

12/14/25

Sermon Title: The Beatitudes

Preacher: Pastor Kim Soonbae

Scripture Passage: Matthew 5:1–12

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down.

His disciples came to him,

² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
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 children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all
kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same
way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

After being baptized by John the Baptist and overcoming the temptations of the devil, Jesus began His public ministry in earnest.

After calling His disciples, He traveled with them, teaching the Word, proclaiming the gospel, and healing every disease—fulfilling His mission as the Son of God and the Messiah through these threefold ministries.

When the crowds saw Jesus healing every kind of sickness and infirmity, great multitudes gathered—not only from the region of Galilee, but also from the Decapolis, from Jerusalem in the south, from Judea, and from across the Jordan. Seeing the crowds who had gathered, Jesus went up on a mountainside and sat down; and when His disciples came to Him, He began to teach them.

Here, the term “disciples” does not refer only to the Twelve, but to all who followed Jesus and sought fellowship with Him.

To the multitudes who had gathered after witnessing His healing power, Jesus now began to teach the gospel of the kingdom of heaven.

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,
² and he began to teach them.

This teaching is called **the Sermon on the Mount** because Jesus delivered it after going up on a mountain.

However, the place where Jesus actually went was not a high mountain, but rather a gently sloping hillside.

Matthew intentionally refers to it as a “mountain” to draw a contrast between Moses—who received the Law on Mount Sinai—and Jesus, who now declares the new command.

By doing so, Matthew emphasizes that Jesus did not come to abolish the Law Moses received, but to fulfill it.

Indeed, Jesus is greater than Moses; He is the true and better Moses, and His message is the gospel that fulfills the Law.

The crowds and the disciples came near to Jesus.

This stands in contrast to the time when Moses received the Law at Sinai, where the people were forbidden to approach.

But Jesus is the only way through whom people may come to God and have direct fellowship with Him.

All who hear and keep the commandments of Jesus—the One who is the way, the truth, and the life—may enter the kingdom of God.

From this chapter through chapter 7, Matthew records the Sermon on the Mount.

Today's passage begins with the first teachings of the sermon: **the Beatitudes**.

The Beatitudes are both the conditions for possessing the kingdom of heaven and the principles by which the citizens of that kingdom are to live.

First, "Blessed are the poor in spirit."

³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

To be "poor in spirit" does not simply mean to be materially poor.

While material poverty may be included, the primary meaning is a deep spiritual longing for God.

It is not relying on our own strength or abilities, but looking to, depending on, and seeking the Almighty God.

Therefore, the poor in spirit are those who honestly acknowledge their spiritual bankruptcy—those who confess that human beings are fundamentally helpless and that only God can be their refuge.

They confess their condition, repent, and turn to Him.

God wipes away the tears of those who repent, comforts the brokenhearted, and restores them.

Such people receive the mercy of God and inherit the kingdom of heaven—the kingdom ruled by the Messiah.

Here, “the kingdom of heaven” includes both the privileges Christians enjoy in this present life and the eternal blessings they will enjoy in the life to come.

Second, “Blessed are those who mourn.”

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

To “mourn” means to grieve deeply and lament over one’s sin.

Here, it refers especially to **spiritual mourning**—grieving over the unrighteousness that separates humanity from God, mourning over the moral pride and self-righteousness people once boasted in, and yearning earnestly to seek and ultimately discover the will of God.

Indeed, in Jesus’ time, those who sought to live godly lives believed that Israel’s suffering and disgrace were the result of both personal and national sins. Because of this, they mourned and shed many tears of repentance.

To such people—those who weep in repentance and mourn over their sin—the comfort of God will come.

God Himself will dwell with them.

This comfort will be experienced partially in the present life and fully in the life to come.

Third, “Blessed are the meek.”

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Meekness refers to a gentle and humble posture of heart—one that trusts in the goodness of God even in the midst of adversity, and patiently endures suffering under His hand.

The meek belong to Christ, and therefore, on the last day, they will inherit the kingdom of God together with Him.

Just as the people of Israel entered Canaan according to God's promise, so the meek will inherit the new heaven and the new earth—the kingdom of heaven—in the end.

Indeed, the conquerors of this world have taken lands by power and force, but Jesus became the Lord of all creation and the King of heaven through His meekness.

Fourth, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness."

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Hungering and thirsting for righteousness does not refer to the physical hunger and thirst that all people experience in life, but to the severe spiritual famine that comes from not hearing the Word of God.

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are those who earnestly desire to fully carry out God's will in their lives and long to see justice accomplished in the world.

They also yearn for God's final victory over the injustice of this world—a victory that will not be completely resolved here on earth—and they look forward to the new heaven and new earth, the true home of righteousness.

Such people will be fed abundantly as Christ Himself becomes their Shepherd and leads them to green pastures.

He will fill them completely with the living water of eternal life and the heavenly bread.

Fifth, *the merciful*.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

To be merciful includes both forgiving sins and showing compassion to those who suffer or are in need.

Mercy is the character of the Lord and the foundation of the spirit of the Law. Jesus had mercy on humanity—sinners who were destined to die—and therefore left His heavenly throne, came to this earth, and shed His blood on the cross to save us.

As disciples of Jesus, when we show mercy to our neighbors as He did, God will show mercy to us.

God remembers the mercy we extend and will surely reward it.

He promises that even giving a cup of water to one of the little ones in His name will not be forgotten but will be rewarded.

Sixth, *the pure in heart*.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

“Purity” was a term commonly used in the Jewish purification rituals of that time, referring to moral and ceremonial cleanliness.

But here it speaks of something deeper and more internal—purity of heart, a heart freed from greed and double-mindedness.

Those who are pure in heart will receive the blessing of seeing God. Sinful humanity cannot see God; if a sinful person were to see God, he would die. Those who seek the face of God and go up to the temple must have clean hands and a pure heart.

Only when our thoughts, our hearts, and our hands and feet are pure can we behold the holy God.

Seventh, *the peacemakers*.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Here, “peace” does not primarily refer to peace between individuals or nations, but to the ultimate peace that comes from the restoration of the relationship between God and humanity.

The one who accomplished perfect peace in all of human history is Jesus Christ. By His own body, Jesus broke down the dividing wall between God and humanity and made peace.

The relationship between God and humankind—severed because of sin—was completely resolved when Jesus Himself became the atoning sacrifice.

Therefore, we who have received salvation by the grace of the Prince of Peace must continually carry out the ministry of peace that Jesus fulfilled on earth. Like Jesus, we must help those whose relationship with God is broken to be reconciled to Him.

We must introduce them to Jesus.

And in conflicts between people, we must mediate so that Jesus can work between them.

Then Jesus will act, and reconciliation will take place.

Those who do this will be acknowledged as sons of God, just as Jesus is.

And the sons of God are heirs who will inherit the kingdom of God—heaven.

Eighth, *those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake*.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

To be *persecuted for righteousness’ sake* includes suffering for keeping God’s commandments, suffering because one refuses to compromise with injustice, suffering hardships while laboring for the advancement of God’s kingdom and

the gospel, and experiencing loss of reputation or various social, political, or economic restrictions because of the name of Jesus.

The reward given to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake is the same reward given to the poor in spirit: the kingdom of heaven. Because they stand firmly on the righteousness they received by God's grace—even in the midst of persecution—they are granted the reward of heaven. All the grace, gifts, and glory belonging to the Messiah's kingdom are theirs.

Thus ends the Sermon on the Beatitudes, which begins with ownership of the kingdom of heaven and concludes with the same promise.

After finishing His teaching on the Beatitudes, Jesus adds an explanation in verse 10.

Instead of saying "for righteousness' sake," Jesus uses the phrase "because of Me," placing Himself on equal footing with God.

He clearly reveals that "righteousness" refers to Himself.

He also includes false accusations as part of the persecution.

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Jesus tells us to **rejoice and be glad** when we are persecuted and reviled because of Him.

He says that the reward in heaven will be great.

Jesus also reminds us that even the prophets were persecuted in the same way. Jeremiah was whipped, Zechariah son of Jehoiada was stoned, and Isaiah was sawed in two under the reign of Manasseh.

Jesus Himself was persecuted and suffered greatly.

For those who live as children of God, persecution from earthly powers is inevitable.

Therefore, being persecuted in this world is proof that our true allegiance belongs not to this world, but to the kingdom of God.

Beloved members of Church of Godly Dreams,
Jesus taught the gospel of the kingdom of heaven to the large crowds and His disciples who had gathered after witnessing Him heal every disease and every weakness.

This passage is His first teaching, focusing on the Beatitudes.

Jesus declares that the blessed life is one in which people are poor in spirit, mourn, are meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, show mercy, are pure in heart, make peace, and endure persecution for His sake.

He says that those who live such lives will possess the kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven.

The kingdom of God, the kingdom of heaven, has not yet been fully consummated, but it has already come to this world.

Therefore, the Beatitudes are not blessings reserved only for the life to come.

For those who live according to these principles—the citizens who live under the rule of the kingdom of heaven—the kingdom of God has already come.

Thus, they already live in the grace of Christ, the Lord of heaven, in this world, and furthermore, they will enter the kingdom of heaven at the end of the age and receive overflowing blessings.

May you practice the Beatitudes in your daily lives.

In doing so, may you live as citizens of the kingdom of God that has already come, enjoying God's grace not only in the life to come but also here on this earth. I bless you in the name of Jesus Christ.