

The Blessed Life
Sermon on the Mount #2
Matthew 5:1-10
June 13, 2021

Scripture Reading

Matthew 5 ¹ When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² Then he began to teach them, saying: ³ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Pre-Sermon Remarks

- Today, after an introduction to The Kingdom of God, we officially start the Sermon

Leon Morris The teaching in this sermon certainly sets a high standard. If we take it seriously we realize that we cannot attain it and therefore cannot merit salvation. It is the end of the way of law and drives us to seek salvation in Christ. But when we have received this salvation as God's free gift, the sermon shows us how we should live in the service of our gracious God. It shows us what life is like in the kingdom of God. The sermon removes all complacency. The follower of Christ cannot say, "I have done all I should; I am the complete servant of God." No matter how far we have gone along the Christian road the sermon tells us that there is more ahead of us.

PRAYER

Introduction | The Blessed Life

Beatitudes comes from Latin word "beatus" which means "blessed"

Instagram search for #blessed | 135 million posts

- 10 of the top 11 were bible verses or Christian encouragement
 - 11th was a picture of flowers written in Sanskrit
- Scroll down: fitness influencers, moms with kids, couples on dates, "haters", hiking/beach selfies, drinks and food, a cake, drummer, a gun, dude holding a pink ukulele, Ford excursion

What does it mean to live a blessed life?

- Greek μακάριος (makarios) | fortunate, happy, privileged, favored (by divine)
 - "I have a good life, I've had good fortune, I'm happy"
- Every human being wants "the good life," the pursuit of happiness
- The social media #blessed is just a new version of the age-old human search for happiness

Big idea: The truly blessed life is found in Jesus and his kingdom

1. The upside-down nature of the blessed life
2. The entrance into the blessed life
3. The character that forms in the blessed life
4. The promises of the blessed life

I. The Upside-Down Blessed Life

Jesus says, "let me paint you a picture of the good life"

Matthew 5 ¹ When he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² Then he began to teach them, saying: ³ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

Now, contrast that with the Instagram #blessed life

Poor vs. rich	Merciful vs. haters
Sad vs. smiling	Sincere vs. phony
Lowly vs. influential	Peacemakers vs. call-out
Hungry vs. well-fed	Hated vs. admired

The Beatitudes of Instagram

1. Blessed are those who think like rich people, for they won't ever be dependent upon others.
2. Blessed are those who are always smiling in their selfies, for they won't need to be comforted.
3. Blessed are the influencers who are always killing it, for they won't need to be comforted.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for acceptance, for they shall find their tribe online.
5. Blessed are the ones who show no mercy, for those people are just haters anyway.
6. Blessed are the curated, for in not being truly known, they can never be hurt.
7. Blessed are those who cancel others, for it is only in this that true peace will be achieved.
8. Blessed are you when you are admired and when everyone likes your posts, for the kingdom of pop culture is yours.

Jen Wilkin [Jesus] turned his disciples' expectations for what it meant to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven upside down—rather than kings and conquerors, citizens of the kingdom should expect to be aliens and strangers. Rather than pursue a political agenda, citizens should expect to pursue a spiritual one. Rather than a kingdom established through the conquest of its rulers, citizens should expect a kingdom established through the character of its servants...When we answer the call to discipleship, we enter into a kingdom that turns human expectations of blessedness upside down.

II. Entering Into the Blessed Life

³ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth.

1. Poor in spirit = I don't have the resources
 - a. Contrasted with self-sufficient
2. Mourn = I am sorrowful that I don't have the resources
 - a. Early in our marriage, pretty big (for us) credit card debt
 - b. Also a collective element = mourning for injustice and brokenness
3. Humble (meek) = Not a doormat, more like "I need to go ask somebody for help"

David's Prayer

Psalm 51 ¹⁶ You do not want a sacrifice, or I would give it; you are not pleased with a burnt offering.

¹⁷ The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. You will not despise a broken and humbled heart, God.

Jesus' Fulfillment

Matthew 9 ¹³ Go and learn what this means: I desire mercy and not sacrifice. For I didn't come to call the righteous, but sinners.

- The cross is his payment on our behalf | demonstration of his amazing mercy

III. The Character of the Blessed Life

When someone truly enters into the blessed life, what does their life start to look like?

1. They hunger and thirst for righteousness | I want my life and actions to change
2. They become a merciful person
 - a. Rise of *cancel culture*: Ellie Kemper, John Cena, Chrissy Tiegen, Dawkins, Rowling
 - b. [The Fading of Forgiveness article by Tim Keller](#)
 - c. Mercy and forgiveness are always costly. But to not forgive is even more costly.
3. They have a purity of heart
 - a. Parallel passage in James 3: "sincere" or "without pretense"
 - i. Later in the sermon, praying or giving for show
 - b. Authenticity, sincerity, genuine. The good, and the bad. (Example: Rusty)
4. They will experience opposition
 - a. **Ralph Waldo Emerson** Let me never fall into the vulgar mistake of dreaming that I am persecuted whenever I am contradicted.
 - b. Range: persecution to slander to insults | honest assessment, change what you can
 - c. But NO MARTYR COMPLEX | Jesus literally told us to expect this

IV. The Promises of the Blessed Life

The only way that any of this makes sense is if the *promises* that Jesus makes are true:

- You will be part of a new kingdom where God rules in wisdom and justice
- You will experience his comfort and care
- You will be put in charge of the whole earth
- You will be completely filled up and satisfied

- You will be treated with mercy and kindness
- You will have direct access to God
- In fact, you will be adopted into God's family as a son or daughter

N.T. Wright People often say what wonderful teaching the Sermon on the Mount is, and that if only people would obey it the world would be a better place. But if we think of Jesus simply sitting there telling people how to behave properly, we will miss what was really going on. Jesus is not suggesting that these are simply timeless truths about the way the world is, about human behaviour. If he was saying that, he was wrong. Mourners often go uncomforted, the meek don't inherit the earth, those who long for justice frequently take that longing to the grave. This is an upside-down world, or perhaps a right-way-up world; and Jesus is saying that with his work, it's starting to come true. This is an announcement, not a philosophical analysis of the world. It's about something that's starting to happen, not about a general truth of life. It is gospel: good news, not good advice.

Conclusion/Application

1. The blessing comes before the demands/obligations
 - a. Every week, every topic: keep coming back to this foundational list
2. The blessed life is not dependent upon circumstances
 - a. Healthy or sick, rich or poor...this blessed life is yours in Christ
3. The blessed life requires our full participation
 - a. Our world offers you a version of "the good life." But if you belong to Jesus, there is a higher way. Don't take the bait.

Benediction

Numbers 6 ²⁴ The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.