

# *“BE-ing Spirit-Led, Discipled, & Blessed”*

Matthew 5:1-3a

December 15, 2024

**INTRO:** *When did you last count your blessings?*

- How many did you count? WHAT did you count?
- **“Blessings come in many shapes and sizes!”**
- *This is often said but seldom really understood...*

## **PRAYER**

### **CONTEXT:**

- Matthews Gospel on The Gospel of Jesus The Christ...
- We are about to open Christ’s **Sermon On The Mount...**
  - Don’t get caught up in any secondary distractions...
    - Matthew 5-7 = **Christ’s WORDS of Wisdom**
    - Matthew 8-9 = **Christ’s WORKS of wonder**
  - **Let the primary reality wash over you & set in!**
    - **Think about what you are about to do...**
    - **The Creator of ALL is about to teach all us!**
    - **He’s going to sit down & pour into us...**
    - **He’ll tell us the truth that can set us free!**
- We are about to encounter the most concentrated collection of God-breathed, culture-CONTRASTING truth in love that the world has ever encountered.
- Remember what we learned last time... *Christ & His Church are NOT coy, “cute,” or “customizable!”* No. Instead, Christ, Christianity, and the Church (the TRUE, biblical, missional, and “invisible” Church) are, by contrast, NEVER-changing, breath-taking, and BOLD.

**BIG IDEA:** Jesus shocked & taught the crowds that biblical “BE-ing” & blessings are the Messiah’s missional miracles... that most people don’t really want or understand.

**PREVIEW:**

1. Looking BACK
2. Looking HERE
3. Looking AHEAD

**T/S:**

\*\*\*\*\* We should be blown away & in AWE of the AWESOME setting that we find ourselves in the midst of... Jesus The Christ... Jesus The Creator of ALL things... Jesus The LAMB OF GOD Who takes away the sin of the world... is about to sit down and biblically teach, preach, heal, & BLESS us... any & all who will listen, learn, love, & live His Word, will, & ways!

- How thankful are you?
- How privileged are you??
- How blessed are you???

We are about to be blown away with the contrasting & counter-cultural realities that are embedded in biblical blessings!

## TEXT:

### Matthew 4:23-25

23And He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24So His fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought Him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and He healed them. 25And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

**T/S:** Don't miss or mess with this miraculous, Messianic, & missional moment.... "the kingdom of heaven is at hand," The King, Creator, & Sustainer of the universe, who is also The ultimate Controller of every circumstance & outcome... is about to grace us with His loving, eternal, soul-saving & life-sanctifying inspiration & instruction... Friend, pray that the Holy Spirit will now calibrate & ready you for what you are about to hear... and I pray... what you will henceforth learn, love, & live... from this moment forward - all by God's grace & all for His glory! Amen & AMEN

### Matthew 5:1-3a

1Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him. 2And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: 3**"Blessed are those..."**

**T/S:**

**Genesis 1:28**

*And **God blessed them**. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*

**Psalm 1**

***The Way of the Righteous and the Wicked***

**1***Blessed is the man who*

*walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;*

**2***but his delight is in the law of the LORD,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.*

**3***He is like a tree  
planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.*

**4***The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.*

**5***Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;*

**6***for the LORD knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.*

# I. Looking **BACK**

## *“Seeing the crowds...”*

- A. Who is seeing?                      Answer: *Jesus*  
B. Who is this Jesus? (LET’S ZOOM OUT FOR A MINUTE)

Jesus is... the Promised One from **Genesis 3:15**...  
He is... the Son of Abraham (global missionary);  
the Son of David (Messianic royalty/majesty);  
Lamb of God who takes away the world’s sin;  
He is our propitiation... Our atoning Sacrifice...  
Our rescuing Redeemer...The Alpha & Omega...  
The Light of the world... Our Creator & Sustainer.  
Jesus is the... Author & Perfector of our Faith.

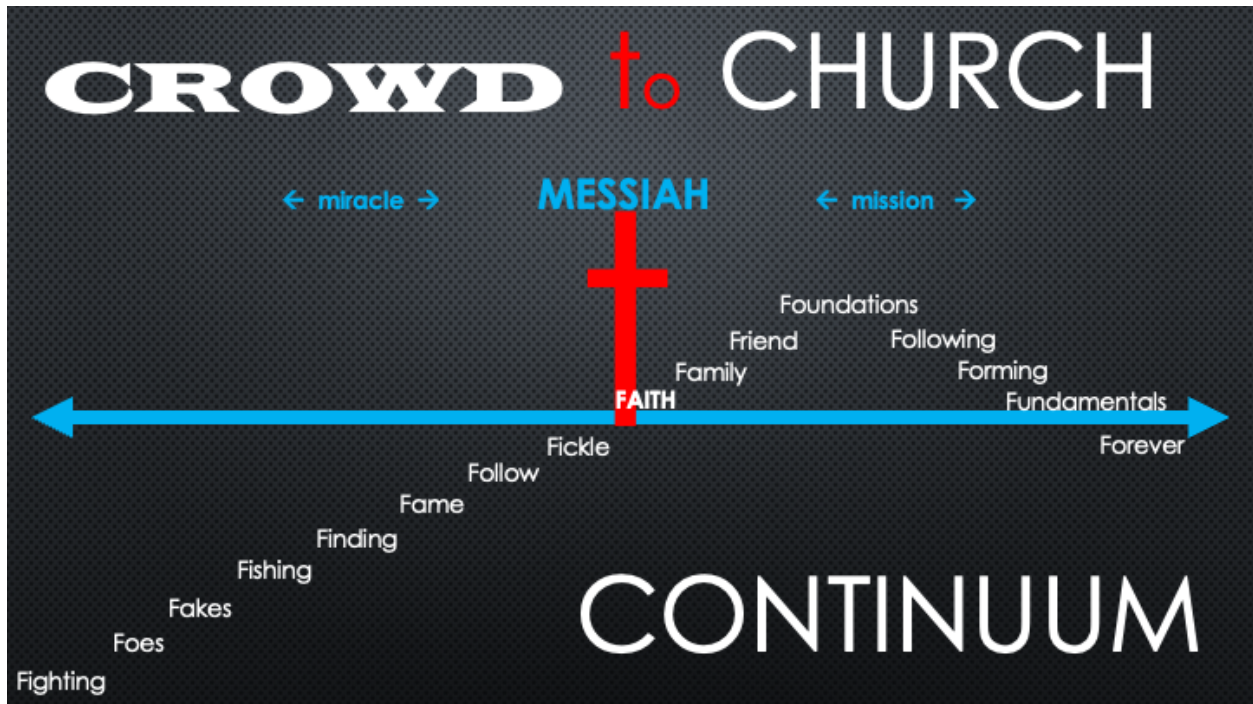
He is The Messiah... The Son of God... The Christ.

He is Emmanuel - God with us!

- i. *He was born to die...*
- ii. *He was sent to serve...*
- iii. *He came to testify to the truth...*
- iv. *He came to set the captives free!*
- v. *He came to give His life as a ransom...*

He disciplined His disciples to faithfully follow  
in His footsteps... forcefully fighting  
& fishing for His forever family.

### C. Who are these crowds?



- The Bible is crystal clear... not all following is following!
- There is more to following Christ than following Christ!
- Not all obeying is biblical obeying... ditto with loving...
- Don't confuse the superficial with the supernatural! - JDP

There is a lot more to BE-ing His Church  
than going to a church.

- JDP

No amount of learning about Him can take  
the place of loving Him & living for Him.

- JDP

- **No amount of mechanical forcing can take the place of miraculous & missional following.**

*No amount of doing will ever take the place of BE-ing.* - JDP

**Remember:** “Birds of a feather flock together.”

Don't be afraid to be found in the biblical few!

- JDP

#### **D. What's been going on?**

##### **a. Jesus was BE-ing Spirit-led...**

- i. Christ was Spirit-led to faithfully obey...
- ii. Christians are to BE Spirit-led (**Acts 1:8**)

##### **b. Jesus was fulfilling all righteousness...**

- i. No coy proclaiming or preaching...
- ii. No “cute or customizable” teaching..
- iii. No cultural adaptations to The Gospel!
- iv. No compromise is acceptable to Christ!
- v. No corruption—*NONE* in His Christianity

##### **c. Jesus was *fishing for men*; training fishermen**

- i. He was proclaiming: Repent...
- ii. He was teaching: The kingdom...
- iii. He was healing everything:
- iv. He was discipling the crowds...
- v. He was modeling His mission.
  - 1. He was strengthening the weak...
  - 2. He was straightening the crooked...
  - 3. He was fishing for **F.A.T.** folks...  
*(Faithful & Available & Teachable)*

Jesus was witnessing to the world!

## II. Looking **HERE**

**VIDEO:** “*Sermon On The Mount Overview*”  
(The Bible Project)

### 1 Seeing the crowds,

- Jesus saw back then & Jesus still sees today...
- **What/Who** do you see?
- Jesus said that when His disciples saw, served, & sacrificed for prisoners & the “*least of these,*” they did so (or did NOT do so) for Him.
- **How do you see** (*biblically or culturally*)?

Who are “the crowds”?

### He went up on the mountain,

- Initially, it may not have made sense - *He’s going away?*
- **Why** would He go **UP** on the mountain?
  - **Acoustics...** sound travels better
  - **Accommodates** more people

and See the *continuation* of *connecting conjunctions...*

### when He sat down,

- In Christ's culture it was common & traditional for the rabbi/teacher to sit while teaching.
- **NOTE:** "*seeing the crowds,*" Christ chose to sit...
- *Jesus is linking kingdom teaching with Gospel saving!*
  - How **thankful** should we be when taught by Christ?
  - How **privileged** is anyone who is taught by Christ?
  - How **blessed** are we to sit under Christ's teaching?

### His disciples (learners)

- **Remember...** Not all disciples are disciples!
- See **John 6:66** & last week's "*birds of a feather*" quote.

Biblical disciples are called, commissioned, and commanded to BE faithfully obedient, innocently shrewd, wisely discerning, & unashamedly zealous... all while applying judgement righteously. Declare these things. Exhort & rebuke with all authority; let no one disregard you... especially the liars, deceivers, & hypocrites.  
(Matt. 10:16; John. 7:24; Titus 1:11, & all Jude & 1st John).

## came to Him.

- Remember... again... not everyone who came to Him or comes to Him today really came/comes to Him.
  - See Mark 1:6; Luke 6:46 & 14:27
- On the other hand...

Of those who do truly become His grace-based, Gospel-transformed, miraculously-glorifying Church... EVERY-soul, EVERY-one who is truly in His faith family... did, does, and will biblically & missionally come (and KEEP COMING) to Christ!

2And ...continuing to connect to Christ & His mission...

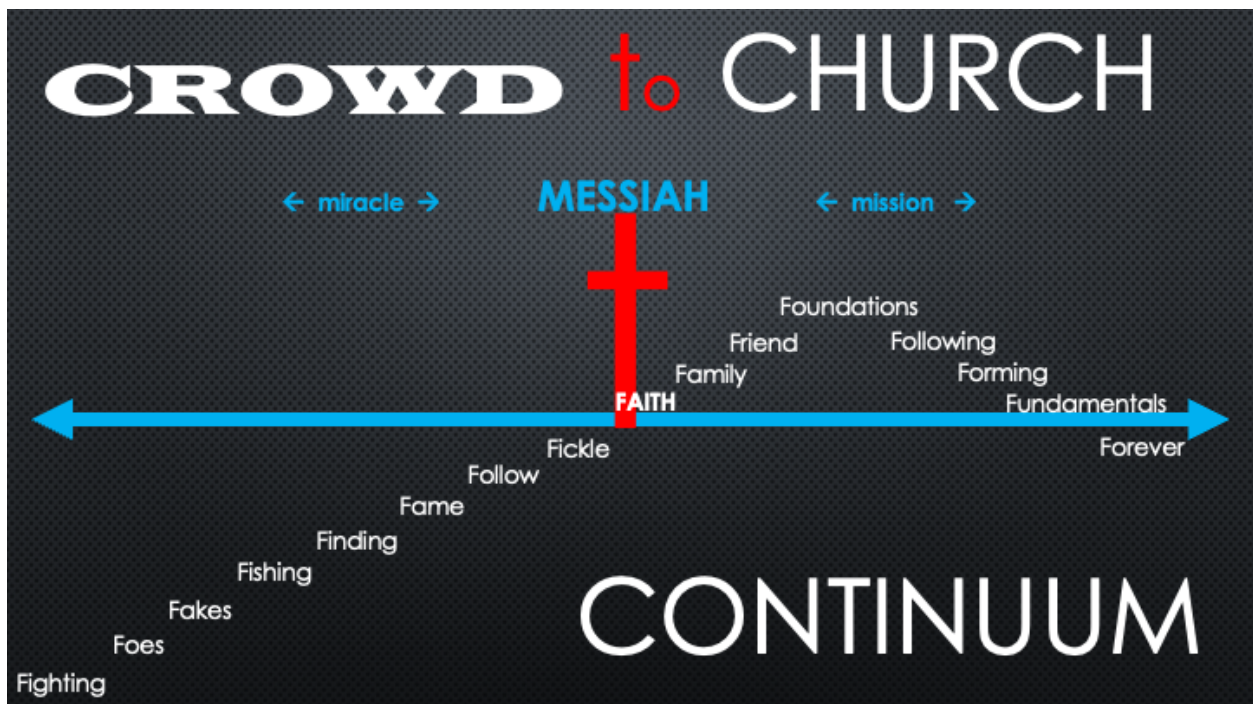
## He opened His mouth

- This is a cultural colloquialism...
- Ie. *“with his final breath” or “he stood tall in the pulpit”*

and (...again and again and again and....)

## taught them,

- What did He teach them?
  - We will soon see...
  - **There are layers of teaching here!**
    - **WHO** are God's blessed?
    - **HOW** are we blessed?
    - **WHAT** do blessings look, love, & live like?
- Don't miss the "them!" (*"the great crowds"*)



Not everyone being taught is learning!

## saying:

- Note that some teaching can & should be done by inspiring example(s)

**BUT...**

The Gospel has to be taught with words  
*(written, spoken, signed, &/or illustrated...)*

- By God's grace, faith-filled understanding, to the point of miraculous-repentance & believing-transformation, **MUST** accompany a biblical application of The Gospel of Jesus The Christ (**Mark 1:15**).
- 
- **When it comes to teaching biblical Christianity, missional discipleship, & Acts 1:8 witnessing... inspiring others & glorifying God with our righteous examples are exactly what WE should do...**

But when it comes to teaching The Gospel by wordless example, there's only One whose divine & defining work could ever teach The Gospel! Amen & AMEN

## 3 "Blessed are those..."

\*\*\* *Let's define **blessed** in BOTH a simple AND personal... physical & spiritual... cultural & biblical... a superficial & supernatural... a temporal & eternal way...*

- **Blessed** in English is **Markareeos** in Greek...
- To **be blessed** is to **receive blessing(s)**.
- **“BLESSED” IS LIKE “GOSPEL”** – both words have casual, cultural definitions & applications, as well as biblical meanings & messages...
- **Culturally, “blessed” & “gospel” mean happy and good news.** Conversely, ***biblically “blessed” missionally unifies HOLY with happy; while “Gospel” is exclusively defined by Christ’s loving crucifixion & resurrection.***

Think about it this way...

- Biblical blessings are **anything** that could or should directly or indirectly enhance &/or increase our appreciation & awe of God, His Gospel, and all of His grace gifts...
- **THE KEY HERE IS THE WORD “ANYTHING,”** as it pertains to that thing’s potential **to enhance our relationship with God.**
  - Think about who Jesus was talking to then.
  - Think about who Jesus is talking to NOW...
  - **Who are the “blessed in the crowds?”**
  - Rethink our opening questions:

- When's the last time you counted blessings?
- What did you consider to be your blessings?
- How did you / do you think of blessings?

**Before answering, consider the power of providence:**

**Romans 8:28**

*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

God's blessings are **everything** that comes to us from His grace and for His glory!

(P.S. That means EVERYTHING!)

- Blessings of God's sovereign omni's... (see John 1:1-18)
- Blessings of orchestrated predestination (see Ephesians 1:5)
- Blessings of overwhelming grace (see James 1:17)
- Blessings of outpouring mercies (see Lamentations 3:22-23)
- Blessings of overt opportunity (see Revelation 3:20)
- Blessings of overlooked offenses (see 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9)
- Blessings of ongoing refinement (see Hebrews 12:6)
- **Blessings of outrageous realities** (see Romans 8:28)
- Blessings of outstanding generosity(s) (see Ephesians 2:1-10)
- Blessings of overcoming counterfeit love (see all of 1<sup>st</sup> John)
- Blessings of opening hearts (see Lydia AND every true Christian)
- Blessings of our faith family! (see John 17; Ephesians 4:1-6)

To be biblically blessed is to experience the intentional, loving fruits of God's missional graces.

- JDP

- **BLESSINGS, LIKE COINS, HAVE 2 SIDES...** like narrow roads have 2 guardrails... Similarly, blessings have both cultural & biblical, temporal & eternal sides.

**Philippians 1:21**

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

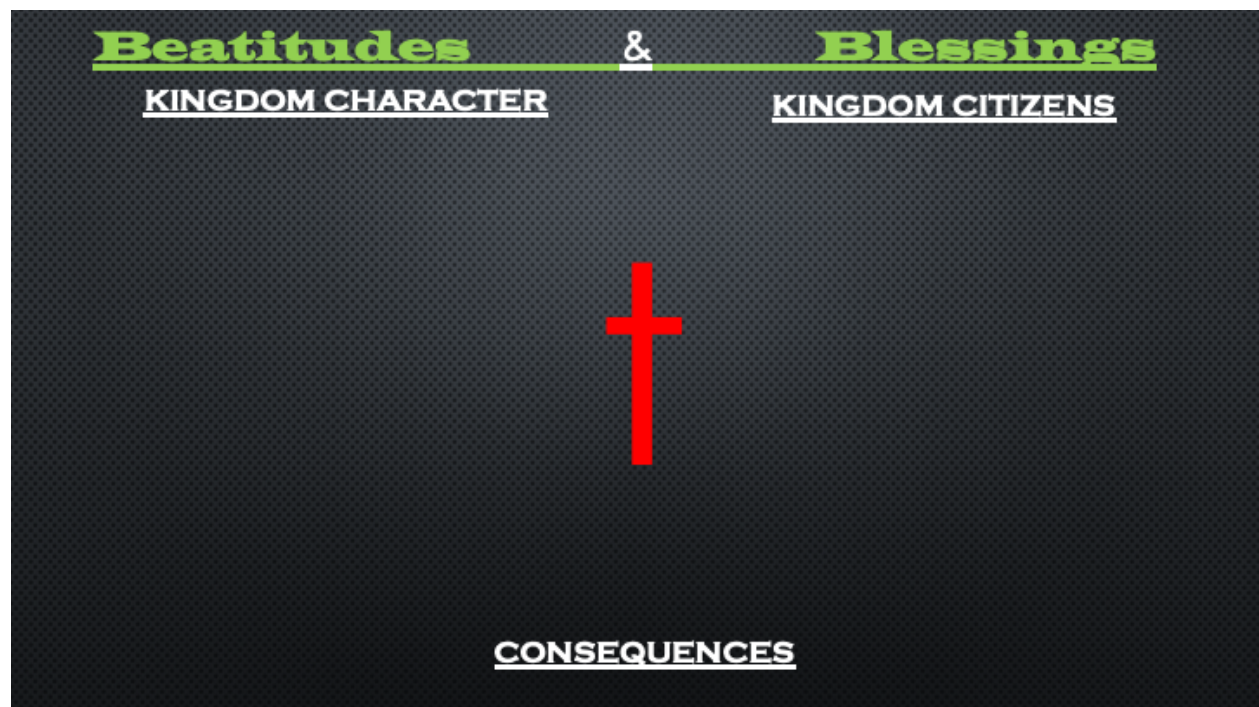
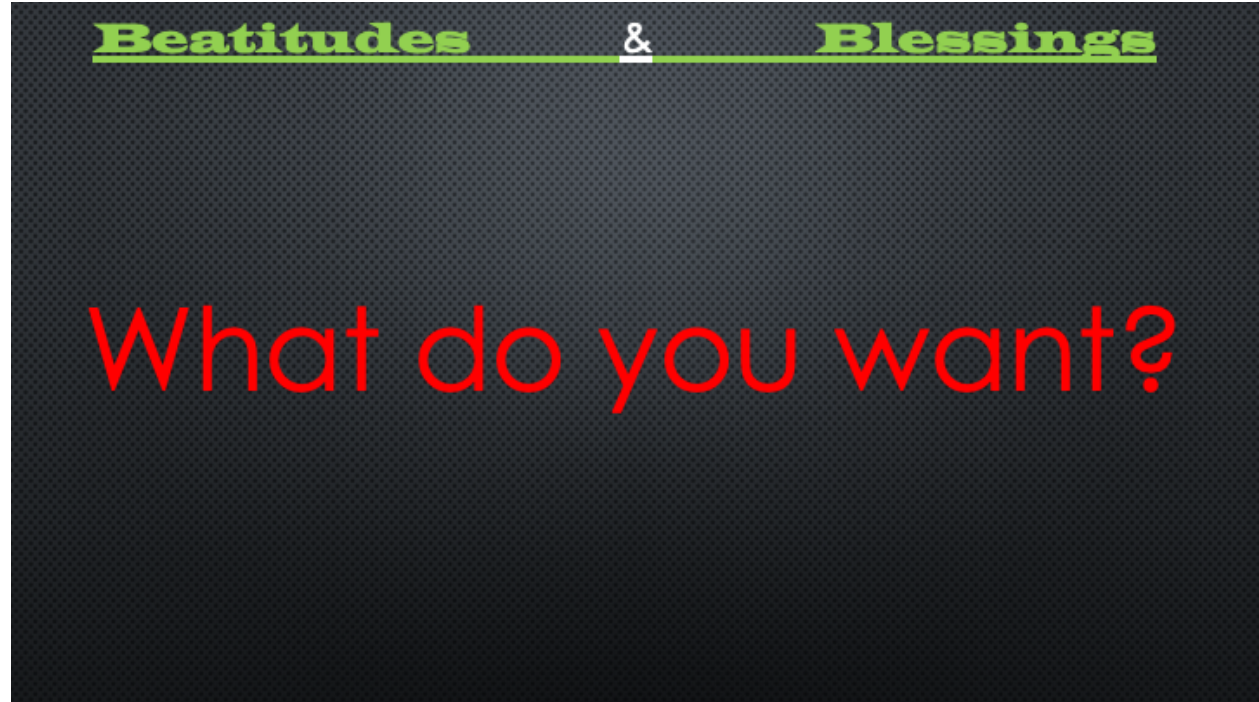
### III. Looking **AHEAD**

*2And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:*

*3 **"Blessed are those..."***

Jesus is about to share with us WHO are blessed & HOW they are blessed, as well as WHAT biblical blessings LOOK, LOVE, & LIVE like in everyday life.

**VIDEO:** *"The Beatitudes Overview"*  
(The Bible Project)



**Beatitudes** & **Blessings**

**KINGDOM CHARACTER**

**KINGDOM CITIZENS**

THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!



**CONSEQUENCES**

THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!

**Beatitudes** & **Blessings**

**KINGDOM CHARACTER**

**KINGDOM CITIZENS**

THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!

Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness



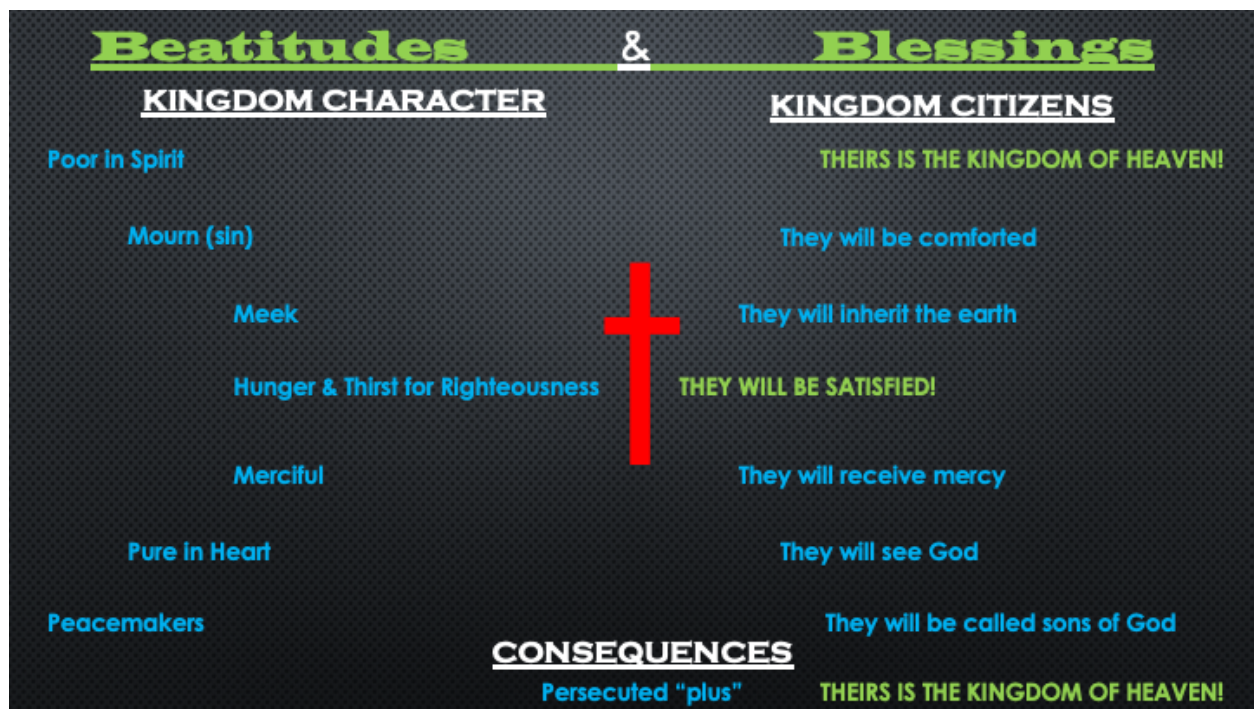
THEY WILL BE SATISFIED!

**CONSEQUENCES**

THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!

See the sequential importance of the 7 beatitudes as each one beatitude begets the next beatitude... including #8, which is NOT a character trait but rather, a Christian consequence... a consequence for the true, consistent, & uncompromising, Great Commission Christian and Great Commission Church.

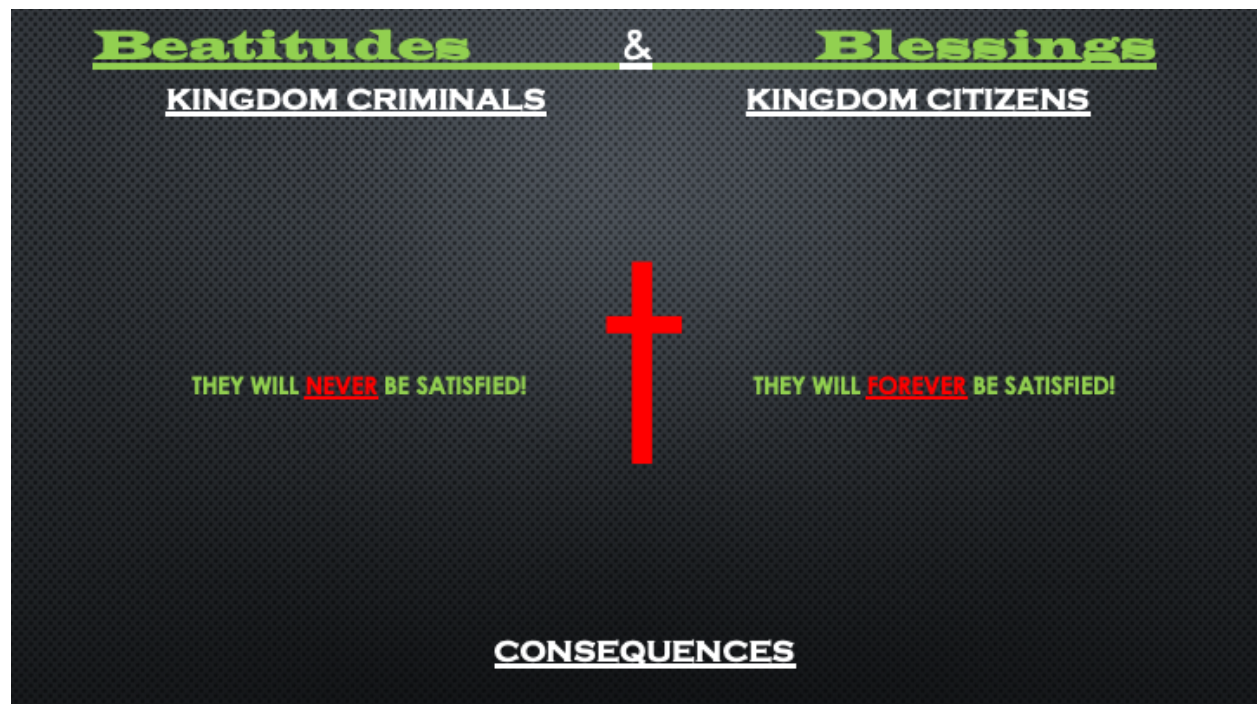
**NOTE:** The point of the arch is Christ's point & mission!  
*("to fulfill all righteousness")*

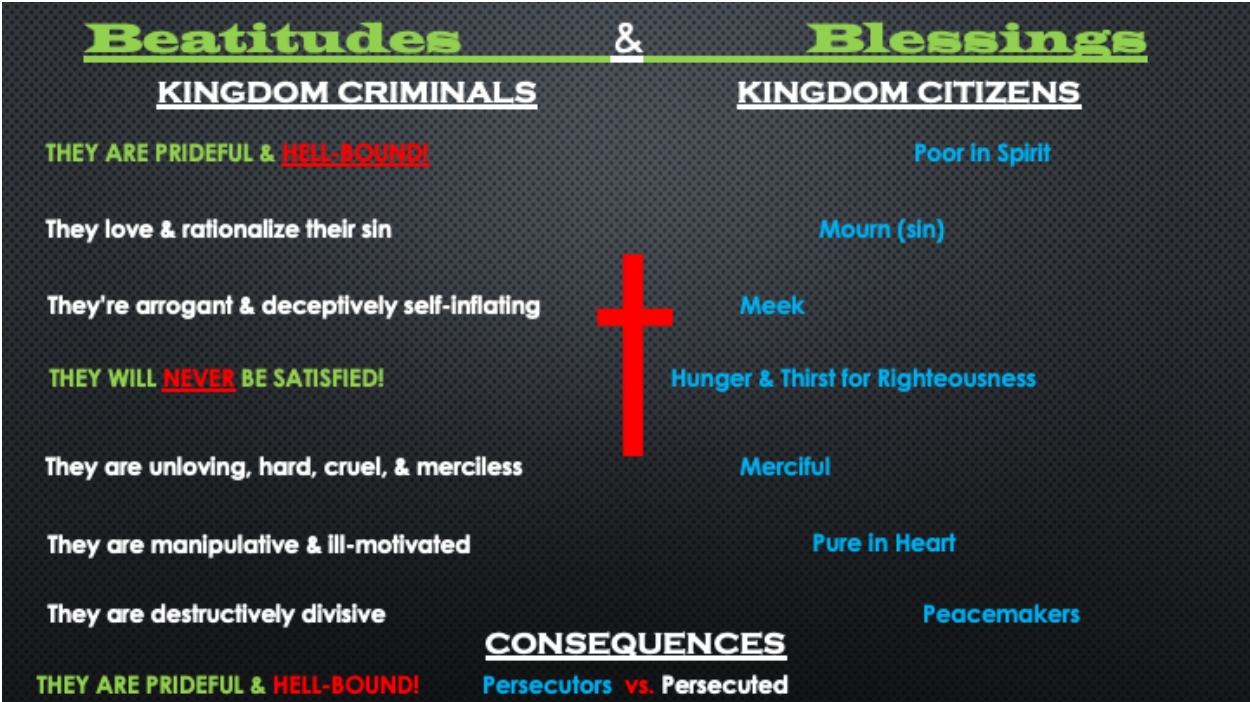


Ok... this is where things get really interesting and missionally revealing... as we see that there are only 2 types of people in the kingdom of heaven...

There are only 2 types of people in God's creation... kingdom citizens and/or kingdom criminals.

- JDP







NOW... see the consequence of Christ's beatitude character (His cross & our cup) AND in the same way, His Church's Christlike character & consequences (persecution, reviling, slander, & persecution.

***Everyone who truly follows Christ WILL be persecuted!***  
(2 Timothy 3:12)

Kingdom Consequences (**BLESSINGS** of ALL kinds... including various sicknesses, diseases, afflictions, pains... even the most intimate tragedies (ie. **Job**) & intense spiritual warfare... like demon oppression, persistent persecution, vicious reviling, & scandalous slander... could & should be seen & treated as blessings (see **Romans 8:28**).

*The best of the blessed are those who powerfully impact & improve this world... based on their personal world having been powerfully impacted & eternally improved by Jesus The Christ & His Word, will, & ways... all by God's grace, all thru His Gospel, & all for His glory.  
Amen & AMEN!*

## **REVIEW:**

Jesus shocked & taught the crowds that biblical "BE-ing" & blessings are the Messiah's missional miracles...  
that most people don't really want or understand.

## **CLOSE:**

*The most common blessings come from God's most common graces (everybody gets them... i.e. Sunrises & sunsets).*

The temporarily challenged are often the most eternally blessed.

Partial & Perfect blessing = already & not yet...  
what is experienced here and what we are  
guaranteed to have in heaven.

- JDP

Not all blessings are blessings!  
(So many die eternally... chasing & choking on cultural “blessings.”)

- JDP

Not all brokenness is bad...  
because God often breaks & blesses the broken.

- JDP

**Biblical blessings are the LORD’s truth in love,  
God-glorifying gifts of grace & mercy... Anything &  
EVERYthing, vertically & horizontally, that  
supports Christian salvation & Christ-like  
sanctification is a biblical blessing.**

- JDP

*Cultural “blessings” are at best, short lived & diminished  
copycats of Christ’s lasting & divine blessings. At worst,  
cultural “blessings” are compromised & contextualized,  
consistently-confusing, casually-corrupted, counterfeits!*

- JDP

Whereas cultural “blessings” are worldly & man-centered; biblical blessings are meant to be God glorifying and Christ-centered.

- JDP

BE-ing biblically blessed  
is being missionally benefitted.

- JDP

Biblical blessings connect the people of God with the power, promises, & purposes of God!

- JDP

*The best of the blessed are those who powerfully impact & improve this world... based on their personal world having been powerfully impacted & eternally improved by Jesus The Christ & His Word, will, & ways... all by God's grace, all thru His Gospel, & all for His glory.*

*Amen & AMEN!*

- JDP

## PRAYER

**WORSHIP:** *The Revelation Song (global) & Reckless Love*

# **STUDY NOTES:**

## **Supporting Scripture:**

### **See 1 Corinthians 3:21-23**

[18](#)Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you thinks that he is wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. [19](#)For the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, “He catches the wise in their craftiness,” [20](#)and again, “The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile.” [21](#)So let no one boast in men. For all things are yours, [22](#)whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future—all are yours, [23](#)and you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.

### **See Luke 14:14**

#### ***The Parable of the Great Banquet***

[12](#)He said also to the man who had invited him, “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers<sup>2</sup> or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. [13](#)But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, [14](#)and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. For you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.”

### **See James 1:12**

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

#### ***The Cost of Discipleship***

[25](#)Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, [26](#)“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. [27](#)Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. [28](#)For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has

enough to complete it? [29](#)Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, [30](#)saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' [31](#)Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? [32](#)And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. [33](#)So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

### **Benson Commentary**

**Matthew 5:1-2.** *And seeing the multitudes* — A vast concourse of people assembled from all parts to attend him, some with their sick to obtain cures, for he never rejected any who applied to him; some out of curiosity to see his miracles, and hear his extraordinary doctrine; some with a design to find fault and censure; and some, doubtless, to hear and be edified by his discourses, which seldom failed to make a deep impression on those who had any share of good sense or true piety: — the Son of God, beholding such a vast multitude of men, bewildered in the darkness of ignorance, and lost in sin and wretchedness, had compassion on them, and feeling in himself a strong desire to give them more particular instruction than he had yet done in the infinitely important matters of religion; that he might deliver what he had to say to them on this most momentous subject, with more convenience to himself and advantage to them, *he went up into a mountain* — Which afforded room for all, and where, addressing them from an eminence, he could be seen and heard by great numbers. *And when he was set* — After the manner of the Jewish doctors, who, to show their authority, were wont to sit when they taught; *his disciples came unto him* — To be instructed by him as a teacher come from God. By *his disciples* here, not only those strictly so called, viz., the twelve, who were afterward chosen to be his apostles, are intended, but as many of the multitude as were willing to learn of him. *And he opened his mouth* — A phrase which, in the Scriptures, generally denotes the solemnity of the speaker, and the importance of what he delivers, and here signifies that he uttered the following weighty truths with great seriousness and earnestness. *And taught them* — As the great prophet and lawgiver of his church, the one way to present and future happiness, at the same time that he corrected those false notions of the Messiah's kingdom which so generally prevailed, and which he foresaw would prove of destructive tendency to those who continued to be governed by them. Observe, reader! Christ thought it as lawful to preach on a mountain as in a synagogue; nor did his disciples doubt the lawfulness of hearing him wherever he thought fit to speak. Our Lord, it must be observed, pursues the most exact method in this divine discourse; describing, 1st, viz., in this chapter, the nature, excellency, and necessity of inward holiness; 2d, chap. 6., that purity of intention which must direct and animate our outward actions to render them holy; 3d, cautioning us

against the grand hinderances of religion, and pointing out the chief means of attaining it: [Matthew 7:1-20](#); Matthew , , 4 th, making an application of the whole, [Matthew 7:21-28](#).

### **Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary**

5:1,2 None will find happiness in this world or the next, who do not seek it from Christ by the rule of his word. He taught them what was the evil they should abhor, and what the good they should seek and abound in.

### **Barnes' Notes on the Bible**

And seeing the multitudes - The great numbers that came to attend on his ministry. The substance of this discourse is recorded also in [Luke 6](#). It is commonly called the "Sermon on the Mount." It is not improbable that it was repeated, in substance, on different occasions, and to different people. At those times parts of it may have been omitted, and Luke may have recorded it as it was pronounced on one of those occasions. See the notes at [Luke 6:17-20](#).

Went up into a mountain - This mountain, or hill, was somewhere in the vicinity of Capernaum, but where precisely is not mentioned. He ascended the hill, doubtless, because it was more convenient to address the multitude from an eminence than if he were on the same level with them. A hill or mountain is still shown a short distance to the northwest of the ancient site of Capernaum, which tradition reports to have been the place where this sermon was delivered, and which is called on the maps the Mount of Beatitudes. The hill commonly believed to be that on which the sermon was delivered is on the road from Nazareth to Tiberias, not far from the latter place. The hill is known by the name of Kuran Huttin, the Horns of Huttin. Of this hill Professor Hackett (Illustrations of Scripture, pp. 323, 324) says: "Though a noontide heat was beating down upon us with scorching power, I could not resist the temptation to turn aside and examine a place for which such a claim has been set up, though I cannot say that I have any great confidence in it. The hill referred to is rocky, and rises steeply to a moderate height above the plain. It has two summits, with a slight depression between them, and it is from these projecting points, or horns, that it receives the name given to it. From the top the observer has a full view of the Sea of Tiberias. The most pleasing feature of the landscape is that presented by the diversified appearance of the fields. The different plots of ground exhibit various colors, according to the state. of cultivation: some of them are red, where the land has been newly plowed up, the natural appearance of the soil; others yellow or white, where the harvest is beginning to ripen, or is already ripe; and others green, being covered with grass or springing grain. As they are contiguous to each other, or intermixed, these particolored plots present at some distance an appearance of joyful chequered work, which is really beautiful.

"In rhetorical descriptions of the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount, we often hear the people represented as looking up to the speaker from the sides of the hill, or listening to

him from the plain. This would not be possible with reference to the present locality; for it is too precipitous and too elevated to allow of such a position. The Saviour could have sat there, however, in the midst of his hearers, for it affords a platform amply large enough for the accommodation of the hundreds who may have been present on that occasion."

And when he was set - This was the common mode of teaching among the Jews, [Luke 4:20](#); [Luke 5:3](#); [John 8:2](#); [Acts 13:14](#); [Acts 16:13](#).

His disciples came unto him - The word "disciples" means "learners," those who are taught. Here it is put for those who attended on the ministry of Jesus, and does not imply that they were all Christians. See [John 6:66](#).

## Strong's Lexicon

**makarios: Blessed, happy, fortunate**

**Original Word:** μακάριος

**Part of Speech:** Adjective

**Transliteration:** makarios

**Pronunciation:** mah-KAH-ree-os

**Phonetic Spelling:** (mak-ar'-ee-os)

**Definition:** Blessed, happy, fortunate

**Meaning:** happy, blessed, to be envied.

**Word Origin:** Derived from the root μάκαρ (makar), meaning "blessed" or "happy."

**Corresponding Greek / Hebrew Entries:** - **H835 (אשרי - 'eshher):** Often translated as "blessed" or "happy," used in contexts like Psalm 1:1, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked."

**Usage:** In the New Testament, "makarios" is used to describe a state of spiritual well-being and prosperity. It denotes a deep, abiding joy and contentment that comes from a right relationship with God. This term is often used to describe those who are favored by God and who experience His grace and favor in their lives.

**Cultural and Historical Background:** In ancient Greek culture, "makarios" was often associated with the gods or the dead, who were considered to be in a state of bliss. However, in the biblical context, it is used to describe the blessedness of those who live in accordance with God's will. The term reflects a counter-cultural

understanding of happiness, one that is not dependent on external circumstances but on one's spiritual condition and relationship with God.

### HELPS Word-studies

**3107** *makários* (from *mak-*, "become long, large") – properly, when God *extends* His *benefits* (the advantages *He confers*); *blessed*.

[3107](#) /*makários* ("blessed") describes a believer in *enviable* ("fortunate") position from receiving *God's provisions* (*favor*) – which (literally) *extend* ("make long, large") His grace (benefits). This happens with receiving (obeying) the Lord's inbirthings of faith. Hence, faith ([4102](#) /*pístis*) and [3107](#) (*makários*) are closely associated (Ro 4:5-7, 14:22, 23; Rev 14:12, 13).

### NAS Exhaustive Concordance

#### Word Origin

from makar (happy)

#### Definition

blessed, happy

#### NASB Translation

blessed (1), blessed (46), fortunate (1), happier (1), happy (1).

### Thayer's Greek Lexicon

## STRONGS NT 3107: μακάριος

μακάριος, μακαρία, μακάριον (poetic μάκαρ)

(from Pindar, Plato down), **blessed, happy**: joined to names of God, [1 Timothy 1:11](#); [1 Timothy 6:15](#) (cf. μακαρες Θεοί in Homer and Hesiod); ἐλπής, [Titus 2:13](#); as a predicate, [Acts 20:35](#); [1 Peter 3:14](#); [1 Peter 4:14](#); ἡγοῦμαι τινα μακάριον, [Acts 26:2](#); μακαραριος ἐν τίνι, [James 1:25](#). In

congratulations, the reason why one is to be pronounced blessed is expressed by a noun or by a participle taking the place of the subject, μακάριος ὁ etc. (Hebrew יְרֵאֵתָּהּ, [Psalm 1:1](#); [Deuteronomy 33:29](#), etc.) blessed the man, who etc. (Winer's Grammar, 551 (512f)): [Matthew 5:3-11](#); [Luke 6:20-22](#); [John 20:29](#); [Revelation 1:3](#); [Revelation 16:15](#); [Revelation 19:9](#); [Revelation 20:6](#); [Revelation 22:14](#); by the addition to the noun of a participle which takes the place of a predicate, [Luke 1:45](#); [Luke 10:23](#); [Luke 11:27](#); [Revelation 14:13](#);

followed by ὅς with a finite verb, [Matthew 11:6](#); [Luke 7:23](#); [Luke 14:15](#); [Romans 4:7f](#); the subject noun intervening, [Luke 12:37, 43](#); [Luke 23:29](#); [James 1:12](#); μακάριοι ... ὅτι, [Matthew 13:16](#); [Matthew 16:17](#); [Luke 14:14](#); followed by ἐάν, [John 13:17](#); [1 Corinthians 7:40](#). (See Schmidt, chapter 187, 7.)

### Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

blessed, happy.

A prolonged form of the poetical makar (meaning the same); supremely blest; by extension, fortunate, well off -- blessed, happy(X -ier).

### **Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers**

(3) **Blessed.**—The word differs from that used in [Matthew 23:39](#); [Matthew 25:34](#), as expressing a permanent state of felicity, rather than the passive reception of a blessing bestowed by another.

**The poor in spirit.**—The limitation, as in “the pure *in heart*,” points to the region of life in which the poverty is found. In [Luke 6:20](#) there is no such qualifying clause, and there the words speak of outward poverty, as in itself a less perilous and therefore happier state than that of riches. Here the blessedness is that of those who, whatever their outward state may be, are in their inward life as those who feel that they have nothing of their own, must be receivers before they give, must be dependent on another’s bounty, and be, as it were, the “bedesmen” of the great King. To that temper of mind belongs the “kingdom of heaven,” the eternal realities, in this life and the life to come, of that society of which Christ is the Head. Things are sometimes best understood by their contraries, and we may point to the description of the church of Laodicea as showing us the opposite type of character, thinking itself “rich” in the spiritual life, when it is really as “the pauper,” destitute of the true riches, blind and naked.

### **Benson Commentary**

[Matthew 5:3](#). *Blessed are the poor in spirit* — The word μακαριοι, here rendered *blessed*, properly means *happy*, and it may be better to translate it so, because our Lord seems to intimate by it, not only that the dispositions here recommended are the way to future blessedness, but that they immediately confer the truest and most noble felicity. As happiness was the great end to which the wisest philosophers undertook to conduct their hearers, and as it is our common aim, and an object to the pursuit of which we are continually urged by an innate instinct, our Lord, whose great business in coming into the world was, to make mankind happy by making them holy, wisely and graciously begins his divine institution, which is the complete art of happiness, by pointing out the necessary connexion it has with holiness, and inciting to the latter by motives drawn from the former. In doing this we cannot but observe his benevolent condescension. He seems, as it were, to lay aside his supreme authority as our legislator, that he may the better act the part of our friend and Saviour. Instead of using the lofty style in positive commands, he, in a more gentle and engaging way, insinuates his will and our duty by pronouncing those happy who comply with it. And, in order to render his hearers more attentive, he proposes his doctrine in certain paradoxical dogmas, which, at first sight, may seem false to such as judge by

appearance, but which, when attentively considered, are found to be most true. Indeed, as an old writer remarks, "All the beatitudes are affixed to unlikely conditions, to show that the judgment of the *word* and of the *world* are contrary." By this expression, *the poor in spirit*, Grotius and Baxter understand those who bear a state of poverty and want with a disposition of quiet and cheerful submission to the divine will; and Mr. Mede interprets it of those who are ready to part with their possessions for charitable uses. But it seems much more probable that the truly humble are intended, or those who are sensible of their spiritual poverty, of their ignorance and sinfulness, their guilt, depravity, and weakness, their frailty and mortality; and who, therefore, whatever their outward situation in life may be, however affluent and exalted, think meanly of themselves, and neither desire the praise of men, nor covet high things in the world, but are content with the lot God assigns them, however low and poor. These are happy, because their humility renders them teachable, submissive, resigned, patient, contented, and cheerful in all estates; and it enables them to receive prosperity or adversity, health or sickness, ease or pain, life or death, with an equal mind. Whatever is allotted them short of those everlasting burnings which they see they have merited, they consider as a grace or favour. They are happy, because *theirs is the kingdom of heaven* — The present, inward kingdom, *righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*, as well as the eternal kingdom, if they endure to the end. The knowledge which they have of themselves, and their humiliation of soul before God, prepare them for the reception of Christ, to dwell and reign in their hearts, and all the other blessings of the gospel; the blessings both of grace and glory. *For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place: with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.* [Isaiah 57:15](#); [Isaiah 66:2](#). And those in whom God dwells here shall dwell with him hereafter.

### **Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary**

5:3-12 Our Saviour here gives eight characters of blessed people, which represent to us the principal graces of a Christian. 1. The poor in spirit are happy. These bring their minds to their condition, when it is a low condition. They are humble and lowly in their own eyes. They see their want, bewail their guilt, and thirst after a Redeemer. The kingdom of grace is of such; the kingdom of glory is for them. 2. Those that mourn are happy. That godly sorrow which worketh true repentance, watchfulness, a humble mind, and continual dependence for acceptance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, with constant seeking the Holy Spirit, to cleanse away the remaining evil, seems here to be intended. Heaven is the joy of our Lord; a mountain of joy, to which our way is through a vale of tears. Such mourners shall be comforted by their God. 3. The meek are happy. The meek are those who quietly submit to God; who can bear insult; are silent, or return a soft answer; who, in their patience, keep possession of their own souls, when they can scarcely keep possession of anything else. These meek ones are happy, even in this world. Meekness promotes wealth, comfort, and safety, even in this world. 4. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are happy. Righteousness is here put for all spiritual blessings. These are purchased for us by the righteousness of Christ, confirmed by the faithfulness of God. Our desires of spiritual blessings must be earnest.

Though all desires for grace are not grace, yet such a desire as this, is a desire of God's own raising, and he will not forsake the work of his own hands. 5. The merciful are happy. We must not only bear our own afflictions patiently, but we must do all we can to help those who are in misery. We must have compassion on the souls of others, and help them; pity those who are in sin, and seek to snatch them as brands out of the burning. 6. The pure in heart are happy; for they shall see God. Here holiness and happiness are fully described and put together. The heart must be purified by faith, and kept for God. Create in me such a clean heart, O God. None but the pure are capable of seeing God, nor would heaven be happiness to the impure. As God cannot endure to look upon their iniquity, so they cannot look upon his purity. 7. The peace-makers are happy. They love, and desire, and delight in peace; and study to be quiet. They keep the peace that it be not broken, and recover it when it is broken. If the peace-makers are blessed, woe to the peace-breakers! 8. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake are happy. This saying is peculiar to Christianity; and it is more largely insisted upon than any of the rest. Yet there is nothing in our sufferings that can merit of God; but God will provide that those who lose for him, though life itself, shall not lose by him in the end. Blessed Jesus! how different are thy maxims from those of men of this world! They call the proud happy, and admire the gay, the rich, the powerful, and the victorious. May we find mercy from the Lord; may we be owned as his children, and inherit his kingdom. With these enjoyments and hopes, we may cheerfully welcome low or painful circumstances.

### **Barnes' Notes on the Bible**

Blessed are the poor in spirit - The word "blessed" means "happy," referring to that which produces felicity, from whatever quarter it may come.

Poor in spirit - Luke says simply, Blessed are the poor. It has been disputed whether Christ meant the poor in reference to the things of this life, or to the humble. The gospel is said to be preached to the poor, [Luke 4:18](#); [Matthew 11:5](#). It was predicted that the Messiah would preach to the poor, [Isaiah 61:1](#). It is said that they have special facilities for being saved, [Matthew 19:23](#); [Luke 18:24](#). The state of such persons is therefore comparatively blessed, or happy. Riches produce care, anxiety, and dangers, and not the least is the danger of losing heaven by them. To be poor in spirit is to have a humble opinion of ourselves; to be sensible that we are sinners, and have no righteousness of our own; to be willing to be saved only by the rich grace and mercy of God; to be willing to be where God places us, to bear what he lays on us, to go where he bids us, and to die when he commands; to be willing to be in his hands, and to feel that we deserve no favor from him. It is opposed to pride, and vanity, and ambition. Such are happy:

1. Because there is more real enjoyment in thinking of ourselves as we are, than in being filled with pride and vanity.
2. Because such Jesus chooses to bless, and on them he confers his favors here.
3. Because theirs will be the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

It is remarkable that Jesus began his ministry in this manner, so unlike all others. Other teachers had taught that happiness was to be found in honor, or riches, or splendor, or sensual pleasure. Jesus overlooked all those things, and fixed his eye on the poor and the humble, and said that happiness was to be found in the lowly vale of poverty more than in the pomp and splendors of life.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven - That is, either they have special facilities for entering the kingdom of heaven, and of becoming Christians here, or they shall enter heaven hereafter. Both these ideas are probably included. A state of poverty a state where we are despised or unhonored by people is a state where people are most ready to seek the comforts of religion here, and a home in the heavens hereafter. See the notes at [Matthew 2:2](#).

### **Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary**

3. Blessed—Of the two words which our translators render "blessed," the one here used points more to what is inward, and so might be rendered "happy," in a lofty sense; while the other denotes rather what comes to us from without (as Mt 25:34). But the distinction is not always clearly carried out. One Hebrew word expresses both. On these precious Beatitudes, observe that though eight in number, there are here but seven distinct features of character. The eighth one—the "persecuted for righteousness' sake"—denotes merely the possessors of the seven preceding features, on account of which it is that they are persecuted (2Ti 3:12). Accordingly, instead of any distinct promise to this class, we have merely a repetition of the first promise. This has been noticed by several critics, who by the sevenfold character thus set forth have rightly observed that a complete character is meant to be depicted, and by the sevenfold blessedness attached to it, a perfect blessedness is intended. Observe, again, that the language in which these Beatitudes are couched is purposely fetched from the Old Testament, to show that the new kingdom is but the old in a new form; while the characters described are but the varied forms of that spirituality which was the essence of real religion all along, but had well-nigh disappeared under corrupt teaching. Further, the things here promised, far from being mere arbitrary rewards, will be found in each case to grow out of the characters to which they are attached, and in their completed form are but the appropriate coronation of them. Once more, as "the kingdom of heaven," which is the first and the last thing here promised, has two stages—a present and a future, an initial and a consummate stage—so the fulfilment of each of these promises has two stages—a present and a future, a partial and a perfect stage.

3. Blessed are the poor in spirit—All familiar with Old Testament phraseology know how frequently God's true people are styled "the poor" (the "oppressed," "afflicted," "miserable") or "the needy"—or both together (as in Ps 40:17; Isa 41:17). The explanation of this lies in the fact that it is generally "the poor of this world" who are "rich in faith" (Jas 2:5; compare 2Co 6:10; Re 2:9); while it is often "the ungodly" who "prosper in the world" (Ps 73:12). Accordingly, in Lu 6:20, 21, it seems to be this class—the literally "poor" and "hungry"—that are specially addressed. But since God's people are in so many places styled "the poor" and "the needy," with no evident reference to their temporal

circumstances (as in Ps 68:10; 69:29-33; 132:15; Isa 61:1; 66:2), it is plainly a frame of mind which those terms are meant to express. Accordingly, our translators sometimes render such words "the humble" (Ps 10:12, 17), "the meek" (Ps 22:26), "the lowly" (Pr 3:34), as having no reference to outward circumstances. But here the explanatory words, "in spirit," fix the sense to "those who in their deepest consciousness realize their entire need" (compare the Greek of Lu 10:21; Joh 11:33; 13:21; Ac 20:22; Ro 12:11; 1Co 5:3; Php 3:3). This self-emptying conviction, that "before God we are void of everything," lies at the foundation of all spiritual excellence, according to the teaching of Scripture. Without it we are inaccessible to the riches of Christ; with it we are in the fitting state for receiving all spiritual supplies (Re 3:17, 18; Mt 9:12, 13).

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven—(See on [1224]Mt 3:2). The poor in spirit not only shall have—they already have—the kingdom. The very sense of their poverty is begun riches. While others "walk in a vain show"—"in a shadow," "an image"—in an unreal world, taking a false view of themselves and all around them—the poor in spirit are rich in the knowledge of their real case. Having courage to look this in the face, and own it guilelessly, they feel strong in the assurance that "unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness" (Ps 112:4); and soon it breaks forth as the morning. God wants nothing from us as the price of His saving gifts; we have but to feel our universal destitution, and cast ourselves upon His compassion (Job 33:27, 28; 1Jo 1:9). So the poor in spirit are enriched with the fulness of Christ, which is the kingdom in substance; and when He shall say to them from His great white throne, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you," He will invite them merely to the full enjoyment of an already possessed inheritance.

### **Matthew Poole's Commentary**

Happy are they, who, though they be not rich in this world's goods, yet have a spirit suited to their state and condition, not looking for their consolation here, but, having a poor and low opinion of the world and all that is therein, looking after more excellent riches; and, in order to it, are of broken and contrite spirits for their manifold sins, and cannot entertain any proud opinion of their own righteousness, but flee unto the free grace of God, and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not the great, and rich, and proud men of the world are happy, but these are the blessed men; for true happiness lieth not in worldly possessions, but in the favour of God, and a right to the kingdom of heaven, and that these men have, [Psalm 34:18](#) [51:17](#) [Isaiah 66:2](#).

### **Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible**

Blessed are the poor in spirit,.... Not the poor in purse, or who are so with respect to things temporal: for though God has chosen and called many, who are in such a condition of life, yet not all; the kingdom of heaven cannot be said to belong to them all, or only; but such as are poor in a spiritual sense. All mankind are spiritually poor; they have nothing to eat that is fit and proper; nor any clothes to wear, but rags; nor are they able to purchase either; they have no money to buy with; they are in debt, owe ten thousand talents, and have nothing to pay; and in such a condition, that they are not

able to help themselves. The greater part of mankind are insensible of this their condition; but think themselves rich, and increased with goods: there are some who are sensible of it, who see their poverty and want, freely acknowledge it, bewail it, and mourn over it; are humbled for it, and are broken under a sense of it; entertain low and mean thoughts of themselves; seek after the true riches, both of grace and glory; and frankly acknowledge, that all they have, or hope to have, is owing to the free grace of God. Now these are the persons intended in this place; who are not only "poor", but are poor "in spirit"; in their own spirits, in their own sense, apprehension, and judgment: and may even be called "beggars", as the word may be rendered; for being sensible of their poverty, they place themselves at the door of mercy, and knock there; their language is, "God be merciful"; their posture is standing, watching, and waiting, at wisdom's gates, and at the posts of her door; they are importunate, will have no denial, yet receive the least favour with thankfulness. Now these are pronounced "blessed", for this reason,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; not only the Gospel, and the ministration of it, which belongs to them. "The poor have the Gospel preached": it not only reaches their ears, but their hearts; it enters into them, is applied unto them, they receive and embrace it with the utmost joy and gladness; but eternal glory, this is prepared for them, and given to them; they are born heirs of it, have a right unto it, are making meet for it, and shall enjoy it.

### **Geneva Study Bible**

Blessed are the {a} poor in {b} spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- (a) Under the name of poverty are meant all the miseries, that are joined with poverty.
- (b) Whose minds and spirits are brought under control, and tamed, and obey God.

### **Meyer's NT Commentary**

**Matthew 5:3-10.** *The beatitudes in general*, in order to set forth, first, in a general way, the moral conditions of future participation in the Messiah's kingdom.—"That is, indeed, a fine, sweet, friendly beginning of His teaching and sermon. For He does not proceed, like Moses, or a teacher of the law, with commands, threats, and terrors, but in a most friendly manner, with pure attractions and allurements, and pleasant promises," Luther.

**μακάριοι**] "Initiale hoc verbum toties repetitum indicat scopum doctrinae Christi," Bengel. *What* the blessedness is (**אַשְׁרֵי**) which He means, is stated by all the causal sentences[395] with **ὅτι** in **Matthew 5:3-10**, viz. that which is based on *this*, that they will attain *the salvation of the kingdom*, which is nigh at hand.

**οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι**] the **עֲנָוִים, אֶבְיֹוֹנִים** (see **Isaiah 61:1**; **Isaiah 66:2**, and the post-exilian **Psalms 37:11**) were those who, according to the theocratic promise of the O. T., had to expect the Messianic blessedness (**Luke 4:18**). Jesus, however, according to Matthew, transports the idea of the *poor* (les misérables) from the politico-theocratic

realm (the members of the oppressed people of God, sunk in poverty and external wretchedness) into the purely moral sphere by means of the dative of more precise definition, τῷ πνεύματι (comp. [Matthew 5:8](#)): the poor in reference to their spirit, the *spiritually poor*—that is, those who *feel, as a matter of consciousness, that they are in a miserable, unhappy condition*; comp. [Isaiah 57:15](#); [Proverbs 29:23](#).

The ΠΤΩΧΕΙΑ intended is then *subjectively* determined according to the consciousness of the subject, so that these latter (comp. [Matthew 5:4-6](#)) are conceived of as those *who feel within them, the opposite of having enough, and of wanting nothing in a moral point of view*; to whom, consequently, the condition of moral poverty and helplessness is a familiar thing,—as the praying publican, [Luke 18:10](#) (the opposite in [Revelation 3:17](#); [1 Corinthians 4:8](#)), was such a poor man. We have neither to supply an “*also*” before τῷ πνεύματι, nor, with Baur, to explain it as if it meant οἱ πτωχοὶ, ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι πλούσιοι; comp. [2 Corinthians 6:10](#). Chrysostom is substantially correct (comp. Theophylact): οἱ ταπεινοὶ κ. συντετριμμένοι τὴν διάνοιαν. Comp. de Wette in the Stud. von Daub und Creuzer, III. 2, p. 309 ff.; *de morte expiat*. p. 86 f. Jerome strikingly says: “Adjunxit *spiritu*, ut humilitatem intelligeres, non penuriam.” Comp. ὑψηλὸς πνεύματι, [Ecclesiastes 7:8](#). They are not different from the μὴ βλέποντες in [John 9:39](#). They know that in point of knowledge and moral constitution they are far from divine truth. The declaration that such are blessed, however, at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, is in perfect accordance with the *fundamental condition* of participation in the kingdom of the Messiah, the *METANOΕΙΤΕ*, with the call to which both Jesus and John began their public appearance. The ΠΤΩΧΕΙΑ Τῷ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ, is the precondition of ΠΛΟΥΤΕΙΝ Εἰς ΘΕΟΝ ([Luke 12:21](#)), and of becoming a true ΠΛΟΥΣΙΟΣ Τῷ ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ (Barnabas 19). These poor people *are* humble, but we are not to say that πτωχ. τ. πν. *signifies* the humble (in answer to Kuinoel and older interpreters); for which reason we have not to appeal to [Isaiah 66:2](#), where רֵיחַ does not agree with עֲנִי. Fritzsche, in a way that is not in harmony with the moral nature and life of the whole discourse, limits the meaning to that of *discernment*: “*Homines ingenio et eruditione parum florentes*,” so also Chr. Fritzsche, *Nov. Opusc.* p. 241, in which meaning (consequently equivalent to οἱ πτωχοὶ τῆ διανοίᾳ, as Origen, *de princ.* iv. 22, calls the Ebionites) the saying was already made a subject of ridicule by Julian. Older Catholics (Maldonatus and Corn. a Lapide), after Clement of Alexandria and many Fathers, taking ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ of the *self-determination*, misused our passage in support of the vow of *voluntary poverty*. On the other hand, Calovius strikingly remarks: “Paupertas haec spiritualis non est *consilii*, sed *praecepti*.” *Others* (Olearius, Michaelis, Paulus) connect τῷ πνεύματι with μακάριοι: *the poor are spiritually happy*. Opposed to this is the position of the words and [Matthew 5:8](#). Moreover, no example is found in the N. T. or in the Jewish writings, where, in the case of beatitudes, to the ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ, or אֲשֶׁרֵי, or טוֹבֵי, any more precise designation of fortune was

immediately subjoined. Comp. especially, Knapp, *Scripta var. arg.* pp. 351–380. According to Köstlin, p. 66, the τῷ πνεύματι, which is not expressly read in the Clementines (see Homily xv. 10) and Polycrates ii. (as also τὴν δικαιοσ. [Matthew 5:6](#)), is said to be a limiting addition proceeding from later reflection, one of the many changes which must be assumed as having taken place in the original collection of discourses; comp. also Hilgenfeld, Ewald, Bleek, Wittichen, *Jahrb. f. D. Theol.* 1862, p. 323; Holtzmann, p. 176; Schenkel, and others. But see on [Luke 6:23](#).

**Ἡ ΒΑΣ. Τ. ΟὐΡ.]** *the kingdom of heaven* belongs to them (see on [Matthew 3:2](#)), namely, as a certain possession *in the future*. Comp. the following *futures*. Observe in all the beatitudes, [Matthew 5:3-10](#), the symmetrically emphatical position of αὐτῶν, αὐτοί; *it is just they who*.

[395] These causal sentences justify also the usual enumeration of the Makarisms as the “*seven* beatitudes.” For vv. 3 and 10 contain the *same* promise, which, therefore, is to be counted only *once* in order to retain the number seven; comp. Ewald, *Jahrb.* I. p. 133; also Köstlin and Hilgenfeld. Others, like Weizsäcker and Keim, counting ver. 10 specially with the others, arrive at the number *eight*. But Delitzsch, to bring out an analogy with the Decalogue, reckons, besides the μακάριοι in ver. 11, the χαίρετε κ. ἀγαλλ. also in ver. 12, as “the full-sounding finale,” and in this way knows how to force out ten beatitudes.

## Expositor's Greek Testament

[Matthew 5:3-12](#). *The Beatitudes*. Some general observations may helpfully introduce the detailed exegesis of these golden words.

1. They breathe the spirit of the scene. On the mountain tops away from the bustle and the sultry heat of the region below, the air cool, the blue sky overhead, quiet all around, and divine tranquillity within. We are near heaven here.

2. The originality of these sayings has been disputed, especially by modern Jews desirous to credit their Rabbis with such good things. Some of them, *e.g.*, the third, may be found in substance in the Psalter, and possibly many, or all of them, even in the Talmud. But what then? They are in the Talmud as a few grains of wheat lost in a vast heap of chaff. The originality of Jesus lies in putting the due value on these thoughts, collecting them, and making them as prominent as the Ten Commandments. No greater service can be rendered to mankind than to rescue from obscurity neglected moral commonplaces.

3. The existence of another version of the discourse (in Lk.), with varying forms of the sayings, has raised a question as to the original form. Did Christ, *e.g.*, say “Blessed the poor” (Lk.) or “Blessed the poor in spirit” (Matt.)? This raises a larger question as to the manner of Christ’s teaching on the hill. Suppose one day in a week of instruction was

devoted to the subject of happiness, its conditions, and heirs, many things might be said on each leading proposition. The theme would be announced, then accompanied with expansions. A modern biographer would have prefaced a discourse like this with an introductory account of the Teacher's method. There is no such account in the Gospels, but there are incidental notices from which we can learn somewhat. The disciples asked questions and the Master answered them. Jesus explained some of His parables to the twelve. From certain parts of His teaching, as reported, it appears that He not only uttered great thoughts in aphoristic form, but occasionally enlarged. The Sermon on the Mount contains at least two instances of such enlargement. The thesis, "I am not come to destroy but to fulfil" ([Matthew 5:17](#)), is copiously illustrated ([Matthew 5:21-48](#)). The counsel against care, which as a thesis might be stated thus: "Blessed are the care-free," is amply expanded ([Matthew 5:25-34](#)). Even in one of the Beatitudes we find traces of explanatory enlargement; in the last, "Blessed are the persecuted". It is perhaps the most startling of all the paradoxes, and would need enlargement greatly, and some parts of the expansion have been preserved ([Matthew 5:10-12](#)). On this view both forms of the first Beatitude might be authentic, the one as theme, the other as comment. The theme would always be put in the fewest possible words; the first Beatitude therefore, as Luke puts it, **Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί**, Matthew preserving one of the expansions, not necessarily the only one. Of course, another view of the expansion is possible, that it proceeded not from Christ, but from the transmitters of His sayings. But this hypothesis is not a whit more legitimate or likely than the other. I make this observation, not in the spirit of an antiquated Harmonistic, but simply as a contribution to historical criticism.

4. Each Beatitude has a reason annexed, that of the first being "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven". They vary in the different Beatitudes as reported. It is conceivable that in the original themes the reason annexed to the first was common to them all. It was understood to be repeated like the refrain of a song, or like the words, "him do I call a Brahmana," annexed to many of the moral sentences in the Footsteps of the Law in the Buddhist Canon. "He who, when assailed, does not resist, but speaks mildly to his tormentors—him do I call a Brahmana." So "Blessed the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven", "blessed they who mourn, for," etc.; "blessed the meek, the hungry, for," etc. The actual reasons annexed, when they vary from the refrain, are to be viewed as explanatory comments.

5. It has been maintained that only certain of the Beatitudes belong to the authentic discourse on the mount, the rest, possibly based on true *logia* of Jesus spoken at another time, being added by the evangelist, true to his habit of massing the teaching of Jesus in topical groups. This is the view of Weiss (in *Matt. Evan.*, and in Meyer). He thinks only three are authentic—the first, third, and fourth—all pointing to the righteousness of the kingdom as the *summum bonum*: the first to righteousness as not yet possessed; the second to the want as a cause of sorrow; the third to righteousness as an object of desire. This view goes with the theory that Christ's discourse on the hill had reference exclusively to the nature of true and false righteousness.

6. A final much less important question in reference to the Beatitudes is that which relates to their number. One would say at a first glance eight, counting [Matthew 5:10](#) as one, [Matthew 5:11-12](#) being an enlargement. The traditional number, however, is seven

## Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges

A. The Subjects of the Kingdom, [Matthew 5:3-16](#).

(1) Their character and privileges, [Matthew 5:3-12](#).

**3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*** [The beatitudes—so called from the opening word “beati” (blessed), in the Vulgate. Mark the Christian growth step by step. First, spiritual poverty, the only character which is receptive of repentance, therefore alone admissible into the Kingdom. Secondly, sadness for sin. Thirdly, meekness, implying submission to the will of God, a characteristic of Jesus Himself, who says “I am meek and lowly in heart.” Fourthly, the soul-hunger for righteousness. Then three virtues of the Christian life, each of which wins, without seeking it, a reward in an ascending scale—mercy, purity, peacemaking. (It is a little remarkable that the English language supplies no abstract term to express this last, the highest grace of the Christian life.) The last two beatitudes [Matthew 5:10-11](#) may be regarded as encouragements to the disciples, and as tests of their true discipleship.

*poor in spirit*] Opposed to the spiritually proud, the just who need no repentance. St Luke omits “in spirit,” showing that the literal poor are primarily meant, St Matthew shows that they are not exclusively meant.

## Bengel's Gnomon

[Matthew 5:3](#). **Μακάριοι**, *blessed*) This initial word, so often repeated, indicates the object of Christ's teaching.[170] By means, however, of striking paradoxes, blessedness is proposed not only by itself, but inasmuch as, *in Christ now present*, it is within the reach of all who are capable of receiving Him. There were some such amongst our Lord's auditors, though undistinguished by the eye of man (see ch. [Matthew 9:36-37](#), [Matthew 11:28](#); [Isaiah 29:19](#)), although compared with the rest they were not many in number: for the epithet *blessed* frequently implies both the excellence and rarity of a thing (as in [Sir 31:8](#)), from which the expressions, *theirs*, *they*, etc., exclude those otherwise disposed: cf. [Luke 6:24-26](#), where the *woes* are denounced. Seven however of the **μακαρισμοὶ**, or *predications of blessedness*, are *absolute*, declaring the condition of the godly, as far as regards themselves; two are *relative*, having respect to the conduct of men towards them. In both cases the *kingdom of heaven* is placed first, as embracing the whole of the beatitudes. All are enumerated in a most beautiful order. With these may be compared the matter and order of the eight woes, which are denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees, in ch. [Matthew 23:13-16](#); [Matthew 23:23](#); [Matthew 23:25](#); [Matthew 23:27](#); [Matthew 23:29](#). In both cases mention is made of the *kingdom of heaven*, here [Matthew 5:3](#), there [Matthew 5:13](#); of *mercy*,

here [Matthew 5:7](#), there [Matthew 5:23](#); of *purity*, here [Matthew 5:8](#), there [Matthew 5:25](#); and of *persecution*, here [Matthew 5:10-11](#), and there [Matthew 5:29-30](#) : and undoubtedly the other clauses may also be respectively compared with each other. In the *subject*, the saints are described as they are *now* in *this life*; in the *predicate*, as they will be *hereafter* on *that day*: see [Luke 6:25](#); [Luke 6:23](#). Our Lord, however, frames His words in such a manner, as at the same time to intimate the blessedness of *individual* saints already commencing in the present life, and to signify prophetically the blessedness of the holy *people*, which will hereafter be theirs also upon *earth*: see [Matthew 5:5](#).—οἱ πτωχοὶ, *the poor*) A vocative, either expressly or such in meaning (cf. [Matthew 5:11](#), and [Luke 6:20](#)). Nor does the pronoun αὐτῶν, *their*, oppose this view. Cf. Gnomon on [Matthew 23:37](#). *Poverty* is the first foundation. *He is poor*, who has it not in his power to say, *this is mine*;<sup>[171]</sup> and who, when he has anything for the present, does not devise what he will have for the future, but depends on the liberality of another. The riches which are disclaimed by such poverty, are either spiritual or natural, and are either present or absent. Such cardinal and fundamental virtues are despised by the world: whereas those which the world admires as such, are either no virtues, or false ones, or merely the offshoots and appendages of Christian virtues.—ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙ, *in spirit*) *i.e.* in their inmost self. This word is to be understood also in the following passages as far as [Matthew 5:8](#), where the words τῆ καρδία, *in heart*, occur.—ὅτι, *because*) Each kind of blessedness which is predicated corresponds with the previous description of [the character or condition which is] its subject,<sup>[172]</sup> and is taken, either (1.) from *the contrary* (for the works of God, [2 Corinthians 4:6](#); [2 Corinthians 7:6](#); [2 Corinthians 12:9](#), are effected in the midst of their contraries);<sup>[173]</sup> or (2.) regulated by a law of benignant retribution or exact conformity.<sup>[174]</sup>—ἔστιν, *is*) sc. already. The present in this verse, and the future in those which follow, mutually imply each other.—ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, *the kingdom of heaven*, literally, *the kingdom of the heavens*),<sup>[175]</sup> which, promised in the Old Testament, is actually conferred by the Messiah.

[170] The first word of this discourse announces its whole scope: a great blessedness is here placed before us by the Lord.—See [Hebrews 2:3](#).—B. G. V.

[171] *i.e.*, Has nothing which he can call his own.—(I. B.)

[172] Sc. of the present state of the subject. Ex. gr. “Blessed are they that *mourn*: for they shall be *comforted*.”—ED.

[173] In the original, “in mediis contrariis,” the full force of which it is difficult to give by a single phrase. Bengel’s meaning is best obtained by a reference to the texts which he gives.—(I. B.)

[174] In the original, “a *talione benigna* proximave convenientiâ,” where *talio* (talion) is used in a sense cognate with its original derivation from *talīs*, *such*, but unknown (as far as I am aware) to classical usage. It is one of those peculiar adaptations of words

frequently occurring in Bengel, and sanctioned (in its principle) by no less an authority than Horace.—See his *Ars Poetica*, [Matthew 5:47-48](#). For an example of Bengel's meaning, cf [Matthew 5:7-8](#) of this chapter.—(I. B.)

[175] This expression, *the kingdom of the heavens*, marks the commencement of the discussion (tractatio) in this verse, as it also marks the close of the discussion in [Matthew 5:10](#).—*Vers. Germ.*

## Pulpit Commentary

Verse 3 - [Matthew 7:27](#). - THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. The following may serve as a brief summary.

1. The **ideal character** of his disciples ([Matthew 5:3-10](#)), which must be allowed to appear ([Matthew 5:11-16](#)).
2. The **relation** that they ought to hold towards the religion of the day, of which the Law was the accepted standard ([Matthew 5:17 - 6:18](#)).

(1) The fundamental principle of this relation is found in the relation which Christ himself holds towards the Law ([Matthew 5:17-20](#)).

(2) Their relation further defined by illustrations taken from the religion of the day, as this is seen in -

(a) Cases deduced directly from the Law ([Matthew 5:21-48](#)).

(b) Cases not so deduced ([Matthew 6:1-18](#)).

### 3. **General principles** regarding -

(1) Their relation to wealth. They must remember that only the single eye receives the light ([Matthew 6:19-31](#)).

(2) Their relation to men. They must remember the dangers of differentiating others. They must treat them as they would themselves be treated ([Matthew 7:1-12](#)).

4. **Epilogue** ([Matthew 7:13-27](#)). A call to decision and independence of walk ([Matthew 7:13-23](#)). Assent is useless if it becomes not action ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)). There is little doubt that the two accounts (here and [Luke 6](#).) represent one and the same discourse, the main arguments for this belief being thus given by Ellicott ('Hist. Lects.,' p. 179): "That the beginning and end of the Sermon are nearly identical in both Gospels; that the precepts, as recited by St. Luke, are in the same general order as those in St. Matthew, and that they are often expressed in nearly the same words; and lastly, that each Evangelist specifies the same miracle, viz. the healing of the centurion's servant, as

having taken place shortly after the Sermon, on our Lord's entry into Capernaum." Verses 3-16. - 1. **The ideal character of his disciples.** Verse 3. - **Blessed** (μακάριοι); Vulgate, **beati**; hence "Beatitudes." The word describes "the poor in spirit," etc., not as recipients of blessing (εὐλογημένοι) from God, or even from men, but as possessors of "happiness" (cf. the Authorized Version of [John 13:17](#), and frequently). It describes them in reference to their inherent state, not to the gifts or the rewards that they receive. It thus answers in thought to the common אֲשֵׁרִי of the Old Testament; e.g. [1 Kings 10:8](#); [Psalm 1:1](#); [Psalm 32:1](#); [Psalm 84:5](#). **Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs, is the kingdom of heaven.** The first Beatitude is the sum and substance of the whole sermon. Poverty of spirit stands in contrast to self sufficiency ([Revelation 3:17](#)) and as such is perhaps the quality which is most of all opposed to the Jewish temper in all ages (cf. [Romans 2:17-20](#)). For in this, as in much else, the Jewish nation is the type of the human race since the Fall. Observe that vers. 3, 4 (οἱ πτωχοὶ οἱ πενθοῦντες, possibly also ver. 5, **vide infra**) recall [Isaiah 61:1, 2](#). As recently in the synagogue at Nazareth ([Luke 4:18, 19](#)), so also here, he bases the explanation of his work on the prophecy of that work in the Book of Isaiah. The poor (οἱ πτωχοὶ). Πτωχός, in classical and philosophical usage, implies a lower degree of poverty than πένης ([2 Corinthians 9:9](#) and LXX.). "The πένης may be so poor that he earns his bread by daily labour; but the πτωχός is so poor that he only obtains his living by begging. The πένης has nothing superfluous, the πτωχός nothing at all" (Trench, 'Syn.,' § 36.). Hence Tertullian ('Adv. Marc.,' 4:14; cf. 15) purposely altered **Beati pauperes** of the Old Latin to **Beati mendici**, and elsewhere ('De Idol.,' 12) rendered it by **egeni**. But in Hellenistic Greek, so far as the usage of the LXX. and the Hexapla goes (**vide** Hatch, 'Biblical Greek,' p. 73), the distinction seems hardly to hold good. Hatch even infers - on, we think, very insufficient premisses - that these two words, with τακεινός and πρᾶύς (but **vide infra**), designate the poor of an oppressed country, i.e. the peasantry, the **fellahin** of Palestine as a class, and he considers it probable that this special meaning underlies the use of the words in these verses. Whether this be the case or not, the addition of τῷ πνεύματι completely excludes the supposition that our **Lord** meant to refer to any merely external circumstances. **In spirit**; Matthew only (τῷ πνεύματι). Dative of sphere (cf. [Matthew 11:29](#); [1 Corinthians 7:34](#); [1 Corinthians 14:20](#); [Romans 12:11](#)). [James 2:5](#) (τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ) forms an apparent rather than a real contrast; for the dative there marks, not the sphere in which, but the object with reference to which, the poverty is felt ("the poor as to the world," Revised Version; Wiesinger in Huther), or possibly the object which is the standard of comparison, i.e. in the judgment of the world (Winer, § 31:4, a). Christ here affirms the blessedness of those who are in their spirit absolutely devoid of wealth. It cannot mean that they are this in God's opinion, for in God's opinion all are so. It means, therefore, that they are this in their own opinion. While many feel in themselves a wealth of soul-satisfaction, these do not, but realize their insufficiency. Christ says that they realize this "in (their) spirit;" for the spirit is that part of us which specially craves for satisfaction, and which is the means by which we lay hold of true satisfaction. The actual craving for spiritual wealth is not mentioned in this verse. It is implied, but direct mention of it comes partly in ver. 4, and especially in ver. 6. **For theirs.** Emphatic, as in all the Beatitudes (αὐτῶν αὐτοί.). **Is.** Not hereafter (Meyer), but even already. **The kingdom of heaven** (**vide** note, p. 150). The poor in spirit already belong to and have a

share in that realm of God which now is realized chiefly in relation to our spirit, but ultimately will be realized in relation to every element of our nature, and to all other persons, and to every part, animate and inanimate, of the whole world. Matthew 5:3

## Vincent's Word Studies

Blessed (μακάριοι)

As this word and its cognates occur at least fifty-five times in the New Testament, it is important to understand its history, which is interesting because it is one of those numerous words which exhibit the influence of Christian association and usage in enlarging and dignifying their meaning. It is commonly rendered blessed, both in the A. V. and Rev., and that rendering might properly be given it in every instance.

Its root is supposed to be a word meaning great, and its earlier meaning appears to be limited to outward prosperity; so that it is used at times as synonymous with rich. It scarcely varies from this meaning in its frequent applications to the Grecian gods, since the popular Greek ideal of divine blessedness was not essentially moral. The gods were blessed because of their power and dignity, not because of their holiness. "In general," says Mr. Gladstone ("Homer and the Homeric Age") "the chief note of deity with Homer is emancipation from the restraints of moral law. Though the Homeric gods have not yet ceased to be the vindicators of morality upon earth, they have personally ceased to observe its rules, either for or among themselves. As compared with men, in conduct they are generally characterized by superior force and intellect, but by inferior morality."

In its peculiar application to the dead, there is indicated the despair of earthly happiness underlying the thought of even the cheerful and mercurial Greek. Hence the word was used as synonymous with dead. Only the dead could be called truly blessed. Thus Sophocles ("Oedipus Tyrannus"):

"From hence the lesson learn ye

To reckon no man happy till ye witness

The closing day; until he pass the border

Which severs life from death, unscathed by sorrow."

And again ("Oedipus at Colonus"):

"Happiest beyond compare,

Never to taste of life:

Happiest in order next,

Being born, with quickest speed

Thither again to turn