

# Sermon on the Mount - Part 3 David Servant

by David Servant

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*David Servant explores the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, emphasizing the characteristics of those who are blessed by God and the importance of righteousness, mercy, and purity of heart.*

**Duration:** 28:30

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:6-9, Matthew 5:16, Galatians 5:22-23, Hebrews 12:14, James 2:13

**Topics:** "Spiritual Growth", "Christian Character"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, emphasizing the importance of evaluating one's spiritual condition. It highlights the characteristics of the blessed, such as hungering and thirsting for righteousness, being merciful, having a pure heart, and being peacemakers. The sermon challenges listeners to assess whether they align with these qualities and to seek God's transformation in their lives.

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## Transcript

Welcome back to our program. Thanks so much for joining me today. I'm sitting once again here in the beautiful region of Galilee in Israel.

Here on top of Mount Arbel, it's absolutely gorgeous in the morning. Take a look at this view that I'm able to see looking towards the sunrise. It's been a lovely, lovely morning and I can begin to understand why the Lord Jesus spent so much of his ministry in this region, if for the beauty alone, I'm sure it would have been worth it.

But Jesus also found lots of hungry hearts in the area of the Sea of Galilee and practicing what he himself preached, he didn't waste his time casting his pearls before swine, but he went to where people were receptive and hungry. As we read in our former broadcast, we saw that as Jesus ministered in Galilee and right before the time that he gave his Sermon on the Mount, multitudes of people had gathered, many of whom had walked days, maybe more than a week to get to this location. Now again, we don't know exactly where the Sermon on the Mount was given by Jesus, but we know he went up on a mountain somewhere around the Sea of Galilee and I'm on a pretty good sized mountain, one of the highest around Mount Arbel and if he hiked up here, you can understand why scripture says that it was his disciples who came to him.

Only those who were hungry, only those who were really searching for truth and who were really interested in him would have bothered to make a journey up a mountain like this one at least. The traditional site of the Sermon on the Mount is somewhere a little bit up the coast of the Sea of Galilee here, but again, that's purely built on a tradition and that's really built on speculation because the scripture doesn't say. We're going to continue our way now through the Sermon on the Mount and so far we've made it through Matthew chapter 5 and verse number 5. We read three of the Beatitudes, blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted and blessed are the gentle for they shall inherit the earth.

I made mention in a former broadcast that a common error that people make in reading the Beatitudes is picking out one that seems to apply to them and they say, oh that's my Beatitude, but you can see the error in doing that if you just use a little bit of logic. Let's say for example that you are poor and you, poor in spirit rather, and you are persecuted, the first and the last Beatitude. The promise there is that yours is the kingdom of heaven, but let's say that although you're poor in spirit and you're persecuted, but you are not pure in heart, well then even though yours is the kingdom of heaven, you don't have a promise that you'll ever see God.

You see, it wouldn't be logical to conclude that these are unique characteristics of unique people. These are what characterize all the blessed people. Take another example here.

Let's say that you are pure in heart, but you're not a peacemaker, well then you're going to see God, but you'll never be called a son of God or reverse that, it'd be even more ridiculous. Let's say you're a peacemaker, but you're not pure in heart, well then you'll be, excuse me, take it the other way around, then you would be a son of God rather, but never see God. Well, that would seem a little bit unusual, wouldn't it? Okay, so all I'm trying to say is that it's very obvious that Jesus is describing to us all the blessed people, and he's trying to help his audience that day along the Sea of Galilee to know whether or not they're among the blessed or not, and every one of us should be making that same type of evaluation right now.

Am I among the blessed? Is Jesus describing me? And so if you have recognized your spiritual poverty, number one, if you have mourned for your sin, number two, if the Holy Spirit has begun to work in you, number three, so you're beginning to see the fruit of the Spirit, remember we said that one of the fruit of the Spirit, according to Paul in Galatians 5, is that you'll display gentleness, praise the Lord. So if you can say, yeah, I identify with that, that's something that I recognize that's happened in my life, well then you are among the blessed. But if you don't identify with that, well then you're not among the blessed, and of course if you're smart, you'll get among the blessed, and begin to study what Jesus had to say that would help you to become among that blessed category.

So now we come to Matthew chapter five and verse number six, the fourth beatitude. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Well, you know, everybody, regardless of who you are around this earth I suppose, has some desire for righteousness, but what it usually is, is that everybody wants everybody else to do the right thing and treat them right, but they don't necessarily see their own unrighteousness.

So they're pointing their finger at everybody else, not realizing that there's really three other fingers pointed back at them. That's what Paul said in his gospel as he explains it in the first few chapters of Romans, he says, you know, you're without excuse because you're condemning others for your

unrighteousness, but you practice the same thing. And so Jesus is not talking here about the common everyday desire for righteousness that everybody experiences.

No, notice he says, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. And so this shows a desire for righteousness that goes way beyond the ordinary desire that so many people, most of the people of the world, have in their lives. So how do we describe this in more detail? Well, once you have mourned for your sin and repented of your sin, and once the Holy Spirit has begun that good work in you which he promises, Jesus promises to complete that good work in you, well, one of the things that shows up in your life is that you have this strong inward desire.

That's what Jesus meant by hungering and thirsting. It's, you know, it's something that just compels you. You know, when you're thirsty, you can only think about one thing.

You know, I want water. When you're hungry, you know, you're thinking, where can I find the nearest fast food place so that I can, you know, take care of this craving? And so it's the same thing in the life of someone who's been born again. You just want to experience righteousness, first of all, in your own life.

And so that indicates that you're motivated to be holy, to be obedient. What becomes of supreme interest to you above all else is pleasing Jesus. And that then identifies, you know, your everyday lifestyle.

It's not just a Sunday thing. It's not just a thing where, you know, you are, you know, mildly interested. It's a thing where you're driven by this.

Everything that you do, everything you say, the question is in your mind, is this pleasing to God? Would Jesus approve of this right now? So you're always evaluating the level of righteousness in your own life. Now beyond that, you have a hunger and thirst for righteousness in everyone else's life. But first, you know, as Jesus will say to us later on, you get the log out of your eye before you begin to pick out the speck in everyone else's eye.

Then I think that's a major problem with many of us today. We're finding fault with everyone else. It'd be much better if we just turn that searchlight of examination upon ourselves, clean up our own act, and then we would be truly the light of the world.

As Jesus said, we are to be. Alright, so once you examine yourself, and again, none of us have reached perfection yet, but we're striving for perfection, and the Holy Spirit works in us in such a way that He's always revealing the next step. He'll show us where we're falling short this time, or what we need to do, what we need to clean up.

He works on the inward motives. He works upon our thought lives and so forth. And secondly, I think this beatitude applies to us in that we just long for righteousness in the whole world.

We want everybody to repent. We want everybody to believe in Jesus and follow Him as we are doing and setting the example. And when we see unrighteousness, when we see injustice, when we see sin, which of course, you know, this whole world is in darkness, it's characterized by sin, then, you know, it makes us angry.

It makes us concerned, upset. We want to do something about it. And so we get involved in bringing righteousness to this world and bringing justice to this world.

We can't ignore it. We can't be passive. We can't just say, well, I'm just going to bide my own time now until I get to heaven.

I think that's the attitude of a lot of false Christians, people who, you know, they're just satisfied with their own little lives, they're, you know, righteous to a certain degree as far as they're not breaking any major commandments, and, you know, they have a semblance of righteousness. But they're not involved in trying to change the world. They're not involved in evangelizing or in working for justice or to eradicate poverty or, you know, so many things that we can be involved in to make a difference in this world.

So that's the characteristic of those who are truly born again. They hunger and thirst for righteousness. And Jesus said, you will be satisfied.

Well, that's a promise that I'm going to bank on myself. And that fits into the rest of what scripture says. You know, one day there's going to be a new heaven and a new earth.

And it's characterized, this is what scripture says, therein dwelleth righteousness. And so one day, believe it or not, and you might as well believe it because it's true, you know, there's not going to be any sin on this earth. There's not going to be any injustice.

There's not going to be anyone taking advantage of anybody else. This is going to be a righteous world where everybody obeys Jesus Christ with all their heart. Well, that's going to be a wonderful day, okay? And so that's the promise.

You're blessed if you have that hunger and thirst for righteousness and you have the promise that you will be satisfied. And hopefully you're getting more and more satisfied with the righteousness in your own life as the Holy Spirit works in you. And through that process of sanctification, you're getting more satisfied with how you're obeying the commandments of Jesus Christ.

But one day you'll ultimately be satisfied when we are all perfected, praise God, and that all who are in the kingdom will also be perfected and everyone will love Jesus. So as we finish this little segment of our broadcast, I want you to ask the question, is this describing me? Am I just a regular person in the world who is always finding fault with everybody else? Yeah, I want there to be righteousness. I want everyone to do the right thing.

But you yourself are ignoring what God wants you to do. If you find it within yourself, that hunger and thirst for righteousness where it's a driving motivation. When you get up every day, your thought is, Lord, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

That then describes your hunger and your thirst for righteousness. And when you sin, it grieves you. When you catch yourself doing something that you know is displeasing to God, you immediately confess it.

Well, that ought to just fill you with assurance, praise God, that you are among the blessed. And truly, that is a sign of God's blessing upon you. It didn't happen sovereignly apart from your own will, of course.

You humbled yourself. But yet, when you humbled yourself, God blessed you. Okay, we'll be right back after this short side trip and continue through our study of the Sermon on the Mount.

I'm standing here at Qumran. These are the caves up on this mountainside where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found some years ago by Bedouin shepherds who just happened to stumble upon them. Very

significant find because these scrolls contained biblical scrolls and fragments of biblical scrolls that predated the oldest existing manuscripts by a thousand years.

So, for example, they found an entire scroll of the book of Isaiah, and then they could compare that scroll of Isaiah with the oldest one they had before that, which was a thousand years apart, to see if the text had been changed at all. And there were tiny, tiny little things, but nothing significant, so the meaning has been preserved faithfully from one to the next, praise God. We take you closer to these caves, but our low budget prevents us from paying the entrance fee into the Qumran Park.

Forgive us for that. Well, welcome back. Let's continue our study through the Sermon on the Mount back to Matthew chapter 5. If you've got your Bible, would you read the next beatitude with me in verse number 7? Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

All right? So, again, we're evaluating ourselves to see, are we in the category of the blessed or are we not? Have you found, since you believe in Jesus, that you become more merciful? Well, you should, because those of us who have received so much mercy should be those who have a feeling of obligation to show others a lot of mercy. You recall, Jesus one time told a story about an unforgiving servant. His master, whom he owed an immense amount of money, graciously forgave him because he asked.

And so he went out completely forgiven of an enormous debt. A fellow servant, who owed him a considerable amount of money, begged him for forgiveness, just time to repay, and he wouldn't show him any mercy. And when the first servant's master heard of what had happened, he was enraged at it.

He said, should not you, who have received so much mercy, then given and granted the same mercy to your fellow servant? And it says he was moved with anger and he handed him over to the torturers. He reinstated his formerly forgiven debt and he said, you're going to go there until you repay what you owe me, which would be impossible for him to repay that, and so he would be tortured forever. Now that's a scary thought in itself, but Jesus went on to say, so shall my heavenly father do to you if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart.

And so it's especially important that when a brother or a sister in Christ does something to offend us or wrong us in some way, and as we confront them as Christ commanded us, he said, if your brother sins against you, go to him, et cetera, et cetera. When he asked for our forgiveness, oh my goodness, we have an obligation to show forgiveness because we receive so much mercy, we have an obligation to show mercy. That also implies a degree of humility.

It's proud people who hold grudges because they think they have the right to hold a grudge. Proud people are really those who are full of hatred because they're finding fault with somebody else, but yet they're ignoring their own guilt. Maybe they're not guilty now because they repented, but at one time we were all terribly guilty in the eyes of God prior to our salvation, prior to being forgiven.

And so blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. Obviously, those who are not merciful have no such promise or no such assurance. It's only the merciful who are blessed and who are promised they're going to receive mercy.

You know, James, the Apostle James who wrote one letter in the New Testament, and many Bible scholars think that his letter could have been perhaps the earliest of all the epistles penned in the New Testament, but it's very obvious as you read through the book of James that as he wrote his letter, a lot of

the thoughts that he had were thoughts that were derived from the Sermon on the Mount. And if you take a look at James chapter 2 and verse number 13, James warns, judgment will be merciless to the one who has shown no mercy. And so what happens to you if you receive a merciless judgment? Oh my goodness, that doesn't sound good.

If I don't get mercy at my judgment, I'm not going to go to heaven, I'm going to go to hell. And so, you know, it's imperative that we be merciful because if we're not merciful, we will not receive mercy. It's said by Jesus here.

Oftentimes, we ignore what the implication is, but we can't ignore it if we go to James where James flat out says, judgment will be merciless to the one who has shown no mercy. And so the blessed people are merciful people. If you're not merciful, you're not blessed and you have no hope of being shown any mercy when you stand before God.

Okay, now, maybe this sounds to you like salvation by works. No, it's not salvation by works, you're blessed. That implies God's grace upon your life.

But it began with your mourning for your sin, repenting for your sin, and receiving the work of the Holy Spirit in your life, being born again. And that regenerates you so that you become merciful and you become, you know, humble in that sense. And so you're less apt to be condemning others all the time.

Now, again, does that mean it's wrong ever to find any faults with anybody? Well, obviously not. Jesus said if your brother sins against you, go to him. Well, in order to, you know, go to him because your brother sins against you, you're going to have to make a judgment about that.

Jesus told us later on in this same sermon, he said, beware of the false teachers and prophets who come to you like wolves in sheep's clothing. He's saying that you'll know them by their fruit, so you have to make a judgment there. Jesus said, don't cast your pearls before the swine, you know, you have to make a judgment.

Who are the swine that I'm not supposed to cast my pearls before? Even in this case, when Jesus says, you know, blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy. You have to make a judgment. Who needs mercy, you know, so it doesn't mean you're blind to people's faults.

Jesus also said, if your brother sins against you, go to him, as I've already mentioned. So it doesn't mean it's wrong to find fault. He goes on there to say, and we'll read this later on in this sermon, that he said, first of all, get the log out of your own eye.

That's a great illustration. Get the log out of your own eye, then you'll see clear enough to take the speck out of your brother's eye. And so there is a time to get the speck out of your brother's eye or someone else's eye once you've got the log out of your own.

And so let's work on our own logs, first of all. Okay? All right, so make the evaluation, am I merciful? If you're not, you're not among the blessed. You can get among the blessed just by repenting of your sins and receiving the work of the Holy Spirit in your life to make you a merciful person.

Here comes the next beatitude in verse number eight. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. I love this one because this describes to us the deepest work of the Holy Spirit.

The deepest work of the Holy Spirit doesn't just work on the outward person, but the Holy Spirit works deep within our core to cleanse us from the inside. We become literally pure in heart. And another very subtle theme that continually arises in this very important sermon is Jesus' own criticism of the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees and their lifestyle.

Later on in the same gospel, he says to them, you guys are like whitewashed tombs. On the outside, wow, you look great, you're holy, you got your act cleaned up so people think you're holy, but inside you're full of dead man's bones and you stink. You see? And so that's the difference between the religious person and the person who's truly born again.

The religious person, it's a show. It's a big show for people. So they'll praise you and say nice things about you and so you can feel good about yourself and get your rewards all on this earth.

Those who have truly believed in Jesus, who have repented, they have a sense that God knows their thoughts, that God knows the intents of their heart. And the word of God is like that. It's like a two-edged sword.

It cuts deep within, right to the division of spirit and soul, scripture says, and it gets you way down inside. I know I've listened to sermons at times that were so convicting, I just felt like someone took a knife and drove it right into my heart. And yet it was a good feeling because I knew that God was showing me something that I needed to adjust.

I needed to change. So this beatitude is a great way to evaluate whether you're really among the blessed or not. Whether you're really on the way to heaven.

If you're going to receive the blessing of, what did he say here, they'll see God. This is reiterated in other places of scripture. Paul warns over and over again, don't be deceived, he says, brethren, the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom.

Don't be deceived. Fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals and thieves and the greedy, the covetous, they will not inherit God's kingdom. The writer of Hebrews said, pursue the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

And so the kind of holiness that you need to see the Lord according to the Lord himself is you have to have purity of heart. That's talking about why you're holy. So another way to check it out, as Jesus himself will tell us later, he said like, for example, when you give alms, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing so that your alms may be in secret.

Your father who sees in secret, he will repay you. And so if you're giving secretly, giving to the poor, helping someone who doesn't know that it's you that's helping them, well that's a way to check your heart because you're doing it because you want God to see you and there's nothing wrong with wanting praise from God. That's the whole reason we're living.

We want to hear him say to us one day, well done, good and faithful servant. Praise God. But if all we're looking for right now is the praises of men and if we behave one way in church and if we behave a different way at home, that shows we don't have holiness of heart.

It shows we're just like Pharisees, we're just like the scribes. We are putting on a big show for people to see us. Alright, so evaluate yourself.

Do you act the same way behind closed doors as you do when you're in church and among other believers? Or are you just putting on a show that at times when people are watching, you're the holy and righteous one? That is an indication that you need to think about whether you're really pure in heart and whether you really see God. Those who are not pure in heart, they will not see God. So you can take these beatitudes in the positive as well as in the negative sense.

And then the next one in verse number 9, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. We'll have to talk about this more in our next broadcast. But in what sense are all born again people peacemakers? Well, number one, they have made their peace with God.

We at one time were enemies with God and now, Scripture says, we've been reconciled to him through the blood of Jesus Christ. And again, we were reconciled because God took the initiative to send his son to die for our sins on the cross. But we had to respond to that.

We had to do something ourselves. We had to open our hearts in humility and receive his grace. And so God's Holy Spirit works in us and makes us peacemakers in that sense that we've made our peace with God and we're no longer enemies.

We're now his servants, right? And then, of course, we are peacemakers in another sense too. We're trying to help everybody else make peace with God. And if you're like me, when you meet someone for the first time, the first thought that goes into your mind is this, I wonder if this person has made peace with God.

I wonder if this person's born again. When I sit next to somebody in an airplane, introduce myself or we ask where we're going, I'm already thinking, I wonder if this person's a believer. We're throwing out little pieces of bait, as it were, to try to get a conversation going in that direction.

So blessed are the peacemakers. They're the ones who are the sons of God. Those who are not peacemakers have no such promise, no such assurance.

Well, thanks so much for joining us. Until next time, keep following Jesus with all your heart. God bless you.

Hey, there's a whole lot more happening through the ministry of Heaven's Family than just this teaching broadcast. Heaven's Family consists of three divisions, the first of which is Shepherd Serve. And through the ministry of Shepherd Serve, we are literally equipping thousands of hungry pastors around the world with vital biblical truth every single year.

We do that in two ways. First of all, by pastor's conferences. They're happening almost every single month somewhere in the world.

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Thanks so much. God bless you. God bless you.

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