

PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE KING

RELATIONSHIP with God - God created mankind for relationship with Him, Genesis 1

Reflect His image 'Let us make man in our image'

Reign in life 'Let them have dominion over creation'

Reproduce 'Be fruitful and multiply. fill the earth and subdue it.'

The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth He has given to man
- Psalm 115:16

However, only those with **character from God** can be worthy and effective in reigning.

The Serpent: Pride, Rebellion, Resistance and a lust to rule in place of God.
The fall of man.

Restoration through the promised Messiah. God prophesied a **fiery forerunner** who would prepare the way for Him. He would **turn the people's hearts**

- Malachi 3:1; 4:1,6

John the Baptist: Humble preparation in a lonely and hostile place....

desert of Judea: * Rooted in God's Word * **Separated** from the voices of the world so he could be God's voice * **Simple** clothes and food
27 A.D. early autumn / John prepares the **hearts** of the people for the Messiah with a simple but powerful message: **REPENTthe kingdom of heaven is at hand!**

- Matthew 3:1

John had faced scorpions and snakes in the desert, now he faces a **brood of snakes...religious leaders who relied on tradition/ ancestry.** (Jesus also called them a brood of snakes: full of pride, greed, wickedness, unjust, unmerciful, blind guides, hypocrites, self-indulgent, persecutors and murderers - Matthew 23) **Flee the fire and wrath to come!** (like snakes that flee out of a fire - Acts 28:3)

Repentance is a change of mind and a **turning** from sin and unto God. (**Before physical birth a baby should turn head in womb between 30-34th week to avoid breach birth**) **Cut the umbilical cord!** Leave the darkness and enter a world of light.
Produce fruits of repentance - Luke 3:9-14. God requires a change of **heart**.

We are being **trained to reign with Christ.** **God starts with our heart attitudes.**

We must first learn to reign over our fears, greed, thoughts, time, temptations, trouble and our tongue!

Beatitudes = Beautiful attitudes that **display Christ's character** and **kingdom lifestyle**

BLESSED = Happy, life joy and satisfaction in God's favor regardless of outward conditions - Amplified translation

God takes an ax to the root of the trees, which is our heart. Before he fills us, he wants to root out wrong heart issues. The first 4 beatitudes are vertical (towards God) and the other four are horizontal (towards the world). God deals with our **inward heart attitudes**, then fills us, so we can change the world as we reflect his image, reign and reproduce. Man's solutions often only deal with branches. God goes to the root, which is the heart.

AX TO ROOTS	KINGDOM ATTITUDES	BLESSINGS
1. Proud heart	Poor in spirit / humble heart	Kingdom of heaven access now
2. Apathetic heart	Mourns / sensitive heart	Will be comforted
3. Stubborn heart	Meek / yielded heart/ will (like wild stallion under the reins of master)	Will Inherit the earth
4. Self-righteousness	Hunger and thirst for Righteousness	Filled and fulfilled
5. Heartless	Merciful	Will be shown mercy
6. Mixed motives	Pure in heart	Will see God continually
7. Division/ Discord	Peacemakers	Called mature sons of God
8. Persecutors Lying tongue	Persecuted for Righteousness Persecuted for Jesus' sake	Kingdom of heaven now Great reward in heaven

So above all, **guard** the **affections** of your **heart** for they affect all that you are. Pay attention to the welfare of your innermost being, for from there flows the wellspring of life. - Proverbs 4:23 The Passion Translation

Victory begins with the Name of Jesus on our lips. It is consummated by the **nature of Jesus** **in our hearts**. - Francis Frangipane

And the **glory of the Lord** will be **revealed** and all mankind together will see it **because the way has been prepared for the king!** Isaiah 40:3-5.

Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Let earth **receive her king**. Let every **heart**, **prepare Him room**. And heaven and nature sing!

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MAKARIOS MAN

Man here includes woman

Matthew 5 -7

The Sermon on the Mount is the greatest sermon ever preached. Sadly, today it is one of the rarest ones ever proclaimed from church pulpits. Occasionally you might here a few verses from it preached on, but the whole message is mostly ignored. The Sermon is about the **kingdom attitudes and lifestyle actions** which are to be present in the lives of Jesus' followers now. There is a false teaching that began over 100 years ago (via the Scofield Bible and its hyper

dispensational teachings) that said the kingdom message of this sermon is not for us, but is only for the millennial kingdom when Jesus returns to reign over the earth for 1000 years. However, Jesus' final words to his disciples convey otherwise, for he said to them: 'Teach your disciples to **obey everything** I commanded you.' - Matthew 28:20.

Jesus sat down as he gathered his disciples around him to share key aspects of the kingdom. **The Beatitudes are the essence of the essence of the Christian life - Matthew 5:1-12.** As we examine the various traits therein, you will begin to understand that statement.

Jesus sat down / Matthew 5:1. When a rabbi sat down it indicated this was highly important 'official' teaching. **He opened his mouth** - this phrase was in preface to some pronouncement of the greatest weight and importance. It described a speaker who would not refrain from saying what ought to be said - one who speaks fearlessly. Nothing is kept back; the whole truth is told and shared intimately from the heart.

- Insights from William Barclay

Peter preached like that on the day of Pentecost. It was prophetic pointed powerful preaching - Acts 2:23, 36 and the results were dramatic as the people were 'cut to their heart'. - Acts 2:37. The Jewish teachers were indefinite, uncertain and quoted the various viewpoints of others. Whereas Jesus taught with authority, **'You have heard or it has been said, but I say to you'**. - Matthew 5:22,28,32,34,39,44. The crowd was astonished at how Jesus taught - Matt.7:28-29. Jesus had the heart of a shepherd, but he spoke with boldness like a lion.

Jesus taught them / Matt.5:2 (Gk.imperfect tense/ repeated, habitual action in past time) It is likely Jesus repeated this sermon many times on other occasions, due to its importance. eg. Luke 6:17-21 where he taught on the plain. He begins his first extensive teaching with the word **blessed**. This is in contrast to the last word of the Old Testament which is **curse** - Malachi 4:6.

Throughout the Old Testament scriptures we find references to blessing and cursing. At creation, God blessed the land and the living creatures of the air, land and sea. He then blessed the first man and woman in order that they would reflect his image, reproduce and reign over the paradise he had placed them in. To be blessed by God was to be holy, happy, healthy, fruitful and fulfilled. Then came the curse due to their disobedience.

The curse brought woe, weeds, toil, thorns, pain, pressures and problems. Cain became a 'restless wanderer' living a fruitless life. The curse brought a sense of dissatisfaction, fear, loss and shame. When Jesus arrived on the scene thousands of years later, the world was weary from the results of sin and the curse. Especially hard hit were the common people who comprised the bulk of the population in Israel. They struggled economically under the taxes and oppression by the Romans and the elite religious leaders. Jesus came with a pronouncement of hope for them.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

They were familiar with kings who used them and took advantage of them for their own benefit. Jesus now brought good news! There was a king who not only cared about them, but who would also treat them as royalty with access to him and all of his resources. The word **blessed** had a special meaning in their day.

BLESSED / Gk. Makarios This word was used in that day for the privileged aristocracy who because of their rich status, could live above the everyday concerns of the common man. It also described the bliss which belonged to the Greek pagan gods. Paul used this word to describe the true God - 1 Tim.1:11; 6:15. 'In

ancient times Cyprus was called the 'Blessed Isle' (Happy Island); because the climate was so perfect, the soil so fertile and natural resources so abundant that anyone who lived in Cyprus would never need to go elsewhere. They were perfectly satisfied and happy there. **Makarios is that inner joy that fulfills every longing in the human heart.**' - William Barclay

Blessed Happy, to be envied and spiritually prosperous [that is with life-joy and satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions] - Amplified

'Not subject to fate, deathless. It depicts the kind of life that rises above the fated mechanism of earthly life into moral and spiritual freedom. - E. Stanley Jones

The ordinary word for human happiness was 'eudamonia, that term was perceived as too weak to describe divine happiness. Buddha began his teachings with suffering, but Jesus begins with joy! The Christian's life is meant to be marked by joy through all kinds of circumstances.

Blessed (are) There is no verb here in the Greek. Barclay says these are not statements but exclamations; not promises of future happiness but affirmations of present bliss.

Inner life formed and filled as it relates to God and His righteousness

- the bliss of the **poor in spirit**.
- the bliss of those who **mourn**
- the bliss of the **meek**
- the bliss of those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**

Outward expressions which come from an overflowing heart

- the bliss of the merciful
- the bliss of the pure in heart (this one relates more to God)
- the bliss of the peacemakers
- the bliss of the persecuted

As we examine each one of these beatitudes, we will define them and give examples from the Bible along with their benefits. To better appreciate their value, we will contrast them with the woes that follow those who live without these beautiful attitudes. The Bible has other examples of Beatitudes / Psalm 1; 112:1, Revelation 1:3, 14:13, 16:15, 19:9, 20:6, 22:7, 14.

The Beatitudes are not things that we do to become a Christian, but they are qualities that God works in our life as we let His Holy Spirit work in heart, spirit and mind. That is how we become a makarios man!

A Christian is something before he does something. - Martyn Lloyd Jones

