

**MATTHEW (THE KING, HIS KINGDOM AND ME)
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WEEK 2 (910341)
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SERIES: Matthew (The King, His Kingdom And Me)

TITLE: Program 8 – Blessed Are The Righteous

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

I'm standing on a mountain overlooking the Sea of Galilee in the land of Israel, it is called the Mount of Beatitudes. This is the famous place where Jesus taught the Sermon on the Mount. O Beloved, it was a life-changing message, it was one that astonished people. Come with me and together we'll study the Sermon on the Mount.

PART ONE

Having established who Jesus Christ is and having given us the prophecies that have been fulfilled, the words of the prophets that have been recorded, Matthew now takes us to Jesus' first discourse. This is the discourse on the famous Sermon on the Mount, is what we call it. It occurred here, in all probability, on what they call the Mount of Beatitudes; a beautiful mountain overlooking the Sea of Galilee, overlooking the region of Galilee, where Jesus will spend a great time in public ministry. It says in Matthew chapter

5, “When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. [And] He opened His mouth and [He] began to teach them, saying, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ‘Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. ‘[And] blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they [will] see God. ‘Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called [the] sons of God. ‘Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ‘Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ‘Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before [them they will persecute you.]” (Matthew 5:11-12) We will be persecuted for following Jesus and yet this is part of the beatitudes: blessed, happy, content is the man who has this character. As Jesus begins this teaching there are several words that you need to watch and that you need to mark, one of those is one that you are marking already, and it’s the word “righteousness.” The Sermon on the Mount is all about the righteousness, the character, of those who are true followers of Jesus Christ. [Remember when John the Baptist came into the region baptizing the scribes and the Pharisees came to be baptized of John and he told them they were a brood of vipers and that they were to bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance? He brought them down because they were not righteous.] (*Referring to Matthew 3:6-8*) And now what Jesus is going to do and what Matthew is going to accomplish in this gospel is Matthew is going to show us that the kingdom of heaven belongs to those who are righteous, it’s those that are going to be blessed of God, and so he gives a description of a character that is very opposite to the character of the scribes and the

Pharisees. Now I've done extensive teaching here in the land of Israel on the Sermon on the Mount and so I'm not going to give all the details because you can take it in depth, we have a whole Precept course on the Sermon on the Mount, but what I want to do is move through the text and I want to summarize it as we go along because the course that I wrote is very, very long and there's so much rich, rich food here for your soul. But when we look at it he opens up with this statement of ["Blessed are those...,"] and He is describing the character of the righteous and He begins with this important statement. Verse 3, **"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."** (Matthew 5:3) Now remember He is coming and He is preaching after John the Baptist, **"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."** (Matthew 3:2) So who is going to have the kingdom of heaven? Who is going to possess the kingdom of heaven? Well it is those that are poor in spirit and this word "poor" means that you see that you are so dirt poor. You are so poverty stricken that you cannot even lift up your head. Your bowed down and you feel such poverty of spirit that you can't lift up your head, that you can't look up at the person standing above you. And He says, ["I want you to know that that is the heart's attitude of those that are going to belong to the kingdom of heaven, of those that are going to inherit the kingdom of heaven."] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 3:2) Well the Pharisees would never walk that way. The Pharisees were proud, the Pharisees were arrogant, the Pharisees, as you are going to see when we get to Matthew chapter 6, ["practice their righteousness in order to be seen of men."] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 6:1) They exalted themselves and He is saying that is not who is going to enter the kingdom of heaven. It's the poor in spirit, it's those that realize their deep-seated poverty, it is those that recognized their sin, it is those that come in the state of poverty to lift up a hand to God and say, "There is nothing about me that makes me deserving of the kingdom of heaven." I want to go back for just a minute so that you do not miss it and I want to take you back to Matthew chapter 3, just by way

of review, it says, [“Jerusalem and Judea and the district around the Jordan were all going out to John the Baptist.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 3:6) In verse 7, **“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and [the] Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, ‘You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ‘Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance....’** Now watch what he says, **“...and do not suppose that you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham [as] our father....’”** He says, “Don’t exalt in the fact that you were born a Jew that’s not what’s going to get you in heaven.” And then He goes on to say that **“...the axe is already laid at the root of the tree; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.” (Matthew 3:7-10)** So he is letting them know that if they do not see their need for repentance, and He says over and over again to them, **“...I baptize you with water for repentance....” (Matthew 3:11)** He is calling them to repentance. Well it’s the poor in spirit who are repentant, it’s the poor in spirit that see themselves as they really are, and it’s to those that he gives the kingdom of heaven. Well, if you see your poverty of spirit the next thing you are going to do is you are going to mourn for your sin and so He says in Matthew chapter 5 verse 4, **“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4)** Have you mourned, have you grieved over your sin, has it broken your heart what you did to God, how you walked in arrogance and how you walked in your independent living and your independent lifestyle, how you broke His commandments? Does that bring sorrow to your heart? Then God is able to comfort you. He is able to comfort you because you have the same heart that He has in respect to sin. Then He says, **“Blessed are the gentle [or blessed are the meek], for they [will] inherit the earth.” (Matthew 5:5)** Now the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the scribes are all going to try to manipulate things to get their way. You are going to watch it all the way through the gospel of Matthew, as a matter of fact. Through the Gospel of Matthew what you are going to have, is you are going to have a

contrast between the religious who do not know God and the righteous who have walked in repentance and believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. Well as you look at them, one of the things that you see is, you see that the scribes and the Pharisees and the Sadducees are anything but gentle. They are anything but humble. The word for “gentle” here or translated “meekness” in the King James Version which I really prefer because it’s far more than gentle, it’s the word “prautes,” “p-r-a-u-t-e-s.” And that word was used of taking a horse and putting the reins under it and bringing that horse into submission so this is a temperament, it is a spirit; I would say it is a spirit rather, it is a spirit that says I am not going to exalt myself or go down to the depths but rather I am going to walk in complete and absolute trust of God. It’s like putty in the hands of God so that God can do with you as He pleases and you don’t resist Him. That is what it means to be gentle, that is what it means to be humble; that’s what it means to be meek. It’s a lowness of spirit it’s a servant kind of thing. He says, “**...They [will] inherit the earth.**” (Matthew 5:5) Now that’s so different than what we think. We think it’s the aggressors. We think it’s the ones that are out there just pushing and moving and manipulating to get their way. They are the ones that are going to inherit the earth and Jesus says, “Oh no, oh no you have it backwards.” Then He says, “**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.**” (Matthew 5:6) I came to know Jesus Christ at the age of 29, I moved from a religion to a relationship, I moved from an immoral lifestyle from a divorce and immorality on my part to coming to know Christ and being absolutely transformed. And I remember one day I was lying on the floor on my tummy with the Bible propped in front of me and reading it and I had been praying, “Oh God, what if I want to be a holy woman of God? What if I really, really want to be everything You want me to be. Will You let me be it?” And I looked down and I read, “**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they [will] be satisfied.**” (Matthew 5:6) Oh I just rejoiced! I rolled over

and laid on my back and just rejoiced before the Lord. Precious One, are you hungry and thirsting for righteousness? God's word to you is: You will be satisfied. We'll be back to the beatitudes in just a minute right here, from the Mount of Beatitudes, overlooking the Sea of Galilee.

PART TWO

It is so awesome, Beloved, to stand on this mountain with you overlooking the Sea of Galilee and open the Word of God and listen to the teaching that Jesus Christ gave on this mountain. The teaching that He gave to those that were following Him, first to the disciples, but we know by the end of this message that many had seen Him up here and they had come to hear His teaching. It was teaching that literally threw them to the ground, I mean it just absolutely astonished them, it awed them, and the reason that it did was because what He was teaching was so contrary to what they saw. He was teaching them about the character of those who belonged to the kingdom of heaven and He picks up in Matthew chapter 5 verse 7, **"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."** (Matthew 5:7) Merciful means "I see you in desperate need, I have the means of helping you, I have the means of bestowing compassion on you and lifting you up and so I do that. I'm kind, I'm loving, I'm compassionate, I'm merciful." Have you got it? And he says, **"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."**

(Matthew 5:7) He says, **"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they [will] see God."** (Matthew 5:8) He is going to talk about this purity in heart and he is going to expound on it later, but if you want to see God you can't have a dirty filthy heart. You've got to keep that heart pure and when you do, then you see God. **"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called [the] sons of God."** (Matthew 5:9) What did Jesus do? He came and He was the prince of peace and He was going to bring peace to His people and so [if we are peacemakers then we are called the sons of God.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:9) He says, **"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for**

the sake of righteousness....” (Matthew 5:10) Now this is the second time in this sermon that He’s mentioned “righteousness.” He mentions it in verse 6, “...Those [that] **hunger and thirst for righteousness....” (Matthew 5:6a)** He mentions now in verse 10 that they are going to be persecuted for the sake of righteousness, but then He says, “...**theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**” (Matthew 5:10b) He is laying down for us that we are going to suffer and we are going to suffer because we are righteous people living in an unrighteous world. We are living in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation and because of that we are going to be persecuted because unrighteousness does not like righteousness. And in all probability you’ve experienced that, but He says, [“I want you to know if you were persecuted for righteousness then the kingdom of heaven belongs to you because the kingdom of heaven belongs to the righteous. ”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:10) He goes on to say, “**Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.**” (Matthew 5:11) In other words you are so like Me and you are such a representative of Me and your character is being more and more like Mine and so people are going to say things falsely about you because of Me and He says, [“You are blessed because of that.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:11) He says, “[I want you to] **rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great....” (Matthew 5:12)** When Jesus Christ comes, Revelation 22:12 says, [“He brings His reward with Him.”] (PARAPHRASE, Revelation 22:12) He says, “...**for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**” (Matthew 5:12) The ones who were spokesmen for God were the ones that brought the message of God to a crooked and perverse generation of Jews, Jews that were not obeying God. Those prophets were persecuted. Jeremiah was put in a cistern and left there. We know from Hebrews, that Isaiah, tradition says, was sawn in half. They were persecuted. They rejected the prophets. They stoned the prophets. But he says, “**Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in**

the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

(**Matthew 5:12**) Then He makes a statement, [“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again?”]

(PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:13) It can’t salt was big hunks in those days it was not refined salt like we have today coming out of a salt shaker. People were paid in salt. He says, [“you are worth your weight in salt, so salt was huge, but if the salt lost its savor then how can it be made salty again?”]

(PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:13) When salt was no longer good to be used as a preservative, when it was no longer used to make the food taste good when it had lost all of its salt, it was cast out, it was thrown out and it was used like a sidewalk. It was used for crunchy stuff to walk on. So He goes on to say this, **“...It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men.” (Matthew 5:13)** And He says, “Now look, if you don’t keep your saltiness you are good for nothing, but to be trampled under foot by men.”] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:13) And that is what happens to a lot of Christians, a lot of people who bear the name Jesus, and do not live the way that they ought to live, do not have the kinds of relationships that they ought to have, do not talk the way they ought to talk, do not treat people the way they ought to treat people then they have lost their savor and men just trample them down. They think nothing of them. He goes on to say, **“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden...,”** Why? Because that city has lights and in the darkness it shines so brightly. He says, **“...nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on [a] lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light [so] shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works...,”** now watch, **“...and glorify your Father who is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16)** I want you to mark every reference to “Father,” I put a box around it and colored it yellow and I want you to watch, as we go through the Sermon on the Mount, how many times He refers to the “Father.” So He is talking about them. He is talking about them

as the righteous glorifying their Father which is in heaven and He is reminding them that [they are to live in such a way that they can see their good works that are born of their character that is blessed by God so that men might see their righteousness and glorify their Father that's in heaven.] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 5:16) He says, **“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law [or] the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.” (Matthew 5:17)** Now He is going to talk about the law, He is going to talk about what is written in the law, and He is going to show them that keeping the law is a matter of the heart. It is not just external keeping of the law, but it is an internal thing. But before He does this, He wants them to understand that as He tells them these things, He does not come to abolish the law, but He has come to fulfill the law. He says, **“For truly I say to you, [that] until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished....”** He says, **“...Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them,...shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you that unless your righteousness [exceeds the righteousness at the] scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:18-20)** What has He just told us? He's given us an example of a righteous man, a righteous woman, who is going to inherit the kingdom of heaven. It is a righteousness that is so different than that of the scribes and the Pharisees. We'll talk about it more in the days to come.