

Journeying Towards the Summit

Lessons from the Beatitudes

The Beatitudes are eight blessings recounted in the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew.

- Each is a proverb-like proclamation, without narrative, cryptic, precise, and full of meaning.
- Each one includes a topic that forms a major biblical theme".

Together, the Beatitudes present a **new set of Christian ideals** that focus on **a spirit of love and humility**.

- They echo the ideals of **the teachings of Jesus** on **mercy, spirituality, and compassion**.

Matthew 5:3-12 - NIV

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

In this lesson we will be focusing on **the beatitudes of Christ** as an upward Journey towards fulfilling our destiny.

We will see these **characteristics of Christ's nature** as progressive steps in our growth as Christians who are starting from **the base of the mountain** and **journeying towards the summit**.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 - NIV

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, **there is freedom**.

¹⁸ And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are **being transformed** into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

For those who are **choosing** to come under the rule of the kingdom of God - - -

Jesus is setting up a whole new package of values ***proclaiming that in these you and I will find fulfillment***

- **not** in pleasure, but in longing, **not** in satisfaction, but in hunger,
- **not** in popularity, but in **commitment** to an unpopular cause,
- **not** in competition and "winning", but in helping others win their way to peace.

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 5:1-2 – NIV

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, **he went up on a mountainside** and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

Steps to the Summit

1. The Base Of The Mountain Or The Initial Step Is Humility.

Before we can begin this spiritual journey to the summit

- **We must** be conscious of **our need for God**
- And **His strength** to sustain us.
- **We have to realize** that in ourselves **we can't do it**.

Matthew 5:3 *"Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

The poor in spirit are those who **recognize in their heart** that **they are 'poor'**

- In the sense that **they can do no good thing without divine assistance**
- They have **no power in themselves** to help them do **what God requires them to do**.
- They do not approach life with **confidence in themselves**
- **Blessed instead** are those who approach life **without such self-based confidence**
- ***"for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"***.

2 Corinthians 3:5 - NIV

⁵ Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but ***our competence comes from God***.

Let's keep in mind that this is God's mountain that we are climbing

- He must **establish** our steps right from the beginning
- Or We can **journey around the mountain lost** in confusion and turmoil!!!!

Psalm 40:1-3 NIV

¹ I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry.

² He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; **he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand.**

³ He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the LORD and put their trust in him.

When we approach life humbly with full reliance in the King

- We open up ourselves to His direction
- **Enabling grace** for the remainder of the journey.

2. The Second Step Is Repentance And Mourning For Our Sin.

Matthew 5:4 *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

To mourn implies a sadness and humble realization and regret for one's sins.

- **Mourning** has to do with the ability to repent and be forgiven
- Which **enables you to enjoy the freedom** that it brings.

2 Corinthians 7:10 - NIV

¹⁰ ***Godly sorrow brings repentance*** that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

We'll **never make it to the summit** with the weight of sin bearing down on us.

- We must shed it ***through godly sorrow.***
- The further up the mountain we go
- ***The more we will*** have to deal with and get rid of.

Hebrews 12:1-2 - NIV

12 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

We must continually come to the place in our lives where we really do have **a godly sorrow for the sins in our lives.**

A lack of mourning and sorrowing over our present sinful condition ***will prevent us from travelling further up the mountain.***

3. The Third Step Is Meekness, The Mark of a New Spirit.

Matthew 5:5 *Blessed are **the meek**, for they **shall inherit the earth.***

The meek are those who humble themselves before God, because they acknowledge their utter dependence upon Him.

- In consequence, they are **gentle** in the dealings with others.

Being of a meek and quiet spirit means

- You have come to the place where you don't have to appear "**macho**" all the time.
- You can be **tender and gentle** with people - - -
- Because you have given **control of your life** to God
- You **don't** have to "**win**" all the time.

2 Timothy 2:24 - NIV

²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful.

When meekness begins to appear

- This is a **sure sign** that you have humbled yourself and repented with **Godly sorrow**
- Now **God's true characteristics** are beginning **to take root in your life.**

As a result you are now coming into your inheritance.

- God will begin to equip you more thoroughly for the rough journey ahead.

4. The Fourth Step Is A Spiritual Appetite.

Because we have come to the place where we are dependent upon God's sufficiency, we need more than natural food to keep us going.

We begin to develop a **real hunger** for **God's word** and **His righteousness.**

- This is a **sign** of significant **growth and maturity.**

Matthew 5:6 *Blessed are those **who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be filled.*

Remember, this is God's mountain that we are climbing - - -

- Which means the only way we can reach the summit
- Is to partake of His righteousness.
- ***Righteousness is*** the character or quality of being right or just in God's sight.

Dikaisune, the Greek word or righteousness, means **whatever conforms to the revealed will of God.**

This is why we find in **Matthew 6:33** seeking God's kingdom and seeking righteousness linked together.

Because in order to receive the benefits and the fullness of the kingdom into our lives **we must be seeking God's revealed will** for our lives as well.

Hungering and thirsting involves

- Hungering and thirsting **for a deeper walk** in faith
- As **righteousness is revealed** from faith to faith.
- It takes going from one level of faith to another **to move up the mountain.**

Romans 1:17 - NIV

¹⁷For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

5. The Fifth Step Is Mercifulness Indicating Further Advance.

Matthew 5:7 *Blessed are the **merciful**, for they shall obtain mercy.*

Mercifulness is an attribute that indicates further advancement.

We are no longer consumed with our own journey

- We have been given more of a deposit of God's divine nature
- We are concerned about helping those who are journeying with us.

We can't be in such a hurry to get to the summit that we ignore those who are stranded and in trouble.

Luke 6:36 – NIV - ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

6. The Sixth Step Is Heart Purity, The Attainment Of Higher Altitudes.

Matthew 5:8 *Blessed are the **pure in heart**, for they shall see God.*

Heart purity marks the attainment of higher altitudes.

We are able to perceive the vision of God.

We are able to see more clearly **where** we are going and where we have been.

Hebrews 12:14 – NIV - Warning and Encouragement

¹⁴ Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

This does not necessarily have to do with a heart without sin, though there will be a turning from all known sin. **The deeper meaning is one "without guile".**

Guile is **deceit** and **pretence**. *Thayer's Greek Lexicon* defines pure as **free from every admixture of what is false**. Sincere.

Being pure and without guile means coming to the place where **you can be completely open and honest with God and others.**

It means that you are able to be **transparent**, you don't have to put on an "air" or **pretend to be what you are not** or trying to hide your faults.

7. The Seventh Step Is Peacemaking - Calming The Storms Of Life.

Matthew 5:9 *Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.*

More of the **Divine nature of Christ** has been imparted into your spirit and you now have a Christ-like influence that is **able to calm the storms** of life.

Peace makers are people who are at peace with God 'the author of peace'

- You have learned how to reconcile others to Christ
- You are learning what it really means to **be an ambassador for Christ.**

2 Corinthians 5:18,20 - NIV

¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

8. The Eighth Step Is The Summit.

The Summit represents suffering for Christ.

You are now standing beside the prophets and martyrs.

You had to endure a lot to get here.

Matthew 5:10-12 - NIV

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

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake

- ***Suffer because*** they uphold God's standards of truth, justice and purity
- ***Refuse to compromise*** with the world
- ***Or bow to the idols*** that men tend to erect as substitutes for God.

As Paul reminded Timothy, *'all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution'*;

but to such Jesus gives the assurance that **they are citizens of the only kingdom that abides, the kingdom of heaven.**

2 Timothy 3:12 - NIV

¹² In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted,**

Close:

Now that you have reached the summit, what's next?

"Is the journey over?"

Not really, you have just reached that point to where you can be released to mount up on the wings of an eagle and to go and **minister all over God's mountain** with the authority of a son of God. (*Isaiah 40:31*).

You are a mature son of God who is able to be led by the Spirit to do God's work. (*Romans 8:14*).

