

# Beautiful Attitudes

by Denny Kenaston

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*Denny Kenaston's sermon 'Beautiful Attitudes' explores the transformative power of the Beatitudes and their practical applications in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 57:19

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:24, Ephesians 4:1-3, James 3:13-18, James 4:6

**Topics:** "Attitudes"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of laying a strong foundation in our lives. He uses the illustration of a house being built on a rock to illustrate the need for a solid foundation. The preacher then introduces the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, describing them as basic principles that have to do with both God and ourselves. He highlights the significance of blessings and how they apply to those who are poor in spirit, mournful, meek, hunger for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, and peacemakers. The preacher urges the audience to pay attention to these blessings and emphasizes that they are especially important for those who have nothing.

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## Transcript

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Can I just look at you a minute? God bless you, every one of you, dear young people. Well, it's Bible school time again, highlight of my whole year. Amen, Brother John? It is.

I know you may not understand that, but it is. This is the highlight of my whole year. I am so honored to be able to share with you, with all your hungry hearts, with all your desires to do right, with all your zeal and longings to walk with God, to be all that God wants you to be.

When I think that I get opportunities to talk to a bunch of hearts like that, I just, it overwhelms me. And it is, because of that, it's the thrill of my year to just be together like this and walk through a Bible school week and see what God does for us and what He does in us and what He wants to teach us and how He'll purify us, all of us. I love it.

I just love it. I love the pain of it. I love the strain of it.

I love what God works me over in it all. And I love to see what He does in all of you through a week of Bible school. So let us go on to higher ground this week.

We pray. Shall we have a prayer? Lord, we bow down to Thee again this morning. We come in the name and through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We come by the blood of the everlasting covenant. Thank You for that blood this morning that we were singing about. Oh, God, do we know what we're singing about, I wonder sometimes, the power that is in that blood.

Lord, cover us with that blood this morning as we're here in this meeting. Wash us in that blood even as we sit here this morning from every little thought, every attitude, every wrong look. Yea, God, there may be some deep things in our hearts and our lives that need to be washed.

Oh, we've come to Bible school for a bath, Lord. I thank You. Thank You for this beautiful privilege that we have to be here this morning and this holy subject we have at hand.

Break Thou the bread of life to us today, dear God. And Lord, again, yes, beyond the sacred page, we seek Thee, Lord. We seek Thee.

Oh, take us, truly, Lord, take us beyond the words on the pages of this book, of this chapter, of these verses in Matthew chapter 5. Take us beyond the words, Lord. We commit this session to You, Lord, the whole week. Pray that You will have Your way in each one of our hearts.

Fill us with the Holy Spirit, Father. Fill us with the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.

All right, let's open our Bibles and read in Matthew chapter 5. Just to begin with here, I have again taken a subject that is too much for me. I feel a bit overwhelmed to try to teach on this subject. But we're going to, by God's grace.

Practical Beatitudes, that's the name of the subject. Practical Beatitudes. And I'm notorious for changing the titles.

So, we'll see what the title is by the end of the week, Tape Ministry. I think that our burden as we began to ponder this subject was that we could make some practical applications to the beautiful attitudes that we find here in these verses in Matthew chapter 5. Some practical applications. I think the burden for these sessions today came out of some of the pleas of you young people for practical things in Bible school, things you can get a hold of, something you can grasp in reality in your day-to-day life, work it out, live it out, something that you can understand and do something with.

And so that's where the seed thoughts began, out of those kind of pleas as we were in a planning meeting for Bible school. And I had no idea what all that meant when the decisions were made, but I do now. Practical Beatitudes.

We're going to read in Matthew chapter 5, and we'll read verse 1 through 16, although most of our time will be focused on verse 3 through 10. But I want to read these through 16 because it's a good and a beautiful flow of the context of these beautiful attitudes. And seeing the multitudes, Jesus seeing the multitudes, the great multitudes of people from Galilee and Decapolis and from Jerusalem and from Judea and from beyond Jordan, all these multitudes, and seeing the multitudes, He, Jesus, went up into a mountain, and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him, and He opened His mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they that mourn shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. We learned about that already today, didn't we? Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven.

For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth, young people. Ye are the salt of the earth.

But if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden underfoot of men. Ye, young people, ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on an hill, cannot be hid, neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick. Ye give us light in all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, which is in heaven. Our Lord Jesus pronounced blessings upon the life of those who have these beautiful attitudes, these godly virtues. You know, as I settled down to look upon the title of these sessions, I had to go after this word beatitude and find out where it came from.

It's not in the Bible, but the meaning is in the Bible, but the word is not in the Bible. The word beatitude is a Latin word which means blessing. But somehow it was brought along when translations were made from Greek to Latin and from Greek to Latin to English.

Somehow it was brought along. And thus, this portion of Scripture is called the beatitudes or the blessings. We've entitled it practical beatitudes because if there is nothing practical, then there is nothing real.

We want to go beyond theories this week. We want to take these beautiful, lofty attitudes, virtues, and bring them down to a place where we can look at them and see how they work out in everyday life. If it doesn't work out in everyday life, it's of very little value to us.

And thus, practical attitudes, these beautiful attitudes are foundational to a true Christian life. They are foundational attitudes. They must be there.

We must have these beautiful attitudes as foundation stones in our Christian life. In a sense, we could say, and it's true that they are the true entrance into the Kingdom of God. And they make a good catechism class for new believers.

Amen? What a beautiful way to begin your Christian life to somehow be able to lay these foundation stones in the character of your lives, in the beginning of your lives, in the early part of your lives, in the beginning of your Christian life, to be able to lay these stones in the foundation of your Christian life. It's not a little thing to lay these stones, as we will see later. These beautiful attitudes in Matthew 5, they are the roots by which a beautiful, God-fearing life grows up.

And lastly, they are the keys to the abundant life that Jesus spoke about. Remember what He said there? I am come that ye may have life and that ye may have it more abundantly. For these beautiful attitudes are the keys to that abundant life that Jesus came to die for.

You know, as I was meditating upon these beautiful graces, I thought, you know, these graces are something that you can have now in your life, in the early part of your life. You can have them yet you will be reaching for them the rest of your life. Isn't that something? You can have them today.

You can enjoy the blessings of them today, but yet you will spend the rest of your Christian life reaching for them, reaching for them, and reaching for them again and again. You know, as I was meditating upon these first few verses, and I have, I have meditated much upon them, I realized that in a sense, Jesus, our Lord Jesus was giving here the outline of the Sermon on the Mount, and then He spends the rest of the sermon broadening what He says here in the beginning. It's like He gives the foundational attitudes that are so important in the Christian life, to walk the Christian life, or even to enter into the Christian life, but then after showing those beautiful stones, those foundational stones, then He spends the rest of the sermon describing them, showing us how they can be worked out, or may I say, making practical applications to these hard attitudes.

And as I have meditated much upon the Sermon on the Mount, this Sermon on the Mount is by no means an all-inclusive list of the applications, but I've learned that if you get the hard attitudes, and you keep them, you can spend the rest of your life making the applications. And I believe that that's what God wants for every one of us, not that we just learn a list of things, a list of do's and don'ts, but rather that we would receive the very heart of these foundational stones, and with that heart, then God can thrust us out into real life, into a real world, and therein we will find hundreds of applications to these hard attitudes. And thus God will make us the salt of the earth and the light of the world each and every day.

We will by no means exhaust the applications in this week. We'll only touch on some, oh, maybe some that are very close home to you, where you live right now in your life. I want to say something about the word blessed, and I hope that you don't quickly pass over this word.

I've learned this as I study the Bible. When God says something more than once, He has a very good reason for saying it. He didn't just put the word there to fill up space.

He didn't just put it there because it sounded good to be there before each one of these words. God put it there all those times because it's very important and He's trying to get our attention. So, I hope you will not pass over this word blessed very quickly.

I remember back in, I think it was in August, I was down in Haiti and they were having a, oh, I guess they call it a convention down there. They have their yearly convention and there were 500 Haitians packed into a building about half this size. That's about right.

And that's a sight that you would love to see. But here are these 500 Haitians packed in this building and you have to understand the context of their lives. They're poor.

They're poor people. They have nothing. They live from day to day.

They're not sure if they'll eat tomorrow. They live in a little shack. And all in all, I could go here this morning, but I stood up sometime during the weekend there and I announced my subject to them.

I said, I want to speak to you this morning about blessings. And everybody sat up on the edge of their seat. Now, why do you suppose they sat on the edge of their seat and we just kind of, you know, sit back and relax and just take it as it comes? Why do you suppose those dear people down there all sat up on the edge of their seat and I didn't have to do anything to keep their attention? Which sometimes you do have to do a few things to keep their attention, you know, like walk across the room, go to the other side, stand up on a bench, I've done a lot of things down there to keep their attention, but when I gave the title, all eyes were on me.

Blessings? Oh, I'm poor. I need blessings. And they listened intently for an hour and fifteen minutes.

They were so into that message, I had to calm them down several times. You know why? Because they have nothing. They have nothing.

And this guy got up and gave this title of blessings. And they need some. They need some.

Do you need any? I hope that you will not pass over this word, blessing. I hope that there are 400 poor Americans here who will sit up and take note in your hearts. Blessed, this is what will happen to those who are poor in spirit.

Blessed, this is what will happen to those that mourn. Blessed, this is what will happen to those that are meek and those that hunger and thirst after righteousness. Blessed, this is what will happen to those who are merciful, who are pure in heart, who are peacemakers.

This is what will happen to those. Now, this word, blessed, in the New Testament, it's been raised to a higher meaning. You know, in the Old Testament, it kind of meant, or it mostly meant, prosper.

You know, good things. Maybe more cattle. Maybe your crops will do better.

But in the New Testament, it is soared so far beyond. A few cows or some money in your pocket. In the New Testament, it is soared so far beyond that.

In the New Testament, this word, blessed, is speaking about a spiritual blessing. God says, you will be spiritually blessed if these attitudes are foundational stones in your life. You will be spiritually blessed.

You will find in your life a state of supreme well-being. You will be overjoyed and happy. You will find a joy that goes beyond feelings.

You will be spiritually prosperous. You will prosper spiritually. That is what the word blessed means.

You will be enjoying God's favor and salvation in your life. You will be experiencing the abundant life of God to the point that it will cause others to look on with envy and say, Oh, I want that. You will experience an abundant life from God that will cause others to look on and say, I want that.

I want that. Let me use just a few spiritual words out of the New Testament to describe this word, blessed. 1 Peter chapter 1 says, Joy unspeakable and full of glory.

That falls underneath the category of this word, blessed. Ephesians chapter 3 says, The fullness of God. The fullness of God.

Paul said it this way. I believe it was in Romans chapter 15 as he was writing to the Romans and saying, I want to come and see you sometime. And he said, I trust that I will come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ.

That's what that word, blessed, means. It's the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Romans chapter 14 says it this way, The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

And Romans chapter 5 says it this way, And the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. Those are just a few New Testament phrases which describe this word, blessed, that we are looking at today. I don't know if that has sparked your attention yet, but what God is saying this morning is that I am laying before you a gold mine of spiritual blessings.

If we would just somehow be able to open our heart up to it and receive it and let it become the longing of our soul, God is saying that I am presenting before you a spiritual gold mine in these few verses that we have looking at us. It's interesting to me that this word, blessed, if you go into a German Bible, they have the German word for saved. Instead, saved are the poor in spirit.

Saved are they that mourn. Saved are the meek. That's the way the Germans said it.

And I believe what they mean by that is the reality of salvation to those who are poor in spirit. I believe that's what they're saying. Most of humankind seek for this.

This list of descriptions and definitions that I've given to you about this word, blessed, most of humankind would seek after this. Many of the false religions of the world present this kind of a euphoria, this kind of a utopia, this kind of a wonderful experience. They present that as the end result of their false religion.

And multitudes upon multitudes run after it only to find that there's nothing there at the end. And dear young people, we know of a surety that if we pursue it with all of our heart, we shall find all those beautiful things at the end of it all. Blessed be God this morning.

We have found it. It's hidden in the Lord Jesus Christ. Man, hidden in the Lord Jesus today.

Oh, in simplicity, I believe what God is saying in this word, blessed, is simply this. The reality of a living God shall be yours. The reality of a living God shall be yours.

Blessed the poor in spirit. Blessed they more than me. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Blessed are the merciful. Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the peacemakers.

Yea, even blessed are the persecuted. That's what God says. How utterly different this is than the world's definition of success.

How utterly different this is. So unlike the power of positive thinking and the New Age teachings of our day on how to succeed, on how to get ahead, on how to find good, and how to get a blessing, how unlike all of them they are. But Jesus said, way up, down.

May we all see that more clearly this week as we gaze into, more deeply, these verses. And it will take you a lifetime to dig to the bottom of these verses. It will take you a lifetime.

But may God help us to see more clearly this week that yea, Jesus was right. Way up is down. It seems absurd to the natural mind and especially to a youthful mind that this is the way to a blissful, fulfilling life.

But, young people, this is the way to a blissful, fulfilling life. Sometimes it's a little hard for a young person to see that. You know, full of energy, full of zeal, full of ideas, full of dreams.

Sometimes it's a little hard for young people to think that that which I truly, really want, I will only get by losing everything. Sometimes that's a little hard for them to grasp. The world would say this way, blessed are the independent, the self-sufficient, and the confident.

The world would say, blessed are they that laugh and think positive all the time. Wouldn't they? Blessed are they who get their own way, fight for their rights, push to the top. Blessed are they who accept themselves the way they are.

I'm okay, you're okay, we're all okay. That's what the world would say. It's not what God says.

The world would say, blessed are they who push their way to the top. Never take. Lastly, blessed are they that take the path of least resistance.

Let's go with the flow. Let's go with the flow. How different man's ways are than God's ways this morning.

Even much of the Christian world in our land would have a hard time with these beautiful attitudes that Christ speaks of. Even much of the Christian world would have a hard time with this. They would and they will have a very hard time someday when persecution comes on this land of ours.

All of a sudden, their rebuking the devil will not cause everything to change for them. Yes, even the Christian world in our land, they have a hard time understanding these beautiful attitudes. Yet the saints of God throughout the ages have found the blissful joyous reality of these blessings as they took the path downward, downward.

Oh my! Some of the most beautiful expressions of the heart of Christians you will find coming out of the hearts of those who took a pen and they were sitting in a cell somewhere the night before they lost their head. Some of the most sweet and beautiful things flowed out of their hearts. You can see without a doubt that they were so spiritually prosperous, so rich, so overflowing with joy and satisfaction in God's favor and grace and blessing.

Yet they were in the poorest state that a human could find himself. Well, we are looking at the blessed side here today a bit just to draw your interest in and let us turn over to the end of the Sermon on the Mount. Turn over to the end of the Sermon on the Mount just to see how important these attitudes are.

Some may say, well, that's good and you may explain it away many ways and say, well, that's for disciples and I'm not one or that's for the ministers and I'm not one of those or that's for people with a special call and I'm not one of those, I'm just a young person, but don't believe that that's what our Lord Jesus had in

mind when He gave this Sermon on the Mount, that it was just for a select few, that it was just something that, oh, you can take or leave, or I don't believe that's what He had in mind and it's so clearly evident as we read at the end of the sermon, as our Lord Jesus gives His concluding words and I know He's concluding the whole sermon, but surely the beatitudes fall under the category of His conclusion when He said these words in verse 24 of chapter 7, Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man who built his house upon a rock, who built his house upon a rock and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell not, it fell not, for it was founded upon him. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not. It's not for me.

I'm not interested in that. That's too much for me. I can't understand it.

I can't handle it. I can't take it. It's too deep.

Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, hear them and doeth them not, I will liken him unto a foolish man who built his house upon the sand and the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house and it fell. Great was the fall of it. Great was the fall of it.

Let's turn over to Luke and read it again. Luke chapter six. Oh, for a cup of water from Bethlehem's well.

Brother Aaron, would you get me a drink of water back there, please? Thank you, brother. In Matthew, I'm sorry, in Luke chapter six, we have somewhat of the same sermon. Somewhat of the same sermon.

But look at the way that it reads from verse 46 through 49. Jesus said it this way, And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like. Thank you, brother.

He is like a man which built a house and digged deep and laid the foundation on a rock. He digged deep and laid the foundation on a rock. And when the flood arose and the stream beat vehemently upon that house and could not shake it, for it was founded upon a rock, but he that heareth and doeth not is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth against which the stream did beat vehemently.

And immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great. Now here we get a little bit different picture.

Here we have a house by a stream. Two houses by a stream. Why, if you were to look at them, well, they look like the same kind of house.

It's a beautiful day. The stream is just running by. It's a beautiful place to put a house.

Right there by the stream, you can hear the stream trickling by. It's a lovely place to build a house. Two houses by the stream.

But very different houses they are. One man, he looked at that stream and said, you know, it's not always going to be a rippling brook singing music to me as I go to bed at night. But that stream, when the rains come, may turn into a violent river.

I better lay a foundation before I build my house. And so he did. The other, not having any foresight, thinking that everything is going to be alright.

That's kind of how it is with young people sometimes, isn't it? Not having a lot of foresight. Not being able to look ahead very well. They just think, everything is going to be alright.

It's going to be alright. That's the way this man was. He looked at that beautiful stream, put himself up a nice quick house, sat down to listen to the sound of the rippling brook, only to see that one day the rains came and the winds came, and that little stream filled up and became a rushing river and just washed his house away.

Like we saw so many pictures of in North Carolina not long ago. Just washed it away. Picked up that house like it was a little toy and just washed it away.

Dear young people, let's go after these foundation stones. You don't know. You don't know what your life is going to hold.

You have no idea as you sit here today what your life will hold. But you don't need to know what your life will hold because God has told us to prepare. I think we can look into this illustration and acknowledge and bow our heart and say, God said the winds are going to blow and the little stream will become a rushing river in my life someday.

You can count on it. You can count on it. So let's lay some foundation stones this week as we look into this portion of the Sermon on the Mount.

The Beatitudes are very basic. Very basic. They have to do with you.

They have to do with God. And they have to do with others. And we'll be crisscrossing these three all the way through the week.

You know, as I thought about it, actually this whole Bible school is about these graces that we're going to be looking at. We have come together to walk in them through this week. And as we do, and God's so good like this, as we do, we shall experience the blessings that we've already described to you.

Because we've walked through a few Bible schools, I can tell you ahead of time, if you will walk in these graces this week, and God will give you opportunities to walk in them this very week, if you will, you will prosper. You will find your life blessed by God this week. God's so good to do that.

Again, taking beautiful, high, lofty principles from the Word, bringing them down where we can look at them, and touch them, and taste them, and see them working in our own very lives this very week. God's so good like that to do that to us. There are a few parallel passages that I would like to read.

Can we do that? First of all, let's turn in Ephesians chapter 4. A parallel passage. That's one that kind of says the same thing. Paul said it this way, giving the secret for an ongoing unity in the church at Ephesus.

Paul said this to the church at Ephesus. Chapter 4, verse 1. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all loneliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Turn over to the book of James.

Trust me, brother John. We only want to look at these to see that they are parallel Scriptures, to see that all through the New Testament, God just keeps focusing again and again on these foundational stones. In James, chapter 3, God describing a wise and a mature man, He says these words, Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you.

Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. Verse 17 says, But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is shown in peace of them that make peace.

A parallel passage that runs right alongside of what we are studying here. And then lastly, in James, chapter 4, an explanation of the steps to getting right with God. Look at these.

An explanation of the steps for getting right with God. And God says in verse 6, But He giveth more grace. Wherefore He saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.

Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to happiness.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He shall lift you up. These are parallel passages.

And lastly, this morning, I want us to notice that these beautiful attitudes, that we're going to be looking at, they have to do with humility. They have to do with humility. Our study this week will be a study in humility.

In humility. You know, as I pondered all these things, I realized Joseph is such a beautiful example of humility. And our Lord Jesus is a beautiful example of humility.

And Joseph is a type of Jesus. I'm sure that Brother Roman will share all of that with us. Then I thought about the book of James.

And I thought, you know, there's a whole lot in that book on the same subject. Could it be that God is just going to hold the jewel of humility up before us all week long? Could it be what a blessed exercise that would be if at the end of the week we went away holding humility in high esteem and pursuing it with all of our hearts? Because I believe out of humility flow all the graces of the Christian life. So, as we look at the beautiful attitudes, the beatitudes in Matthew chapter 5, let's be mindful of this one thing.

They all center in humility. In humility. And humility is a priceless possession worth everything you can give.

My prayer this week is that we will all go home with a love for humility like we never had before. Let's bow our heads to our Father and our God. Thank you this morning.

Thank you for the beauty of your Word. Thank you Lord for how it all connects together because it is all come out of your heart. Every word of it.

Father, we thank you for these dear young people that you brought here. Thank you for their hungry hearts. Thank you for their attentive eyes.

Thank you for the desires, Lord. I know that you have put the desires that are in their hearts. We know that, God.

If you hadn't put them there, they wouldn't even be here. They'd be off playing somewhere. Doing something else, God.

But they're here because these desires you have put in their hearts. Now, God, I pray, give them, fulfill the spiritual desires of their hearts, Father. Through this week, through all the teachings, through the life of Joseph, through these Beatitudes, through the book of James, through the singing, the chorus, through the times of prayer and confession, through the messages in the evenings, through those times of sharing, Lord, in whatever way, in any way you can, fulfill the spiritual desires of all of our hearts.

And God, I pray, O, give us humility that we may enjoy the blessings of the Christian life. I pray all this in the name of Jesus Christ. With thanksgiving.

Amen.

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