

The Beatitudes - Blessed Mercy

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could this evening, for a short while, if we could turn to the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 5. Matthew chapter 5.

And we're reading from the beginning of the chapter. Matthew chapter 5 from the beginning.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you, and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. But particularly the words of verse 7 this evening.

[1 : 41] Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

As you know, Jesus introduces his Sermon on the Mount with these nine Beatitudes. They're nine statements of blessing, or they're nine benedictions of blessedness.

And they appear as the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount, because Jesus seeks to teach us what it means to be a Christian. And what it means to be a citizen living within the kingdom of heaven.

And a child of our Heavenly Father. And also a disciple of Jesus Christ. But as we said before, in the Beatitudes, Jesus isn't telling us what we're to do as Christians.

Or even what we're to be as Christians. Rather, Jesus is telling us what we are as Christians. And what we are, says Jesus, what we are is blessed.

[2 : 42] We're blessed. As sinners who have entered the kingdom of heaven by faith, we're blessed. And as Paul says, we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ.

And because we're blessed as Christians, as citizens of the kingdom, as children of our Heavenly Father, and as disciples of Jesus Christ. The outworking of our blessedness is that we are to possess and practice a Christ-like character, conduct, and conversation.

And this is important because as Jesus introduces the Sermon on the Mount. He teaches us that in the kingdom of heaven, we need to be emptied before we are filled.

We need to be emptied before we are filled. Because the gospel doesn't just add something to what we already have. No, the gospel empties us of all that we are in order to fill us and to bless us with all that Jesus is.

And that's why Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount with the beatitude. The first beatitude, blessed are the poor in spirit. For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus says it's only those who experience and encounter blessed poverty.

[4 : 01] Those who are poor in spirit. Those who are emptied of pride and emptied of self. Jesus says they will receive the kingdom of heaven. And then it's followed by the second beatitude.

Blessed are those that mourn for they shall be comforted. Because it's only those who truly mourn over their sin. And it's only those who truly mourn over their sin who will find comfort and consolation in the gospel.

And from that Jesus proceeds to the next beatitude. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Because it's only those who are emptied of their self-confidence.

And emptied of their self-assurance who will inherit the earth. And then as we saw last time. The result of such blessedness is that we receive blessed righteousness.

We're declared righteous. And we desire righteousness. Because as Jesus says in verse 6. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

[5 : 03] For they shall be satisfied. And you know my Christian friend. As citizens of the kingdom. As children of our heavenly father. And as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is teaching us from the outset of his sermon on the mount. That the outworking of our blessedness. Is that we are to possess and practice.

Blessed poverty. Blessed mourning. Blessed meekness. Blessed righteousness. And then tonight. Blessed mercy.

That's the fifth beatitude we see in verse 7. We're to possess and practice blessed mercy. We're to possess and practice blessed mercy.

Because we have been shown mercy. Therefore we must show mercy. We have been shown mercy. Therefore we must show mercy.

[6 : 04] And there are our two simple headings this evening. Shown mercy. And show mercy. Shown mercy. And show mercy.

Jesus says in verse 7. Blessed are the merciful. For they shall receive mercy. Now Jesus introduces this beatitude by saying that as Christians.

As citizens of the kingdom of heaven. As children of our heavenly father. As disciples of Jesus Christ. We are blessed. We are blessed. We've entered the kingdom of heaven by faith.

We have submitted and surrendered our life. Under the lordship of Jesus Christ. We have come kneeling before King Jesus. Therefore we are blessed.

Blessed. And as we've said many times before. The word blessed. It literally means to kneel. And that's how we should read these verses. Almost kneeling in our heart and mind.

[7 : 03] Because it's the sense of kneeling before King Jesus. The image of King Jesus standing before his throne. And we are kneeling in his presence.

With our head bowed and our hand outstretched. And we are receiving from the hand of King Jesus. What we do not deserve. It's what we do not deserve.

He's blessing us. Because blessing only comes to us. From the gracious hand of King Jesus. And one such blessing we see in verse 7.

Is the blessing of blessed mercy. Blessed mercy. But the interesting thing about blessed mercy. Is that it's the opposite of receiving from the hand of King Jesus.

What we do not deserve. You know blessed mercy is not receiving from the hand of King Jesus.

[8 : 02] What we do deserve. Blessed mercy is not receiving from the hand of King Jesus. What we do deserve. And this is important to remember.

The difference between grace and mercy. Because grace is receiving from the hand of King Jesus. What we do not deserve. But mercy is not receiving from the hand of King Jesus.

What we do deserve. I'll say that again. Grace is receiving from the hand of King Jesus. What we do not deserve. But mercy is not receiving from the hand of King Jesus.

What we do deserve. Grace is being given that full and free gift from the hand of King Jesus. Grace is given to us. No strings are attached. There's no small print in writing.

Grace is given. And it's given not because of who we are. Or what we have done. Grace is given not because of anything we have achieved. Or attained. Or accomplished. In and of ourselves. No grace is given by the gracious hand of King Jesus.

[9 : 08] It's given to us as a gift. It's given to us as a gift. And that's what Paul repeatedly emphasizes in his letters. You go to Ephesians 2.

And Paul tells us that it's by grace you have been saved. Through faith. It's not of yourselves. No it's a gift from God. It's not of works. Lest any man should boast.

Paul says in Romans. The wages of sin is death. But the free gift of God. The free grace of God. Is eternal life. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And even the Apostle John. You know I love the way he describes it. He says that through the person and work of Jesus Christ. He says that we have received grace. Upon grace. Upon grace.

We have received from the hand of King Jesus. Something we do not deserve. King Jesus has given to us the gift of salvation. And all that flows from that salvation.

[10 : 07] He has given to us the gift of election. Predestination. Faith. Repentance. Justification. Adoption. Sanctification.

Perseverance. Glorification. And the gift of eternal life. We have received every spiritual blessing in heavenly places. And we have received it in Christ.

Through Christ. And by the grace of Jesus Christ. Because as we said. Grace is receiving from the hand of King Jesus. What we do not deserve.

But mercy. Mercy is not receiving. From the hand of King Jesus. What we do deserve. Mercy is not receiving.

From the hand of King Jesus. What we do deserve. And as you know my Christian friend. What we deserve. For our sin. And our rebellion against a holy God.

[11:08] Is his fierce anger. His full wrath. His final judgment. And the fires of hell. That's what we deserve.

We deserve his fierce anger. His full wrath. His final judgment. And the fires of hell. We deserve eternal death. We deserve the pains and punishment.

Of hell. And you know. When we have a perspective. On who we really are. And what we really deserve.

Because of our sin. You know. It should actually make God's grace. And God's mercy. All the more sweeter. You know. That's how the psalmist depicted it.

And described it in Psalm 130. Because. When the psalmist was crying. In the depths of despair. He was aware. He was aware. Of the sinfulness.

[12:07] Of his own sin. That's why he said. Lord. From the depths. To thee I cried. My voice Lord. Do thou hear. Unto my supplications voice. Give.

An attentive ear. And you know. The psalmist. He pleaded for grace to be given. And for mercy to be granted. He pleaded for grace to be given. And for mercy to be granted.

And he went on to say. Lord. Lord. Who shall stand. If thou Lord. Shouldst mark iniquity. But yet with thee forgiveness is.

That fear thou mayest be. The psalmist knew. That if he were to stand. Before the judgment seat of Christ. He would be convicted. Condemned.

And consigned to hell. For all eternity. He knew that what he deserved. For his sin. And his rebellion. Against a holy God. Was his fierce anger. His full wrath.

[13:04] His final judgment. And the fires. Of hell. He knew that what he deserved. Was eternal death. He knew that he deserved. The pains and punishment. Of hell.

Lord. Who shall stand. If thou Lord. Shouldst mark. Iniquity. And as you know my friend. None of us could stand. No one.

Could stand. And the psalmist knew. That that's what he deserved. He knew that. He deserved. The punishment. And the pain of hell. He knew what he deserved.

But look at what he discovered. But yet. With thee. Forgiveness is. That fear thou mayest be. But yet. With thee.

Forgiveness is. That fear thou mayest be. The psalmist discovered. That God was. Gracious. And merciful. Because in God's. Character.

[13:59] God is gracious. And merciful. You know. It's in God's character. It's in God's character. For grace to be given. And mercy to be granted.

And as we read in Exodus 33 and 34. That's what Moses discovered. Because the Lord declared to Moses. I will be gracious. To whom I will be gracious.

And I will show mercy. To whom I will show mercy. God's grace and God's mercy. Is not dependent upon who we are. Or what we've done.

Or whether we are good or bad. No. The grace and mercy of God. Is completely dependent upon the character. Of God. That's why.

The Lord preached a sermon about himself. On the top of Mount Sinai. That's what we read in Exodus 34. The Lord preached a sermon. To an audience of one.

[14:57] To Moses himself. It was a self-revelation. Where the Lord revealed. That he is the Lord. The Lord God. God.

Merciful. And gracious. Slow to anger. And abounding in steadfast love. And faithfulness. God's self-revelation. God's character.

Is that he is gracious. And he is merciful. In fact. It's based upon God's self-revelation. Of his character.

That David writes. In Psalm 103. And we'll sing it later on. The Lord our God is merciful. And he is gracious. Long-suffering and slow to wrath.

In mercy. Plenteous. My friend. God. Gives grace. And he grants mercy. Because it's in his character. To be merciful.

[15:52] And gracious. And you know. As we said. Grace is. Grace is receiving from the hand of King Jesus. What we do not deserve. But mercy is not receiving from the hand of King Jesus.

What we do deserve. But here's the point. As Christians. As citizens of the kingdom. As children of our Heavenly Father. As disciples of Jesus Christ.

We have been shown. Mercy. Therefore. We must. Show. Mercy. We have been shown.

Mercy. Therefore. We must. Show. Mercy. Mercy. And this brings us to our second point. So there's. Shown. Mercy. That's us. We have been shown.

Mercy. Then secondly. Show. Mercy. Show. Mercy. Jesus is. Blessed are the merciful. For they shall receive.

[16:51] Mercy. So in his beatitude. Jesus teaches us. That as Christians. As citizens of the kingdom. As children of the Heavenly Father. As. As disciples of Jesus Christ.

We have been blessed. We are. We have received from the gracious hand of the King. What we do not deserve. And what we have received. Is. Blessed. Mercy. But as we said.

Mercy is not receiving. From the hand of King Jesus. What we. Do. Deserve. And what we deserve. Is pain and punishment. In hell. Therefore.

Jesus teaches us. That. As those. Who have. A great high priest. And as those. Who have encountered. And experienced. The throne of grace. And as those. Who have come.

To the mercy seat. Of God. And as those. Who have cried. The prayer. Of the publican. God be merciful. To me. A sinner. We have received. Blessed mercy.

[17:45] We have received. Blessed mercy. Therefore. The outworking. Of our blessedness. Of what we have received. The outworking. Is that we are to possess.

And practice. Blessed mercy. Towards. Others. We are to possess. And practice. Blessed mercy. Towards. Others. We have been shown.

Mercy. Therefore. We must. Show. Mercy. And you know. This is the greatest. Challenge. Because. If God. Has graciously. Shown. Mercy. Toward. Us. As hell. Deserving. Sinner. Then we should. Imitate. And emulate.

His. Character. In our. Character. Conduct. And conversation. We should. Show. Mercy. Towards.

[18:39] Other. People. And I love this word. Mercy. Because. It literally means. Compassion. Compassion. And.

As you know. There was no one more. Compassionate. Than Jesus Christ. Because. We're told. So often. That he moved. With compassion. He moved. With compassion.

I'm sure. I've told you before. That. I had a great auntie. Who lived. Next door. To my parents. In Melbost. And. She had been a Christian. For many years. And I went to visit her. One night. She was. Quite unwell.

And I went to visit her. To have worship. With her. And as I sat with her. She handed me. Her. Old. Tattered Bible. For me. To read a passage. With her. And as I turned the pages.

In the Gospels. I noticed that. With yellow. Highlighter. She had highlighted. All the times. Where it says. He moved. With compassion. Jesus.

[19:34] Moved. With. Compassion. And when I asked her about. I said. What's this about? She said. And you know. I remember her turning to me. Saying. Murdo. Murdo. Don't you just love that phrase?

He moved. With compassion. He moved. With compassion. And you know. My Christian friend. Don't you just love that. Phrase. He moved. With compassion.

Because you know. That's the wonder. And glory. Of the Gospel. That Jesus Christ. Moves. Towards. Unwanted. Unworthy. And even. Unwilling. Sinners. He moves.

With compassion. And we see it. Time and time again. In the Gospels. Where Jesus. He moved.

With compassion. Towards the leper. And the tax collector. Towards the sick.

And the suffering. Towards the deaf. And the dying. Towards the paralyzed. And even the prostitute. Jesus moved. With compassion. Towards the multitudes. Because they were like sheep.

[20:30] Without. A shepherd. He moved. With compassion. Because. He is gracious. He's a gracious God. He's a compassionate Christ.

He's. A merciful. Messiah. And you know. As. Christians. As followers. Of the Christ. That's what it means. To be a Christian. As followers. Of the Christ. That's who we are called. Commissioned. And commanded. To imitate. And emulate. In our character. Conduct. And conversation. We're to show mercy. Because we ourselves. Have been shown. Mercy. We're to be gracious. And compassionate. Because we ourselves. Have been shown. Grace. Grace. And compassion. And you know. This ought to confront. And even challenge us. About our approach. And even our attitude. Towards worldly wisdom. [21 : 25] Godless gossip. Revengeful retaliation. In fact. The same sentiment. Is taught. In the following chapter. In chapter six. In the Lord's Prayer.

As you know. As we often say. On the Lord's Day. Jesus has taught us. To pray in the Lord's Prayer. Forgive us our debts. As we forgive. Our debtors. Jesus teaches us. To practice. What we pray. We're to practice. What we pray. Because as those. Who have been. Forgiven. We must therefore. Forgive. Others. Because as Jesus. Solemnly says. At the conclusion. Of the Lord's Prayer. In verse 14. Of chapter six. He says. If you forgive. Others. Their trespasses. Your heavenly father. Will also forgive you. But if you do not. [22 : 20] Forgive others. Their trespasses. Neither. Will your father. Forgive. Your trespasses. And Jesus. He's very clear.

Because he says. That we must practice. What we pray. Because. We have been forgiven. Therefore. We must forgive. Others. But how many times. Must we forgive. Well. Peter asked that. Very question. And Jesus. Told him. Not seven times. But seventy times. Seven. In other words. There's to be no end. To our forgiveness. Towards others. Because there is no end. To God's forgiveness. Towards us. There is to be no end. Towards our forgiveness. Towards others. Because there is no end. To God's forgiveness. Towards us. We have been shown forgiveness. Therefore. [23 : 15] We must also. Show. Forgiveness. And surely. We can apply the same. To what's been said here. In verse seven. About mercy. We have been.

Shown. Mercy. Therefore. We must. Show. Mercy. We have been. Shown. Mercy. Therefore. We must. Show. Mercy. In fact. It was the late. John Stott. He wrote. In his commentary. He said. We cannot receive. The mercy. And forgiveness. Of God. Unless we repent. And we cannot claim. To have repented. Of our sins. If we are. Unmerciful. Towards the sins. Of others. Nothing. Proves. More clearly. That we have been forgiven. Than our own readiness. To forgive. To forgive. And to be forgiven. To show mercy. And to receive mercy. These belong. [24 : 12] Indissolubly. He says. Together. To forgive. And to be forgiven. To show mercy. And to receive. Mercy.

And you know. This is so important. Not only as Christians. In a congregation. But also as Christians. Within a community. Because you know. Far too often. Far too often. There are. Congregational clashes. Or there are. Community confrontations. There are family. Feuds. Over all sorts of things. And more often than not. In light. Of eternity. They are trivial. And even tiny. In light of eternity. They are trivial. And tiny. And yet these things. Can roll. And rumble on. For years. And even decades. But it's all because. Some are not willing. [25 : 11] To forgive. Others are not willing. To say sorry. No one is willing. To say. Sorry. Sometimes it's the hardest word. To say.

But you know. As a minister. I'm often reminded of this. When I stand over. An open grave. You know. When it comes to. Congregational clashes. And community confrontations. And family feuds. And everybody has them. They're in every family. You know. It reminds me. That life is too short. For holding grudges. And too short. For keeping accounts. With one another. You know. When it comes to. Congregational clashes.

Community confrontations. Family feuds. Life is too short. For holding grudges. And keeping accounts. With one another. Life is too short.

[26 : 08] For not saying. Sorry. And what Jesus is teaching us. This evening. Is that as Christians. As citizens. As citizens. Of the. Of the kingdom of heaven.

As children. Of our heavenly father. As disciples. Of Jesus Christ. We have been reminded. And it's been reaffirmed. To us this evening. We have been shown.

Mercy. Therefore. We ourselves. Must show. Mercy. Mercy. We have been shown. Mercy. Therefore.

We ourselves. Must show. Mercy. Jesus says. Blessed. Are the merciful. For they shall receive. Mercy.

May the Lord bless. These few thoughts to us. Now let us pray. Oh Lord. Our gracious God. We give thanks to thee.

[27 : 04] For. Being so gracious. Towards us. Giving to us. What we do not deserve. And we thank thee. For being merciful. For not giving to us.

What we do deserve. And Lord. We know. That we deserve. Thy wrath. And thy curse. And Lord. We don't even realize. How much we deserve it. We give thanks to thee.

For even withholding. That from us. But we do pray. That we would imitate. And emulate. Thy character. And Lord. That we would. Show. Mercy.

And grace. Towards others. Those whom we come into contact with. In our workplace. Those in our homes. And those in our family. Those in our community. Community. That we would do.

As Jesus teaches us. To let our light. So shine before men. That they may see our good work. And glorify our father in heaven. Oh Lord. Help us to live.

[27 : 57] In light of eternity. To see that our life. It is but a vapor. We are only passing through. That this world. Is but for a moment. And help us then. We pray.

Or to live lives. That bring glory to God. For that is our chief end. To glorify God. And to enjoy him forever. Bless us Lord.

As thy people. Help us to be faithful. Help us to walk. On the path of righteousness. Help us to keep looking. To Jesus. The author. And the finisher.

Of our faith. Oh Lord. Forgive us. When we stray. Forgive us. When we speak. Out of turn. Forgive us Lord. We ask for. The things we do. That we shouldn't do.

For that thou wouldest. Cleanse us. And create within us. That clean heart. And renew a right spirit. Within us all. For we ask it in Jesus name. And for his sake. Amen.

[28 : 55] Now we're going to sing again. Before the live stream. Comes to an end. We're going to sing this time. In Psalm 103. Psalm 103. Is in the Scottish Psalter.

It's on page 369. Psalm 103. We're singing from verse 8. Down to the verse marked. 13. And maybe.

Before. The live stream. Goes off. This evening. I just want to encourage those. Who are at home. To. Maybe stop for a few moments. And. Before you switch over.

To something else. To pray. To take time. To pray. We'll continue praying here. But I'd encourage you. To pray at home. And pray for the things. That I'm going to mention.

For prayer here. Pray first and foremost. For Katie Matheson. That's. We give thanks to the Lord. For the treatments. She's received. And. And.

[29 : 50] Just give thanks to the Lord. For his goodness. To them as a family. And continue to remember. The Matheson. Family. Also remember us. We often pray here. The praying for one another.

Prayer notes. That are sent out each week. Pray this week. We've been encouraged. To pray for Tarbert. Congregation. In Argyle. To pray for them. During their vacancy. Their inter-moderator. Is Roger Crooks. He used to be the minister. In Campbelltown. And he's just looking after them. At present. So pray for the Tarbert. Congregation. You can pray for the Tarbert. Congregation. In Harris as well. If you wish. Pray for the Knox. Church. In Perth. That's where Paul Gibson is. Paul Gibson. You'll remember. He was the man. Who was meant to come. For that communion.

A long time ago. Which he never came. And one day. God willing. We'll have him again. But pray for that congregation there. As they seek to reach out. In their community. They're in the center of Perth.

[30 : 45] Or they're surrounded by houses. If you've ever been to the congregation. And so please pray for them. As they try and make inroads. The other prayer point. I was going to highlight to you. Which is not on the list. Is to pray for Grava.

As you know. I was in Grava. Two weekends ago. Preaching at their communion. And they're hoping to start a Sunday school. In November. So they don't have a Sunday school at present. They don't have any children in the congregation. And it reminds us. That we should be so thankful. That we have children. In our congregation. And we have a Sunday school. And Sunday school teachers. But pray for Grava. As they start a Sunday school.

I think it's on the 14th of November. I'll check with Ian about that. So pray for them. As they start. And as they invite the children. From the school. And the community. To come. And as they make inroads.

In the community. So. Please pray for Grava. So Tarbert. Perth. Grava. And Katie Matheson. So just for those who are watching at home.

[31 : 42] And those who will be asked to pray in a moment. So we're going to sing Psalm 103. At the end of this psalm. The live stream. Will end. We're singing from verse 8. Down to the verse marked 13.

The Lord our God is merciful. And he is gracious. Long suffering and slow to wrath. In mercy. Plenteous. We'll stand to sing if you're able. To God's praise.

The Lord our God is merciful.

And he is gracious. And he is gracious. The Lord our God is merciful.

And he is gracious. The Lord our God is merciful. He will not shine continually.

[32 : 45] Nor keep his armor still. With us he is merciful. With us he is merciful.

Nor does we sin. Nor did we quite our hell.

For us the heaven in its height. The earth's torment and fire.

So pray to those that do him fear. His tender mercy star.

As far as he stays distant from. The west so far at thee.

[33 : 52] From us we moveeth in his love. All our iniquity.

Such pity as the Father hath. Unto his children dear.

Like pity shows the Lord to such. As worship him in fear.