

The Beatitudes

The Sermon on the Mount is often referred to as the Manifesto of the Kingdom of God

By way of review:

1. It is recorded in Matthew chapters 5-7
2. Jesus was teaching His disciples
3. He taught that both righteousness and sin are inward. Jesus was concerned about the heart.
4. The sermon on the mount tells us who we are in the Kingdom of God through the grace of God working in our lives.
5. The Sermon on the mount can be broken down into four sections
 - Section 1 – Our relationship to ourselves (The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:3-16)
 - Section 2 – Our Relationship to the Law (Matthew 5:17-48)
 - Section 3 - Our Relationship to God (Matthew 6)
 - Section 4 - Our Relationship to others (Matthew 7)

The Beatitudes – Here we go

I really feel like Jesus spoke these Beatitudes in an order where they build upon each other.

Remember, these are what we can be in the grace of God. Not the Do-attitudes.

The Poor in Spirit

Matthew 5:3

“The poor in spirit are blessed, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.”

The Greek word for Blessed is Makarios and it appears 50 times in the New Testament.

Meaning: Blessed, Happy, Fortunate, Supremely Blessed, and Well Off

Who are the poor in spirit?

The word poor here is the Greek word for poor is **ptōchos** (pto-khos') and it translates to:

beggar; one who crouches and cringes

For perspective, It is the same word used in

Revelation 3:17

You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

The poor in spirit

It's not that they lack in spirit. That they don't have enough spirit.

The poor in spirit recognize that they are spiritually bankrupt.

They have nothing to offer God and are in desperate need of His gifts and intervention.

Last week we discussed the concept of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven.

Jesus tells us here in the very first beatitude who this Kingdom belongs to. The poor in spirit.

Being poor in spirit is an awareness of our own sin.

Here are a couple of favorite Scriptures I cherry picked of people being aware and undone because of their sin:

Isa 6:5 KJV

5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

This is the famous scene where Isaiah sees the vision of Lord and His seraphim. He is fully aware of just how impure he is in the presence of the glorious Lord.

Psalm 51:1-5

1 Be gracious to me, God, according to Your faithful love; according to Your abundant compassion, blot out my rebellion. 2 Wash away my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I am conscious of my rebellion, and my sin is always before me. 4 Against You—You alone—I have sinned and done this evil in Your sight. So You are right when You pass sentence; You are blameless when You judge. 5 Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me.

I think Jesus strategically began His sermon with this specific characteristic – the poor in spirit. Because it requires a person to be empty of themselves and their own ability to save themselves from the predicament of sin.

That is a foundation that God can build on. And He will not turn such person away as David later says in his Psalm of repentance.

Psalm 51:17 The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. God, You will not despise a broken and humbled heart.

God is not going to build on a foundation rooted in my pride or my self-will or ambition.

But the person who, instead, recognizes their inability to reconcile their sin predicament without the work of God has taken the first step into the kingdom of God.

Forgive me if I belabored this point a bit, but I think it's an important thing for every one of us who wish to inherit the Kingdom of God.

The Mourners

Matthew 5:4 Those who mourn are blessed, for they will be comforted.

The word for mourn here is the Greek *pentheō*

Pentheō

To mourn for; to lament for

It refers to the type of mourning one does for the dead. A deep sorrow.

It is used in three different ways throughout the Scriptures

- 1) Mourning for the loss of someone, a loved one.
- 2) Mourning over the condition of the world
- 3) Or, building upon the poor in spirit, mourning over our sinful condition.

The poor in spirit recognize their sinful condition and mourning or sorrow for our sinful state leads to repentance.

2 Corinthians 7:9,10

9 Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. 10 For godly

sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

Blessed are the Meek or Gentle

Matthew 5:5

The meek are blessed, for they will inherit the earth.

When we get to the place where we realize that we are spiritually bankrupt and powerless to rescue ourselves from sin and we are mournful for this sinful condition, our perspective and attitude toward others ought to be gentleness and meekness.

We are all in the same sin predicament.

A few chapters after the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus would challenge his listeners to take on His yoke and learn of Him because He is meek and lowly in heart.

Mat 11:29 KJV - 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

So we see here meekness is also related to being lowly in heart.

And the Bible instructs us to seek meekness:

Zep 2:3 Seek the Lord, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the Lord's anger.

The word for meek is

praus

Gentleness with strength under control and demonstrating a balanced and controlled approach to one's behavior and interactions with others.

Timmy Hensel – meekness is not weakness

A meek person can have anger as Jesus did with the money changers in John chapter 2 or with the Pharisees who chastised Him for healing on the Sabbath in Mark chapter 3.

Of course, the Jews had very different expectations of their Messiah.

They expected him to come in and overthrow Rome by force.

Instead, Jesus came to give Himself as a sacrifice so that we could gain entry to the Kingdom of God.

We have examples in the Bible of men that were meek:

Abraham (Genesis 13:5-9, 21:22-34);

Moses (Numbers 12:3);

David (1 Samuel 24);

Stephen (Acts 7:59-60);

Paul (Acts 26:21-22);

Jesus (Philippians 2:5-8;

John 4:34;

Mark 14:36).

The reward of the meek is that they will inherit the earth.

“In reality, a meek person has already inherited the earth because he is a satisfied person. A meek person has learned that happiness doesn't lie in his possessions, but in a relationship with God. In the coming Kingdom when Jesus reigns, the meek will reign with Him” – Chuck Smith

Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness

Matthew 5:6

**Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are blessed,
for they will be filled.**

In the first three Beatitudes, we were becoming empty. Empty of our pride, our self-sufficiency, and our own strength. Being mournful for our condition and humble as we realize how much we need God.

Now we are going to seek the answers to our problem.

The hunger and the thirst implies a desire for ALL of God's righteousness, not just a few parts.

There are two kinds of righteousness:

- 1) The Law – This led to Pharisaical self-righteousness and judging others.
- 2) The righteousness of Jesus that is imputed to us when we believe in Him

We cannot achieve the righteousness of Jesus in our own strength. It is only through the grace of God, the work of Jesus on the cross that we can be clothed in this kind of righteousness.

Notice Jesus didn't say, blessed are those who *are* righteous.

It tells us to hunger and thirst for all of **His** righteousness and He is faithful to fill you with it.

Again, not because of what you do, but because of what He did.

The Merciful

Matthew 5:7

The merciful are blessed, for they will be shown mercy.

Mercy is NOT getting what we deserve.

All of you who are in Christ have been shown the ultimate mercy.

We deserve death and worse!

One teacher I was reading put it this way..

It is mercy to be emptied of your pride and made poor in spirit

It is mercy to be brought over to mourning over your spiritual condition.

It is mercy to receive the grace of meekness and to become gentle.

It is mercy to be made hungry and thirsty after righteousness.

The mercy is that all these things lead you to your Salvation and a relationship with your King in the Kingdom of God.

So, one who has received such mercy is expected to show it.

Did you know that Mercy is an important key in reconciliation?

Do you show mercy to the poor?

To the mourning?

Do you forgive (a huge act of mercy)?

Do you look to restore broken relationships?

Do you have a genuine concern for the lost souls of mankind?

The Pure in Heart

Matthew 5:8

The pure in heart are blessed, for they will see God.

Remember, God is concerned with the heart. That is where your righteousness and sin live.

Jesus does not say blessed are the pure in actions. That's what the Pharisees might say.

Your actions that flow from a pure heart will naturally be good.

So, we need to address our hearts.

The heart that is blinded by the pollution of sin does not see a greater intimacy with God

The Greek word **katharos** is in use in this verse and it means literally *“physically clean or pure and has the idea of unsoiled (free from dirt), unalloyed, without blemish, spotless, free from impure mixture or free from adulteration”*

So the pure heart in this passage is not just a clean heart, but an undivided one.

"The idea is that of pure motive-of single-mindedness, undivided devotion, spiritual integrity, and true righteousness. Double-mindedness has always been one of the great plagues of the church. We want to serve the Lord and follow the world at the same time. But that, says Jesus, is impossible... Christians have the right heart motive concerning God. Even though we often fail to be single-minded, it is our deep desire to be so..." John MacArthur

The reward is that they will see God

This promise is for both now and the future.

The Christian is in a relationship with God and sees His work and enjoys that symbiotic fellowship in his life. But one day, we will see Him face to face. And what a glorious gift to these pure in heart.

“For though no mortal eye can see and comprehend the essence of God, yet these men shall by an eye of faith see and enjoy God in this life, though in a glass more darkly, and in the life to come face to face.” (Matthew Poole)

1Co 13:12 For NOW we see through a glass, darkly; but THEN face to face: NOW I know in part; but THEN shall I know even as also I am known.

The Peacemakers

Matthew 5:9 The peacemakers are blessed, for they will be called sons of God.

No, Jesus is not talking about the Colt revolver from the 1800s.

eirēnopoios (i-ray-nop-oy-os') - peacemaker, one who restores peace and **reconciliation** between persons and even nations

This speaks to something deeper than just someone who breaks up a fight or calms a quarrel.

It speaks to actual reconciliation.

Peacemakers bring people to God. Mankind's basic problem is that we need to be reconciled with God.

Pastor Lisa reminds us all the time that our job is reconciliation.

That job is at the heart of this Beatitude.

And in case you wanted the marching orders:

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

By being a peacemaker and a minister of reconciliation, YOU shall be called Sons of God!

Some translations say that the peacemakers will be *chosen* as Sons of God.

A true Son of God will share in God's desire to see people reconciled unto Him.

Persecuted for Righteousness and for Jesus

Matthew 5:10-12

Those who are persecuted for righteousness are blessed, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. You are blessed when they insult and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of Me. Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

I could not resist adding another quote from Chuck Smith

"To be righteous is to be Christlike. We'll be blessed for being persecuted because we're righteous, not because we're fanatical or stupid."

So zealous fanaticism that lacks in the other characteristics in these beatitudes is not what we are looking for. You should be persecuted if you blow up an abortion clinic.

Here's a question.

Who was persecuting Jesus?

The religious people.... The Pharisees

Notice the distinction

In Matthew 5:10 the blessed are persecuted for righteousness's sake. The Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

In Matthew 5:11 the blessed are persecuted for Jesus' sake. Their reward is great in heaven.

He expects our righteous lives to be lived after His example.

Remember when we started all of this. The Beatitudes are what we can be in Christ. Those with these characteristics are members of the kingdom of God.

These beatitudes stand in direct contrast with the world.

For this reason, we can expect to have persecution.

For Jesus' sake... because of their disdain for Him, they persecute you. REJOICE!

1. The word here for rejoice can actually be said "leap for joy" for your reward is great in heaven!
2. Because we're His children, our position in His kingdom is secure.
3. We need to remember that we're His ambassadors on earth, and we represent Christ.
4. We need to remember where we're going ([2 Timothy 4:8](#)).

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

5. The prophets were persecuted ([Acts 7:52](#)).

Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

6. All of the apostles were persecuted for Jesus' sake.

7. They persecuted Jesus Christ.

Persecution has strengthened the Church ([Romans 5:3-5](#)).

Now you might be thinking that a lot of this is hard.

Emptying ourselves, the broken hearted state for our sin..

The hungering and thirsting for righteousness

The purity of heart

Being a peacemaker or a reconciler

All of these things that seem impossible.

And they are in our own strength. That is why Jesus taught this.

And when we our hearts are transformed into His righteousness, there will be many blessings.. and persecutions.

But take heart – Jesus has overcome the world.

Please indulge me as I close with this. We brought this up at men's group on Wednesday and it really encourages me.

Jesus knew the struggles that the disciples would have when He went away. So He prays this amazing prayer for them.

But He doesn't stop with them... He finishes this prayer by praying for you and I.

Can you stand up as we read this?

John 17:9-26

Jesus prays for His disciples

⁹ “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. ¹⁰ And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. ¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep^[d] through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We *are*. ¹² While I was with them ^[e]in the world, I kept them in ^[f]Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is ^[g]lost except the son of ^[h]perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify^[i] them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Jesus Prays for All Believers

²⁰ “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who ^[j]will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

²⁴ “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. ²⁶ And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it*, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

As always, if you this has triggered your soul and you haven't made a decision to follow Jesus. Or maybe you need prayer, please come see one of us up here after service.