

Pilgrims18 - Beattitudes

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- [0 : 00] Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the gentle, the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, they shall be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- [1 : 15] Blessed are you, when people insult you and say all manner of evil against you falsely on account of me. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven.
- For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt should lose its saltiness, of what good is it except to be thrown on the road and trampled underfoot by men?
- You, you, you are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. People don't light a candle and then put a bushel basket over it.
- No, they put it on the table so that it brings light to the whole room. So you, practice your deeds before others so that they may see your Father and bring glory to Him.
- Now, do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I did not come to abolish the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them.
- [2 : 28] And I tell you that if anyone annuls one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.
- But whoever teaches these commandments and observes them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.
- Then Jesus goes on to give six. You have heard it was said, but I say unto you. And that ends with, therefore, you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.
- And then he gives three examples of do not practice your righteousness in order to be seen by others. I tell you, if you practice righteousness to be seen by others, you have your reward in full.
- You've been seen by others. Practice your righteousness to be seen by the Father. And he gives three examples of that. And then, do not store up for yourself treasures on earth where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal.
- [3 : 40] But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven where moth and rust do not eat away at it and thieves cannot break in and steal. Then he talks about the eye being the lamp.
- And then he talks about you cannot serve two masters. You cannot serve God and mammon. And then he talks about not being anxious and look at the birds and then look at the flowers and seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

And all these things will be added to you. Then he says, do not judge, lest you be judged. Then he says, don't put holy things before the dogs and the swine. And then he says, ask, seek, knock.

Because if you ask, seek, knock, you will receive and you will find and the door will be opened to you. And then that section culminates with the golden rule. Therefore, however you want to be treated, so treat others.

This is the law and the prophets. And then he concludes with two ways, two roads, two prophets, two kinds of fruit, two decisions to make about his teaching.

[4 : 42] I tell you, the one who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like the wise man who built his house upon the rock. The floods came, the rains came, the floods came up and great was the storm.

But it stood because its house was on the rock. But whoever hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man. Built his house upon the sand.

The rains came down. The floods came up. The storm blew against that house and great was its fall. That is the Sermon on the Mount in a nutshell.

Now, I thought what we would do for this time together is I wrote out what I think is the outline of the Sermon on the Mount. I think if you have a sense of the structure of how Jesus put this together, Jesus was a good homiletician.

And when I teach homiletics, I say that the key to a sermon is the structure and the order. And so I'm always looking for the structure and the order in the early Christian sermons. And it's here in Jesus' greatest sermon.

[5 : 45] And so I've given that in front of you. And I'd just like to walk it through. And then we're going to go back to the Beatitudes. Make a couple of comments about that. And then maybe we can talk. That's why I said yesterday, if the whole world could just hear these words and put them into practice, it'd be a different world.

Which is why Jesus preached. So I think it's broken down into four major sections. There is, first of all, well, first of all, let me give you the context.

It's really important whenever you're studying or working with or teaching the Sermon on the Mount to remember the context. Without the context, the Sermon on the Mount could become frustrating idealism on the one hand or hopeless legalism on the other.

And when I grew up listening to the Sermon on the Mount, people didn't put it in context for me. And it was oppressive. But if you know the context, it's not oppressive. It's very liberating. And the context is Jesus' first sermon, recorded in Matthew 4, 17, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Immediately after that, he calls the disciples. And then he begins to heal people, to show what this kingdom is about. And then he does the Sermon on the Mount. Which is why I think the Sermon on the Mount is Jesus is now explaining what you become, the kinds of people you become, when you enter the kingdom of God.

[7 : 17] Or when the kingdom of God enters you would be probably the better way to say that. So that's why if I have written a book on the Beatitudes, I hope to finish the whole Sermon on the Mount. And I will call that, right at this point anyway, kingdom-ized humanity.

This is the humanity that emerges when the kingdom of God takes over us. Okay? So the first thing that Jesus talks about is the character of the kingdom people, the Beatitudes.

And then the second thing is the influence of kingdom people. The Beatitude people are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. John Stott likes to point out that salt does two things.

One, it gives flavor, right? But also it protects putrefaction. And so what Jesus is saying is that Beatitude people bring flavor to a society and keep that society from putrefying.

You are the light of the world. Stott points out light does two things. It brings light into a dark place, but it also exposes darkness so that that darkness can be healed in the light. So the Beatitude people have that influence in the world.

[8 : 23] And then there's the behavior of kingdomized people. And I take that. That's the major section of the sermon. And I see it coupled by this phrase, law and the prophets.

Do not think that I came to abolish the law and the prophets. And that's an audio cue. He's going to come back to that, which he does at the end. Treat other people the way you want to be treated.

This is the law and the prophets. So it's bracketed by that. And then he points out that the law and the prophets is all about righteousness. Unless you're righteousness.

Persecuted for righteousness sake. So the law and the prophets for Jesus turns out to be about righteousness. Now that's a big heavy word. And we can get confused by that.

This is how I translate it. Right relationship. The kingdom of God. The law and the prophets is all about right relationship.

[9 : 21] And basically for right relationships. Relationship with the living God. A relationship with the self. A relationship with other selves. And a relationship with the earth.

And so the kingdom of God. Jesus is saying. Is the fulfillment of what the law and the prophets are about. This holistic four-fold relationship. That's restored.

Now. Scholars will say the key verse is 520. Unless your righteousness. Exceeds that of the scribes. And the Pharisees. There are three righteousnesses there.

Yours. Scribes. And Pharisees. And so in the next section. Jesus contrasts kingdom righteousness with scribal righteousness.

And he does that with those six. You have heard it was said. But I say unto you. And there he's countering the scribes interpretation of the law and the prophets. And basically. They kept it at the level of mere words.

[10 : 22] And not a matter of the heart. So. Do not murder. But then Jesus says. No. It goes deeper than that. If you call somebody else a fool. That's equivalent to murder.

So. He's exceeding the scribal righteousness by taking it deeper. You have heard it was said. But I say unto you. And as you read it last night or this morning. You see how deep he takes it.

And then. He contrasts kingdom righteousness with the scribal. The pharisaical righteousness. As we've been learning about. That pharisaical righteousness is fundamentally for show.

And I'm taken afresh by what we've been learning. By that phrase. Do not use meaningless repetition. Jesus isn't against repetition. Otherwise we'd say the Lord's Prayer once in our lifetime.

Meaningless repetition. Just saying the words over and over and over again. So there he contrasts. So there he contrasts. What the kingdom right relationship. It looks like. Versus scribal.

[11 : 20] And he talks about alms. And he talks about fasting. And he talks about prayer. And then. At 619. Do not treasure treasures for yourselves. On earth. But treasure treasures for yourselves in heaven.

He's beginning now to unpack kingdom righteousness. It's about having your treasures in heaven. And not on earth. It's about your eye being clear. It's about not serving two masters.

Learning to serve God and not mammon. It's about not being anxious. And the way to cure anxiety. He says. Is to look at birds. And look at flowers.

Why did he tell us to do that? That seems kind of Mickey Mouse. And it's because when you look at the birds. You see the Father. He takes care of them. And you look at the flowers.

You see the Father. He takes care of them. And the more you see the Father. The less you'll be anxious. Then he says. Kingdom righteousness is about not judging. It's about not wasting holy things.

[12:17] Before people who don't care about it. And it's about prayer. Ask. Seek. And not. And then he sums it up with them. The golden rule. This is the law and the prophets. Am I making sense?

Did that help you? Some people think that the Sermon on the Mount. Is kind of like the book of Proverbs. Just a series of one-liners. One after another. No. It's put together in a structure. All around this word righteousness.

Which is the fulfillment of Torah and the prophets. And then. Having said that. Bringing it to the golden rule. Then he brings it to conclusion. And to our choices.

The kingdom choices. You're going to walk a road. What road will it be? You're going to follow a prophet. What prophet will it be?

You'll know them by their fruits. You're going to make decisions. About the ultimate concerns of your life. What will it be? Will it be me? Lord. Lord. Then he says.

[13:13] Not everyone who says Lord. Lord. Enters the kingdom. It's the one who does the things of the kingdom. And then he ends up with the two foundations. There's two ways. Which comes from Psalm 1.

The beginning of the prayer book. There are two ways to live. And Jesus then reinforces that. And unpacks it. In these. In the Sermon on the Mount. Okay. So that's how I see it put together.

Make sense? Do you kind of concur with me? That might be a good way to look at it? Okay. We have a few more minutes. Let's go back to the Beatitudes. I'd like to say three things about the Beatitudes.

I could say a lot more. That's why I wrote a book. But. There's so much to say about the Beatitudes. My goodness. Three things. Number one. The Beatitudes.

In my mind. Are not natural human qualities. That is. Jesus doesn't walk around the Galilee. Looking for Beatitude people.

[14:13] To call into his kingdom. They did not exist. They don't exist. On their own. Rather. He comes. Calls people.

Follow me. Enter the kingdom. And as we follow him. And enter the kingdom. We become. Beatitude people. That's why this. The Beatitudes. Are similar to the fruit of the spirit.

It's that way of saying it. Only the spirit. Can produce this fruit. Only Jesus. And his kingdom. Can produce. Beatitude people. And that's in that first line. Blessed are the poor. In spirit.

For theirs. Is the kingdom. I think we tend to read that. Blessed are the poor in spirit. For theirs will be the kingdom. If you're poor in spirit. I'll give you the kingdom. No. No. No. No. I gave you the kingdom.

And you became poor in spirit. You see the difference? Do you? That's a huge difference. When I've called you to myself. And brought you into my reign.

[15:08] Into my rule. You began to change. And you became poor in spirit. You knew. How helpless you were. Apart from me. And you began to mourn.

And you became meek. And gentle. And you began to hunger. Like you never did before. You became merciful. And you're becoming pure in heart. And you become a peacemaker.

And you'll get in trouble for it. Comes from the territory. We talked about the other night. Does that make sense? So these are what we become. As a result of following Jesus.

We don't exist in this state. Apart from him. Second thing I want to comment on. And I kind of already hinted at it. Is these eight beatitudes.

Come in a cluster. And if you begin to manifest. One of these character traits. You'll begin to manifest them all. In one way or another. So there aren't poor in spirit folks.

[16:09] And the mourner folks. And the hungry and thirsty righteous folks. And the pure in heart folks. And the merciful folks. Some of us. Some of us. We might be one of those things. To a greater degree than others. But all of these qualities.

Begin to emerge in us. As we follow Jesus. It's a beautiful cluster. Okay. Third thing is most important. And we leave it with this.

This word. Blessed. Blessed. Blessed. In Greek. And I believe Jesus did speak Greek. Right? I did. Yeah. Well maybe not here. But the fishermen would have needed to know Greek.

In order to entertain. Do their businesses. But anyway. The Greek word that's used here. Is the word makarios. In fact I just learned. Someone took a course with me years ago.

At Regent. On the. Sermon on the Mount. And he was so taken by makarios. That he named his first son. Makarios. And he's coming to Regent this summer.

[17:03] And I get to meet makarios. But makarios. Here's the key thing about makarios. Makarios. And sometimes it's translated happy. Happy are the poor in spirit.

Happy are those who mourn. I could never put that together. Happy are the mourners. Like that's an oxymoron. It's because it shouldn't be translated happy. Makarios does not describe how you and I might feel.

Makarios describes how God feels. Makarios is God's perspective on us. Not our perspective on ourselves.

So Jesus is saying. God is pleased when you are poor in spirit. You might not feel pleased. God is pleased when you mourn. You might not feel good about mourning.

God is pleased when you hunger and thirst for righteousness. That's painful hunger. You might not feel pleased about that. It's okay. God's pleased. So makarios is God's blessing upon us.

[18:10] Blessed be you. Blessed are you. Am I making sense there? So I've over the years tried to find another way to translate blessed. And I've come up with a bunch of them. One of them would be right on.

Right on are you when you find yourself poor in spirit. Right on are you when you find yourself hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Right on. Or better yet right up.

Because another way to describe the Sermon on the Mount is turning things right side up again. And there are others. Karl Barth, great theologian of the 20th century, translated it as lucky bums.

You lucky bums. God is pleased with you. And the word that I've chosen right now is in sync. I came up with that because my daughters liked the in sync group years ago.

So I can't remember their music. But anyway, I remember the title. But in sync. So it's Jesus' way of saying in sync with the kingdom of God. You're in sync with the kingdom of heaven when you find yourself poor in spirit.

[19 : 15] And when you hunger for thirst and for justice and righteousness. And when your heart is getting pure. And when you want to make peace. That make sense? So that's what blessed is.

It's God speaking to you from God's perspective about you. You might be happy. That's not the point though. The point is God is happy. golden midst of God is gospel.

You might be happy. You might be happy. It's the April of■■■ atSinceivi is the card.

So that you are through the school the Queen of God is not happy.