

### Background

“Blessed” (Greek) makarios = happy (refers to an inner happiness that is not influenced by circumstance) Jesus used “makarios” 9 times in the Sermon

“Blessed” (Hebrew) barukh = a blessing from God

The bedrock of Jesus teaching is poverty. It takes a good amount of time for us to understand his concept of poverty. Only knowledge of our own poverty can bring us to a point where Jesus can implement his plan within us.

Every state of happiness that Jesus mentions in the Beatitudes was viewed as a curse by the people to whom he was preaching. The only sign that Jews (and Pagans) believed to be a blessing from God was material wealth and prosperity.

Each Beatitude in relation to others around us is simple and easy to understand

Each Beatitude in relation to God is much more difficult

Each Beatitude grows out of the former and feeds a higher level of Christian growth

Yet each Beatitude is complete in itself

Each Beatitude must be viewed in the present...the Now. They do not relate to a future condition

Beatitude 1 begins where Mosaic Law leaves off (Malachi 4: 1-5)

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5: 1-10) is to the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5: 1 – 7:28) as The Ten Commandments are to Mosaic Law.

Within Christianity, the concept of happiness ultimately comes from being in right relation to and with God and all of his creation, and living in the “new world order” of Jesus and the True Sacred.

---

### Blessed (happy) are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Poor in spirit in relation to God

A pauper before God

Unable to lift oneself closer to God but the Holy Spirit enables us to become closer

Unable to receive the Holy Spirit until we are aware of and acknowledge our own spiritual poverty

Spiritual poverty is the lowest rung on the ladder, but we must begin there. It is the beginning of spiritual growth. Spiritual poverty is the ultimate disgrace, but the premise of possessing the “kingdom of heaven” is the reward (comfort).

Pride vs. Humility

Human will interacts with the Holy Spirit

Poor in spirit are able to possess the kingdom of heaven

---

### Blessed (happy) are those who mourn, for they will be comforted

Far beyond weeping, this is a state of deep lament that lasts a lifetime

Mourning for sin (our own and that of others)

Reward is the joy of the remission of sin

Mourning for the difficulty of life

Reward is the joy of eternal life

Mourning for the joys of the world that must be left behind in order to follow Christ

Reward is the joy of divine love

---

### Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth

Meekness can equate with gentleness, but meekness directly relates to anger and the management of anger

Greek = práos = power under control (controlled strength)

To inherit the earth ("the land of the living" is the Old Testament phrase used to refer to the earth in a harmonious state)

Anger most often the result of the outcome of external issues

Anger often involves pre-determined thought and expectations

Those who have difficulty with Beatitude 3 usually had difficulty with Beatitude 1 as well

Being angry with restraint is much more difficult than the ability to become angry

St. John Chrysostom: "Among many eternal promises, Jesus has placed one earthly promise."

The "land of the dead" is subject to corruption and sin (Ps. 27:13)

---

### Blessed (happy) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled

It is not enough to do works of justice if you do not desire justice

It is fortitude that allows one to work for justice

Hebrew: tzedek = justice; mishpat = righteousness

Greek = dikaiosyne = 1 word = righteousness and justice: living in a way that is pleasing to God and in right relationship with others and creation, characterized by justice

Plato The Republic (Book 4) lists the 4 Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance

Justice works in harmonious regulation; one who hungers for justice, hungers for all other virtues.

Justice is not just one virtue among others, but rather it is the virtue that has to do with the harmonious, concurrent functioning of all the virtues in a person's life