

SERMON ON THE MOUNT: BLESSING

February 1, 2026

Preaching: Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



MATTHEW 5:1-12

5When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

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 receive 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 for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. This passage, called the beatitudes, begins a longer set of teachings that Jesus gives to his disciples—all called “The Sermon on the Mount.” What do you make of the curious fact that Jesus begins with a *blessing*?
3. Which beatitude do you find the most comforting or challenging? Why?
4. Which of the groups that Jesus identifies as blessed do you feel closest to? Why is that? Which do you feel least closest to?

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5. Jesus “went up the mountain” to provide this teaching. What is something significant you have experienced or learned from a mountaintop or high place?
6. Jesus doesn’t say, “blessed are the peace-keepers.” What’s the difference between a peace-maker and peace-keeper? What do you think peacemakers seek to do in a world riddled with conflict, violence, and hatred?
7. The word for “righteousness” is also the word for “justice.” In what ways are people hungering and thirsting for justice today?
8. Meekness is not about weakness (no power), but about controlling the power you have for the sake of others. Meekness is about not exerting domination, control, or exploitation when you can get away with it. Rather, it is having the integrity (and courage) to show compassion, gentleness, and investing in the agency of others. What might meekness look like in your life? What might meekness look like from business, political, and social leaders? How does Jesus demonstrate meekness in his life, death, and resurrection?