

Matt 5 v7-12 Beatitudes part 2

1) Introduction

2) Blessed are the merciful (v7)

3) Blessed are the pure in heart (v8)

4) Blessed are the peacemakers (v9)

5) Blessed are those who are persecuted (v10-12)

6) You are the salt of the earth (v13)

7) You are the light of the world (v14)

Introduction

The 8 beatitudes (part of the sermon on the mount to his disciples) set forth the character expected in his followers under the rule of God.

1-4 (last week) the Christian's relation to God
(the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger & thirst for righteousness – blessings: KoH, comfort, the land & filled)

5-8 (this week) the Christian's relation to others.

NT context	last week Matt ch 4 “Do not be like them (the pagans)” Matt 6v8 seven woes - Matt 23 v13 & onwards
OT context:	“Do not do as they do (nations)” Lev 18 v1-4 God's people in exile Is 61 v1-3

“The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,
because the LORD has anointed me
to proclaim **good news to the poor.**
He has sent me to **bind up the brokenhearted,**
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and **release from darkness** for the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to **comfort all who mourn,**
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion -
to bestow on them **a crown of beauty**
instead of ashes,
the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and **a garment of praise**
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the LORD
for the display of his splendour.”

Isaiah 61 v1-3

The qualities & blessings are spiritual not physical (v3 poor in spirit, v8 pure in heart)

Plus Jesus said “my kingdom is not of this world” John 18v36

8 qualities all christians should have & 8 privileges to enjoy.

Similar to the 9 fruits of the spirit in Gal 5 (love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness & self control)

When are the blessings to be enjoyed?

v3 & v10 “for theirs is . .” (starts now)

v4/5/6/7/8/9 “for they will be . .” (future, but many are partly enjoyed now)

“Blessed” *gk makarios* - means ‘happy’ (subjective)

Also God’s view of them ‘they are blessed’ (objective)

“Blessed are the merciful . . .” (v7)

“One thing that is common to the poor in spirit, the meek, and those who hunger for righteousness is that their life is not self sufficient but looks outward for help. They understand mercy for they know their own inadequacies. When they receive grace & mercy from the King, they in turn know to show mercy to others which includes both the forgiveness of the sinner and compassion for the suffering and the needy.

They are called blessed because they place showing mercy above their own rights; it is not that they are merciful by nature, but because they have been shown mercy and live in constant dependence on the Lord.” (Allen Ross)

Similar thought to part of the Lord’s prayer “if you forgive others their sins your father will forgive you”

Mercy is compassion for people in need (gk eleemon, noun eleos = mercy, as opposed to charis = grace) & includes being willing to forgive others

Parable of the unmerciful servant Matt 18 v21-35 (debt of 10000 bags of gold cancelled – did he cancel the debt of 100 silver coins?)

“He has shown you, O man, what is good . . To act justly, to love **mercy** & to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6 v8

“ . . . for they will be shown mercy” (v7)

A day of judgment is coming:

“Everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” Matt 12 v 36-37

The Christian trusts in the power of Christ’s death to forgive our sins – because we have been shown mercy we are able show it to others & so expect to be shown mercy on that day.

“Blessed are the pure in heart . . .” (v8)

Text confirms not an outward thing - *pure=gk 'katharos'*

- Idea of mind/emotions/will cleansed of impurity
- Also unmixed emotions, no double allegiances, utterly sincere.
- Whole life (public & private) is transparent before God & men

Can't just try harder - need a new heart.

“I will give them an undivided heart & put a new spirit in them. I will remove from them their heart of stone & give them a heart of flesh”
Ez 11 v19

“If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!” 2 Cor 5 v17

“put to death . . . whatever belongs to your earthly nature: .” Col 3 v5

“ . . . for they will see God.” (v8)

“Moses said ‘now show me your glory . . .’

The LORD said ‘ . . . You cannot see my face, for no one may see me & live.’ . . . ‘When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of a rock . . .’ parts of Ex 33 v 18-23.

More aware of God in the world

Future in glory:

- Job 19 v25-27 “ I know that my redeemer lives, & that in the end he will stand upon the earth . . . *after death* . . . I myself will see him . . . How my heart yearns within me!”

“Blessed are the peacemakers . . .” (v9)

Is 9 v6-7 “ he will be called . . . Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government & peace there will be no end”

Col 1 v20 (same verb) “and through Christ to reconcile to himself all things . . . By making peace through his blood, shed on the cross”

Song by Casting Crowns ‘. . . Who am I, that the voice that calmed the sea would call out through the rain & calm the storm in me.”

Qualities of a peacemaker:

- Knowing when not to speak: James 2 v19 “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry . . .”
- Have a deep peace in themselves - not people with their own agenda.

Note place in sequence – these are humble people, mourning sin, meek, not quarrelsome.

“. . for they will be called children of God.” (v9)

“yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name,
he gave the right to become children of God . . . born of God.”

John 1 v12-13

Deeply loved

Heirs

“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness . .” (v10-12)

Not those persecuted for religious or political reasons or because they are fanatical or rude – but because of righteousness.

None of us seek this, it comes from a clash of very different value systems.

These persecutors find distasteful the righteousness for which we hunger & thirst & they have rejected the Christ we seek to follow.

V11 ‘because of me’

V12 ‘rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven’

Acts 5 v41 after being flogged “ the apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name”

“ . . for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (v10)

The blessing stated here for those who suffer such persecution in this world is that their destiny will be a complete contrast to their present humiliation - theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

And that, the disciples know, is something worth dying for. But it is not a future reality only--they have it now (and so this blessing parallels that for the poor in spirit).

Beatitudes in general:

Logical progression.

“With every beatitude the gulf is widened between the disciples & the people, & their call to come forth from the people becomes increasingly manifest.” (Bonhoeffer)

Rich blessings: kingdom of heaven, comfort, the land, being filled, shown mercy, seeing God & made heirs

“The ways of the God of Scripture appear topsy-turvy to men. For God exalts the humble & abases the proud, calls the first last & the last first, ascribes greatness to the servant, sends the rich away empty handed & declares the meek to be his heirs. The culture of the world & the counter-culture of Christ are at loggerheads with each other. In brief, Jesus congratulates those the world most pities, & calls the world’s rejects ‘blessed’.” (Stott)

Salt & Light: the Christian's influence for good in the world

Would we expect to have much impact in our world against the overwhelming tide of evil with the qualities we've just been through??

Jesus thought so “you are the salt of the earth & light of the world.”

“You are the salt of the earth” (v13)

Salt gives flavour (“Is tasteless food eaten without salt” Job 6 v6)

Salt is a preservative

Can salt lose its saltiness?

If so only good “to be thrown out & trampled underfoot.”

It can become contaminated by mixture with impurities.

Preservative - SA Biltong: cut to size & well rubbed with coarse salt.

The church is set in the world to hinder the process of social decay

- to be effective we need to be free of impurities - are we?
- Salt not much use piled up on side of plate

You are the light of the world (v14)

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” 1 Pet 2 v9

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.” Matt 5 v16

Effect of this light on others

For both salt & light each affirmation begins in the greek sentence with the emphatic pronoun ‘you’ meaning ‘you & only you’

So we must not fail – there is no plan B

Glimpses of holiness this evening.

Do any of us feel comfortable?
How will you react?

Marvel at the beauty of life under the rule of God

Don't gloss over sinful thoughts/ways – mourn & put them to death
. . If your not a Christian start here, if you are one continue in this.

As a Christian this is not all down to you – we have the holy spirit

Bathe in his grace & mercy deeply – that you may show it to
others.

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion
until the day of Christ Jesus” Phil 1 v6

BE WHAT YOU ARE!