

“What the Beatitudes Are All About, Part 2”  
(Matthew 5:5-6)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. This morning,

We started looking at the Beatitudes,

But before we did,

We first noted a few things about them:

That they’re really describing Jesus –

He was –

And is –

This kind of man –

They also describe the work

The Spirit does in us

As He makes us more like Jesus.

That means, we can see these

As the marks of God’s grace –

When we see these things in us,

We can know that we belong to Him.

We saw that they all come as a package

And not individually –

If we have one, we will have them all,

And if there's one we don't have,  
We really don't have any of the others.

We won't have them to the same degree that Jesus does –  
He was filled with the Spirit above measure,  
He was perfect in every way –  
But we will have them to some degree –  
Which means we will be at least  
Something like Him in every area.

We saw that having these qualities,  
We are to work hard at growing in them.  
Paul tells us,  
We are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 13:14).

We saw that the blessings connected to these qualities –  
The kingdom of heaven,  
Comfort,  
Inheriting the earth, etc. –  
Are really the things that Jesus earned –  
That He receives as His reward.  
When we find these Jesus-like characteristics in ourselves –  
When we see ourselves growing in them –  
Then we're blessed:

Not only because we're becoming like Him,  
 Not only because they show  
 That we belong to Him,  
 But because belonging to Him,  
 We will inherit His kingdom –  
 And all its blessings – with Him.

Finally, we stepped back to look  
 At the larger lesson the Beatitudes teach:  
 And that is, that God's grace comes before obedience.  
 We would never be able to keep God's Law  
 In the way Jesus tells us we must to enter the Kingdom,  
 If He had not first granted us His grace –

We must always remember,  
 That obedience doesn't earn the kingdom –  
 It only shows that it belongs to us  
 Because of what God has done  
 Through His Son, Jesus Christ.

## 2. We then looked at what the Spirit does in us

Through the first two Beatitudes.

First, He works humility in us:  
 It's those who are poor in spirit

That will inherit the kingdom.

Jesus was humble:

He humbled Himself to become a man,

He humbled Himself further

By becoming a servant to us –

Even to the point of laying down His life

For us on the cross.

The Spirit creates this same quality in us:

He humbles us for our sins to bring us to Jesus;

He humbles us further

So that we might serve each other,

And those outside the church.

Humility – being a servant –

Is something Jesus prizes in His Kingdom:

He tells us that it's the servant of all

That will be the greatest (Mark 9:35) –

That's what He wants us to strive for.

We saw second,

That it's those who mourn over sin

That will have the comfort of knowing

That their sins are forgiven.

Unless our sins trouble us,  
 We'll never come to Jesus  
 To be freed from them.

Unless the sins of others –  
 And the consequences they will face for them –  
 Grieve us,  
 We won't reach out to them.

Jesus didn't have any personal sin to grieve over –  
 Because He never committed any –  
 But He did mourn the sins of those around Him  
 And did what He could to reach out to them.

#### B. Preview.

This evening,  
 We're going to consider two more Beatitudes –  
 Two more of these characteristics Jesus had:  
 Blessed are the gentle (v. 5),  
 And blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness (v. 6).

## II. Sermon.

### A. Jesus says first, "Blessed are the *gentle*, for they shall inherit the earth" (v. 5).

The word means to be kind, considerate, meek, mild, of a friendly disposition.

One further thing

That Ferguson noted about the Beatitudes,  
Is how they are the exact opposite  
Of what we find in this world –  
Isn't that true?

The people of this world aren't humble –  
They're proud –  
They don't want to serve others –  
They want others to serve them.

James tells us, "God is opposed to the proud,  
But gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6).

They don't grieve over their sins or the sins of others.  
They might be sorry if they're caught,  
They might feel a twinge of guilt in their conscience,  
But they're not grieved that they've offended God;  
And they're more often comforted  
By how the sins of others make them feel about themselves  
Than being grieved by what sin will do to them.

This shouldn't surprise us  
Because we're in two different kingdoms:  
They belong to a kingdom *of darkness*,  
And we to the kingdom *of light*;

Their father is the devil,  
While ours is God.

The same is true here:  
Those who belong to the kingdom are gentle –  
Kind, considerate, of a friendly disposition –  
While those of the world are harsh –  
They can be cruel, inconsiderate, and reserved.  
We would see more of this  
If God wasn't working by His Spirit  
To restrain the sin in their hearts.

One thing that stands out about Jesus  
Is His gentleness –  
He wasn't weak –  
No one could accuse Jesus  
Of being wimpy or powerless –  
He is the One who drove  
All the thieving Jews out of the Temple;  
Who rebuked the scribes and Pharisees  
Publicly for their hypocrisy;  
Who willingly faced all their hatred and abuse  
That He might save us from our sins.

He wasn't weak –

But He was meek –

He was kind, gentle, considerate –

He wasn't intimidating,

Or harsh and condemning,

But welcoming.

He calls out in Matthew 11:28-29, “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, *for I am gentle and humble in heart*, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS” (Matt. 11:28-29).

He was easy to approach,

Which is one of the reasons

We came to Him –

We knew if we came to Him

He wouldn't send us away empty-handed.

This is the grace the Spirit works in our souls –

He gives us the same *gentle* disposition –

So that we will be approachable –

So that others won't be afraid to come to us.

This is one of the things people look for

When they come to a church –

They look for love,

They look to be welcomed –



It's one of the signs

That the Lord is with us.

Jesus said in John 13:35, "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Years ago,

When Donna and I were looking for a church,

We visited one of the most unfriendly

And unwelcoming churches

We have ever seen:

No one greeted us,

No one talked to us,

When the pastor saw us coming toward the exit

Following the service

He turned his back to us –

Sadly, that was our first experience

With a Reformed Church –

They didn't seem to care

Whether we were there or not –

We never went back.

If we are to be effective in reaching others,

Or in ministering to those around us,

We need to have a gentle disposition;

We need to be approachable –

They need to know we care.

Gentleness isn't a weakness, but a strength –

It's the ability to be kind and considerate

Even to those who aren't.

It's really another aspect of the love

The Spirit puts in our hearts

To make us like Jesus.

But like the others,

This is something

We also need to strive to put on.

When Jesus was speaking

Of the last days before judgment fell on Jerusalem,

He said, "Because lawlessness is increased, most people's love will grow cold"  
(Matt. 24:12).

Lawlessness can have this effect in any generation.

The wickedness of those around us –

Their harshness,

Inconsiderateness,

Rudeness –

Can tend to make our love grow cold –

Tell me that the way people drive

Doesn't affect how you drive –  
That if they pass you, you don't want to pass them,  
Or if they cut you off,  
That you don't want to do the same.

We need to resist returning evil for evil,  
But seek to do good instead,  
If we are to become more like Jesus.  
It's the only way  
We'll be effective in ministering to others.

Let's also not forget the blessing  
That's attached to this:  
“Blessed are the gentle, *for they shall inherit the earth*” (v. 5).

When we exhibit this Christ-like gentleness in our lives,  
We show that He is being formed in us –  
That we belong to Him –  
And that will inherit the earth with Him –  
Not this old earth  
That has been corrupted by sin –  
But the New Earth He will bring  
When He makes all things new again  
In His eternal kingdom.

B. Second, and finally for this evening, Jesus says, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (v. 6).

We all know what it feels like to be hungry –

We feel like we have to eat –

Or to be thirsty –

We want to quench that thirst.

Jesus uses this as an image

Of how strongly we should want to do

What God tells is good and right in His Word –

Of how we should want it constantly –

He says literally,

Blessed are those who are *continually hungering*

*And thirsting* –

Ultimately, to be like Him,

Since He is the perfect example

Of what God wants us to be.

Jesus said on one occasion

That doing His Father’s will

Was more important than His necessary food –

When the disciples returned

With food from the Samaritan city,

They urged Jesus to eat.

“But He said to them, ‘I have food to eat that you do not know about.’ So the disciples were saying to one another, ‘No one brought Him *anything* to eat, did he?’ Jesus said to them, ‘*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work*’” (John 4:32-34).

This is what He was hungry for.

Doing this is what satisfied Him –

What quenched the thirst He had in His soul –

Pleasing the One He *loved the most*.

If there was any one secret to Jesus’ productivity,

It was this:

His desire to honor His Father

Kept Him continually moving forward.

This is what His Spirit works in us:

The *desire* to be like Jesus,

To move forward in furthering His goals.

This is what makes us want to read His Word,

To learn about Him –

To see what He’s like –

So that we can put on His character,

And put to death the things in our lives

That are contrary to what we see in Him –

It’s what makes us want to learn

More about what He wants us to do,  
And how we are to do it.

But even though we have  
This desire from the Spirit,  
Like the other qualities we've seen,  
We are to grow in it.

We grow by putting off the things that are sinful –  
By making no provision for our flesh  
With regard to its lusts –  
And by putting on Jesus –  
By being filled with His Spirit.

The more we have of His Spirit –  
The more we are influenced by Him –  
The more we'll want to be like Jesus –  
And so the more we will be –  
His presence strengthens all of these qualities.

If this desire is in us –  
Along with humility,  
Grieving over sin,  
And a gentle spirit –  
And if it is growing,

It shows we belong to Jesus,

And because we belong to Him,

We will not only grow more

Into His image and likeness here,

But one day we will be like Him –

Our desire will be fully satisfied.

We will enter into heaven;

Our souls will be perfected –

All of our remaining sin will be removed –

And we will bear His image perfectly –

We will love as He loved –

We will love Him,

His Father,

And the saints and angels,

With the fullness of the Spirit's love.

Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, *for they shall be satisfied*" (v. 6).

We'll look at the remaining Beatitudes in two weeks,

Lord willing. Amen.

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