

# Beatitudes

## Part 2.

*Blessed are Poor in Spirit*

*Blessed are Those Who Mourn*

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# Text: Matt 5:1-12 (ESV)

**Matt 5:1** Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. **2** And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

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

**4** "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

**5** "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

**6** "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

**7** "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

**8** "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

**9** "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

**10** "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**11** "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

# “Blessed” Review

- 9 times in Matt 5, Jesus says “blessed are” ...its clearly the theme. What is this blessedness?
  - G3107 Makarios: supremely blessed, happy, fortunate (from root of makar, happiness)
- But this “happiness” is not the world’s idea of bliss. In fact, the list sounds like miserable losers.
- Jesus teaches what true happiness is in the kingdom of God. Its a deep, inner happiness that the world can not offer through external stimuli. Happiness redefined.
  - **Rom 14:17** for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus dismantles man’s ideas and preconceived notions about the kingdom and replaces them with counter-intuitive, paradoxical and eternal truths. For example, kingdom rank:
  - **Matt 18:1** At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, “Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”<sup>2</sup> Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them,<sup>3</sup> and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- Jesus lays out the path to the kingdom in Matt 5:3-11 which results in rejoicing in vs. 12.
- As our maker/creator, Jesus gives instructions how to be happy, content and fulfilled.

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# Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

**Matt 5:3** “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- An unexpected start to a sermon...Both then and now.
- Poor: G4434 *ptochos*: to crouch, cower like a beggar. Poor and helpless. Someone in abject poverty, utter helplessness, complete destitution.
  - Mark 12:42-44 Poor widow that gave 2 pennies, everything she had to live on
  - Luke 16:19-31 Rich man and Lazarus, a poor man laid at the rich man's gate; dogs licking his sores
- Contrasted with *penes* (G3993) poor: to work for a living. Poor, but able to help oneself through his own labor or toil. (2 Cor 9:9)
- Jesus uses *ptochos*, a beggar, helpless, destitute, in poverty
- This is not just “poor”, its begging poor.

# What Kind of Poverty?

**Matt 5:3** “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- What sort of poverty is Jesus referring to?
  - G4151: pneuma: breath, spirit. The common word for spirit.
- Spirit refers the inner part of man, not the outward body.
  - **Luke 1:46** And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
- The spiritual also refers to man’s connection with God because God is spirit.
  - **1 Cor 2:11** For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. 13 And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.
- “Poor in spirit” is an inner poorness. Poor God connection. Opposite of being “rich toward God” (Luke 12:21)
- Luke’s account (Luke 6:20) does not include “in spirit”, but inferred from Matthew’s account

# What Kind of Poverty?

- So, what is “poor in spirit”? And why is it “blessed”?
  - Spiritually bankrupt
  - Spiritually empty
  - Spiritually destitute
  - Spiritually worthless
  - Spiritually helpless
  - Spiritually humble
  - Spiritual beggar
  - Spiritual poverty
- Recognizing our spiritual poverty apart from Christ is the emphasis.
- Consider Jesus’ words to Laodicea.

# Jesus' Words to Laodicea

**Rev 3:14** "And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation. 15 "'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! 16 So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. 17 For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.

- Vs. 17 Jesus compares their perception of themselves (rich) with their reality (poor)
- Vs. 18 Solution: Once you realize your true wretched condition, come to Jesus for true wealth
- Jesus offers true blessedness, but only after we humble ourselves and admit our spiritual poverty



# Jesus' Teaching Wasn't New

**Isaiah 66:1** Thus says the LORD: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? 2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the LORD. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.

- Humble H6041: poor, afflicted, suffering in a state of poverty, oppression, misery
- Contrite H5223: smitten, literally maimed or lame
- God is not looking to dwell in temples of stone...God dwells in the hearts of those of a humble and contrite spirit.

# Jesus' Teaching Wasn't New

**Isaiah 57:15** For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.

**Psalms 34:18** The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit.

**Psalms 51:17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

- Contrite H1793 & H1794: to crush, break in pieces, pulverize, to crouch

**Psalms 138:6** For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.

- Good is with, near to, saves and regards the lowly, broken, crushed, smitten and afflicted in spirit.
- Was God unclear in the OT?

# Pharisee and Tax Collector Parable

**Luke 18:9** He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: 10 “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ 13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ 14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

- Vs. 13 tax collector acting like a beggar; he won't even look up to God
- How does it end? Vs. 14 says it all.
- Blessed are the spiritual paupers, spiritually empty, spiritually bankrupt, those whose spirit is destitute, those who cringe afar off crying out for God's mercy.

# Examples: Isaiah, Peter & Paul

**Isaiah 6:5** So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."

**Luke 5:8** When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"

**Rom 7:18** For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

**1 Tim 1:13** (NKJV) although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. 14 And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 15 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.

**Rom 7:23** But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

# Summary: Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

Why does Jesus begin his SOTM with being spiritually empty?

- Jesus is saying “start here”. Happiness is for the humble.
  - The world says assert yourself, be self ambitious, be proud of yourself, put yourself forward
  - Jesus says empty yourself. Humble yourself.
- Humility is the entrance point to the Kingdom of Heaven.
- No one enters the kingdom of God on their own terms.
- Until we are humbled and recognize our own spiritual emptiness, we can not enter the kingdom.

This is not just the beginning...humility is an on-going requirement for kingdom living.

**James 4:6** But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ...**10** Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

# Matt 5:1-12

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# Blessed are those who Mourn

**Matt 5:4** “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

- Mourn G3996: to lament, grieve, wail. This is a deep mourning, used often for one dead.
- So, is Jesus speaking an oxymoron...happy are the grieving and sad??
- At face value, this almost sounds shallow (or fortune cookie-ish); Don't worry if you are sad, you will find comfort soon.
  - Like Job's friends tried to do? How'd that work out? (Job 2:11)

However, God does indeed comfort the hurting

- **Psalm 147:3** He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.
- **Psalm 23:4** Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- **2 Cor 1:5** For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.

# Human Sorrow

- Mourning is a normal, God-given response to a variety of human emotions:

**Gen 23:2** And Sarah died at Kiriath-arba (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan, and Abraham went in to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her.

**Gen 27:38** Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

**Gen 45:1** Then Joseph could not control himself before all those who stood by him. He cried, "Make everyone go out from me." So no one stayed with him when Joseph made himself known to his brothers. 2 And he wept aloud, so that the Egyptians heard it, and the household of Pharaoh heard it.

**Mark 9:24** Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

- Tears of loss, loneliness, discouragement, concern, compassion, love, anxiety, worship, devotion.
- Mourning is a gift of God to release these emotions and is normal and healthy.

**Eccl 3:4** A time to weep, And a time to laugh; A time to mourn, And a time to dance



# What Does Jesus Mean?

- But is Jesus teaching “blessed are those who have human sorrow; God will grant them comfort.”?
- No, Jesus is referring to godly sorrow. Sorrow that moves sinners to action. Deep, conviction over one’s own sin.
- Consider the drastic response to sin in Jesus’ own words, same chapter:

**Matt 5:29** If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell.

- People don’t take drastic action in response to sin until they reach the point of despair.
- Dave Ramsey: people will not break out of their financial bondage until they reach the point of “being sick and tired of being sick and tired”
- Jesus is saying until you come to the end of yourself, you can not enter the kingdom of God.
  - Poor in Spirit = intellectual part
  - Mourning = emotional part

# Godly Sorrow

What is godly sorrow? Let's ask Paul.

**2 Cor 7:9** (NKJV) Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. **10** For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.

- Worldly sorrow leads to death, regret, disappointment, failure; NOT comfort.
  - Matt 27:3 Then when Judas...saw that Jesus was condemned, he changed his mind and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,...5...he departed and hanged himself.
- Vs. 10 But godly sorrow produces repentance, leading to salvation, with no regrets!
- Just as human sorrow releases human emotion, godly sorrow over sin brings the comfort of forgiveness of sin and reconciliation with God. There are no downside!
- That's why Jesus can say "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted".

# The [Very] Sinful Woman

**Luke 7:36** One of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at table. 37 And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, 38 and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." 40 And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say it, Teacher." 41 "A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt of both. Now which of them will love him more?" 43 Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." 44 Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You gave me no kiss, but

# The [Very] Sinful Woman cont.

from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss my feet. 46 You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. 47 Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.” 48 And he said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” 49 Then those who were at table with him began to say among themselves, “Who is this, who even forgives sins?” 50 And he said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

- This woman is obviously poor in spirit and recognizes her poverty, thus her need for Jesus
- She is so affected by her sin and Jesus' righteousness that she responds in weeping and tears. She washed, dried, kissed and anointed [perfumed?] Jesus' feet.
- Vs. 47 She is comforted by forgiveness; She received a HUGE blessing! Do you think she was happy? YES!!
- Vs. 50 Ultimately, her faith is what saved her

# Humility, Mourning, Grace!

Returning to James 4

James 4:6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

- James repeats the beatitudes (#1-4) in other words
- Vs 9 Be wretched (recognize miserable spiritual condition)
- Vs 9 Mourn and weep (broken/contrite spirit)

# Cut To the Heart

Peter preached a powerful sermon (Acts 2:14-36) ending with “Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

**Acts 2:37** Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- Vs. 37 seems to get overlooked.
- The cutting of the heart is what lead them to ask “what shall we do?”
- Despair → Godly sorrow → Repentance → Obedience

# Closing

- Blessed are we when we recognize our sinfulness and spiritual bankruptcy.
- Blessed are we when we grieve and confess our sin. God comforts with forgiveness.
  - 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- We never out-grow any of the beatitudes.
- If anything, awareness of our spiritual poverty should grow more acute as we grow and our mourning and disgust for sin should only intensify.

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

***"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.***

Invitation: #557 *Rock of Ages*