



## On your marks

A way-in to talking about how things are in God's amazing kingdom, with links to the beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-12.

## Get set

You will need two paper plates - one with a happy face on it and one with a sad face.

Some paper and pens

Eight key phrases based on the beatitudes written on coloured cards and on separate cards eight blessings. See below for wording

## Go!

1 Introduce the paper plates with the happy and sad faces. You may be able to find a template for the sort of face that could be either, depending which way you turn it up. Some books of illusions will have a copy of this.

What makes you happy? What makes you sad?

List their answers on paper and place the words they have said around the relevant paper plate face.

2 Introduce the following eight phrases based on the beatitudes:

A - Feeling bad about yourself

B - Feeling sad about others

C - Being ignored and going unnoticed

D - Feeling empty on the inside

E - Not getting your own back on someone, even though they deserve it

F - Missing out on doing some things that everyone else says are OK

G - Getting in between two people who are fighting and ending up by being shouted at by both!

H - Being got at, even when you've done nothing wrong

By which face (happy or sad) would these phrases go? Why?

3 However these phrases end up, now put them all on to the happy plate! Jesus says that all these things are in fact reasons to be happy, because they bring us nearer God, and God nearer to us. Wherever God is, that is where His kingdom is and that is the safest place we can ever be.

4 Look again at the eight key phrases. Isn't God's Kingdom rather strange? Why is God close to people who feel like this or express these things?

Read Matthew 5:1-12. Can you link up the phrases on the plate with the first part of each of the beatitudes in the Bible.

5 What does God's upside down kingdom promise to people who feel this way?



Here are some paraphrase versions of the blessings that Jesus promises that go with the eight phrases.

Lay out the eight blessing phrases (see below) and then asked the children if they can link up the happiness phrases and the blessings, based on what the Bible passage says.

- A - You will be where God is
- B - God will be very close to you
- C - God has big plans for you
- D - God will give you all you really need
- E - God's love will seem more and more real to you
- F - God will be right there for you
- G - God will treat you as family
- H - You are definitely the right way up and in God's place!

6 In God's amazing kingdom, things look upside down to most of us. For example, the first end up as last; the weak can end up being strong; the lost, least and last are the most important!

Maybe God's kingdom is in fact the right way up and it is the world that is upside-down?

What has Acts 17:6 got to do with all this, do you think?