



July 5, 2020

“The Beatitude Attitudes”

Matthew 5:1-12

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The longest recorded and most familiar sermon of Jesus is referred to as The Sermon on the Mount. All of Matthew chapters five, six, and seven are devoted to this teaching. Jesus’ purpose was to explain what it looks like to live as a devoted follower of Jesus Christ, motivated by the heart rather than by the law. The first part of the sermon is called The Beatitudes, which means The Blessings. There are eight beatitudes, and they are all intended to be read and lived out as a package, not as options.

### Historical Background

1. The Sermon on the Mount
  - a. Matthew chapters five through seven comprise what is known as Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount.
  - b. The gospels of Mark and John don’t include any of Jesus’ message, but Luke makes some reference to it.
  - c. The average person can read these chapters in about ten minutes.
  - d. Pastor Gary said, “I don’t know who labeled this the Sermon on the Mount, but in my opinion it’s more like a Devotional on the Mount. No sermon I’ve ever delivered was ten minutes [long]!”
  - e. Jesus addressed the crowd gathered on a hillside on the northern coast of the Sea of Galilee.
  - f. The Roman Catholic Church built the Church of the Beatitudes at the traditional site in 1936.
    - i. The church has eight sides, which commemorates the eight beatitudes.
    - ii. The word beatitude means blessing.<sup>1</sup>
  - g. This is the longest recorded message in Jesus’ ministry at 107 verses.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strongs=G3107&t=NKJV>

- h. Jesus was seated when he shared this message and the people stood, which was customary in that day.
- i. Jesus' message was to his disciples in general, not just the twelve disciples, which is important to note because this was not for the general public.
- j. The purpose of Jesus' message was to explain what it means to live as a follower of Christ and to explain the challenges of following him.
- k. Jesus' message spoke about the life of a follower from the perspective of being motivated by the heart and not the Law, which was the emphasis of the religious leaders of the Jews.
- l. Some of the things Jesus said are somewhat revolutionary, very counterintuitive, and completely countercultural.
- m. "The Sermon on the Mount is probably the best-known part of the teaching of Jesus, though arguably it is the least understood, and certainly it is the least obeyed." – John R. W. Stott <sup>2</sup>

### The Beatitudes

- 2. Pastor Gary said, "The Beatitudes have been somewhat compared to the Ten Commandments in this sense... in that the Ten Commandments were things you should not do, [and] the eight Beatitudes were a list of what you should do. So, Jesus [approached] things at the beginning of the sermon by [talking about] eight character traits that my followers need to understand, and live up to, and be about."
- 3. Eight Character Traits
  - a. These are not multiple-choice options!
  - b. There is an increasing intensity in that the first beatitude is recognizing why people need to come to Jesus and the last is the certainty of persecution for being a follower.
- 4. Inner Happiness
  - a. These traits lead to inner happiness.
  - b. Jesus' message to his hearers was that they would be happy if they followed him in each of these different ways.
- 5. Promises
  - a. Attached to each character trait is a corresponding promise.
  - b. Jesus' promises had an eternal value.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.withthemaster.org/Resources/With-the-Master-on-the-Mount\\_146355.aspx](http://www.withthemaster.org/Resources/With-the-Master-on-the-Mount_146355.aspx)

## The Poor In Spirit

6. **Matthew 5:3**- *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*
  - a. Jesus was talking about spiritual poverty not material poverty.
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “[Jesus] is calling us to come to him, first, with the understanding of how destitute we are in our spirit. And, that every single person comes to Jesus poor in spirit seeing their need for him. ... [Jesus emphasizes that] when we see our emptiness, how poor we are in spirit, [we] receive his fullness. ... The ultimate reward for those who come to Christ... [they] will enjoy heaven.”
  - c. There are two phrases that are sometimes used interchangeably in the Bible: Kingdom of God and Kingdom of heaven.
  - d. Pastor Gary said, “The difference between the two is basically this. The Kingdom of God is about God’s rule in your heart and in your life. In a broader sense it’s much larger than that, but individually speaking, the Kingdom of God [speaks about] when the Lord rules and reigns in your heart and life. ... When the Kingdom of God comes into [our lives] that means that [we are] subject to him as the king, [and we surrender our lives to him and understand that he is in charge, he is Lord, and we follow him]. The Kingdom of heaven is where God reigns. Heaven is a real place, and heaven is the ultimate reward for those who know him and love [him].”
  - e. **Luke 17:20-21** - *“Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, ‘The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, “See here!” or “See there!” For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.’ ”*

## Those Who Mourn

7. **Matthew 5:4**- *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”*
  - a. Jesus may have meant this for those who are emotionally grieving.
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “[As] a follower of Christ you know [that] if you’ve been through terrible, difficult times, that it builds a character trait in you through suffering that you can’t always experience without the suffering. Sometimes the suffering that we go through in this lifetime forges us... [and is] shaping us. [This] comes through intense pressure, intense heat, and it comes through [suffering]. ... [This could] also mean spiritually mourning [over the dying to self]. ... God is not unaware of [our] grief and suffering.”
  - c. **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** - *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”*

## The Meek

8. **Matthew 5:5**- *“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*
  - a. Meek does not mean weak, and sometimes this is greatly misunderstood.<sup>3</sup>
  - b. Pastor Gary said, “Meekness is not thinking less of myself; [it’s] thinking of myself less.”
  - c. **Philippians 2:3-4** - *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”*
  - d. Jesus’ promise was that the meek would inherit the millennial kingdom.
  - e. **Revelation 20:4c** - *“And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”*

## Those Who Hunger And Thirst For Righteousness

9. **Matthew 5:6**- *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”*
  - a. The first three beatitudes are about emptying ourselves and dying to self, and now the fourth beatitude is about being filled up.
  - b. There are two types of righteousness: obeying the rules and regulations of religion, which produces a self-righteousness; and God’s righteousness that is imputed to us by faith, which makes us right with God by faith not works.
  - c. **2 Corinthians 5:21** - *“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”*

## The Merciful

10. **Matthew 5:7**- *“Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.”*
  - a. Justice is getting what is deserved, and mercy is not getting what is deserved.
  - b. Since we are recipients of God’s mercy, God wants us to be dispensers of mercy to others.
  - c. Pastor Gary said, “When we are unmerciful to people, it is both hypocritical and judgmental. It’s hypocritical in that we are receiving something that we don’t want to give. When we don’t practice what we preach, it’s hypocrisy. It’s also judgmental because if we don’t give people mercy even though we have received mercy we are basically saying that they don’t deserve what we deserved.”
  - d. The promise is that we will receive mercy, because the more merciful we are,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G4239&t=NKJV>

the more merciful God will be to us.

- e. **Luke 6:36** – *“Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”*

### The Pure In Heart

- 11. **Matthew 5:8**– *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”*
  - a. The Pharisees, a Jewish religious sect in Jesus’ day, were always concerned about outward appearance, but God is concerned about the heart.
  - b. The Pharisees followed every rule and regulation concerning ceremonial cleanliness. It’s true that these things were included in the Law, but these things were in the Law to make people aware that they had a cleansing problem, that was an inward thing, so to speak.
  - c. Pastor Gary said, “It’s a gift in what God does to cleanse our hearts, but it’s a responsibility for us to continue to walk in purity.”
  - d. **Acts 15:8–9** – *“So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged [Gentiles] by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us [believing Jews], and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”*
    - i. In the first ten chapters of the book of Acts, we learn that the early Church was exclusively Jewish.
  - e. The promise is that we will be made pure.
    - i. **1 John 3:2–3** – *“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”*

### The Peacemakers

- 12. **Matthew 5:9**– *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”*
  - a. God wants us to make it our goal to make peace with people and to facilitate peace between people.
  - b. To be a peacemaker brings peace into other people’s lives because they pursue peace.
  - c. Pastor Gary said, “A peacemaker never compromises truth for the sake of making peace. ... We should never try to engage evil in an effort to make peace. As peacemakers we should always try to please the Lord and to use wisdom from above to promote peace in different situations.”
  - d. The promise is that we will have a relationship with the Lord.

### Those Who Are Persecuted For Righteousness’ Sake

- 13. **Matthew 5:10**– *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

- a. Pastor Gary said, “[We need] to get ready for a little persecution. We have it really comfortable [today]. I don’t really know how much our religious liberties are fading away, but it seems to me that they are certainly being threatened. ... Every time I think about the persecution that Jesus tells us to expect as Christians, I keep wondering how much more we will still be able to enjoy that kind of comfort [in our country]. We should be prepared, and we shouldn’t take for granted our religious liberties [because] they may not always be there. They are eroding swiftly; I mean by the day. ... This is to take nothing away from the Christians around the world who are dying as we speak, but it is still to be aware of the fact that Jesus [said] that as part of being a follower [we] need to be prepared to expect a little persecution.”
- b. **Matthew 5:11-12** - *“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*
- i. The *“prophets who were before [us]”* were killed.
  - ii. Pastor Gary said, “Christianity and being a follower of Jesus Christ is something people are dying for on a daily basis around the world. So, as long as you and I aren’t threatened necessarily with our lives presently, we should still mentally and spiritually prepare for the fact that one day we may not enjoy the kind of liberties that we [enjoy]. What kind of a Christian will we be then? When your life is on the line, will you still be as bold for your faith as you are now when your life is not on the line? Are you actually willing to be persecuted and potentially have to die for your faith? ... Don’t fix your eyes too much horizontally; fix your eyes vertically. ... Fix your gaze on the Lord. Fix your gaze to the ultimate reward of heaven. Don’t get too comfortable here [in this world], and don’t think that the world offers any solutions. The solution is in the Lord. We need to always be mindful to keep our eyes on Jesus.”
- c. The promise is the same as the first beatitude: the kingdom of heaven.
- d. **John 16:33** - *“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”*
- e. **2 Corinthians 4:16-17** - *“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day: For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory...”*

## Discussion Questions

1. Read [Matthew 5:1-12](#) to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. Provide an overview of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. (See #1 above)
3. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's outline for The Beatitudes. (See #2 through #5 above)
4. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*poor in spirit.*" (See #6 above)
5. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*those who mourn.*" (See #7 above)
6. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*the meek.*" (See #8 above)
7. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.*" (See #9 above)
8. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*the merciful.*" (See #10 above)
9. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*the pure in heart.*" (See #11 above)
10. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*the peacemakers.*" (See #12 above)
11. Spend time talking about Pastor Gary's remarks concerning those who are "*those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake.*" (See #13 above)
12. Read and discuss [John 16:33](#) and [2 Corinthians 4:16-17](#). (See #13d and #13e above)
13. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)