer at CalTech and at the United Nations. In 2010-11 he hosted an acclaimed conversation series, "The Advent of Evolutionary Christianity," and an "Evolutionize Your Life" online course. Michael and his wife, Connie Barlow (both climate hawks), share the inspiring side of science in ways that offer practical tools for living and active hope for the future. Since 2002 they have crisscrossed North America and have addressed some 2,000 religious and secular groups.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:8 & Matthew 12:43-45

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

43 'When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting-place, but it finds none. ⁴⁴Then it says, "I will return to my house from which I came." When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. ⁴⁵Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So will it be also with this evil generation.'

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Questions:

1. What is the difference between loving peace and making peace?
2. What are some of your own obstacles to making peace?
3. What does the Google search say about our culture's perception of peacemaking?
4. In what ways can Christian practice sometimes negate peacemaking?
5. In what ways can Christian practice be an affirmation of peacemaking?
6. What does Kit's story say about peacemaking?
7. How can you be a peacemaker?

EPISODE TITLE: "Blessed Are The Peacemakers"

The Be@itudes, Episode 7

Featured Guest: **Kit Evans**

Argrow Kitnequa ("Kit") Evans grew up in Mebane, North Carolina and in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in which her mother served as a minister. Kit graduated from the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill, spending an honors semester on site at the Julliard School in New York studying theatre and the arts. "This opened my eyes to what the arts could do in educating about issues of social justice and even healing," she says. She taught special education in Washington, DC for two years while earning an MA in teaching at Trinity University. Kit continued her education receiving an MA in Social Justice and Community Development. She served as a peer outreach educator for the AIDS Projects of Southern Vermont before joining the US Peace Corps as a community development worker and being sent to the Caribbean. During the healing period that followed a sexual assault there, she became a motivational speaker for the National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere and also decided upon seminary. She chose PSR after attending a Ministry as Vocation conference on campus.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:9

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

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Questions:

1. Have you ever been persecuted for your actions or beliefs?
2. Can there be blessing for the persecuted that doesn't condone the persecution?
3. What does it mean to be persecuted "for righteousness sake?"
4. In what ways does light shine in brokenness and persecution?

EPISODE TITLE: "Blessed Are Those Who Are Persecuted"

The Be@itudes, Episode 8

Featured Guest: Audrey deCoursey

Audrey has served in diverse pastoral contexts, from fast-paced urban hospitals to suburban congregations to launching a new online worship community, Living Stream Church of the Brethren. She was ordained in 2009 in Illinois.

She holds a Masters of Divinity from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, where she concurrently studied for a Certificate in Women's Studies in Religion from the Graduate Theological Union. While in seminary, she was blessed to join two campus delegations abroad: in 2006, she traveled to the American Samoan territory and Independent Samoa; in 2008, she visited Uganda and Rwanda. Throughout her three years, she served as Editor-in-Chief of Pacific School of Religion's monthly journal, LOGOS, and served as Pastor-in-Training at a United Methodist Church.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:10 and 2 Corinthians 4: 6-11

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

⁶For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.⁷ But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. ⁸We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. ¹¹For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh.

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Questions:

1. What is the importance of Jesus' teaching that Heaven is now and the kingdom is here?
2. What would be your one-line summation of the Beatitudes?
3. If the Beatitudes work like a GPS from where to meet God, where does that GPS lead you?
4. Have there been times in your life when God was closer than you thought?
5. Do the Beatitudes help you see Heaven in a new way?

EPISODE TITLE: "Blessed Are Those Who Are Persecuted"

The Be@itudes, Episode 9

Featured Guest: Anne Howard

The Rev. Anne Sutherland Howard is Executive Director of The Beatitudes Society, a new organization building a national network for progressive Christian seminarians. Before coming to The Beatitudes Society in September, 2006, she served as Associate Rector at a church well-known for its prophetic social justice teaching, preaching and action, Trinity Episcopal Church in Santa Barbara, California. A seasoned and accomplished preacher, she is now Preacher-in-Residence at Trinity, and is the author of "Claiming the Beatitudes: Nine Stories from a New Generation" (Alban, 2009). Prior to ordination, she was a newspaper reporter and later Executive Director of the Interfaith Center to Reverse the Arms Race at All Saints Church in Pasadena, CA. Since ordination in 1988, she has served as Associate and Interim Rector at All Saints by-the-Sea, in Santa Barbara and as Canon to the Ordinary for Bishop Fred Borsch in the Diocese of Los Angeles, and also as Director of Mt. Calvary Invites, an adult education program of Holy Cross Monastery in Santa Barbara. She is a graduate of Episcopal Divinity School and the University of California, Santa Barbara. She serves on the Advisory Board of the Capps Center for Ethics, Religion and Public Life at the University of California, Santa Barbara. A native Minnesotan, she travels widely from her home in Santa Barbara, California where she lives with her husband Randy. Their son Benjamin is a medical student intent upon reforming American health care.

Pneuma Divina Scripture: Matthew 5:11

11 'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

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