

THE BE GROUP

We need to Be the change

I am convinced that we can **be** the change that we want to see in the world.

But in order to **be** so, we need to acknowledge that we need to change. We need to acknowledge that we are addicted to the dominant values of our society, and that our addiction to power, status and success at the expense of others makes us complicit in a system that is currently oppressing and exploiting our fragile planet.

In the **Beatitudes** Jesus outlines the kind of **Be-Attitudes** we can embody that can enable us to **be** the change all of us want to see in our world.

But in order for us to overcome our addictions and be the change, we will need as much help as we can get. Which is why we suggest that you develop your own Be-Attitude Support Group or what we simply call your own **Be Group**.

Dave Andrews

THE BE GROUP 1-2-3

1. Start a Be Group

Find out who may be interested in studying the **Beatitudes**.

Work out a convenient time and comfortable place for the group to meet.

Encourage those who want to be in the group to get a copy of **Plan Be**.

Invite everyone to read the introduction to the book before the first meeting.

2. Lead a discussion about Plan Be

The **Plan Be Study Guide** provides an outline for discussion of each chapter:

However, do not feel you need to rigidly adhere to the outline – use it as a ‘fallback position’ to keep the conversation moving along.

It may be more productive to start by inviting people to share their immediate responses to the week’s reading.

Follow up the ensuing discussion by using the questions to address any areas that have not already been covered.

3. Facilitate a Be Group based on Plan Be

Most groups find it important to have someone lead or facilitate the group meeting. It doesn’t have to be the same person every week. People may take it in turns. But always start with a more experienced leader to show others with less experience how it is done.

Facilitation is very important given the diversity of people within a group. There is likely to be a range of ages, a mix of spiritual experiences and a variety of viewpoints on social & political issues. Some people may also have better interpersonal skills than others (e.g. some will be better listeners, some may have more empathy than others.)

People move through three stages in developing their participation in a group:

Inclusion (how can I feel part of the life of this group?)

Influence (how can I have some say in what happens?)

Intimacy (how can I feel close to the other people?)

The facilitator is a person who will help other people in a group participate more fully.

The facilitator of a **Be Group** needs to find ways to:

- Welcome people
- Invite each one to participate
- Value each one’s contribution
- Encourage each one to offer their own contribution while still being open to the ideas of others’
- Encourage people to exchange differing viewpoints in a spirit of humility (building each other up) rather than merely debating opposing positions (and tearing one another down);
- Challenge people to help each other step out of their comfort zones, and take small but significant moves to embody the **Be-Attitudes** in their daily lives

There are two parts to any successful group:

the **content** (to begin with working through **Plan Be** in the group), and the **process** (the group dynamics - relationships within the group etc).

In facilitating a **Be Group** the aim is to encourage the group to work through the content (a discussion of the **Be-Attitudes** in **Plan Be**) then to work through a process that embodies the content (practicing the **Be-Attitudes** in the group while discussing the **Be-Attitudes**) by:

- always remembering the most vulnerable people in the group,
- empathising with those in the group who are struggling,
- speaking up for those in the group who aren’t listened to,
- being committed to develop a group process that is fair to everyone, etc.

A Suggested Be Group Process

- Welcome everyone
- Check-in with everyone
-how is everyone feeling?
- Recitation of the Be-Attitudes
-or another item from the resources
- Selection of Be-Attitude to Practice
and/or reflection on Practice so far
-what is working?
-how can we do better?
-what is not working?
-how can we do better?
- Be-Attitude Serenity Prayer

WEEK ONE – *Plan Be*

Openers

What have you heard, read or seen recently that gets you thinking about what's going on in the world?

Read up to page 8 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to reading this chapter?

What do you think of the idea that 'we only change ourselves'?
How do you feel about praying the alternate 'Serenity Prayer'?

Why does the author criticise the idea of doing 'big things'?
Why does the author stress the importance of 'little things'?

What does the author call 'Plan A'?
Why do people so often opt for 'Plan A'?
What are the weaknesses of 'Plan A'?
What does the author call 'Plan Be'?
Why do we so seldom opt for 'Plan Be'?
What are the strengths of 'Plan Be'?

How many times have you heard anyone speak on the beatitudes?
What, if anything, do you remember about what they said?

Exploration

Re-read the beatitudes and reflect on them:

Which of the beatitudes do you like best? Why?

Which do you find most difficult or challenging?

What do you think of the names the author gives to the virtues celebrated in the beatitudes? Can you think of any better names?

Challenge

What difference do you think it would make to your family and/or community if you were able to embody these Be-Attitudes better?

WEEK TWO - *Blessed are the poor*

Openers

Reflect on your experiences of poverty, whether seeing poverty or being poor yourself

Read pages 9-14 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to the reading?

This chapter begins to challenge the 'gentle Jesus, meek and mild' view many people grew up with. How would you describe Jesus' character in the passages referred to?

What does Luke's version of the first beatitude tell us that Matthew's version doesn't?

Why is Luke's version important to take into account?

There are different translations of this beatitude in different Bibles. What difference do you think these make for our understanding of Jesus?

What interpretations of this Be-Attitude have you heard or read?

Exploration

Who do you think are the poor?
Who do you think are the rich?
Why does the author suggest that he is 'rich'?
Which category would you place yourself in? Why?

What does Jesus say to the poor?
What does Jesus say to the rich?

What kind of society does Jesus envisage?

How did the early church make this dream come true?

What is the 'good news' in this for the poor?

What is the 'good news' in this for the rich?

How do you feel about the author's call to be with the 'poor in spirit'?

Challenge

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by being with the poor more in spirit?

WEEK THREE - *Blessed are those who mourn*

Openers

What experiences of mourning have you experienced or witnessed recently?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by being with the poor more in spirit? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read Pages 15-20 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to the reading?

This chapter encourages you to explore an attitude that modern society tends to avoid. Why does the author suggest that in today's world you need to do a bit more 'mourning'?

Of all the facts the author cites about today's world, which one struck you the most?

How did you react to that fact?

Why is it so hard for the rich to identify with the poor and 'mourn with those who mourn'?

Exploration

How does God respond to the plight of the poor? Why?

What does the author mean when he says we should 'sympathise with God' and 'empathise with our neighbours'?

How is it possible to develop 'sympathy with God'? Is there a way you could do it?

What would it mean for you to develop more 'empathy with your neighbour'? How?

What did 'wailing', 'lamenting' and 'crying out loud' mean for Jesus?

What would 'wailing', 'lamenting' and 'crying out loud' mean for you?

Challenge

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by mourning with those who mourn?

WEEK FOUR - *Blessed are the meek*

Openers

What experiences of conflict have you experienced in the last week?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by mourning with those who mourn? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pages 21-30 in **Plan Be**, including 'A widow shows the way forward'.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to the reading?

This chapter encourages you to develop a capacity that has always been much praised but seldom practiced in society. What does the author say it means to be genuinely 'meek'?

What is the relevance of the reference to the process of 'domesticating a wild horse'?

How would you describe in your own words what it means for a person to be 'meek'?

Anger has been defined as 'an explosion of significance in the face of indifference'.

How would you define anger yourself?

What are the dangers associated with being angry?

What are the dangers associated with not being angry?

When did Jesus get angry? Can you think of any other examples?

How did Jesus get angry 'without sin'? Can you think of some examples?¹

Challenge

What are some of the things that make you sad that should make you mad?

How could you get angry without getting aggro?

How could you be less reactive/more proactive?

How can you practice self-restraint?

How can you practice self-control?

What is most inspiring about the example of Gladys Staines?

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – getting angry, but not aggressive?

¹ Note - Jesus was never violent - he used the whip in the temple to drive out the animals not on the people. And - in so doing - my mate Peter Milne reminds us – Jesus saved all the animals from being sacrificed!

WEEK FIVE - *Blessed are those who seek righteousness*

Openers

What experiences of injustice and justice have you had recently?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by getting angry but not aggressive? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pages 31-36 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first response to this reading?

What do we usually associate righteousness with? Some translations use the word 'justice' instead of 'righteousness'. What difference would that make for the way we understand this?

This chapter encourages you to move beyond personal expression of faith to a quest for social justice.

The author says that the quest for 'justice' is a central concern in the scripture and the words used for 'justice' are used in the Old and New Testaments over a thousand times. What are the texts that talk about the quest for 'justice' that are the most telling for you?

What are some of the ways the author says Jesus strove for justice in his society?

How did Jesus confront injustice in his society?

How did Jesus deliver the poor from exploitation by the rich?

How did Jesus liberate the powerless from oppression by the powerful?

How did Jesus free people from cycles of violence and counter violence?

How did Jesus create just communities intentionally committed to including outcasts?

Challenge

What would it mean for you to 'hunger and thirst' for justice in your world like Jesus?

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – and striving for justice like Jesus did?

WEEK SIX - *Blessed are the merciful*

Openers

What experiences of mercy have you had recently?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by striving for justice like Jesus did? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pgs 37-42 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to the reading?

This chapter encourages you to extend the same mercy you want yourself to others.

What does the author call 'the Mercy Rule'?

How significant is it that the same rule can be found in every religion?

What do the different versions of 'the Mercy Rule' in different religions tell us?

Which version do you relate to best? Why?

How does Jesus invoke the rule in the case of the woman caught in adultery?

What difference does it make in her case for her accusers to take the rule into account?

Can you think of cases where others have extended mercy to you?

What difference did it make to you?

To what extent does Jesus suggest you should show mercy to others?

How difficult do you find it to show that kind of mercy to others? Why?

How does your capacity to feel empathy for others affect your capacity to show mercy?

How can you develop empathy for people who aren't like you – whom you don't like?

How do you imagine Jesus might invoke 'the Mercy Rule' in the case of a man or woman with HIV/AIDS?

Challenge

In what other situations do you imagine Jesus would invoke 'the Mercy Rule' today?

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – and show more mercy to others?

WEEK SEVEN - *Blessed are the pure in heart*

Openers

What experiences of distraction and achievement of goals have you had recently?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by showing more mercy to others? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pages 43-52 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to this reading?

This chapter encourages you to clean up your act completely – and be 'pure of heart'.

What is your immediate reaction to someone who tells you to 'clean up your act'?

What does the author suggest that Jesus means when he says you should 'be perfect'? What do you think of what he says - that it's about 'faithfulness', not 'faultlessness'?

How do you respond to the inner voice that calls you to realise your full potential?

The author looks at the biblical guidelines given to help you realise your full potential; the 'Old Rules' - given to Moses on Mount Sinai - and the 'New Rules' - given by Jesus to his disciples in his Sermon on the Mount.

Most people would say that the Ten Commandments are reasonable guidelines for life. What do you think?

Jesus comes along saying that the 'Old Rules' are good as far as they go, but they don't go far enough. And he proceeds to give his disciples a whole set of 'New Rules'.

Author's note: it is important to recognise that Jesus sets out the 'Old Rules' in his first set of statements ('You have heard...'); he unpacks the problems that aren't solved by merely keeping the 'Old Rules' in his second set of statements ('But I tell you...'); and then he typically sets out the 'New Rules' that can solve these unresolved problems in his third set of statements ('Therefore...'). You can study these in the table on pages 50-51.

What difference does it make to the way you understand the Sermon on the Mount, to see the 'New Rules' in the third set of statements?

The author refers to the 'New Rules' of Jesus as a brilliant set of 'doable realistic ideals' a whole new set of 'creative innovative transforming initiatives'. What do you think?

Challenge

How do you think you could use these 'doable realistic ideals' to realise your potential?

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – and practice his doable realistic ideals.

WEEK EIGHT - *Blessed are the peacemakers*

Openers

What experiences have you had of peacemaking?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by practicing his doable realistic ideals? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pages 53-58 of **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to this reading?

This chapter encourages you to renounce violence and to resolve conflicts peacefully.

What does Moses say about the right to retaliation?

How have Christians, Muslims and Jews invoked this right to justify revenge?

How does Jesus differ from Moses in his views on violence?

What do you think of the idea that the Jesus movement was a Jewish peace movement?

What evidence is there in the first three hundred years of church history for that thesis?

What do you think of the list of 'just' war principles outlined by Ambrose and Augustine? Do you think these principles rationalise the use of violence or limit the use of violence?

Using this list as guidelines, how many wars do you think may have been justifiable? Do you think any of the current wars could be considered 'just' according to these criteria?

What do you imagine would be the difference between an approach to conflict based on 'an eye for an eye' and an approach to conflict resolution based on 'turn the other cheek'?

Challenge

How practicable do you think 'do no harm to your neighbour' is as an approach? Can you think of any examples of nonviolent action that have brought about significant change?

What would it mean for you not to be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good?

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – and practice creative nonviolence?

WEEK NINE - *Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness*

Openers

What experiences of persecution have you experienced or heard about?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by practicing creative nonviolence? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pages 59-64 in **Plan Be**.

Reflection

What was your first reaction to this reading?

This chapter encourages you to be willing to risk being persecuted in order to do the right thing – to be willing to suffer yourself, rather than to inflict suffering upon other people.

Why do you think the author stresses that Jesus does not bless being persecuted as such? What are the dangers in seeking persecution as a validation of a person's righteousness?

Still, those who pursue justice in an unjust world will inevitably be persecuted. Why? Can you think of any stories about people who were persecuted for righteousness?

Why did Jesus say that the people who are persecuted for righteousness are blessed?

How does the author suggest it is possible to overcome evil though being persecuted? Give an example.

How does the author suggest it is possible to accomplish good though being persecuted? Give an example.

How does the author suggest it is possible to witness to Christ though being persecuted? Give an example.

Challenge

What action(s) have you been thinking you should take in order to do the right thing, but have been scared of taking because of the possible consequences? How do Jesus' words, blessing those who are 'persecuted for righteousness sake' speak to you in your situation?

Reflect – is there any change, even a very small one, you can make this week to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – and risk suffering in order to do right?

WEEK TEN - *We can be the change we want to see*

Openers

What positive changes in your world have you experienced while reading Plan Be?

What did you try last week in order to start aligning your life more closely to Jesus' values – by risking suffering in order to do right? What lessons did you learn from it?

Read pages 65-84 of **Plan Be** (including 'Wecan.be')

Reflection

What was your first response to this reading?

Have you checked out the **www.wecan.be** website? What parts of the site did you find most helpful?

How do you react to Jim Dowling's criticism? What do you think of Kristin's example in pp74-82?

Challenge

How do you feel about the challenge 'to be the change' the author outlines in pp65-67?

Could you write your own version of the Be-Attitudes?

Could you learn the Be-Attitudes off by heart?

Which Be-Attitude do you think you practice best?

Which Be-Attitude do you feel you should practice more intentionally?

You may like to begin by praying that God will help you to live that Be-Attitude.

You also may like to interview somebody in your community who embodies that Be-Attitude and ask them some tips on how they practice this virtue so well in their lives.

Don't make big plans to practice this Be-Attitude spectacularly, just seize the next little opportunity that will come your way to pray the Be-Attitude and practice it sincerely.

What do you think of the suggestions about publicising the Be-Attitudes?

Could you, for example, write out your own version of the Be-Attitudes and stick them on your diary or journal, post them on your blog site or the wecan.be website, make copies of them and give them to your friends, or put them up on notice boards...etc?

If you want to, you can sign off on the Be-Attitudes pledge in the book.

You can download and print off copies of the pledge from **www.wecan.be**

What do you think about forming a Be Group?

Could you form a group? If so, how would you go about it?

If not, think of how you can get the support that you need.

BE GROUP RESOURCES

To Be Or Not To Be: The Challenge

In an article called *Cold Turkey*, Kurt Vonnegut, the famous satirical American author, wrote: "For some reason, the most vocal Christians among us never mention the beatitudes. But - often with tears in their eyes - they demand that the Ten Commandments be posted in public buildings. And of course that's Moses, not Jesus. I haven't heard one of them demand that the Sermon on the Mount, the beatitudes, be posted anywhere." Well, I think its time we took up Kurt's challenge, and posted the Be-Attitudes up everywhere we can.

I am mindful of how Luther's nailing of his Ninety-Five Theses for reform to the door of his church led to the reformation of his times; and am of the mind that by posting a copy of the Be-Attitudes up, not only in private spaces – like on the back of our bedroom door – but also in public spaces – like on the front of the door to our church, might lead to a new, and more radical, reformation - which not only preaches grace as a precept but also practices it as a process.

Imagine what could happen if, instead of merely reciting our creeds, which (by and large) have little ethical content, we began every week by reciting - and reflecting on - the Be-Attitudes, with a focus on Christlike ethical responses?

Imagine what could happen if our churches, temples, synagogues, and mosques, were transformed into spirited support groups that were committed to helping people live out the Be-Attitudes as an integrated step program?

What AA groups have done for our addiction to alcohol, Be-Attitude groups could do for our addiction to status and violence. They could set us free to be fully human, fully alive, and fully active in loving our neighbours as ourselves!

To Be Or Not Be: The Call

We are inviting you to help us help one another to be the people we can be by

- a. discovering and/or creating as many different beautiful versions of the Be-Attitudes as we can
- b. posting your favourite version of the Be-Attitudes in a private space where you can see it – like on the back of your bedroom door
- c. posting your favourite version of the Be-Attitudes in a public space where others can see it – like on the front door of your church
- d. posting your favourite version of the Be-Attitudes on the website.
- e. signing the pledge to practice the Be-Attitudes on website
- f. meditating on, acting, reflecting on the Be-Attitudes yourself
- g. sharing your own experiences through the wecan.be website
- h. sending in quotes, songs, and images that inspired you to the wecan.be website so that others can be 'be inspired';
- i. sending in stories, including your own, so others can 'be encouraged'
- j. sending in news, views, articles, editorials so others can 'be informed'
- k. sending in the names of groups of potential partners to 'be connected'
- l. sending in the details of campaigns for peace and justice to 'be active'
- m. sending in lots of meditations to help us be a bit more 'be reflective'
- n. using the wecan.be buttons, postcards and T-shirts to engage others

Remember: We can not change others. We can only change ourselves.

Let's commit ourselves to embodying the Be-Attitudes the best we can in our ordinary everyday lives and 'be the change we want to see in the world.

The Be-Attitudes: The Contemporary English Version

³God blesses those people who depend only on him.
They belong to the kingdom of heaven!

⁴God blesses those people who grieve.
They will find comfort!

⁵God blesses those people who are humble.
The earth will belong to them!

⁶God blesses those people
who want to obey him more than to eat or drink.
They will be given what they want!

⁷God blesses those people who are merciful.
They will be treated with mercy!

⁸God blesses those people whose hearts are pure.
They will see him!

⁹God blesses those people who make peace.
They will be called his children!

¹⁰God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right.
They belong to the kingdom of heaven.

The Be-Attitudes: The Message Version

³You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope.
With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

⁴You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you.
Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

⁵You're blessed when you're content with just
who you are—no more, no less.
That's the moment you find yourselves proud
owners of everything that can't be bought.

⁶You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God.
He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

⁷You're blessed when you care.
At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

⁸You're blessed when you get your inside world—
your mind and heart—put right.

Then you can see God in the outside world.

⁹You're blessed when you can show people
how to cooperate instead of compete or fight.

That's when you discover who you really are,
and your place in God's family.

¹⁰You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution.
The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.

Credo's Be-Attitudes:

Blessed are the battlers who,
through their struggle,
are open about who they really are
and see the deception of wealth.
They will understand that, in God's way,
there is enough for all.

Those who are grieved by
the way of the world,
who see that things aren't right,
will be blessed.
Although they will be told to "get over it"
they will find hope together.

Those who are compassionate
and humble,
putting others before themselves,
will be blessed.
They will understand their
place in creation.

"Ya chasin?"
The only real hit is to sort things out with
the world around you and
God who created you.

A user got ripped off in a deal.
Soon after he found the dealer overdosed
in the Baptist Place laneway by himself.
Although the user wanted revenge in
"street justice", he called the ambos and
got help from Credo to keep him alive
not even checking his pockets to
steal his gear or cash.

This is mercy. Be like this and you will be
shown mercy.

People who are honest and
open like children are blessed.
They will see God.

A drunk man in Credo was abusing
people serving the meal
when a young streeety came up to him and
said:

"Hey man, this is a good place, it's a
church, it's not evil."

When the drunk man heard this he gave
the streeety a hug and settled down.

Those who make peace are
children of God.

When you try to do things right,
some people around you will
think that you're weird
and give you a hard time....

Like Uncle Vincent Lingari
who stood up for the rights
and land of his people
but was laughed at and told
that it would never happen.

He had to camp out
and wait for seven years
before he and his people
were listened to.

Like someone who has given up heroin
and still gets called a junkie and is hassled
by the jacks when he comes to town.

Like Jesus who simply loved people
and tried to teach them how to live and
was beaten and killed for it.

If you persevere, God will reward you
with all that is right.

The Be-Attitudes: A Creed

We believe in God...

who cherishes the poor
and offers them the riches of the Commonwealth of God

who hears the sobbing of the sorrowful
and provides them with undying comfort

who sees those who tread softly and humbly
and gives them the earth to look after

who satisfies the hungry and thirsty
with the hospitality of the choicest Table

who honours the merciful
and shows them the fullness of the mercy of God

who recognises pure hearts
and invites them to look upon the glory of God

who strengthens the peacemakers
and names them the free children of God

who suffers with the persecuted
and promises them the freedom of the City of God.

Praise God.

Bruce Prewer

Lord Terry Falla (ed) *Be Our Freedom* Open Book Adelaide, 1994

The Be-Attitudes: A Prayer

"Lord, grant me the serenity
to accept the people I cannot change,
the courage to change the one I can,
and the wisdom to know it is me!"

The Be-Attitudes Pledge

I Want To Be The Change I Want To See...

I will identify with the poor 'in spirit'.
I will grieve over injustice in the world.
I will get angry, but never get aggressive.
I will seek to do justice, even to my enemies.
I will extend compassion to all those in need.
I will act with integrity, not for the publicity.
I will work for peace in the midst of violence.
I will suffer myself, rather than inflict suffering.

Signed.....

Date.....

The Be-Attitudes: A Statement of Beliefs

Based on Luke 6.20-49 by **Garry Hills**

We believe it is a blessing to be counted amongst the poor
for to such belongs the kingdom of God;
It is a blessing to go hungry now
for then we will know satisfaction;
It is a blessing to weep now
for then we will learn how to laugh;
It is a blessing to be hated by people,
insulted by them because of the Son of Man,
for that is how they treated the prophets.

We believe it is not a blessing to be rich
for this is all the comfort we receive.
It is not a blessing to be well fed now
for we will soon hunger.
It is not a blessing to laugh now
for we will mourn and weep later.
It is not a blessing to have all people speak well of us
for that is how they treated the false prophets.

We believe in loving our enemies and
doing good to those who persecute us;
blessing those who curse us and
praying for those who mistreat us.

We believe in turning the other cheek,
giving away that which others would take from us
doing to others as we would have them do to us,
lending to 'sinners' without expecting to get anything back.

We believe in being merciful,
being kind to those who are ungrateful and wicked,
for our reward in heaven is enormous.

We believe in refusing to judge, lest we in turn be judged,
refusing to condemn, so we will not be condemned,
forgiving as we have been forgiven
giving as we have received.

We believe in attending to our own blindness
before addressing the short-sightedness in others,
bearing good fruit
and putting the words of Jesus into practice.

The Be-Attitudes: A Benediction

Blessed are the poor...
not the penniless, but those free from love of money.

Blessed are those who mourn...
not those who whimper, but those who raise their voices.

Blessed are the meek...
not those who are wimpy, but those are patient and tolerant

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice...
not those who whine, but those who struggle for change.

Blessed are the merciful...
not those who forget, but those who still forgive.

Blessed are the pure in heart...
not those who act like angels, but those who are transparent.

Blessed are the peacemakers...
not those who shun conflict but those who face it creatively.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for justice...
not because they suffer, but because they love courageously.

adapted from
Give Me Shelter, **A. Cadwalder, B. Kiley, & P. Lockwood**, Open Book 2001

The Be - Attitudes : A Website

To enable us to help one another 'be the revolution' we have set up a website.

The name of the website is – **www.wecan.be** (donated by some generous Belgians). The general aim of the website is to encourage one another to be the change we want to see in the world. The specific objective of the website is to encourage each other to adopt 'plan be' and practice the 'be-attitudes'. The explicit strategy is to use a web-based network to encourage one another to adopt 'plan be' and practice the 'be-attitudes' and share our experiments in the change on 'wecan.be'. We want to take as our texts the Be-Attitudes in Matthew 5 verses 1-12 (and Luke 6 verses 20-26) and as our mantra the quote from Mahatma Gandhi, "We must be the change we want to see in the world."

There six ways we'd like people to help one another through the website. We want people to...

1. 'be inspired' – through songs, images, quotes, etc
2. 'be encouraged' – through stories from around the world
3. 'be informed' – through current news and views
4. 'be connected' – through accompanying groups
5. 'be active' – through practical campaigns
6. 'be reflective' – through spirited meditations

So, people will need to send us quotes, songs, and images to 'be inspired'; stories, including your own, to 'be encouraged'; news, views, articles, and editorials to 'be informed'; names of groups of potential partners to 'be connected'; details of campaigns for peace, love, justice and sustainability to 'be active'; and lots of meditations to help us be a bit more 'be reflective'. Our prayer is we can be the 'people-that-be' over against the 'powers-that-be'.

The Be-Attitudes: A Songbook

I. JESUS' SONG. The Be-attitudes

Dave Andrews (Songs of Hope and Protest)

The sun rose early; climbed
into the sky;
Took away the cold night air; brought the
warm dawn light.

And Jesus sat upon a rock,
Looking round at the gathering throng
Who came to the mount to hear him speak—
to hear him sing his song
Many were sick; many there were sore;
Many of them were desperate; Many of
them were poor.

Tho' you feel lost - God's always gonna be
with you,
Tho' you feel sad-his grace is gonna see
you through.
Don't lose your temper -
'cause in the end you're gonna win this fight.
Always strive for justice- everything's
gonna be alright.

When you show mercy-then mercy will
be shown to you.
Act with integrity - and you'll see your
vision come true.
Where you solve conflict -
they'll call you the 'children of God'.
Some people may hate you - but the love
of God is yours.

2. LOVE REIGNS

Micah 6:8, 1 John 3:17-18,

Steve Bevis (Songs of Grace and Struggle)

He has showed you all - what is good.
And what does the Lord require of you?

To justly act, with mercy to love
To humbly walk with your God

So let us love! Let us love!
Not in words or speech, but in truth and
in deed
When a brother or sister is in need....

In the Kingdom of Friends.
In the Kingdom of Friends.

So give of your heart. Give of your mind.
Give of your soul. Give what you find.
Give of your time. Give of your wealth
Give as if Jesus was giving himself.

In the Kingdom of Friends - Love reigns!
In the Kingdom of Friends - Love reigns!

3. CHRIST THAT BLEEDS.

The Cruc – Part One

Dave Andrews (Songs of Grace and Struggle)

Standing here at the foot of the cross, I
see life as it is ...
The flesh flayed raw. The crowd cry more.
The wounds that weep.

Some of us would kill for hire; Some of us
kill for desire;
Some of us would kill for fear; Some of us
kill for power.

We crucify with sophistry.
We crucify with style.
We crucify with bigotry.
We crucify with bias.
We crucify with pleasantries.
We crucify with smiles.
We crucify with treacheries.
We crucify with lies.

At the crux of this tragedy, It's painfully
clear to see...
If we crucify even the least -
Its Christ that bleeds.

4. WHAT LOVE IS THIS?

The Cruc – Part Two

Dave Andrews (Songs of Grace and Struggle)

Strung out - naked - on the cross
– assaulted by our age.
We see the cuts. We hear the cries.
You suffer our disgrace.

Around your brows form lines of kindness.
In your eyes there's care.
Down your cheeks flow tears of sadness.
On your lips - a prayer.

What love is this - as strong as death -
that lives life as it should?
What love is this – with its last breath -
sets bad aside for good?

Love never looked so sorrowful.
Love never looked so sore.
Love never looked so beautiful.
Love never looked so pure.
Love never looked so remarkable.
Love never looked so great.
Love never looked so lovable.
As it looks - upon your face.

5. THE WAY OF CHRIST.

The Cruc – Part Three

Dave Andrews (Songs of Grace and Struggle)

'This is my body broken for you.
This is my blood that I shed.
'Do it to ... the least of these ...
In memory of me'.

There's no faith where there is no grace.
No grace where no sacrifice.
No way - but the way of Christ -
A love that lays down its life. (x2)

No other way but redemption.
No other way but prayer
No other way but compassion.
No other way but care.
No other way but devotion.
No other way but love.
No other way but dedication.
No other way but the cross.

There's no faith where there is no grace.
No grace where no sacrifice.
No way - but the way of Christ –
A love that lays down its life. (x2)

6. SORRY.

Dave Andrews (Love and Justice)

I was told that we were the good guys -
a long time ago.
I was told that we fought the good fight -
from go to woe.
I was told that we wrote the guidelines -
to give a fair go.
I was told that we'd always do right -
by friend and foe.

Sorry, Aussies, I don't think that no more!
Sorry, Aussies, I think we're against what
we say we're for!

I was told we'd sort out inequity -
not let it go.
I was told we'd strive for equality -
for young and old.

Sorry, Murries², I don't think that no more!
Sorry, Murries, I think we're against what
we say we're for!

² An indigenous word for Aborigines where I live in
South East Queensland

I was told we'd vote for a demagogue -
to hit the road.
I was told we'd welcome the underdog -
bring 'em home.

Sorry, Refugees, I don't think that no more!
Sorry, Refugees I think we're against what
we say we're for!

I was told we'd protect the innocent -
from brutal terror.
I was told we'd care for civilians -
in event of war:

Sorry, Iraqis, I don't think that no more!
Sorry, Iraqis, I think we're against what we
say we're for!

Sorry. So Sorry.

7. HEY- HEY YOU SAY

The Lord's Prayer

Dave Andrews (Songs of Hope and Protest)

Hey-hey we say, that 'You are my God!'
Hey-hey we say, 'My God, you're good!'
Hey-hey we say, 'I'm prayin' for the day –
that I can live life like I should.'

Hey-hey you say, 'Let's end the war!'
Hey-hey you say, 'Let's feed the poor!'
Hey-hey you say, 'Let's make a start today
– to live a life worth living for.'

'May your kindom come – with love for
everyone-
on earth, as it is in heaven!'

Hey-hey you say, 'Let's end the war!'
Hey-hey you say, 'Let's feed the poor!'

8. DON'T BE AFRAID

Dave Andrews (Songs of Grace and Struggle)

Fearful – we're fearful of others.
Fearful of contact with people –
unless they're just like us.
Fearful – we're fearful of difference.
Fearful of conflict with strangers –
who ain't the same as us.

(But) God's embrace is great.
His amazing grace never fails to save.
God's love conquers hate - so don't be
afraid. (x2)

Fearful – we're fearful of changes.
Fearful of fighting –
Fearful of winning – fearful of loss.
Fearful – we're fearful of dangers.
Fearful of following a leader –
who died on a cross.

Don't be afraid...

9. WE CAN BE

Dave Andrews and Peter B. (Songs of Hope and Protest)

I can't be a saviour – rescue culture from
captivity.
In my soul I know that it's just not me.
I can't be a hero – change the course of
history.
But here and now - I can be the me I'm
called to be.

Be the kind of person I
would like to be.

Though at times it ain't as
easy as it seems.

Be the sign of peace that I
would like to see.

Thru' the Spirit, inside of me,
who inspires me.

I can be. You can be. We can be the way
we'd like to be.
I can be. You can be. We can be the world
we'd like to see.

Songs of Love and Justice
(Frank Communications, Brisbane 2006)
Songs of Grace and Struggle
(Frank Communications, Brisbane 2007)
Songs of Hope and Protest
(Frank Communications, Brisbane 2007)
Songs of Joy and Sorrow
(Frank Communications, Brisbane 2008)

The cds can be purchased on line from
www.lastfirst.net
www.daveandrews.com.au

The music can be downloaded in mp3s
www.daveandrews.com.au

Any enquiries about these songs can be
directed to dandrews@thehub.com.au

The Be-Attitudes: A Booklist

There are a range of books you could read that will help you 'be the revolution'.

Here are some of the books I have written that you might find helpful:

Plan Be

'Plan Be is a simple practical easy-to-use manual for a do-it-yourself global ethical revolution. In eight concise punchy chapters Dave Andrews unpacks the hidden dynamics in the eight Be-Attitudes and shows us how they can help us reshape our personal-political worlds.'

Eden.co.uk

Hey, Be And See

In the context of the gospel of Jesus we can begin to get a glimpse of some of the implications of Plan Be – that in embodying the Be-Attitudes we can actually do God's will 'on earth as it is in heaven', and in doing God's will, we can actually embody something of the hope of heaven in the midst of 'hell's despair'.

'Dave writes with a wealth of experience on issues that are dear to my heart' Dave shows 'how we can live our lives prophetically in the context our times.'

Jim Wallis, Editor, Sojourners

See What I Mean?

Stories from my life to help show what I means about our being the change we want to see in the world.

'When I met Dave Andrews a few years ago, I could feel the fire burning in him. Then I heard him speak. Then I read his books. Ever since, he has been and continues to be a major inspiration for my life and work.'

Brian McLaren, A New Kind Of Christian

Christi-Anarchy

'(In) this courageous and provocative study, ... Dave Andrews attacks Christian complacency and calls us back to the non-violent, yet radically subversive "Way" of Jesus. (Christi-Anarchy is) likely to earn applause from some, brickbats from others, but (it is) certain to challenge, and to stimulate serious reflection.'

Patricia Harrison, Professor, Tabor College

Not Religion But Love

'There is a genius to this book in the way it has been written. If you are looking for quotes, the powerful punchlines come thick and fast. At the end of each chapter is a section for ideas, meditation, discussion and action, which makes it a great tool for living prophetically as people of hope.'

John Uren, Dean, Whitley College

Compassionate Community Work

'This is a must read book for all people who want to see their communities revitalised and shaped by Kingdom values. In the process we will be changed as we authentically relate to people around us. It is doable and Dave shows us how. And this is what mission is all about!'

Ross Coleman, Director of Hope Street

People of Compassion

Highlights 40 people through history who show us how we can embody the Be-Attitudes.

'It is my hope that I, and others who read these stories, will find within ourselves the courage to (occasionally) do what these amazing women and men did. Lord knows our world needs it.'

Mark Delaney, Servants To Asia's Urban Poor

8 Movies Which Embody 8 Be-Attitudes

1. Blessed are those who are with the poor in spirit.

Amazing Grace is a 2007 film directed by Michael Apted about the campaign against the slave trade in 18th century Britain, led by famous abolitionist William Wilberforce, who was responsible for steering anti-slave trade legislation through the British parliament. The title is a reference to the hymn 'Amazing Grace' – the film also recounts John Newton's writing of the hymn.

2. Blessed are those who mourn with those who mourn.

Molokai is a 1999 film directed by Paul Cox, about the life story of the Belgian-born Roman Catholic priest who arrived on the Hawaiian island of Molokai in 1873 to immerse himself in the suffering of those forgotten souls banished to this quarantined leper colony. While the church and political elites would prefer to forget about the problem, Damien worked to draw attention to the plight of the lepers and to improve their care and living conditions.

3. Blessed are those who are meek: angry but not aggro.

Gandhi is a 1982 film directed by Richard Attenborough, about the life story of Mohandas Gandhi, covering 55 years in the life of the great Indian leader. It is an inspirational tale about one of the most remarkable men in world history. As U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall said, "Mahatma Gandhi has become the spokesman for the conscience of all mankind. He was a man who made humility and simple truth more powerful than Empires."

4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for real justice.

Romero is a 1989 film directed by John Duigan, about the life story of Father Oscar Romero, a Salvadoran priest who transformed himself from a humble clergyman into a powerful political leader. Romero passionately pursued the eradication of human rights violations in his country and became a hero to the Salvadoran people. The film is an insightful and disturbing look at one man's spiritual journey from personal virtue to social justice amidst a homeland torn apart by civil upheaval and political oppression.

5. Blessed are those who show mercy to others.

Dead Man Walking is a 1995 film directed by Tim Robbins, about the life story of Sister Prejean, a caring nun who receives a desperate letter from a death row inmate trying to find help to avoid execution for murder. Over the course of the time to the convict's death, the nun begins to show empathy, not only with the pathetic man, but also with the victims and their families. In the end, that nun must decide how she will deal with the paradox of showing mercy to that condemned man while understanding the heinousness of his crimes. The nun also tries to reach out to the man spiritually and guide him to his salvation.

6. Blessed are those who are the pure in heart.

A Man For All Seasons is a 1966 film directed by Fred Zinnemann, about the life story of Sir Thomas More, the 16th-century Lord Chancellor of England, who refused to sign a letter asking the Pope to annul the King's marriage and resigned rather than take an Oath of Supremacy declaring the King the Supreme Head of the Church of England. The King is Henry VIII of England and his wife is Catherine of Aragon, the first of an eventual six wives. The film portrays More as a man of principle, motivated by his devout faith and envied by rivals. It shows More as a man of dignity, integrity and grace - 'a man for all seasons'.

7. Blessed are those who are peacemakers.

Joyeux Noel is a 2006 film directed by Christian Carion, set in 1914 amid the muddy trenches and flying shrapnel of World War I, about a touching tale - based on a true event - of an unlikely, if fleeting, reconciliation amid battle. Trenches occupied by French and Scottish troops lay a mere hairbreadth away from their German counterparts. Suddenly, and entirely accidentally, Christmas Day brings a magical event that would forever sear the history books with a moment of humanity in the midst of bloody battle. The Germans place Christmas trees above their trench, while Scottish bagpipers play along to the operatic voices they hear wafting over from the German camp. Then, as if by magic, all the men are united in No Man's Land for a festive celebration. The men tentatively make friends, show each other pictures of their lovers, and play soccer in the snow.

8. Blessed are those who suffer for just causes.

To End All Wars is a 2001 film directed by David Cunningham, a true story about four Allied POWs who endure harsh treatment at the hands of their Japanese captors during World War II while being forced to build a railroad through the Burmese jungle. Upon arriving at the camp the POWs are forced by the Japanese to build a railroad through treacherous jungle wilderness. Escape is their first priority, but when their commanding officer, Colonel McLean, is ruthlessly killed by the Japanese Head Guard, the men are left to themselves without a leader. Major Campbell, the Colonel's second in command, rises to the challenge and starts planning a suicidal takeover of the camp by the prisoners. Led by the example of British POW Dusty Miller, Ernest Gordon decides to start a college of liberal arts and a 'church without walls' within the camp. The prisoners begin to regain their dignity and hope, but they are also encouraged to forgive their enemies and sacrifice themselves for their fellow POWs. Soon Gordon and his school are in conflict with Campbell's planned coup d'etat. The rival values lead to split loyalties within the camp, and reveal that amidst so much physical suffering, the most treacherous war is the one fought within. *To End All Wars* is about the triumph of the human spirit over inhumanity, and the journey from the prison of self-survival to the freedom of self-sacrifice.

Warning-

We need to take the Be-Attitudes seriously -
but we shouldn't take ourselves too seriously.