



Jesus had been walking with his disciples always teaching and talking with them. More and more people would see Jesus and follow him because they could sense there was something special about him. The way he spoke and what he spoke about captured everyone's attention.

This was one of those days and people had been following and Jesus decided to stop on a hillside with his disciples and teach to all who wanted to listen.

Jesus will make ten points in the first part of his sermon known as the beatitudes. All except one of these points start with the word blessed. So we should probably figure out what the word means before we continue.

To be blessed is to be more than happy. Life doesn't always go our way, sometimes we get sick or someone gets hurt and of course this doesn't make us happy but being blessed is being full of joy on the inside even if things aren't perfect.

It's a deeper joy because we know, as believers, that the spirit of God lives in us and we will live with him in heaven someday.

Jesus starts off with blessed are those who are poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Being poor in spirit means that we aren't attached to all the stuff that we have. That you understand that God has given you all the great things or blessings and we should be very thankful and even willing to give them up or share them with others. All our things on earth doesn't matter because we can't take it with us to heaven which will be more amazing than we can imagine.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Mourning is when we're really sad. Maybe you've cried because you got hurt or someone you knew died but this is different than that. This is being very upset about those people that haven't heard about God or even about the sin in your life. You might not think about these things very much yet but as you get closer to God this will bother you and that's okay. God promises to comfort us when we need it.

Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Being meek is being patient, not easily angered and not thinking of yourself too highly. A bad example of this in the Bible were the Pharisees. They would make sure people knew that they were fasting and praying and seemed proud about what they were doing for God. Except God is looking for us to do these things without putting on a show for others but doing it just for God, not for approval from others. Doing a nice, kind thing for someone is super, but we can always keep on doing that, plus more.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Being righteous is impossible on our own. Can we always do right by God? No,

and God knows that. We can try our best to do the right thing and if we don't, we can ask for forgiveness and the forgiveness erases all the bad. The verse not only asks us to try to be righteous but to hunger and thirst for it. Have you ever been really hungry and thirsty? To be truly hungry and thirsty you might have to go without food or water for more than a day or two. God wants us to need and feel like we're starving for righteousness and He will fill us up with it.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. To have mercy is to be loving and kind to others. This doesn't mean just being loving and kind to your family and friends but also to those who you might not know and even those you don't like.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Being pure is like having a clean heart. Like the heart inside of us, it pumps blood and keeps us alive and if something is wrong with our heart we won't work right. Jesus is talking about the place where we think and make decisions, why we do things, and our thoughts. If we keep our mind, thoughts and decisions full of good, God says we'll understand Him more.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. The simplest way to explain this is someone who makes peace. Helping others to get along would be a big part of it. The second part of this beatitude says: then you will be called the children of God. Being God's child would mean that you truly are a part of God's family and that you're starting to be more like Him; just like we are with our parents.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. God knows that being who He wants is not the way the world acts. By doing the opposite of the world we will be made fun of or worse because people don't understand why we don't do things only for ourselves. By living a life doing things for others confuses the way the world thinks. A lot of people in the world want beauty, money, and don't care about others as long as they get what they want. This is opposite to the life God wants us to lead. Doing the right thing isn't easy but God wants us to know that the kingdom of heaven is waiting for us if we can get through the tough times in this life.

The beatitudes end saying that we should rejoice and be glad because by following these we will receive great treasures in heaven.

God promises that we will be blessed if we follow these teachings but it won't be easy. We all are still figuring out how to do these things. Don't be discouraged. God calls us to be different than the rest of the world.

Keep in mind that the beatitudes are impossible to do without God's help. He wants to help and be a big part of decisions you make and all that you do.

Jesus didn't give us these beatitudes and then want us to fail. He wanted to give us something to aim for, to work on our whole life to try to achieve. He wants us to try our best and give us a life full of blessings and reward us even bigger in heaven someday.

Thursday's Task:

Answer these three questions thoroughly:

In your own words, what are the Beatitudes?

What do they have to do with the Ten Commandments and our topic Freedom with Responsibility?

Why do you think Jesus gave us the Beatitudes?

Then give an example of you, someone from the Bible and someone you have learned about living one of these Beatitudes. You may choose one or different Beatitudes for each!

Friday's Task:

Think about why Jesus gave us the Beatitudes and what we must do with them. Use them to inspire you to write an Acrostic Poem.

Write an Acrostic Poem using the word Beatitudes - include examples of how you should behave and use as a guide to live a good life according to Jesus. Add an explanation of what you believe God wants from us, using the Beatitudes as a guide.

Example:

Beatitudes

Be a peacemaker- don't argue!

Enjoy your friends and family.

Always help your parents.

Trust God.

Imitate Jesus by forgiving others.

Treat others with a Jesus kind of love.

Understand when a friend needs you.

Don't worry - God is near!

Each weekend, attend Mass.

Smile!