Today, we begin a new series on the Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is Jesus’ longest recorded sermon. It is recorded in the Gospel of [Matthew, Chapters 5 through 7](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew5-7%25&version=NKJV). It occurs at the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry. Jesus gathers His disciples outside of Galilee on a mountainside. [Matthew 4:23-25](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew4%3A23-25&version=NKJV) tells us that news about Him had spread and there was a large crowd following Jesus from Galilee and the Decapolis, as well as Jerusalem and Judea and beyond the Jordan. The location rendered itself to the proper acoustics, a sort of natural amphitheater, because of which Jesus’ voice could be heard by the multitude. (He would know its special ability since He created it!)

In reviewing the Sermon on the Mount, it is important to view Jesus as teacher through the lens of Jesus as Savior and Redeemer. Today, we are going to unpack the first of the Beatitudes, the “blessed are” statements, understanding that what Jesus preaches is counter-cultural; Jesus says these are the blessed: the “poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek or gentle, those who hunger and thirst, and the merciful.” But listen, Church, the nine beatitudes that open the Sermon on the Mount constitute the character of Christ. They are instruction for right attitude toward God and other people.

There are fifty-three references to the Kingdom of God in the four gospels. And this kingdom is what Jesus’s sermon is all about. The word “Beatitude” is derived from Latin, and it refers to a state of happiness or bliss. We all want to be blessed; we all want God’s favor. The word “blessed” describes the deep joy that comes to those who live as Jesus taught. [Matthew 5:3](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew5%3A3&version=NKJV) says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This is not a statement on financial poverty but a declaration of our desperate need for a Savior. Acknowledging that my self-righteousness is not enough to gain Heaven. No, first I must trust Jesus as Savior, after which I honor him as teacher.

With that belief effected in me, all the other characteristics described in the beatitudes become possible for me, results of my acceptance of Jesus as Savior.

To start on this journey of having the mind of Christ, to be a partaker of the divine nature ([2Peter 1:2-4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2Peter1%3A2-4&version=NKJV)), I must begin with recognizing my poverty of spirit, my need for Him as Savior.

Listen, family, we cannot be filled until we have first been emptied. We must realize our need for Jesus and our need to walk in his ways ([Psalm 1:1-2](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm1%3A1-2&version=NKJV)). . We must admit ourselves as poor in the sense that we rely on Christ, not on earthly riches, our own goodness, or our self-righteousness. We cannot be full of Jesus if we are full of ourselves: [Psalm 119:9](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm119%3A9&version=NKJV) directs us to be filled with the Word. We must delight in His statutes.

In [Matthew 5:4](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew5%3A4&version=NKJV), Jesus says, “Blessed are they who mourn for they shall be comforted,” a comfort in loss. But if we look at this blessing of the mourner from the spiritual as opposed to the natural, and as a whole and not a part of His mountain message, this blessing speaks to being Kingdom-minded. In this expression, we see mourning over the condition of the world, over our own sin, over the sins of others. It calls for repenting and sharing the gospel, not for expressing disgust and anger over sin but to mourn over a life not in communion with God—to have our hearts broken over things that break His. Mourning in this way follows naturally from recognizing our poor spirit. Thanks be for the truth of Jesus’ sermon and the gospel! We need not be disheartened. No, family, do not be disheartened! Jesus gives us instruction for Holy living. And that must be our pursuit: Holiness rather than things of the world, a setting of our minds on things above—to enjoy intimacy with God, an intimacy that glorifies God.

With an enlightened view of our world, and ourselves we can become the gentle. [Matthew 5:5](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew5%3A5&version=NKJV) says, “Blessed are the meek [gentle] for they shall inherit the earth.” While the world thinks and teaches strength and power, Jesus says blessed are the gentle. Remember, Christian, we are citizens of a different world. Meek is not weak. It is the humble attitude of the servant, one given to his Master, a submitted life. Jesus described himself gentle ([Matthew 11:29](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew11%3A29&version=NKJV)) but as committed to the

service of his Father in ([1Peter 2:23](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1Peter2%3A23&version=NKJV)). Jesus was NOT weak. He was committed to the purpose and plan of the Father, Kingdom-minded, Kingdom focused.

When listeners had absorbed the truth of their poor spirit needing salvation, had they must mourn their sin and the sin of the world, and had accepted the role of servant of the Lord, Christ delivered his fourth beatitude: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for His namesake, for they shall be filled” ([Matthew 5:6](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew5%3A6&version=NKJV)). This blessing confirms that the beatitudes are a recipe for holy living—a hunger for the good and the right, for the Kingdom. The beatitudes are an invitation to taste and see that the Lord is our strength and joy ([Matthew 5:12](https://classic.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew5%3A12&version=NKJV)).

Rejoice and be glad, our Jesus tells us. We should practice that. Our home is Heaven if we are born again. Our citizenship is there. These beatitudes are instructing us on how to be citizens of Heaven and ambassadors in a foreign land.

We have a living relationship! The cross is empty, the tomb is empty, and because of that we are highly favored. We are blessed.

HOLY COMMUNION FOLLOWED THIS SERMON.