**Sermon on the Mount 3 // Matthew 5:3-16 // 4.13.15**

Forsake the typical human ways, choose God’s blessedness, and inherit everything.

**Intro: A description of repentance: see 4:17** – Repent, because the kingdom of God is coming

* Renounce self-glorifying, self-promoting, self-seeking ways of advancing your own agenda. (5:3-9)
* Be willing to endure criticism and oppression from people who disagree with Jesus. (5:10-12)
* Have a life wholly flavored by the things Jesus promotes, and not any other flavor. (5:13)
* Begin living a life of such obvious good that people think about God when they see you, and not you. (5:14-16)

**The Beatitudes: Not framed as imperatives, but as statements of fact.**

* What “blessed” means—“This is the truly blessed life.” The life to be envied, to be admired. “Happy.” This is “the good life.” We say: “They have the best life.”
* In each case, the “blessedness” is not necessarily in the state Jesus describes, but in what he says is true spiritually, or in the future. It is what God gives to those who are like this that makes them “blessed.” For example, it doesn’t “feel good” to be “poor in spirit” or to “mourn” but

**Notes on Beatitudes**

* Reversing how we get honor, and where we focus: from and on God, not from and on People.
* Beatitudes call on God’s people to stand out as different from others, and says they won’t be losers in the end.
* *“poor in Spirit”* a sense of empty-handed dependence on God alone Is 57:15, 66:2
* *“mourn”* for sin, for the broken state of the world, and because of their condition as disciples
* *“meek”* see Psalm 37:5-11. Not pressing their own agenda, not arrogant. *Jesus:* ***11:29***
* *“hunger and thirst”* for personal righteousness and justice in general. **See 5:20, 5:48, 6:33**
* *“merciful”* empathetic, well-wishing, generous, and not retaliating
* *“pure in heart”* God is Spirit…
* *“peacemakers”* involved in a messed up world for the sake of peace, not division or fighting.
* *“persecuted”* these characteristics show that we’re involved in society. And to be involved in society with these characteristics has its costs. They are persecuted here for the exact thing they hunger for in 5:6. So the way they hunger and thirst for it is noticeable to those around them. But it is not just because they are trying to be “good people,” but because they are specifically attached to Jesus—see 5:11
* Notice the rewards—they are encouragement to press on as disciples of Christ, even when the present circumstances might make you question if you made the right choice…

**5:13-16 Salt and Light**

* It is *these* people who are what the world needs. A world that’s decaying and lost its taste, a world full of darkness, only disciples of Christ, who have these characteristics, are the light and salt the world needs.
* The disciples of Christ are totally distinctive—instead of rotting, or tasting like everything else, they preserve and taste like God; instead of darkness, they are light. And they are totally involved. Only salt which is sprinkled around throughout the world can flavor and preserve it. Only a lamp that is set up on a hill lights the world. Disciples won’t be indistinguishable from the world. And they won’t be inaccessible to the world.
* These verses speak of a collective experience (the pronouns for “you” are plural). So while it is true that individual Christians are called to be salt and light in our lives, in this passage Jesus is teaching that it is the collective community of Christians *together*—living out our meek, pure, righteous lives—which is that city on a hill. When they see us, *together* being true disciples of Christ, we are having this effect.

**Gospel:** These things are not checklist items to check off so we can say we pleased God. They are invitations to a different kind of life, the kind we discover once we know Jesus. They highlight how far we are from his way naturally. They show the kinds of people he will make us if we’ll stop believing in ourselves and start trusting in him. Ultimately, they invite us to repent of all the things we are that are opposite of these things, to turn to Jesus and ask him to change us. *This* is what pleases him, and this is how we begin to live a life that actually starts having the qualities. This is how we become these people. This is how we become his disciples.

**Matthew 5:3-16**

3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed *are* those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

5 Blessed *are* the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

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

7 Blessed *are* the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

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

11 Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you,   
 and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven,

for so they persecuted the prophets

who were before you.

13 You are the salt of the earth;

but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?

It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.

14 You are the light of the world.

A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.

15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand,

and it gives light to all *who are* in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

**Discussion Questions**

* Did anything in particular stick out to you in this passage?
* Have you personally experienced any of the things Jesus speaks of in this passage?
* In what ways do you think many people find the qualities Jesus lists in v.3-11 *undesirable*?
* How do you find what Jesus says in v.3-11 personally encouraging?
* Where and how would you like to more fully experience being *salt* and *light*?

End prayer: to be strengthened in our faith in what Jesus promises to his disciples. To be this salt and light in our particular contexts.

Isaiah 61:3 (NIV) and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. **They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.**

**Isaiah 66:2**

For all those *things* My hand has made, And all those *things* exist," Says the LORD. "But on this *one* will I look: On *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit, And who trembles at My word.

**Isaiah 61:1-3**

"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 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn,

3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

**Psalm 37**

5 Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring *it* to pass. 6 He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, And your justice as the noonday. 7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. 8 Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret-- *it* only *causes* harm. 9 For evildoers shall be cut off; But those who wait on the LORD, They shall inherit the earth. 10 For yet a little while and the wicked *shall be* no *more*; Indeed, you will look carefully for his place, But it *shall be* no *more*. 11 But the meek shall inherit the earth, And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.