

## The 9 Beatitudes and Their Meaning: A Bible Study

The following are the nine beatitudes as outlined in Matthew 5:3–11:

1. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3)
2. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." (Matthew 5:4)
3. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:5)
4. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."  
(Matthew 5:6)
5. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." (Matthew 5:7)
6. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8)
7. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)
8. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:10)
9. "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:11)

Let us expound on each one of them in the following section.

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

The poor in spirit are individuals who possess what the prophet Isaiah calls a contrite spirit (Isaiah 66:2). This is a spirit that expresses remorse and a willingness to repent for every wrong deed.

The Bible teaches that God is near to those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18). And that He does not despise those who come to His presence with a broken heart (Psalm 51:17).

It is for this reason that Jesus declares in Matthew 5:3 that the kingdom of heaven belongs to those with a poor or contrite spirit.

No wonder the Bible urges us to keep the company of individuals who have a lowly spirit rather than divide the spoil with those who are proud at heart (Proverbs 16:19).

In fact, the main target of the good news preached by Christ was the poor in spirit. This is according to Isaiah 61:1, which says:

*"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me **to preach good tidings to the poor**; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;"*

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

When the Bible talks about those who mourn, it is referring to a people who express *godly grief that produces repentance that leads to salvation without regret* (2 Corinthians 7:9–10).

When we go about mourning concerning matters of the kingdom of heaven, the Bible teaches that we shall be comforted by God Himself (Matthew 5:4).

In fact, one of the things that Jesus Christ came to accomplish *was to **console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, and that He may be glorified*** (Isaiah 61:2–3).

Similar teaching is found in Psalm 126:6, which says:

*"He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."*

The words of Jesus Christ recorded in Revelation 21:4 are very comforting to believers who will make it through the tribulation. The scripture says:

*"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

## **3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.**

A meek person is one who is forbearing, gentle, submissive, and quiet in nature (Oxford Languages Dictionary).

In other words, a meek person is one who is humble in nature.

The Bible teaches that those who are meek will inherit the earth. This is in line with the word of God recorded in Psalm 115:16, which says:

*"The heavens, even the heavens, are the LORD'S; **but the earth He has given to the children of men.**"*

Similar words are echoed by King David in Psalm 37:11, which says:

*"But **the meek shall inherit the earth**, and they shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."*

The Bible records that Jesus Christ and Moses were among the meekest people to ever walk on the face of the earth. This is according to the following scriptures:

Matthew 11:29

*"Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am **gentle and lowly in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls."*

Numbers 12:3

*"Now the man Moses was **very humble**, more than all men who were on the face of the earth."*

The Apostle Paul encourages believers in Ephesus and Christians in general to emulate Christ Jesus *by walking with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, and bearing one another in love* (Ephesians 4:2).

#### **4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.**

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are individuals who yearn to know and do what is right in the eyes of God.

According to Jesus, when we hunger and thirst for righteousness, God fills us with His Spirit of knowledge, wisdom, and understanding (Matthew 5:6).

These sentiments are also echoed in Psalm 107:9, which says:

*"For He satisfies the longing soul and Fills the hungry soul with goodness."*

In John 4:13–14, Jesus Christ told the Samaritan woman that the waters He would give those who believed in Him would make them thirst-free. The scripture says:

*"Jesus answered and said to her, Whoever drinks of this water (from the well) will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."*

In this passage, Jesus was referring the Samaritan woman to the infilling by the Holy Spirit that began on the Day of Pentecost and continues today (Acts 2:17).

This was a fulfillment of what was prophesied in Isaiah 44:3, which says:

*"For I will pour water on him who is thirsty and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants and My blessing on your offspring;"*

In Psalm 63:1–2, King David teaches us the true meaning of being hungry and thirsty for God. The scripture says:

*"O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory."*

##### **5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.**

The merciful are individuals who readily and willingly forgive people who wrong them. Consequently, the merciful have no time to carry around grudges for each and every offense others commit against them. In short, these are baggage-free people.

According to Jesus Christ, when we show others mercy, we receive the same from God and our fellow men (Matthew 5:7).

Echoes of these words are found in 2 Samuel 22:26, which says:

*"With the merciful, You will show Yourself merciful; with a blameless man, You will show Yourself blameless."*

Mercy and forgiveness go together, and that is why the Apostle Paul encourages believers to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, and forgiving (Ephesians 4:32).

The punishment for being merciless and unforgiving is clearly spelt out by Jesus Christ in Matthew 6:14-15, where the Bible says:

*"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

In conclusion, if you want forgiveness, first begin by forgiving others.

## **6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

A pure heart is one whose intentions are always good. When we do things out of a pure heart, the Bible teaches that we shall see God (Matthew 5:8).

According to the Bible, having a pure heart is one of the conditions we must fulfill if we intend to stand in the presence of God. This is according to Psalm 24:3–4, which says:

*"Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place? **He who has clean hands and a pure heart**, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully,"*

It is the desire of every believer to always be in the presence of God. Therefore, our prayer should be similar to that of King David in Psalm 51:10, which says:

*"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."*

The Apostle James pens similar words in James 4:8, which says:

*"Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and **purify your hearts**, you double-minded."*

## 7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

In the book of Matthew 5:9, Jesus taught that those who pursue peace with fellow men would be called sons of God.

As a result, the Bible instructs every believer to pursue peace with all men as a true mark of being a son of God (Hebrews 12:14).

Similar sentiments are expressed in Psalm 34:14, which says:

*"Depart from evil and do good; **seek peace and pursue it.**"*

God takes the issue of peace very seriously, so much so that He instructed the children of Israel to always seek the peace of the city in which they dwelt as captives. This is recorded in Jeremiah 29:7, which says:

*"And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the LORD for it; for in its peace you will have peace."*

The instruction we get from this Bible passage is that every believer should seek the peace of the city in which he or she dwells and also pray for that particular city.

In Romans 14:19, the Apostle Paul encourages believers to pursue peace in the following ways:

*"Therefore let us pursue the things that make for peace and the things by which one may edify another."*

It is therefore no wonder that one of the favorite scriptures used to do benedictions after many a church service is basically about peace. The scripture I am talking about is Philippians 4:7. It says:

*"And the **peace of God, which surpasses all understanding**, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

**8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Jesus Christ warned His disciples that they would face unprecedented persecution for rejecting the world and choosing instead to follow Him. This is recorded in several scriptures, including the following:

John 15:18-20

*"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, A servant is not greater than his master.' But **if they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.** If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."*

2 Timothy 3:12

*"Yes, and **all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.**"*

Acts 14:22

*"Strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, **We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of heaven,**"*

In Matthew 5:10, Jesus Christ comforts believers by stating that despite the persecution they were going to experience here on earth, the kingdom of heaven was theirs.

What these scriptures are implying is that all who desire to enter the kingdom of heaven must prepare to go through many persecutions and tribulations. There is no shortcut to this!

**9. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

In this passage, Jesus Christ promises His disciples that a reward awaits all those who will persevere in persecution and enter the kingdom of heaven.

In Mark 13:13, the Bible encourages the brethren to endure persecution because, at the end of it all, they will receive salvation for their souls.

In Matthew 19:29, Jesus explained to the disciples what awaited them because they chose to follow Him. Here is what was said:

*"And everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, wife, children, or lands for My sake, shall receive a hundredfold and inherit eternal life."*

### **Conclusion**

This article discussed the nine beatitudes and their meaning as recorded in the book of Matthew 5:3–11. We have so far established that the beatitudes outline the reward awaiting the poor in spirit, the mourners, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted, and the reviled. The identified rewards are therefore meant to strengthen the believer's resolve to press on with their journey of faith till the end. I hope you will also find this information helpful in building up your faith for the salvation of your soul. God bless you. Shalom.