

# The Marks of Kingdom People

Matthew 5:1-12

April 3, 2016

One Sunday as they drove home from church, a little girl turned to her mother and said, "**Mommy, there's something about the preacher's message this morning that I don't understand.**" The mother said, "Oh? What is it?" The little girl replied, "Well, **he said that God is bigger than we are.** He said God is so big that **He could hold the world in His hand. Is that true?**" The mother replied, "Yes, that's true, honey."

"But Mommy, **he also said that God comes to live inside of us when we believe in Jesus as our Savior.** Is that true, too?" Again, the mother **assured the little girl that what the pastor had said was true.** With a puzzled look on her face the little girl then asked, "If God is bigger than us and He lives in us, **wouldn't He show through?**"

**I begin today, series on The Sermon on the Mount Matthew 5, 6, & 7** has been described as "**the essence of Jesus' teaching.**" Jesus came to establish His kingdom. The Sermon on the Mount describes Kingdom values, attitudes and actions. **He describes how Kingdom People live.**

Our passage for today, **Matthew 5:1-12** "Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." is known as **The Beatitudes**. It has been suggested that this is a summary of the rest of what is found in the Sermon on the Mount. **So what we are considering today is the essence of the essence, of the Christian way of life.** It is in a sense the entirety of Christ's teaching, distilled down to a few chapters, and then to a few verses.

It has always been God's purpose that when He entered our lives, He would **be allowed to so fill and control us,...that He would "show through"** – that **He would be visible** in our attitudes and actions. That Christ Himself would **be allowed to live through us.** And our life would be a clear picture of the Marks of Kingdom People.

It is called the "Sermon on the Mount," because it begins, "**Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down.**" He went to a place where there would be room for people to spread out in front of Him, **he could be seen, and heard as well as possible.**

Our passage for today is known as the Beatitudes, based on the Latin word for "Blessed." **Jesus uses that word, 9 times in the first 11 verses of this passage.** What does it mean to be blessed?

**It can mean to be** Revered, to be made holy, or to be set apart for God. It also has the meaning of **Favored, fortunate, happy.** At its root, the word stresses “to greatly enlarge.” In other words Jesus is not just saying, “Don’t worry be happy.” Jesus is bestowing upon Kingdom People the privilege to be **“supremely happy, and to the fullest extent possible experience God’s greatest Joy!”**

**This condition is not subjective, not based upon how we feel.** It is based on God’s presence in our lives & living in a manner consistent with His plan and will. **That brings happiness, joy and fulfillment.** The attitude and actions identified in each “Blessing” leads to increased connection with God, and therefore Joy and completeness.

**Wouldn’t you like that?** Isn’t that what people are striving for in our world?

**Jesus sets forth in this passage, 8 characteristics of the people who are a part of His kingdom.** He is not describing 8 different people, and asking us to consider which one are we. These are not multiple choice and select the ones that you like the best. **They are the Kings own specifications of what His followers will be like.** They are 8 Marks of Kingdom People.

When God’s people allow God’s Spirit to be in control of their lives, these are the attitudes and actions that develop. **These Marks describe 3 areas of attitudes.**

## **I. Our Attitude toward Ourselves.**

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

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

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

To be **“Poor in Spirit,”** means that we recognize **our own spiritual poverty.** We understand our own guilt and helplessness, **we realize our own sinful nature,** and lack of ability to change that on our own.

This is expressed by Paul in **Romans 7:18** **“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature...”** It is to realize that we stand before God and are at His mercy and grace.

Jesus says, **“Blessed are those who mourn,”** that is to grieve over their own sin, and the wickedness and suffering around them. **It is to realize our condition before God,** but also to have compassion on the hurting around us.

Then, **“Blessed are the meek,”** not a quality that we generally esteem. Here it suggests that we are gentle and humble **because we put our trust in God,** rather than self-centered dependence on human power and abilities. **A person sees his spiritual poverty,** he grieves over it, and **comes in meekness before God,** willing to submit to God’s will and way.

## **II. Then Our Attitude Towards God**

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

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

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

To **“Hunger and Thirst,” for the things of God.** It means that this pursuit, this relationship dominates our lives. **It is our highest priority.**

Our intimate, love relationship with God is **at the very core of what it means to experience Kingdom Living.**

When we seek God by using the tools that are available, **the Bible, prayer, worship, fellowship, & service**, we will find what we are looking for, and we will be filled.

**Blessed are the merciful**, To have Mercy is to **express compassion and forgiveness**. When we experience mercy from God, and understand what He had done for us, **how can we not show mercy to others?** It is a realization that we all make mistakes, we strive to improve with God's guidance, **we can hate the sin, but we love the sinner.**

Kingdom people are "**Pure in Heart.**" They are genuine, **morally pure, honest and sincere**. They have nothing to hide from God. They are people of integrity and single-minded commitment to God. The prayer of the Pure in Heart is "**Create in me a clean heart,**" **Ps. 24**. Because of their sincere devotion to Christ, **they will see God**, here and now through the eyes of faith, and finally face to face.

### **III. Our Attitude Towards Others**

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Kingdom People are peacemakers.** They not only live peaceful lives themselves, but actively seek to "make peace," **to end bitterness and strife**. They have the gentle spirit of **reconciliation and seek to solve problems**.

Not to cause them, not to ignore them. They generally are **not aggressive or intimidating as they present their own positions**, ties into meek and gentle. They reflect their Heavenly Father's character and **are known to be His children**.

Finally, Jesus speaks of **persecution**.

Unfortunately, people who **exemplify these characteristics**, who wear the Marks of Kingdom People, **People who love God**, they put others before themselves and who attempt to make peace, **will often not be treated well**.

Because they are "righteous," **they have been set apart**. They have oriented their lives around God, **around His values and His will**, therefore they stand out from the world and become **targets for the enemy's attacks**.

**When we give ourselves over to God, and when we, with enthusiasm apply God's truths and live His way, this is what our lives look like.** Look at the results of living this way.

Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
They will be comforted.  
They will inherit the earth.  
They will be filled.

They will be shown mercy.  
They will see God.  
They will be called children of God.  
Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

To experience these results brings happiness and joy, **we are truly blessed.**

**Matthew 5:1-12 (The Message)**

“You’re blessed when you’re at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

“You’re blessed when you feel you’ve lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One who is most dear to you.

“You’re blessed when you’re content with just who you are - no more, no less. That’s the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can’t be bought.

“You’re blessed when you get your inside world- your mind and heart - put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

“You’re blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That’s when you discover who you really are, and your place in God’s family.

“You’re blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God’s kingdom.

“Not only that - count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable.

You can be glad when that happens - give a cheer, even! - for though they don’t like it, I do! And all heaven applauds.

And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble. **This is Kingdom Living!** These are qualities, attitudes, and behaviors that **exist in the lives of Followers of King Jesus.** As we grow in our love relationship with Him, over time, **these qualities develop and become a more natural part of who we are.**

This is not a burden, to live **as our Creator designed us to be**, and in a way that is consistent with His values and priorities. **That doesn’t mean it is not work, it is, but it is well worth it.**

**It is about joyfully seeking God in our lives.** By doing this, we experience the inheritance of the King, along with the blessings of walking with God.

These Marks are the results of a life committed to, and submitted to God.

As we live God’s way, **these are the Marks of Kingdom People.**

This sermon was preached at the Evangelical Free Church of Bemidji  
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