

The Manifesto of Our King

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[0:00] of His counter-cultural kingdom. It's radical. What Jesus is going to get at is the coming kingdom, His kingdom, His reign, goes beyond the world of entertainment.

This manifesto makes a claim on every area of our lives. And it has eternity in scope. So, Matthew 5, 6, and 7, we're going to take our time.

We're just going to soak in it. I don't want to rush through it. I want you to kind of enjoy it, to make sure you're hearing what our King is telling us about ourselves and how to live.

I need that too. But before we get into kind of the individual parts on the Sermon on the Mount, I mean, really, what does it mean to be poor in spirit?

What does Jesus have to say about divorce? Really, we'll get there. But this morning, before we get into the details, into the parts, I want you to see it as a whole.

[1:08] I want you to see the manifesto for what it is. Our King is making a huge claim on our lives, of who we are, and how we are to live for His kingdom on earth.

How to live under His reign. And so I want to give you an overview of the Sermon on the Mount this morning. So we're going to be moving briskly. But here's where I want to begin.

As a follower of Jesus, as a Christian, you are a kingdom citizen. A citizen of heaven. You are under Jesus' reign.

And so this Sermon on the Mount, He is speaking to you. He has you in mind. The Sermon on the Mount is living and active for us today.

And so this morning, I'm going to do my best to kind of split the Sermon on the Mount into two parts. There's two parts to this manifesto.

[2:13] The first part is the Beatitudes. Who you are, kingdom citizen. And the second part is the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. That's how we are to live.

We live in light of the kingdom. And what we're going to see is who we are and how we live, it's counter-cultural. You ready to dive in?

Amen. Matthew chapter 5, verses 3 through 10.

Who you are, kingdom citizens. The Beatitudes. Now, here's a Captain Obvious statement.

The Beatitudes, blessed be, blessed be, blessed be, blessed be, blessed be, blessed be, blessed be, blessed be, blessed are, are, are. They don't come at the end of the Sermon on the Mount.

[3:18] But, Jesus starts the manifesto with the Beatitudes. He starts it with who you are, kingdom citizen.

That's where he starts. And it's important. Because that's where the rest of the Bible starts. All the rest of the other epistles, they start with who you are, what has God done in you, and then the rest is how you live.

And this Sermon on the Mount, this manifesto, is the same thing. It starts with you, what God has done in you, and then it goes out to how we are to live.

So, it's like Jesus is saying to us, this is what marks my people. This is what is true of those who are citizens of my kingdom.

They have a counter-cultural character. They stand out in a dark world. And so, what we have in the Beatitudes are eight descriptions of the character of a citizen of heaven.

[4:23] Poor in spirit. A kingdom citizen knows they're spiritually bankrupt, apart from God. kingdom citizens grieve over their sin against God.

They're meek. They see themselves as God sees them. They hunger and thirst for righteousness. Kingdom citizens crave to do the will of their Father.

They're merciful. Kingdom citizens have been shown mercy, and they will be shown mercy, and they show kindness and forgiveness on earth now.

The pure in heart. Kingdom citizens have pure motives. God help me. Peacemakers.

Kingdom citizens. They bring shalom to their relationships. They bring shalom to their worlds.

They're not crazy makers. They're not chaos makers.

[5:29] They don't divide people. They seek to unite people, just as God and Christ has united us with Him. Kingdom citizens are persecuted for righteousness' sakes.

We suffer for doing the will of our Father. Now, in all these eight characteristics, what I want you to see is that they're all Godward in orientation.

They're all moving towards the Lord. It's all for Him. It's God aimed. These Beatitudes, well, they're not suggested character traits of a kingdom citizen.

They're required character traits of a kingdom citizen. And don't make the mistake of thinking that these eight marks of a kingdom citizen are kind of distributed among us, like some of us are poor in spirit, and others of us are meek, and then we have some over here who are persecuted, and then some over here who are peacemakers.

That's not how this works. What Jesus is telling us is that each of us is to possess all eight of these characteristics in growing measure. It's true of every Christian.

[6:42] Now, upon hearing that, I'm not sure what you're feeling, but all week long, here's what I've been feeling. Jesus is calling me to something that I know, in and of myself, I am incapable of doing.

I don't know about you, but in and of myself, I am blind to my own spiritual bankruptcy. I don't know about you, but in and of myself, I am not meek.

I think too highly of myself. I don't know about you, but in and of myself, I would not mourn over my sin.

I don't know about you, but in and of myself, I can't make my heart pure. I can't purify my motives. You feeling what I'm talking about?

This Godward orientation we see in the Beatitudes, this stuff doesn't come naturally to us. So from the get-go, you've got to realize that to be a citizen of Christ's kingdom is to be a recipient of God's grace.

[8:15] Only by God's grace are we able to see our spiritual depravity. Only by grace would we mourn over our sin against God. Only by God's grace are we able to see ourselves as God sees us.

Only by God's grace would we have any inclination to do the will of God. Have you read Romans 3, 1 through 10 lately? There's not one of us who would see God.

Not one. It's only by God's grace that we experience a purity of heart. It's a work He does in us.

Do you know what's so beautiful about the Beatitudes? You know what's so beautiful about them? They point us to the beauty of God's grace again and again.

He alone can do in us what we are incapable of. The kingdom of heaven, the active reign of Jesus is a reign not of terror but of grace.

[9:18] He calls us to what is humanly impossible but He makes what is humanly impossible a reality through His grace.

He alone can do it. All those blessed words, blessed are, blessed are, blessed are. Do you know what blessed means? happiness? Happy.

But it's not a circumstantial happiness. It's not like winning the lottery and you're happy and then you've got to pay half of it to the government and then you're sad. I'd still be happy.

Sort of. To be blessed by God in this sense is to have an abiding joy because you've been graced by God.

He's done something in you. He's changed you. He sought you. He loved you.

[10:29] He changed you. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Kingdom citizens are blessed of God because they're recipients of God's grace. Objects of God's grace. God did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

He made us alive. By His grace. We were born again unto God.

We are new creations in Christ Jesus. It's all by His grace. All by His grace. Not our doing but His doing.

So Jesus starts out this manifesto. This first part of the manifesto is all these beatitudes. All these blessed R's. Blessed, blessed, blessed. Blessed by God.

[11:43] And I just want to see, help you to see that the beatitudes are speaking of people who have been recipients of God's grace. A grace of God that makes dead sinners alive.

new creations. A grace of God that transfers a sinner who's been living in the domain of darkness and transfers them into the kingdom of the beloved Son.

It's by His grace. this is who you are. Brother, sister in Christ, fellow kingdom citizen, your citizenship is yours by grace.

You didn't earn it. You've been brought into the kingdom by grace, not by your own merit. He did a work in you. This is what's to characterize you.

These eight characteristics, they're counter-cultural. It's, they stand out. It's who you are and who we are to continue to be.

[13:04] These beatitudes are beautiful in God's sight. It's a work of His grace. So that's part one. Who you are. The beatitudes. And we're going to come back to this over the next few weeks.

We're just going to take our time going through each blessed are. But the manifesto begins here. It doesn't end here.

The Sermon on the Mount continues. He moves from saying, this is who you are, kingdom citizen, the one blessed of God, the one graced. And then He goes on to say, and this is how you live.

Part two of the manifesto. How kingdom citizens live. We have a counter-cultural character born of God's grace and we live counter-cultural lives that display His grace.

And so, let's burn through these. I want you to get, acquaint yourself with the Sermon on the Mount. So we're just going to walk through, follow with me.

[14:13] I'm going to be kind of a, I guess, kind of a tourist host. Kind of like, let's go through these beautiful places. I'm going to show you. We're not going to spend much time, but we're going to keep on moving.

Just so you get a sense of what this sermon is all about. how kingdom citizens live. You've been changed by God's grace. And so now we look at Matthew 5, verse 13.

So, how kingdom citizens live? Well, the first thing you need to realize is kingdom citizens live to influence. We've been born of God, recipients of His grace.

We've been blessed. And now, we influence for the kingdom. And where Jesus goes, He gives us two pictures.

Salt and light. Verses 13 and 14 through 16. Salt and light. Salt is a preservative. It keeps meat from decaying.

[15:14] And way back in the day, you didn't put salt on something to make it a little bit more tasty. You put salt on something so it didn't decay. So it would last. And we're to have a preservative effect in the culture that we live in as kingdom citizens.

But He doesn't stop there. He says that we are to be light in the world. So not only would He have a preservative effect, salt, we're to have an enlightening effect.

We're to be a city set on a hill. We are to light up the darkness with our lives, pointing to Jesus. We are to expose the darkness. We are to make Christ known.

And so, not only preservative, we are an enlightened bunch. We're lit up by God's grace and we shed light around us. We influence for the kingdom.

That's the first thing that we see in verses 13 through 16. The second way Jesus points to the way we're supposed to live, we see through chapter 5, verses 17 through 48, and this is a doozy of a section.

[16:21] Jesus says some unbelievable things here. Unbelievable. But if I were to summarize it, it's this. Kingdom citizens live to fully obey the full intent of God's Word.

Fully. We're to fully obey the full intent of God's Word. And so, if you look at chapter 5, verse 17, I mean, think about this.

Red ink, Jesus saying, do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I've not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them.

Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament. Not to put it on the shelf. He came to fulfill it. At a minimum, what it does is helps us to know how to then read our Old Testaments in light of Jesus.

He came to fulfill it. It points to Him. Not one iota, not a dot will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

[17:30] It's got purpose. It's aimed. He didn't come to relax the law. He came to fulfill the law, and He came to redeem a people to live as fulfillers of the law.

Jesus came to uphold and fulfill all that the law and prophets said. Part of His fulfilling the law and prophets was to bring out the full intent of the law.

Not just external obedience. The scribes and the Pharisees were known for doing that very well, thank you very much. Jesus went from external obedience to addressing internal obedience as well.

And so, in verses 21-48, He shows us how those who've been radically changed by grace live out the full intent of the law.

And so, in verses 21-22, there are these six statements Jesus makes. You've heard it said, but I say. It's a huge claim of authority.

[18:44] Let me just clarify you what my word means. Here is God incarnate correcting misunderstandings of His word.

I would have loved to have been there. I love having this at my hands and fingertips now. This is my king speaking to me. This is our king speaking to us.

And He brings out the full intent. So, you've heard that this is said, those who murder, well, they're liable for judgment. But I say, if you get angry, you're liable for judgment.

He goes from external to internal. Full obedience to the full intent of the law. You've heard it said that adultery is not okay.

Agreed. but I say, even someone who lusts in their heart after a woman commits adultery in his heart. Full intent.

[19:45] Full obedience. Outer conformity. Inner conformity. He goes on to say some very strong things.

You've heard that no default divorce is okay. But I say, do you realize what you're doing to people by doing that? 33 and 34, you've heard it said, don't swear falsely.

Then He says, but I say, let your yes be yes and your no be no. Let's dive into that one when we come to it. 38 and 39, you've heard that it said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Lex talionis! But I say, do not resist the one who is evil. Wait, Jesus, are you telling me, are you telling me to enable bad people?

Is that what you're telling me? We've got to find out what He means. We'll come back to that. 43 through 44, you've heard that it said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy, but I say, love your enemies.

[21:03] Radical kingdom living. Now, I'm the first to admit there's a lot to understand here. I've got a lot of studying to do.

But what Jesus is showing us is that the full intent of the law makes a claim on all of who we are, external and internal.

And we have a tendency of not going deep enough. Are you ready? Are you ready to wrestle with the words of our King? Are you ready to live for His kingdom on this planet?

Kingdom citizens live to fully obey the full intent of God's law. The third thing that we come across is in verses, chapter 6, verses 1 through 18.

Kingdom citizens live for God, not man. there's a temptation we all face is to do our obedience, practice our righteousness for the eyes of men to show our obedience.

[22:20] And then it ceases to become obedience to God. It becomes something else. Jesus says, no, don't do that.

Don't give so other people can see you. Don't pray so others can hear you. Don't fast so that other people know. Don't do that. No, you won't get a reward from your Father in Heaven if you do that.

He tells us to give and to pray and to fast not for public eyes but for private eyes which reminds me of a Hall & Oates song.

Private eyes, they're watching you. I used to build Legos to that. But the private eyes that Jesus is talking about is not the private eyes Hall & Oates we're singing about.

If you look at chapter 6 verses 3 and 4 we're going to start seeing a pattern. But when you give to the needy do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. Do it in private so that your giving may be in secret and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

[23:35] Do it for His eyes. The audience of one. Look at verse 6. But when you pray go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

Audience of one. Look at verses 17 and 18. But when you fast anoint your head and wash your face that your fasting may not be seen by others but by your Father who is in secret and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

See a pattern? See repetition? Practice your righteousness for the audience of one. Your Father in heaven not for the eyes of man.

Kingdom citizens live for God not for man. Chapter 6 verses 19-34 Kingdom citizens live to serve God only and seek God first.

Kingdom citizens have been radically changed and therefore our priorities have been radically changed. And do you see where Jesus goes in this section? Verse 19 Do not lay up yourselves treasures on earth.

[24:50] Verse 24 No one can serve two masters for either will hate the one and love the other or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other and then he brings it home. You cannot serve both God and money.

We've been radically changed by God's grace and it radically changes who we serve. We don't serve money. We don't live for money. We live for our God.

And so we use money as a means to serve Him. We don't use God as a way of serving money. It's called idolatry. Kingdom citizens only have one master.

We prioritize God over money because God's changed us. Kingdom citizens not only serve God over money we prioritize God over our most basic needs.

Don't be anxious. Anybody anxious in the room? Anybody anxious about their life? Anybody anxious about what they're going to wear what they're going to eat where they're going to live?

Anybody. Anybody. Don't be anxious.

[26:10] Seek first God in His kingdom and He will take care of the rest. Trust Him. He's your heavenly Father. He knows your needs before you know your needs. Kingdom citizens are not anxious about their life because they seek first their Father who takes care of their life.

Man, you know what I love about the Sermon on the Mount and this manifesto? Jesus gets right at it. He speaks to us. He speaks to where we live now.

Kingdom Christians live to serve God over money and seek God before themselves. The fifth thing I want you to see is found in verses 1-12 of chapter 7.

Kingdom citizens live to relate to others for the kingdom. Our relationships don't exist for us but ultimately we leverage our lives and our relationships for the kingdom.

And so in verses 1-5 we're told to get the log out of our own eye before we pull the speck out of our brothers.

[27:30] When we've been radically changed by God's grace it radically changes the way we relate to other people. And so instead of saying right there I see that speck there are three fingers pointing right back at me saying there's a gigantic log in your eye Salvati!

And what Jesus is telling us to do is humble yourself. Live out the blessings. Be meek. See yourself as God sees you.

Get the log out of your own eye. And then love you brother. In verse 6 kingdom citizens exercise discernment with those who we talk to about the kingdom.

Pigs, swine, what's he talking about? At a minimum he's calling us to be discerning of who we talk about Jesus with. Look at verse 12.

Kingdom citizens fulfill the law by living by the golden rule. There's the golden rule! Right there. So whatever you wish that others would do to you do also to them for this is the law and the prophets. [28:41] Fulfill the law! Love everybody! This is the golden rule! Jesus, this is the second commandment.

Love your neighbor as yourself. Did you notice I skipped over a spot? Verses 7 through 11. It's kind of, you're kind of like, what is that doing there?

I mean, he goes from talking about getting the log out of your own eye and the speck out of your brother's and he says, don't throw, you know, these wonderful, valuable things to pigs and swine and then he says, then he goes into ask, seek, and knock and then he goes into saying, live the golden rule and you're kind of like, why are you telling me to pray in the middle of being in these relationships with other people and chapter 6 he's already told me to pray as the Lord prays, the Lord's prayer so why are we going back to prayer here?

here's why, our relationships with other people are governed by our relationship with our Father and so we ask, seek, and knock our Father for good things related to our relationships with other people I ask God to help me to live out the golden rule with this person and with that person at a minimum we're to be asking our Father to help live in relationship to others for the glory of his name and advancement of his kingdom kingdom citizens live to relate to others for the kingdom the last thing I want you to see is chapter 7 verses 13 through 27 this is like the finale this is like Jesus sits you down and he's like alright sign here please commit commit and so in verses 13 through 27 we I'd summarize that kingdom citizens live committed to Christ's kingdom we live committed and in this section he contrasts four things he says enter the narrow gate don't go through the wide gate enter through the narrow gate the narrow gate is going to lead to a hard way with a few people but it leads to life and what Jesus is calling us to is live it live it out don't go back to the wide gate don't go back to the easy way don't go back to the mob live for me live this way enter the narrow gate and in 15 through 20 he tells us commit to me don't listen to false prophets listen to me he compares two trees a healthy tree and a diseased tree a healthy tree bears good fruit a diseased tree the ministry of a false prophet bears bad fruit and if you eat that fruit not only are you going to get sick it's going to have an effect on the body commit to discerning truth from falsehood commit to eating from the ministry of a healthy tree verses 21 through 23 oh this is such a sober one verse 21 not everyone who says to me

[32:22] Lord Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven what Lord Lord have you said that Lord Lord Lord Jesus gets at something verses 21 through 23 he's like hey commitment doesn't to me does not look like a profession and doing these awesome works commitment commitment to me looks like living out the will of my father day after day not lip service but life service that's sobering makes you ask some hard questions verses 24 through 27 Jesus shares this last contrast last contrast between foundations he says whoever hears and does my words it's like a wise man who builds his house on a solid foundation of rock build your life on the rock of Christ not on the shifting sands of other words

Jesus Jesus closes the manifesto with that called a commitment this manifesto is broken into two parts who you are blessed are you one graced by God and then he calls us to live it out in a certain way counter cultural character shows up in a counter cultural life and as we walk this way he proves himself faithful can I call you to something this morning I know you can't say no right now let's press into who we are right now let's live out what God has already called us to be kingdom citizens citizens of his realm of his reign let's live it out let's live it out together and so

I'd like to ask you to start praying for something praying for three things in your private prayer life when you go into your prayer closet to pray to your heavenly father in secret would you start praying these three things something like this first God I am totally dependent on you to live this life you have called me to it's admitting your need admitting your place exercise of humility I need you I'm dependent on you second God will you give me the grace to be a faithful citizen of your kingdom today give me what I need today God help me to live this out for you today I need you and you have what I need grace me and then third God would you make me the countercultural

Christian you called me to be for the glory of your name would you begin praying that with me the sermon on the mount is a manifesto it's a manifesto of our king to us his citizens to live for the kingdom on this planet and we are to live it out in every area of our life let's pray God in heaven we

have covered a lot of ground here I pray that Lord you would do a work in us in which we recognize that we need you that you've done a work in us you've calling us something beyond ourselves and our natural abilities and so God would you grace us would you pour out your grace would you empower us by your spirit would you compel us by your words God would you use the relationships of people in this room to stir us up to love and good deeds to live out kingdom principles to live out who we are together here and now in 2016 in Kenosha God would you make us salt would you make us light God would you help us to live out fully the full intent of your word God would you do a work in us we ask in Jesus name Amen