

Text: Matthew 5:1-11

Meaning: Jesus describes those who are truly blessed of God

Big Idea: The blessings of God are not as they seem

Objective: I want the hearers to live for true blessings

Theme:

Matthew stuff:

KINGDOM NARRATIVE – 53 times word Kingdom used, more than any other book in the entire Bible

GOSPEL – euangelion in the Greek, Alexander the Great

Hellenism – Education, Healthcare, Entertainment, Sports

Romans – PEACE, Pax Romana

GOSPEL OF A WORLDLY KINGDOM WHO MAKES YOUR LIFE SO MUCH BETTER. Caesar is king of kings and lord of lords.

MATTHEW, THE GOSPEL WRITERS SAY – NO, I HAVE A MUCH BETTER GOSPEL – JESUS HAD A MUCH BETTER GOSPEL! There is a NEW KINGDOM AND A NEW KING - JESUS IS KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS – TRUST HIM, TAKE ON HIS WAY OF LIFE! THIS IS AN INCREDIBLY SUBVERSIVE THING TO SAY – IT FLIES IN THE FACE OF ROMAN AUTHORITY – HENCE WHY SUCH PERSECUTION CAME TO THE EARLY CHURCH BECAUSE THEY WERE SEEN AS SUBVERSIVES

Matthew 5:17, 20 – THEME VERSES

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them....For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew written to a HEBREW AUDIENCE – portrays Jesus as the NEW MOSES

Moses – went up on Mt Sinai and brought down the law of God

Jesus – goes up on the Mountain to explain the law of God

**OT, Hebrew Scriptures – BLACK AND WHITE TELEVISION
NT, JESUS – HIGH DEFINITION**

Jesus begins with the famous beatitudes

ARE YOU HAPPY?

IS YOUR FAMILY BETTER OR WORSE BASED ON YOUR CURRENT LIFESTYLE?

IS YOUR WALK WITH GOD STRONGER OR WEAKER BECAUSE OF YOUR COMMITMENTS?

READ MATTHEW 5:1-11

BLESSED – means happy or content, akin to the Hebrew idea of SHALOM

SHALOM – THE GOAL OF TRUE RELIGION

The Hebrew word for peace, shalom (שלום) is derived from a root denoting wholeness or completeness

Shalom refers to a state of affairs, one of well-being, tranquility, prosperity, and security – but it also refers to a way of life – one which overcomes strife, stress, anxiety, performance, insecurity, covetousness, or rivalry

SHALOM IS SEEN AS THE PURPOSE OF OUR VERY EXISTENCE – TO BE AT PEACE WITH GOD AND MAN – THE CONTENTED LIFE
HENCE THE NAME OF OUR SERIES – ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.
THAT SHOULD BE OUR GOAL – TO LIVE TODAY AS THINGS ARE NOW IN HEAVEN.

Shalom – means LESS IS MORE. Shalom means SABBATH. Shalom means HITTING THE PAUSE BUTTON AND RESTING IN GOD'S PROVISION AND PLAN.

1. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS FOR THOSE WE LEAST EXPECT

In verse one Matthew writes that when Jesus saw the crowds he then brought the disciples together and began to teach them. It's almost as if the crowd is an object lesson for the disciples. That begs that question: WHO WAS IN THIS CROWD?

V. 25 of ch. 2 – Large crowds followed him from GALILEE, THE DECAPOLIS, JERUSALEM, JUDEA, and BEYOND THE JORDAN.

When you study who it was that lived in these regions this is a huge group of people who have very little in common, and who in fact historically didn't like each other.

GALILEE – Hebrew Rednecks, blue collar, lower middle class
JERUSALEM – possibly affluent politically connected folks
JUDEA – more religious folks, educated crowd
DECAPOLIS, BEYOND THE JORDAN – Gentiles, pagans, liberal Jews

SO, DON'T MISS THE SIGNIFICANCE – JESUS IS TELLING TO DISCIPLES- THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS FOR THOSE YOU LEAST EXPECT. IT'S NOT FOR THE RELIGIOUS ELITE. IT'S NOT FOR ONLY THOSE WHO COME FROM A PURE RELIGIOUS HERITAGE – THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS FOR THE BROKEN, FOR THE SINNER, FOR THE HURTING, AND FOR THE OUTCAST.

OUTCAST – Another one of Matthew's major themes in the gospel. Matthew had turned his back on his Jewish heritage and gone to work as a tax collector for the Romans – he was most likely a HATED AND DESPISED INDIVIDUAL BASED ON HIS TREASONOUS ACTIONS.

But JESUS GAVE MATTHEW ANOTHER CHANCE – SO MATTHEW SPENDS SIGNIFICANT TIME DECLARING THAT THE GOSPEL IS FOR THE OUTCAST!

JESUS HIMSELF SAID he came to bind up the brokenhearted, to set the captives free, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the sick, and to comfort the hurting.

In fact – the religious elite derided him often as being one who spent time with SINNERS AND TAX COLLECTORS! To which Jesus replied – IT'S NOT THOSE WHO ARE WELL WHO NEED THE PHYSICIAN IT IS THOSE WHO ARE SICK!

TODAY – IF YOU FEEL UNWORTHY, IF YOU FEEL UNLOVED, IF RELIGION HAS TOLD YOU THAT YOU AND UNFIT AND NOT GOOD ENOUGH – THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL IS THIS KINGDOM IS FOR YOU!

The love of God is available today! Peace is available today! Forgiveness is available today! Christ loves you and is offering you a radical relationship with Him!

CHURCH – KEEP IN MIND THE LESSON HE IS TEACHING HIS DISCIPLES HERE – THEY VERY ONES WE THINK ARE OUTSIDE THE BLESSING OF GOD JUST MIGHT BE THE VERY ONES ACTUALLY EXPERIENCING IT!

MISSION TRIP EX. – When we help others in need in our city or around the world it is so easy to say – YOU KNOW WE FORGET JUST HOW BLESSED WE ARE.

ARE YOU REALLY? The beggar on the street with Jesus is infinitely more blessed than the rich man without Jesus. The terminally ill person with Jesus is more blessed than the healthy person without Jesus. The Child of God living every day with possibility of

persecution at his doorstep is much more blessed than the unbeliever living in luxury and ease.

BELOVED – I AM NOT SAYING GOD WANTS US POOR AND SICK AND DESTITUTE. WHAT I AM SAYING IS THAT OUR HOPE AND IDENTITY IS IN MATERIAL THINGS AND A COMFORTABLE EXISTENCE A WHOLE LOT MORE THAN MAYBE WE LIKE TO ADMIT.

The question is what are you doing with what you've been given?
HOW ARE YOU PRAYING FOR THE PERSECUTED? HOW ARE YOU SUPPORTING MISSIONARIES AND MINISTRIES AROUND THE WORLD THAT NEED OUR HELP? HOW ARE WE HELPING AND SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS RIGHT HERE IN OUR CITY? HOW ARE WE DISPLAYING THE KINGDOM OF GOD, WHICH IS ACTS 2 – THEY WERE SELLING ALL THEIR PROPERTY AND POSSESSIONS AND DISTRIBUTING TO ANY AS THEY HAD NEED – THAT'S A KINGDOM WAY OF LIFE!

2. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS A WAY OF LIFE

Salvation is a way of life. Following Jesus means taking on his lifestyle. We have dumbed salvation down to this thing of profess Christ, get baptized, get in church programs, and you're good. The truth is it is so much more than that.

SALVATION IS SELLING OUT TO A WHOLE NEW WAY OF LIVING AND RELATING TO OTHERS.

At first glance these characteristics seem a little random. Good rules of thumb but no real pattern or theme to them. However, when you take a closer look at the Greek you realize – this section FORMS A CHIASM.

CHIASM - A chiasm (also called a chiasmus) is a literary device in which a sequence of ideas is presented and then repeated *in reverse order*. The result is a "mirror" effect as the ideas are "reflected" back in

a passage. Each idea is connected to its "reflection" by a repeated word, often in a related form. The term *chiasm* comes from the Greek letter *chi*, which looks like our letter X. Chiastic pattern is also called "ring structure."

<https://www.gotquestions.org/chiasm-chiastic.html>

EX – WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH THE TOUGH GET GOING

In a chiasm – IT IS THE MIDDLE POINT OF THE CHIASM THAT IS THE THEME OF THE PASSAGE.

BEATITUDES – THIS SECTION IS A CHIASM

CHIASMIC STRUCTURE

A - Blessed are the POOR IN SPIRIT

B – Blessed are those WHO MOURN

C – Blessed are the MEEK

D – Blessed are HUNGER FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS

D – Blessed are MERCIFUL

C – Blessed are PURE IN HEART

B – Blessed are PEACEMAKERS

A – Blessed are the PERSECUTED

IT'S LOVE GOD AND LOVE PEOPLE – THE GREATEST TWO COMMANDMENTS ACCORDING TO JESUS – IT'S THE HEBREW SHEMA – DEUTERONOMY 6

IT'S THE TWO BEAMS OF THE CROSS – VERTICAL AND HORIZONTAL. Jesus makes us RIGHT WITH GOD – BUT THEN HE RADICALLY CHANGES THE WAY WE RELATE TO OTHERS. MERCY, RESTRAINT, MEEKNESS, GENTLENESS, AND LOVE BECOME OUR DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS WHEN FOLLOWING JESUS.

Jesus says THIS IS WHAT MY KINGDOM LOOKS LIKE:

POOR IN SPIRIT – a beggar not just someone living paycheck to paycheck

MOURN – persecuted or cast aside will be comforted

MEEK – speaks of power under control, restraint. I could say this or that, or I could do this or that, and I have every earthly right to do it – but I don't because it will not exemplify Christ

PURE IN HEART – the person with no agenda, no selfish motivation, no ulterior motive will see God

PEACEMAKERS – the person who actively works toward peace is blessed, not the person who intentionally tries to hurt or harm or take advantage of others for his/her own gain

PERSECUTED – the blessed people are those who daily cry out to God for deliverance from the enemy.

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT WIDELY ACCEPTED

In verse 11 Jesus changes the language from BLESSED ARE THOSE to BLESSED ARE YOU. The you is the disciples, and Jesus tells them blessed are you when you promote this new kingdom way of life even though it will not be popular. Buckle up boys, because preaching this gospel will lead to great persecution in your life because it is a direct affront to the enemy and the authority structures and messages of this world.

Mankind is sinful at heart. Man would rather have his money, his power, his control, his comforts, his possessions, his pride, and his autonomy than SUBMIT TO CHRIST AS KING AND HIS KINGDOM WAY OF LIFE.

There are millions of Christians that deal with direct persecution as a daily reality.