

“The Blessings of Living Backward”

Matthew 5:1-16

Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”
(Luke 14:11)

“We are beggars, this is true.” - Martin Luther

Blessed are those who Mourn

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified.” (Isaiah 61:1-3)

Blessed are the Meek

“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
(Philippians 2:5-8)

“In just a little while, the wicked will be no more; though you look carefully at his place, he will not be there. But the meek shall inherit the land and delight themselves in abundant peace.” (Psalm 37:10-11)

Blessed are those who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

“As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, “Where is your God?” These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival. Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation” (Psalm 42:1-5)

“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You.”

- Augustine of Hippo

Blessed are the Merciful

“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.” (Colossians 2:13-14)

Blessed are the Pure in Heart

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person’s religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” (James 1:27)

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10)

Blessed are the Peacemakers

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that

is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.” (2 Corinthians 5:17-20)

Blessed are those who are Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake

“Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12)

Notes

Discuss

- *Which of the beatitudes are you most encouraged by? Which one do you have the hardest time believing?*
- *What are some practical ways that you can be a peacemaker and “let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven”?*
- *Read Revelation 21. How do we see the fulfillment of all of the promises of the beatitudes?*

Read

Psalm 19, Psalm 51, Ezekiel 36:22-27, Revelation 21

Pray

- *Ask God to help our church live out the beatitudes and live in light of their promises.*
- *Ask God to give our church boldness to be ambassadors for Christ and to shine as lights in the world.*