

The Beatitudes 1 – Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit, and Mourners

The Greatest Sermon Ever Preached

Matthew 5

January 6, 2019 AM
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I. Introduction (Matthew 4:23-5:3)

A. Jesus has just passed the most impossible test any human could ever endure –

1. 40 days of fasting from all food, and incredible physical weakness
2. Only to be so aggressively tempted by Satan himself – to His very core
3. No human has ever faced such level of pressured temptation, and not wavered
4. Except Jesus of Nazareth!

B. He then goes around all the villages and towns of the region called Galilee (MAP)

C. Preaching that “the kingdom” was coming back – was almost here, just at the door

1. It excited absolutely everyone as he spoke about it
2. And crowds gathered by the thousands around Him to hear Him teach about it
3. Why?
4. Because everything in the Old Testament had pointed to two things coming:
 - a. A Prophet like Moses – able to give brand new laws, and new hearts to people
 - b. And there was coming a kingdom like David’s, that would continue forever
 - c. And here was a simple, yet powerful Man named Jesus, declaring both were here!
5. By the way, Jesus did not say that the kingdom was awesome – He said those who got into the kingdom were blessed!

II. Background

A. Why is the Kingdom of God so Important?

1. Why not focus on current world problems? Like poverty, and climate change, plastics in the ocean, overpopulation and gender issues?
 - a. Because, NONE of that really matters – seriously!
 - b. Politicians and school teachers are basically lying to you
 - c. We will always have poverty, and climate change is absolutely normal
 - d. Overpopulation is a lie – only in cities do planner stack people on top of people
 - e. There are only two genders – God made us male and female – that’s it
 - f. Plastics in the ocean, well, that is a big problem – but not the biggest!
 - g. But the kingdom of God? Well, THAT is something to worry about
2. God’s kingdom is the MAIN thing (the FIRST thing) to worry about. All other kingdoms, and all other problems and all other issues are not anywhere near as important as living in the Kingdom of God!
3. Your understanding of the kingdom of God will determine your eternity! And it will determine your life here and now, how you live it, how you respond to problems, how you see others, and how you will put up with others

4. The kingdom of God is the centre-point of the Bible – start to finish, everything, every conflict, every battle is over who would rule... THE KINGDOM

B. What is the Kingdom of God?

1. Whatever it is, Jesus said we desperately need to seek after it (Matthew 6:33)

- a. Mat 6:33 *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
- b. To seek it FIRST, before finding a mate, deciding a career, or having fun!
- c. That means, hunger for the kingdom, own it, yearn to live IN it... or else everything that we know that we need to be happy will always slip through our fingers, and our lives will end up a waste.

2. Whatever it is, it is the central theme of Jesus' message everywhere He went (Luke 8:1)

- a. It was GOOD news – glad tidings!
- b. Luke 8:1 *And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him.*
- c. Mar 1:14,15 *Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

3. What the Kingdom of God IS

- a. It is NOT of this world – cannot be found here
 - 1) Joh 18:36 *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*
- b. It is not physical or visible (Romans 14:17)
 - 1) Rom 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*
 - 2) Luk 17:20,21 *And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you,*
- c. It is a mystery to this world, only explained by Jesus, the King of it - uses parables to explain it (Mark 4:11) (we will learn about some of them this year)
 - 1) The Kingdom of God is a mystery to solve
 - 2) Mar 4:11 *And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:*
- d. Yet it IS a kingdom, with laws, and citizenship, a King, and subjects, and GREAT benefits
 - 1) Where people are ALIVE and enjoying life, every moment

- 2) And where people are FREE of the dominion of sin and Satan and of the curse of their self
 - 3) It has ONE king, the Sovereign King of heaven and earth.
 - 4) Do you know that Jesus Christ never saved a soul which He did not govern?
- e. Note: Everyone MUST get into it! (John 3:3) By being supernaturally FORGIVEN, saved, born again
4. **In simple words, The Kingdom of God is...** God ruling in the hearts of yielded men and women - overruling anything or anyone else!
- a. That's why it is called, SALVATION! Because GOD is allowed to take possession of your life, and take responsibility for your sin and be your God!
 - b. And by the way, it is THEN, while living under His rule, are we blessed / happy / satisfied!
5. How to LIVE in that kingdom is the goal. So this entire year, we are going to study and learn how to LIVE in an invisible kingdom that Jesus brought to us - the Kingdom of God

C. This morning we are starting to learn the Eight Be-attitudes

D. What are the Beatitudes?

1. These are the beginning truths about the kingdom of God

- a. **Gospel truths that are out of this world** – not from any culture! Not from any science book, or religion. They are NOT naturally learned. They are out of this world!
- b. Beatitudes are **the opening of our eyes to what it is like in the Kingdom of God**. Jesus devotes THREE chapters in Matthew exploring and describing what it is like in His kingdom

2. The necessary attitudes of a follower of Jesus into that kingdom

3. How we are to live HERE AND NOW while being a citizen of another kingdom

4. Beatitude means **blessing, benefit, happiness, beauty**

5. **The opposite of beatitude... is misery**. So I HOPE you realise how important it is to learn these, because the only alternative is how you already are - MISERABLE

6. **These be-attitudes and instructions are NOT for everyone**

- a. When people talk about Jesus, these are the teachings they talk about that they seem to like and respect, and yet never actually lived by!
- b. But they are NOT written to the busy company manager, or the successful football coach, or the ambitious politician
- c. Only written to those that gather at the feet of Jesus – those who seek to follow Him with all their heart!
- d. They are NOT a way to become holy, or religious, or godly like most churches teach
- e. They are written to people who have been born again and are already washed and clean on the inside

7. **The be-attitudes are NOT easy to live by**

- a. It is not easy to change how you view affliction, troubles, success and prosperity
- b. In the kingdom of God, everything is backwards!

- c. No one will live by these things who doesn't desperately want to
- d. And those that want to live by these things will find that they are the hardest things to attempt imaginable!
- e. Because the devil will NOT allow you to just live this way. He will use your WIFE or your CHILDREN, or your husband or your culture, or your past to hinder you and frustrate you and stop you from being "blessed"! Press on anyways!

E. Eight Beatitudes show the Christian all the blessings of having kingdom attitudes, instead of worldly ones – they are exactly the opposite of what you would expect – that's why I refer to them as the Great Opposites of the Christian Life

- 1. Be glad to be empty
- 2. It's okay to be sad sometimes
- 3. Taking Last Place, Wins First
- 4. Always be Hungry for Good
- 5. Show Mercy and Compassion and Kindness a LOT
- 6. Prize Purity of your own Heart
- 7. Seek to Make Peace
- 8. Rejoice in ALL Persecutions

9. This morning, we will just take a look at the first two

III. Message

A. The Meaning of "Blessed"

- 1. Usually describes someone who is happy
- 2. But it means more than just happy, it means *Fortunate, well-off, well-to-do, helped, encouraged, "rich", thriving, successful*
- 3. Pay close attention to WHO Jesus is calling happy, well off and successful...
 - a. Empty failures in life
 - b. Grief-stricken people
 - c. Last-place people
 - d. Hungry and thirsty people
 - e. Kind people
 - f. Clean people
 - g. Peacemakers
 - h. And hated people

B. 1-"Blessed are the poor in spirit"

1. Meaning of poor in spirit:

- a. If I said, "Poor in money" or "poor in love" you would understand that I was saying someone LACKED something
- b. Low, empty – not poor in pocket or wallet, but in their spirit – empty on the INSIDE, in the heart!
- c. The poor in spirit are those in need, lacking what they need, barren and empty on the inside
- d. They know their life is a failure in the eyes of others
- e. Whew! Who would EVER call someone like THAT blessed? Happy, better off?

f. Jesus does!

2. How could being EMPTY be any good?

- a. The kingdom of God RIGHT NOW is filled with poor, broken, empty people – failures (WE FORGET THAT!)
- b. But that is GOOD!
- c. Because ONLY those who are poor on the inside, people with empty hearts, and empty lives will be rich one day in the kingdom of HEAVEN – with every blessing freely given to them by Christ!
- d. And those of us who are poor inside actually are now rich on the inside:
 - 1) In just being forgiven
 - 2) Made new on the inside
 - 3) Having new citizenship
 - 4) And being wrapped in the grace and goodness of God every moment!
 - 5) All because we follow and trust Jesus for everything!

3. The Truths About Our Heart – let's look at it from another direction

a. All people are poor before God on the inside

- 1) Isa 64:6 *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.*
- 2) Rom 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*

b. The challenge is to get us to own up to our poverty of spirit and start there

- 1) Mat 9:10-13
 - a) Mat 9:10 *And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.*
 - b) Mat 9:11 *And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master **with publicans and sinners**?*
 - c) Mat 9:12 *But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are **sick**.*
 - d) Mat 9:13 *But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but **sinners** to repentance.*
- 2) Our hearts are messed up! (Mark 7:21-23)
 - a) Mark 7:21 *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,*
 - b) Mark 7:22 *Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:*
 - c) Mark 7:23 *All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*
- 3) The worst poverty is in our hearts, not our pockets or purses!
- 4) Repentance lets go of all that is in our heart, hoping to receive something BETTER from Christ!

c. Only SINNERS who are broke, and have no money or success to their name can actually come to God and BUY the eternal kingdom of God!

- 1) (Isa 55:12) *Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness (FULNESS).*

d. God will help and bless only EMPTY people! Hallelujah!

- 1) THAT’S where we all must start... EMPTY!
 - a) Psa 34:18 *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*
 - b) Psa 51:17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*
- 2) So, When you come to God, and your heart is full of its own accomplishments, and its own righteousness, and its own conclusions, and its own affections, and its own feelings...
- 3) God CANNOT help you, or save you, or bless you! You have no room for what GOD wants to give you – a whole new kingdom!
- 4) (Mat 13:15,16) *For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.*
- 5) But when we come poor in our spirit, EMPTY of our own goodness, THEN God will fill us with blessings and life more abundant!

C. 2-“Blessed are they that Mourn”

1. People who mourn aren’t just sad
 - a. Mourners are people overwhelmed with sadness – grief, sighing
 - b. Normally grief is something we all run from – we can’t live there
 - c. People who mourn have no joy
2. Jesus says, the kingdom of God is where grieving people can come and be blessed
3. It is normal and healthy to mourn – not be SAD, but mourn – there is a difference
 - a. God says mourning is important (Eccl 7:2-4)
 - 1) Ecc 7:2 *It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart.*
 - 2) Ecc 7:3 *Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.*
 - 3) Ecc 7:4 *The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.*
 - b. It is absolutely normal and necessary to Mourn loss of someone in your family
 - 1) And to mourn sin in your life – where has THAT gone today?
 - 2) And to mourn sin in the life of people around you

- 3) People mourn disasters, and personal failures, and hurts
- c. But it is not right to STAY LIVING in a mournful state (Ps 38:6,8,17,22)
 - 1) Psa 38:6 *I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long.*
 - 2) Psa 38:8 *I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart.*
 - 3) Psa 38:17 *For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me.*
 - 4) Psa 38:22 *Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation.*
- d. You need to move into living in a different kingdom (Rom 14:17) – the kingdom of God
4. Jesus promises that in HIS kingdom, we will mourn for now, but we won't stay mourning!
5. We actually are blessed, even though we mourn because WE WILL be comforted!
 - a. Psa 30:4,5 *Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: **weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.***
 - b. Jesus CAME to comfort the mourners (Isa 61:1-3) *The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to **bind up the brokenhearted**, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; **to comfort all that mourn**; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, **to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness**; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.*
 - c. Isa 35:10 *And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and **sorrow and sighing shall flee away.***
 - d. Rev 21:4 *And **God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes**; and there shall be no more death, **neither sorrow**, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*
6. If there is a better reason to follow Christ, I don't know what it could be. I have hope that all my sorrows will be replaced with joy!

IV. Invitation

A. Summary

1. These eight attitudes are not random. They are steps, to work up from the first to the last. You can work on any of these attitudes, but if you start with the first (emptiness) and work from there, you can get much further than just trying to have handle the hardest at the end – trying to have joy in persecution!
2. For example
 - a. Only a humble person will find it possible to be meek
 - b. And then only meek people can become gentle and kind towards others
 - c. And only kind people will be able to ultimately show love to their enemies, even in the face of adversity and hardship.

B. Three things to do:

1. Want the kingdom – seek this kingdom FIRST!

- a. Don't put it off getting into it by believing and obeying the Gospel's command
- b. Or else, just by neglect, you will MISS the kingdom, which will cost you eternity!

2. Admit REAL POVERTY in you

- a. Start following Jesus
- b. Stop finding fault with everything and everyone around you
- c. Poor people don't blame other poor people
- d. See just how empty YOU are – how poor you are – how full you are of sin
- e. And REPENT – stop holding onto anything in your heart, and turn to follow Jesus
- f. As you follow Jesus, you will discover every joy and peace that Christ has promised you, and you will own everything ahead – the entire kingdom of heaven!
- g. So leave your anger and wrath and bitterness ALL in your past – including your pornography, your depression, your fears and your worries
- h. And bring your life as an empty cup to the Lord, and let Him fill it

3. Go ahead and MOURN for a while

- a. At the sin in your heart – it is usually very deep and very dark
- b. At the condition of your family, and your marriage – probably not that great
- c. At the lostness of your children, or parents – it's okay to weep over their souls
- d. At the condition of our nation, and the world
- e. Jesus says, as we follow Him, we WILL see things change, and we WILL be comforted!
- f. IF people are sitting at HIS feet, and seeking HIS kingdom

C. Ask yourself... Are you a follower of Jesus, or just a Christian in name only?