

Matthew – Sermon on the Mount

>>>>> Sermon on the Mount – Lesson 01 <<<<<

- 1) Ok, let's dig into the details of the Beatitudes.

Matthew 5:2–12 (ESV)

The Beatitudes

- 2) And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (1)

- 1) **Poor in spirit** – This expression describes an inward feeling of one who is spiritually poor or bankrupt – unable to give anything to God and thus depending on His mercy.
- 2) Remember Scott McKnight's translation of this verse:

Matthew 5:3 (Second Testament)

- 3) God blesses the beggars in spirit ...

- a) Jesus is speaking of people who understand their helplessness and put their dependence on God.
- b) The final dispensation of the kingdom He speaks of in this verse lies in the future.
- c) But these folks and we have the promise of that kingdom now as it is being revealed by Jesus at this moment.
- d) There is another kingdom that a major portion of this teaching is about – that is the kingdom we as Christ followers are living in now.
- e) As we will see, many of these teachings are about how to best live in that kingdom – that new covenant community.

Do we and/or should we feel the poorness in spirit as defined here?

Why or Why Not?

- f) I think of that song that we have been singing some in recent times by Brandon Lake called Gratitude.
- i) One of the lyrics from it says in essence that he has nothing fit for the king except for a Hallelujah.

Is that a representation of this idea of poor in spirit?

- g) We should note here that this beatitude (#1) and verse 10 beatitude (#8) both promise a present tense reward of the kingdom of heaven in the same way.
- i) The promises of the intervening beatitudes are all future tense or conditional.

Other questions or comments?

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. (2)

- 3) **Mourning** – Of the nine terms used for mourning or lament in scripture, the one used here is the strongest, the most severe.
 - a) It represents the deepest, most heart-felt grief, and was generally reserved for grieving over the death of a loved one.
 - b) Scholars differ on the exact object of the word mourning as used here.

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- i) Some say that Jesus was referring to the nation of Israel mourning for its sins.
- ii) Others interpret this more personally, explaining that it refers to those who mourn for their own sins or even for personal grief or oppression.
- c) Though we know without doubt that Jesus personally mourned over the nation of Israel, in the context of these teachings, He is most likely referring to our own personal grief over sin.

As those who are saved by Christ's blood, why should we mourn over our own sins?

- d) This beatitude says we will be comforted.

How do you feel God's comfort?

- 4) Moving on to the third beatitude in verse 5 ...

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (3)

- 5) **Meek or Gentle** – means here to not be overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance, to be gentle, humble, considerate, meek.¹
 - a) The term was sometimes used to describe a soothing medicine or a soft breeze.
 - b) It does not mean cowering in a corner or being afraid to speak or timid.
 - c) One definition I read was:

Meek refers not to weakness but to strength under control – a disposition that is patient, teachable, and not driven by domination or retaliation.

- d) Only those who seek Jesus and understand his ways will be gentle as He means here.
- e) Contrary to human standards of the strong ruling, the gentle in this way will truly rule.
- f) When you think about this in the mindset of those who were listening to Him, it must have really seemed strange.
 - i) The Romans who ruled their world were anything but gentle.
 - ii) These folks who were listening to this sermon were themselves looking for a Messiah who would lead a great revolution against the Romans – anything but a gentle concept.
- g) As we think of applying this to ourselves, we probably need to apply all four of the definitions – not be overly impressed by our own self-importance, be gentle, be humble, be considerate, and be meek in the way we have defined.

Which one of the following groups are WE MOST likely to show gentleness or meekness to?

1. **Family.**
2. **Church family.**
3. **Those we meet, who are not church members.**

Which one of these groups are WE LEAST likely to show gentleness or meekness to?

¹ William Arndt et al., [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 861.

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Why are we gentler with some folks than others?

What do you think Jesus means when he says the meek will inhabit the earth?

- h) There are several ways this has been interpreted over time. One summary of all them I found quite complete.
 - i) God gives the world not to conquerors but to the gentle.
 - ii) Power in God's kingdom flows through humility, not domination.
 - iii) The faithful, humble, and nonviolent will ultimately receive the blessings the arrogant try to seize.
 - iv) This inheritance is both a spiritual reality now and a future fullness in the renewed creation.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. (4)

- 6) **Hunger and Thirst** – We think of hunger as missing a meal or two in a row, and of thirst as having to wait an hour on a hot day to get a cold drink.
 - a) If we think about those situations in our lives, we can get an inkling about how Jesus is saying we should feel regarding righteousness.
 - b) Righteousness here, I think speaks to a deep desire for spiritual matters.
 - i) Knowledge of God and his ways and a life that reflects that knowledge – not just a casual interest or passing fancy.
 - ii) If we are indeed hungering and thirsting, it becomes not just the knowledge we are seeking – we are seeking to put that knowledge to work in our everyday lives.
 - c) I can see a direct relationship between this beatitude and that of the poor in spirit.
 - i) Being poor in spirit is understanding our helplessness and our need to depend on God.
 - ii) Hungering and thirsting for righteousness
 - (1) Speaks to a desire for a relationship with God and Christ,
 - (2) Speaks about the need to remove sin from our lives so we can be in that relationship.

Can we all agree on those two statements?

- iii) At the heart of this is a need to fill that natural hole that is part of us.
- iv) That hole was placed there by God to be filled with a relationship with Him.
- v) So many ignore or become calloused to the existence of that hole, or they fill it with something other than the relationship with God that He intended.

Do we or should we ever come to a point where we are not hungering and thirsting for this righteousness?

If we do not feel that hunger or thirst for righteousness, how do we get back those desires or can we?

- d) Our hunger and thirst for righteousness will only be satisfied by doing something.
 - i) We must study to gain knowledge of what God wants us to be.

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- ii) We must, with the help of the Holy Spirit, do our best to lead the righteous life God intends.
- iii) We must seek to do what God has for us to do whatever it may be.

When do we feel satisfied?