

**Conduits of Mercy**  
*Sermon on the Mount, Vol. 7*

HBC 7/12/20

Matthew 5:7

The first four beatitudes obviously have to do with a person's **response to God**.

Matthew 5:3–6: *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.*

The promises to people who accept such  **blessings? They and they alone . . .**

Are citizens of the **Kingdom of Heaven**

Shall be *comforted* by God

Shall **inherit** the earth

Shall **be satisfied**

The qualities that are precious in the sight of God and which are bestowed upon those whom He adopts into His family when they come by faith in response to His grace are **the opposite of the qualities extolled by the world**.

That's the first four beatitudes. Beginning with this one, we see those previous inner qualities as they are expressed outwardly in the presence of other people. To introduce this beatitude, I want you to see a universal principle built into the world of men by God from the beginning.

Galatians 6:7–9: *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for **whatever a man sows, this he will also reap**. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. Let us not lose heart in doing good, for **in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary**.*

2 Corinthians 9:6: *Now this I say, he who **sows sparingly** shall also **reap sparingly**; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.*

Proverbs 22:8: *He who **sows iniquity** will **reap** vanity . . .*

Hosea 10:12: ***Sow** with a view to righteousness, **Reap** in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the Lord Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.*

In all the beatitudes, **faith is presupposed**. Remember, this is Jesus' extended explanation of what He meant by **Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand**. He is not talking about what to do in order to get saved. He is describing the kind of people who

**are** saved. So he is not talking about someone in the world who is more gentle, forgiving and merciful than most other people. He is talking about the mercy that springs from a personal experience with the unequalled mercy of God.

Ephesians 2:1, 4–5: *And **you were dead** in your trespasses and sins, . . . **But God**, being **rich in mercy**, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, **made us alive together with Christ** (by grace you have been saved), . . .*

## I. **Who Is Blessed?**

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

The word translated **merciful** means *to have mercy on, to care for the afflicted, to give help to the wretched, or to rescue the miserable*. It implies **having compassion** and **showing it** by your actions toward people who are needy. **Mercy is not receiving** the punishment you deserve. **Grace is receiving** the good things you do not deserve.

When God is involved there will be mercy for mercy. Remember, we're going to circle into this territory again in the next chapter:

Matthew 6:14–15: *For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions. “*

The more Jesus showed mercy, the more He exposed the unmerciful hearts of the Jewish religious leaders. The more He showed mercy, the more they were determined to kill Him. The ultimate outcome of His mercy was the cross. In Jesus' crucifixion, merciless government and merciless religion united to kill Him. Totalitarian Rome joined intolerant Judaism to destroy the Prince of mercy.

## I. **Who Is Blessed?**

## II. **What Does The Blessing Include?**

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

### ***Forgiven people are forgiving people***

The fifth beatitude does not teach that mercy to men brings mercy from men, but that **mercy to men brings mercy from God**. If we are merciful to others, God will be merciful to us, whether men are or not. It is **God who gives the kingdom** of heaven to the poor in spirit. **God** gives comfort to those who mourn. **God** gives the earth to the meek. **God** gives satisfaction to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Those who are merciful shall receive mercy **from God**.

Luke 6:36: *Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

Ephesians 4:32: *Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

The same two observations are valid for this promise that we have seen before:

1. It is **passive voice**, meaning that the **source** of the mercy is **God**. It isn't something we can achieve for ourselves.
2. The pronoun is emphatic. **Only those who are merciful receive mercy**. Show me a person without mercy, a person who does not forgive, a person not willing to let go of bitterness, and I'll show you an unsaved person **regardless of what he or she claims**.

This is illustrated vividly in a parable told by Jesus, on one of those times when Peter almost got something right.

Matthew 18:21-22: *Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus \*said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he had begun to settle them, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. But since he did not have the means to repay, his lord commanded him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and repayment to be made.*

*So the slave fell to the ground and prostrated himself before him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you everything.' And the lord of that slave felt compassion and released him and forgave him the debt. But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and he seized him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back what you owe.'*

*So his fellow slave fell to the ground and began to plead with him, saying, 'Have patience with me and I will repay you.' But he was unwilling and went and threw him in prison until he should pay back what was owed. So when his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were deeply grieved and came and reported to their lord all that had happened.*

*Then summoning him, his lord \*said to him, 'You wicked slave, I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. 'Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?' And his lord, **moved with anger**, handed him over to the torturers until he should repay all that was owed him. "My heavenly Father will also do the same to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart."*

God is merciful **by nature**, but even if some of His mercy splatters on you, **unless it changes you**, you will miss out on His mercy in the most important sense of His forgiveness of your sins.

Me telling you about one of the beatitudes is irrelevant unless we let it penetrate our lives. The #1 reason for unexciting Christian lives and for the general lack of spiritual

growth in so many people who say they love Jesus is **unwillingness to make the effort to change**.

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Recognizing your spiritual bankruptcy is real. Mourning over sin is profound. Choosing meekness is an everyday thing. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness is something you must cultivate. Your flesh will always come up with abundant and creative ways and reasons to avoid it. You must seek the right things, fill your mind with them, and act on them if you want the blessings promised in these beatitudes.

It's not OK to let things slide because you don't feel like pursuing them. Spiritual growth is not a matter of waiting for the right feeling to move you. It's a matter of obeying the King, not waiting for a feeling.

Psalm 119:58:

*I sought Your favor **with all my heart**;  
Be gracious to me **according to Your word**.*

Psalm 119:59: *I considered my ways, And turned my feet to Your testimonies.*

Psalm 119:60 *I hastened and did not delay To keep Your commandments.*

So what about this beatitude? Like Psalm 119:59 prompts you, **consider your ways**. Is there someone you won't talk to? Is there someone about whom you secretly rejoice when they have a hard time? Has God allowed a need to cross your path and you have ignored doing something you could to help? Is there a feud going on, and you're letting yourself be content with doing nothing about it? Are you consumed enough with God's mercy to you that you look for opportunities to pass it on to others?

Hebrews 2:17: *Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a **merciful** and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.*