

Series: From Israel to Everyone: Disciples who Demonstrate God's Presence (a study of Matthew).

Sermon Text: Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes in Community

Good morning church family. It's good to see your faces and hear your voices. We have spent 5 weeks on The Beatitudes, Brandon spent 3 weeks guiding us through the ones found in Matthew chapter 5, Gary spent 2 weeks pointing out that Jesus echoed them in Revelation, sprinkling them throughout the letter, like little treasures to find and cherish. And in between Brandon and Gary, we celebrated Jesus Christ's Resurrection from the dead, on Easter Sunday! And thank you John Crabb for beautifully reminding us that we can have reasonable and logical certainty that our Lord has risen! Jesus' resurrection is incredible isn't it? No wonder we are taking a month to change up the way we enjoy communion together... We want Easter to change the very fabric of how we live.

By conquering sin and death, Jesus completely flipped the world upside down! "Oh death, where is your victory? Oh death, where is your sting?" The fear of death, that fear that our entire world is crippled by, for those who claim the risen Lord Jesus Christ, the fear of death and all of our attempts to evade or wiggle out of it, evaporate. For the child of God, our inevitable bodily death is merely the threshold we must walk through to finally meet our Savior joy-filled face to joy-filled face. For those who abide in Christ, for those in whom the Holy Spirit dwells, we are no longer crippled or held captive by the fear of death. The child of God has traded fear in this world and fear of this world for the love and peace of the Father through Jesus Christ. This kind of freedom, that God offers in the resurrection of Jesus, frees us up to love others as Jesus commanded his disciples in John chapter 13:34-35 NLT: "*So now I am giving you a new commandment [Jesus said]: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.*"

We are now free to partner with God in love... we can partner with God to bring the heaven he planted in our hearts out into our communities. And the world will know we are Christian by our love for one another. And who has Jesus invited to partner with him to bring more of heaven to earth? That's a great question! We've

spent 5 of our 6 weeks in the Beatitudes, talking about how we get to partner with each other! As we wrap up our Beatitudes series, let's slow down and wonder what it might look like to love each other as God's community that is made up and described by the Beatitudes. We're also gonna be looking at how the Beatitudes might be working out in your own life, and even how you might be experiencing them when interacting with our faith community.

This morning, Kelsey Moeller will join me for a conversation about all this. I'm delighted that she serves with me and our other discipleship leaders. If you don't know, our team is tasked with helping our church go from just learning about truth to experiencing truth in healthy, intergenerational relationships. Our team recently sat down to discuss this question: "How can we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who might struggle with believing and experiencing that the Beatitudes are true for them?" Today, Kelsey and I will share a few of our responses in hopes of inspiring you to have a similar discussion with other believers in your family or small group.

Let's jump right into it! We'll begin with the first Beatitude in **Matthew 5:3, *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*** Do you feel like the Christian faith doesn't make sense; you have too many doubts or questions? Maybe you feel like a perpetual failure in God's eyes, maybe you don't know what to believe, or maybe you believe that you're too messed up, or don't have enough faith, feeling ashamed of who you are, that you're not enough. Welcome home friend, by your example, the risen Lord has declared that the kingdom of heaven is home to so many more than we could ever fathom! Landmark, "How can we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who feel like they may not belong in the kingdom of heaven?" **Examples:** Loving them where they are, accepting who they currently are, making sure they have space to belong, they don't have to be put together to be family, encouraging reminders and be the embodiment, be God's glowing face of how God actually does enjoys and likes you.

Let's consider the next Beatitude in **Matthew 5:4, *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*** Are you grieving right now? Is sadness a persistent unwelcome presence in your life? Maybe you feel depressed or are clinically

depressed. Maybe you're trying to pick up the pieces of a shattered life and don't know where to begin. Maybe you feel like you're all alone in your sadness or struggle. We are so glad that you are with us, for your presence shows us that the risen Lord is fully present with us in our pain and struggles, he feels and understands our grief, and that he's not going anywhere. Landmark, "How can we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who are in need of comfort?" **Examples:** In the moment praying for and over them. Not giving advice or platitudes, hearing them, asking what real help (practical) might be for them. Creatively finding ways to simply be with you... non-anxious compassionate presence. Invite to join or be part of a group. For the mourner to come at all is a huge win, for them to let someone know is a big deal.

Let's consider the next Beatitude in *Matthew 5:5, Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.* Are you slow to speak, gentle in your responses? How did that happen? How have you been humbled over the years? How have your edges been softened, what did you have to go through? What has placing the needs of others above your own, what did that cost you? You honor us with your hard-won patience, teachability and dependence on God; we join in to proclaim that God's children shall inherit the earth. Landmark, "How might we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who are lowly and place others higher than themselves?" **Examples:** Intentionally looking for and thanking/appreciating the people who are doing stuff behind the scenes, and maybe even asking to help them out. Pointing out what you value in the other person, what you notice, how they remind you of the character of Christ. Validated and venerated.

Let's consider the next Beatitude in *Matthew 5:6, Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.* Does your heart break for the outcast, the marginalized, the oppressed? Maybe you've been on the receiving end of a terrible injustice and long, not for revenge, but for God to fix it, to put it right again. Maybe you lie awake at night praying to God for relationships to be restored, for the vulnerable to be protected, for others to have integrity, for our government to uphold godly justice. Because of you, we are reminded that God seeks both justice and restoration, and that he will put right what has gone wrong, and we

will be satisfied. Landmark, “How might we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who wait upon our Lord to put things right again?” **Examples:** When this person shares their heart and hope for justice, look for ways to serve with them and to champion. Do not ignore or minimize, but take seriously, do not deflect or distract their passion and heart. Investigate with them, be curious, with scripture in hand, what is the right thing, the best thing, what we can do with our resources. Appreciate the voice, passion, burning, be heard.

Let’s consider the next Beatitude in ***Matthew 5:7, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*** Are you quick to forgive, maybe too quick others might say; unable to hold a grudge? Do you feel compassion for others deep in your gut, and then act on it? Maybe you're too soft on others, or too quick to help or rescue them? Are you loyal to a fault, giving three, four, or fifteen chances? Thank you for showing us the tender loving kindness and faithfulness of our risen Lord, for what you've given to others, you will receive from God. Landmark, “How might we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who risk being vulnerable and compassionate as they help others with their hearts out in front of them?” **Examples:** Help talk through the truth of love and boundaries, when helping hurts, when generosity doesn’t benefit, discerning needs from wants in generosity. Help be wise in how they help. Never say to the helper, “I told you so” but genuinely walk alongside the helper as the weather their costly decisions. Encouraging and reminding healthy boundaries, and self-care.

Let’s consider the next Beatitude in ***Matthew 5:8, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*** Are you aware, deeply aware of your motives and intentions, the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly? Do you desire to act with integrity, where your actions match your motives? Maybe you give yourself a hard time for not being perfect or good all the time, making it hard to believe that God smiles upon you. You strive and grasp to obey our risen Lord from the heart. And as we seek him, thanks to your encouragement model to us all, we will see God’s radiant face! Landmark, “How might we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who are hard on themselves, and perhaps others, when they or someone else misses the mark?” **Examples:** Help them see themselves as a child of God, not a servant or

slave. Share own testimony that we are human and broken, tell them that you like their messy self, that you give them grace and where you give them grace.

Let's consider the next Beatitude in ***Matthew 5:9, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*** Are you sensitive to conflicts, disputes, and wars? Do you look for ways, maybe even putting yourself in danger or harm's way, to bring the peace of God that you have tasted and know is possible, so that others might experience peace and rest for themselves? Your effort and work will be fruitful, for just like our older brother, the risen Lord Jesus Christ, you too will hear God call you His child! Landmark, "*How might we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who call to our community's attention the brokenness and the power struggles going on in our world, and who can't stand idle or turn a blind eye to them?*" **Examples:** Joining in their prayers, hope with them, listen so they are and feel heard, be curious and take serious, stand in solidarity with the peacemaker, brainstorm what resources might be available. Help peacemakers discern what wise course of action to take. And remind peacemakers to self-care.

Let's consider the final Beatitude in ***Matthew 5:10-12, 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.*** In your efforts to live the life you truly believe our risen Lord has designed you to live, has violence been done to you? Have you been traumatized, abused, neglected, marginalized, kicked out, hated? Has your offer of love been twisted or turned against you, have you stood up for injustice only to be cancelled? At great personal cost, you have been planting seeds of love and life in the world's soil, making it possible for our risen Lord's kingdom to grow and flourish. Landmark, "*How might we show the love of Jesus to our brothers and sisters who have been and are being wounded for showing love to the powers of sin and death in an empire of domination?*" **Examples:** Continue to show our persecuted God's love, his gentle, embracing, opened arms kind of love that lets them heal over time. Invite their stories

to be heard, celebrate their victories, and honor the cost they have paid. Be a consistent, positive yet realistic, and safe person that our persecuted can rely on.

Questions: “What do you think, how does all that sit with you? Did you find yourself being described in one or more of the Beatitudes? Did one of them remind you of a family member or friend?” We spent today wrestling with how practical the Beatitudes really are. Our prayer is that this conversation was encouraging for you. Our hope and prayer for you is that you continue to talk with God, your family, friends and your small group about how you, how we might practically show the love of Jesus to each other. For this is how heaven spreads on earth! And remember, wherever you are on your journey of trusting Christ, you need not work through anything alone. Reach out, and let’s help each other!

Sunday to Monday Connection: Tim challenged us to live out the Beatitudes within our faith community. Empowered by the resurrection, we partner with God and each other to bring the kingdom of heaven here through love.

- **Question:** Having experienced God's comfort in our own brokenness, and finding ourselves deeply loved by Him—how can we actively extend that same love to support a brother or sister this week?
- **Next Step:** Discuss in your small group practical ways you can offer God’s comfort to those in low places. Who is God bringing to mind, and what steps can you take to walk alongside them? If you aren’t in a small group and are interested in how they build relationships in our community, please see someone on the Discipleship Team or any of our leaders.
- **Note:** If you are not a Christ follower and would like to explore what all this might mean for you, please speak with someone you know here or one of our church leaders.

Takeaways to discuss with your people (in addition to the underlined questions above!):

Considerations for discussion leaders:

1. Keep circling back to the big idea and main points of the passage to stay on track.
2. Keep the group small for deeper sharing. Single underlined sentences are for discussion, while key points are double underlined.
3. Keep the discussion around 30 mins. Once you hit the “sweet spot”, spend your time there.
4. Keep these simple questions in your back pocket: What is God teaching you? What are you going to do about it? How will it help you love & serve others?

Other Articles/Songs/Videos: Please ask us for help obtaining other resources.

- Bible Project - Gospel of the Kingdom [Videos](#) and [Podcast episodes](#).
- Bible Project - Heaven and Earth [Videos](#) and [Podcast episodes](#).
- Bible Project - Temple [Videos](#).
- Bible Project – Day of the Lord [Podcast episodes](#).

Quotes related to this passage:

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