

Matthew 05

Scriptures:

Matthew 4:17 - From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Notes:

Matthew 5 to 7 are referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. It is probably Jesus' most famous sermon and most powerful. Saint Augustine referred to as 'a perfect standard of the Christian life.'

"No other section of Scripture makes us face ourselves like the Sermon on the Mount. It is violent, but its violence can be our ongoing liberation! It is the antidote to the pretense and sham that plagues Christianity." (Hughes, 2001) page 14

The Sermon on the Mount begins with the Beatitudes – or as someone called them the 'Beautiful Attitudes'.

The first and eighth beatitudes end with the same reward – the kingdom of heaven. According to Hebrew style – that means all of them have the same reward.

Jesus began His public ministry by calling people to repent ([Matt. 4:17](#)). The Sermon on the Mount is directed to those who have responded. This sermon describes the character of the kingdom of God and of those who choose to live in it.

The Beatitudes describe the character of a citizen of heaven. The Beatitudes are a ladder that a believers ascends (or maybe descends) on their journey to Christlikeness.

Matthew 5:1-3 - Kingdom Character – Poor in Spirit!

Scriptures:

¹ And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a

G3793 - crowd

Notes:
'disciples' – probably referring to the Twelve. But it could also mean anyone who was interested in learning from Him.

mountain, and when He was seated His

disciples came to Him.

G3101 – follower,
pupil, learner

Scriptures:

² Then He opened His mouth and taught them,

G1321 – to give
instruction.

Notes:
This is one of the things Jesus came to do – to teach people about the kingdom of God.

As believers, we should be willing to be taught about the kingdom of God.

saying:

Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 6:20 - For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Romans 7:18 - For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.

Isaiah 61:1 -

The Spirit of the Lord
GOD is upon Me,

Because the LORD has
anointed Me

To preach good tidings to
the poor;

He has sent Me to heal
the brokenhearted,

To proclaim liberty to the
captives,

And the opening of the
prison to those who are
bound;

Revelation 3:17-18 -

Because you say, 'I am rich,
have become wealthy, and
have need of nothing'—and
do not know that you are
wretched, miserable, poor,
blind, and naked—18 I
counsel you to buy from
Me gold refined in the fire,
that you may be rich; and
white garments, that you
may be clothed, that the
shame of your nakedness
may not be revealed; and
anoint your eyes with eye
salve, that you may see.

Luke 18:10-14 - "Two men
went up to the temple to
pray, one a Pharisee and
the other a tax collector.
11 The Pharisee stood and
prayed thus with himself,
'God, I thank You that I am
not like other men—
extortioners, unjust,
adulterers, or even as this
tax collector. 12 I fast twice
a week; I give tithes of all
that I possess.' 13 And the
tax collector, standing afar
off, would not so much as
raise his eyes to heaven,
but beat his breast, saying,
'God, be merciful to me a
sinner!' 14 I tell you, this
man went down to his
house justified rather than
the other; for everyone
who exalts himself will be
humbled, and he who
humbles himself will be
exalted."

Ephesians 2:4-6 - But God,
who is rich in mercy,
because of His great love
with which He loved us,
5 even when we were dead
in trespasses, made us alive
together with Christ (by
grace you have been
saved), 6 and raised us up
together, and made us sit
together in the heavenly
places in Christ Jesus...

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the

G3107 – happy,
fortunate,

G4434 –
destitute,
beggarly, humble,

G4151 – inner
being,

kingdom of heaven.

them less 'poor in spirit.'
Jesus referred to that in a
parable (Luke 18:10-14).

Spiritual poverty is not
something we ever outgrow.
In fact, the more spiritually
mature we become, the
more aware we should be of
our spiritual insufficiency.

"A perpetual awareness of
our spiritual insufficiency
opens us to continually
receiving spiritual riches."
(Hughes, 2001) pages 20

'for theirs is the kingdom of
heaven' – Spiritual poverty
today results in spiritual
riches both now and in the
future. Many of the rewards
of real faith in Christ are
experienced by faith today.
We are seated with Christ
today (Eph. 2:4-6).

Poverty of spirit, or humility
before God, makes us free
to be filled with God and to
experience more grace. The
opposite of being poor in
spirit is pride, which
enslaves someone to
whatever is the object of
pride.

Jesus was born to humble parents
and was first declared to humble
shepherds.

Poverty of spirit is a sign of grace.
There are many in the world who
claim to be Christians who have
never known even a moment of
spiritual emptiness. They are not
saved – they are the tares among
the wheat.

No one can come to Jesus without
poverty of spirit. Only those who
know there is nothing in them that
makes them worthy of God's grace,
especially the grace of salvation, can
be saved.

The spiritually proud or self-
sufficient, those who think there is
something in them that makes them
worthy of God's undeserved grace –
are lost.

No one deserves to enter the
kingdom of heaven. Only those who
know that their only hope is to put
their faith in Christ and utterly
depend on Him for everything
spiritually.

The problem with some Christians is
that they used to be poor in spirit.
Somehow, they grew out of spiritual
poverty. That is the state of the
Laodicean church (Rev. 3:17-18). As
our experience with God grows,
there is a serious temptation to
depend upon our own knowledge
and experience rather than on God
and His grace.

This is a real problem for religious
people. Their religion may make

Another rendering of this verse is:
"Blessed are those who realize that
they have nothing within themselves
to commend them to God, for theirs
is the kingdom of God." (Hughes,
2001) page 18

The world has a different view on
what it means to be blessed. To the
world the man who is blessed is rich
or powerful or famous, or influential,
or popular, or satisfied within
themselves. To those in this modern
world, blessedness is found in self.

There has never been a time in
human history when self-worship
dominated the culture as it does
now. Modern media and music have
long played a role in promoting a
love of self. With the introduction of
social media, this has exploded
exponentially.

One of the big problems in social
media is that it promotes self-
worship to spiritually weak people. If
someone lives in the false world of
self-worship they will eventually
sense that the god (themselves) they
are worshipping can't help them. It
is very common for people who have
grown up in the delusion of social
media to struggle with depression
and despair and suicidal ideation.
That is not because they are poor in
spirit – they are poor in self. The
answer is not to build self-esteem –
it is to dethrone yourself and let
Jesus be God in your life.

If we ever want to know God's smile
and experience true happiness it will
be as a result of being truly poor in
spirit.

At the beginning of Jesus' public
ministry, He read in the synagogue
in Nazareth out of the book of (Isa.
61:1). He concluded that reading and
told them that that Scripture had
been fulfilled in Him. This was His
first claim to be the Messiah.

Notes:

'Blessed' – can mean happy, but that
is not what it means here. Happiness
is subjective. Happiness is
dependent upon our circumstances.
Happiness is about how we feel.

It should be noted that the Old
Testament ends with the word
'curse', while Jesus' first sermon
opens with the word 'blessed.' Jesus
came to redeem mankind and
deliver them from the curse of sin.

Blessing comes from outside of us. It
is an objective declaration by God of
how He feels about us.

"Jesus is not declaring how people
feel; rather He is making an
objective statement about what God
thinks of them. Blessed is a positive
judgment by God on the individual
that means 'to be approved' or 'to
find approval.' So, when God blesses
us, He approves us." (Hughes, 2001)
page 16

Blessed people are more likely to be
happy because knowing God's
approval is pleasant. To be blessed is
to know the smile of God over your
life.

There is nothing wrong with wanting
to be happy. The question is, which
is more important to you – your
happiness or God's approval?

'poor in spirit' – is not about the
absence of self-worth. You are worth
a lot – Jesus died to prove that to
you (1 Cor. 6:20).

It is also not about the false humility
that constantly reminds people how
humble you are.

The word for 'poor' is used for
someone who is utterly dependent
on others – a beggar.

"Until we are emptied of self we
cannot be filled with God."
(Spurgeon, 2012) page 20

'in spirit' gives us the key to
understanding this poverty. It is not
about the physical world, but the
spiritual.

"Blessed are those who are so
desperately poor in their spiritual
resources that they realize they
must have help from outside
sources." (Hughes, 2001) page 17

This spiritual poverty is the personal
acknowledgment of spiritual
bankruptcy. It is the realization that
you have nothing spiritually to draw
upon.

To be 'poor in spirit' is to understand
the depth of your sin nature. It is to
admit that deep down, we are all
morally corrupt and that there is
nothing good in us (Rom 7:18).

It is a confession of our total moral
unworthiness before God.

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