

FOLLOW ME

The Gospel of Matthew Part 1

WEEK 6 - THE BEATITUDES OVERVIEW

Although we cannot look at the entire sermon on the mount, one passage we *must* consider is Jesus' provocative and shocking intro to it. In this passage, often called the "beatitudes," Jesus lays out who in God's kingdom is truly blessed. As we'll see, those who have the blessing of God (God's presence, abundance, and compassion) are not the rich and powerful, but the poor, downtrodden, grieving, and outcast of our world. This is a stunning reversal of our normal human perspective and invites followers of Jesus across time to reconsider their assumptions about what it means to follow Christ.

God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

Matthew 5:3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What would it look like to have the blessing of God?
2. Read Matthew 5:1-12.
 - a. How does Jesus' version of the "good life" compare to yours? That is, what does Jesus say it takes to be *makarios* (blessed/happy/favored/fortunate), and what would you say?
 - b. Why did Barry say that in the kingdom of God it is better to be poor, unlike in the kingdoms of Earth? (verse 3)
 - c. In verse 4, how does Matthew again follow the theme of fulfillment? (See Isaiah 61:1-3)
 - d. Why does it make sense that Jesus is probably contrasting the "humble" with the Roman Empire in verse 5?
 - e. What is the significance of the use of "hunger and thirst" in verse 6? (see Barry's *Fun Fact* in the Grace app for more information)
 - f. Does the meaning of verse 7 change for you when you consider that "mercy" means "a willingness to see things from another's point of view"? Why or why not?
 - g. How does Psalms 24:3-4 help us understand verse 8?
 - h. What is peacemaking in the kingdom of God? (verse 9)
 - i. What truth about his kingdom does Jesus acknowledge in verse 10?
3. What about the beatitudes challenges you? What about them encourages you?

RESOURCES

www.gracechurch.us/matthew