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MATTHEW 5:3-10 THE BEATITUDES

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**3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Poor in spirit = honest realization of our own spiritual bankruptcy. No ability to pay our own way into the kingdom of heaven.

**4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.**

Mourning over our own sinful state and the sinful state of the world around us.

See Isaiah 61:1-3 and Ezra 10:6

**5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.**

Meekness is not about personality but character. The strength to not assert our plan, will or purpose.

See Psalm 37:1-11 for a good description of the meek person

**6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.**

Hunger and thirst are survival instincts. As it is for food and water in a creature, so it is with God’s word, God’s will and God’s purposes for the believer. Unlike with food however, the more we are filled by God, the more we hunger and thirst.

See Psalm 107:4-7 and Amos 8:11-12

**7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**

Includes both thoughts and acts of mercy, born out of the great mercy shown to us by the Father.

See Genesis 45:1-15, Luke 10:25-37

**8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.**

The life of the pure of heart has one focus and one objective; the plans, purpose and will of God for their lives and the lives of others.

**9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

Having experienced first-hand Christ’s mission to bring peace between God and man, the believer is able and willing to extend the gospel message of peace.

See Isaiah 52:7

**10 Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

This would include the violence, ridicule, dismissiveness, exclusion and marginalisation experienced because of the believer’s hunger for and participation in the will of God for their life. Taking up the cross is not an optional extra for the super spiritual, but a place of blessing for those in the kingdom of heaven.

See 1 Peter 3:8-17 and Philippians 3:8-11

REFLECTION + DISCUSSION

What does Matthew 5:1-2 tell us about the context for the sermon on the mount?

Who is the target audience for the message?

The order of the beatitudes is important. Discuss how they build upon one another.

Consider an example of how Jesus Christ lived out each of the beatitudes during his life on earth. Why is the first beatitude, being poor in spirit, more difficult to assign to Jesus Christ than the others?

How does the blessedness described in the beatitudes differ from the blessedness the world promises?

