

The Weather Inside

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala's sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing our spiritual poverty to experience true blessedness and happiness in God's kingdom.

Duration: 35:00

Topics: "Beatitudes"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the Beatitudes, which are a series of sentences spoken by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes are not the gospel, but rather a mandate for how Jesus wants his people to live. The speaker focuses on two of the Beatitudes: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' and 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.' He emphasizes the idea that when we come to the end of ourselves and recognize our need for God, we will find comfort and inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Transcript

We've been reading through the Bible, and we're reading through the New Testament, I should say, in a new kind of Bible. We read just one chapter a day, and it's the New Testament, nothing added, nothing subtracted, except it has a different order. It started with Luke, and then Acts, and then all the epistles of Paul, and now we are into another gospel.

Instead of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, they just start with Luke, and then go to Acts, which makes a lot more sense, to me at least. Now we're reading in Matthew, which is called the Jewish gospel. It was written by Matthew, one of the 12 followers of Jesus.

Anybody know in the choir, lift your hand if you know, what did Matthew do for a living? Tax collector. What was his other name? Levi, right. He followed Jesus, and then he wrote this gospel called Matthew, which most commentators and experts believe was written in order to try to convince Jewish people that Jesus, Yeshua, was the Messiah they were waiting for.

There's all kinds of prophecies in the Old Testament predicted the Messiah coming, the Deliverer, even said where he would be born, even said what kind of suffering he would go through. So Matthew was writing to the educated Jewish person who was, could this have been a Messiah ending up on a cross? How could that be? We're waiting for a mighty Deliverer. How could somebody die as a criminal? And Matthew is referring constantly to the Old Testament to show that this was a prophecy that was being

fulfilled.

Well, in the book of Matthew, we have the most famous sermon that Jesus ever gave. Luke gives a different rendition of it, a shorter form of it, a different message, probably preached at a different time. But the famous one Matthew has in it is in Matthew 5, and it's called the Sermon on the Mount, and it begins with a series of sentences which are called Beatitudes.

Everybody say Beatitudes. What I want to do is look at just two of them and see what we can learn, because it's revolutionary. Someone has pointed out that Moses went up onto a mountain to get the law.

Jesus went up on a mountain to give us the constitution of his people or the mandate for the way he wanted his people to live. This is not the gospel. The Beatitudes are if you do this and do that and do this, then you'll inherit eternal life.

Then it wouldn't be a gift. Salvation is a gift. What are the Beatitudes? It's God's formula for having good weather inside.

The name of this message is the weather inside. You know, you can be in the North Pole, but if you're in the right place with climate control, you can be doing really good. Why? Because the temperature inside is really nice.

I know, but it's 40 below. I met somebody from North Dakota the other day or Montana, and they told me as a kid growing up, they grew up on a ranch, and it was 40 below real temperature, not wind chill, 40 below. I was asking them, how'd you navigate through 40 below? They were fine as long as they were in their house with that heating system going on, furnace.

I've been in Arizona, Phoenix. The first time I ever went there was 117. I came out of the airplane.

Oh, that'll say hello to you, 117. They say, well, there's low humidity. Trust me, when it's 117, you feel it.

So you just run from the hotel to the car. The only trouble is if someone hasn't put the car on and got the AC on, you can't touch the wheel. You can hardly get in the car because the car's been out in the sun, which goes to show, though, that if you're in the right environment, you can be fine even though everything around you is nasty cold or nasty hot or a nasty storm.

This is kind of the idea that Jesus gave when he gave the Beatitudes. Let's look at a couple of them, okay? Very short little verses. Matthew 5, verse 1. Now, when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside.

Really, in the Greek, it has the definite article, the, and some people try to locate that mountainside, that mountain. It was near the Sea of Galilee. No one knows exactly where it was.

Some people thought they found it and built a monastery there that was reported during the time of the Crusades, but it's gone now. And he sat down, his disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. So let's just go back here.

Now, when Jesus, when did Jesus do this? He's in the first year of his ministry. He's about 30 or 31 years old. He's never going to see 34.

So in his first year in his ministry, some believe this is the first sermon he ever preached publicly. And that's interesting because what we want to do is pick up the first word that he said. So Jesus is up on the mountain and he sees crowds.

He's with his disciples. They come to him. That's probably more than the 12 because he had 70 others.

He might have hundreds. And he went up on a mountainside and he sat down. When a rabbi taught in those days, they did not stand like I am.

I wish I was a rabbi sometimes. But they sat when they taught, and he sat on a rock on a mountainside. So Jesus is sitting down on a rock, disciples close to him, and the crowd's listening.

You know, John Wesley, before there were sound systems during the Methodist revival in England in the 1700s, actually spoke and was heard with no sound amplification by over 20,000 people. Imagine the gift that they had to be able to throw their voices and enunciate clearly. So Jesus is sitting on a rock, and now he's going to give the first word of his first sermon.

In the Beatitudes, there's a whole bunch of them. I've only taken the first and the third for us to analyze. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed, that's the first word he said. We're going to find out that's a very tricky word. Are the poor, not poor people, but the poor in spirit, whatever that means.

For theirs not will be the kingdom of heaven, present tense, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. So let's just recite out loud the first Beatitude. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Again, out loud. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs. That's the first thing he ever said.

Publicly, this is the first thing he ever spoke about. Not you're miserable sinners, not you're going to be damned, this and that and the other, but the first word he ever spoke was blessed. Who? Very unlikely thought.

Are the poor in spirit. Poverty and blessedness, poverty of any kind and blessedness don't seem to go together. Blessed are the rich.

No, no. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And then finally verse five says, let's say it out loud.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Say it again. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Now those two sentences have so much texture and depth to them and complexity. They sound simple, but let's look at it, see what we can learn today. So the first thing Jesus said was blessed.

That's what God wants everybody here to be, blessed. Everybody here in the building, God wants you to be blessed because he loves you. You and I have to learn the secret of being blessed, but what he wants all of us is to be blessed.

Jesus didn't look out at the crowd and say, you're good, you're sincere. Nah, you don't even listen to this. He said to everybody, blessed, be blessed.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. Now that word blessed, it started out meaning almost to be admired or envied in the Greek language preceding the time of Christ. It was a word that was used really of the gods, the many gods, which were sometimes called demons.

They were good and bad demons, but it was spelled in that way, D-A-E-M-O-N-S in the Greek culture. So you had a good demon that you could go to or a bad one that would be after you. It was spoken of that only the demons or the gods could be blessed, could be envied, could be in a position where you go, lucky you.

But see, lucky is the thought, but that wouldn't go with the Christian use of the words. To be envied, wow, what a position you have. By the way, it's interesting that the gods of the Greek empire had no morality whatsoever, no morality.

They were known to have extra power and knowledge, but they actually did evil things to each other in Greek mythology. So Greek mythology had no moral component for the gods. And that, of course, had a resultant effect on the people.

The word first meant that. It was used in the Old Testament like someone's blessed. You know, he's blessed.

But it almost had always the connotation of something physical or financial or something, you know, you got an inheritance. He's blessed. His mom and dad left him a lot.

They're blessed. You sit under your fig tree and you have a lot of kids and your quiver is full and you got a lot of land and workers to work the land. That dude is blessed.

But in the New Testament, there was some in the Old Testament moral component to it, but Jesus takes it and takes it a whole other way. Because the word blessed in the New Testament is about an interior condition, the state of a heart with no relationship at all to what's happening around you. So what Jesus is teaching us is that the true joy, the true peace, the true blessedness, the Amplified Bible has it to be envied, full of spiritual joy despite outward circumstances, favored by God in an amazing way.

That's what blessed means. It's a word that's very hard to get one English word. It's not lucky or we use blessed now in different ways that the connotation wouldn't be true to what Jesus was saying.

This to be envied, full of spiritual joy, this condition that God wants for all of us, Jesus is now saying has nothing to do with your outward circumstances. This is a revelation. This is revolutionary, but it makes all the sense in the world.

Because everyone knows if you feel miserable inside, if you have no peace, if you're full of racial animosity or unforgiveness or meanness, it doesn't matter what anyone gives you, you're still a miserable little critter. Do I get an amen here or not? You're upset, you're angry with someone. I don't care if someone gives you a check for \$10,000.

It might take it down a notch, but as soon as you get used to the \$10,000, you're still going to be full. Some are saying, I'll take the \$10,000. I know that.

I could tell that you're from Brooklyn, right? All right. I'm from Brooklyn too. But we know that's true, isn't it? There are all kinds of wealthy people who are miserable, famous athletes and actors.

They go through marriages and people and they beat up their wives and they do miserable things and they're unkind and cruel and they got all the money. They have access to everything, so why aren't they happy? If things make you happy, how come they're not happy? They pretend they're happy because when the spotlight is on them, they want to show like, I got it together, but that's not true to their real condition. So now Jesus is saying, this is good, that to be really in the position that God wants you to be in, it has everything to do with su corazon, your heart, your spirit, your inside.

So let's just stop and think about that. The world knows nothing of that. The world knows, go get it, go get it, go get more.

And when you get more, get more. And when you have that, get the other thing. Am I right or wrong here? It's a never ending rat race.

You have some education, you can get another degree. That'll make you happy. Oh, you married her because she would make you happy? She didn't make you really happy, so let's look around and see who else is going around.

Am I right or wrong? And we all cover that up, but the world covers it up because they're not humble enough to say, I'm empty. But we got in the front row, a guy who was in Wall Street, making all kinds of money and just living the good life, and he was empty as a drum. He would tell you, wine, women, song, money, perks, where does it leave you? And then you always got to worry you could lose it.

There's another thing. Whatever you have, you could lose it. No, I got it in stocks.

Yeah, but look at the market. You could lose it overnight. You know, when the Great Depression came and they had the stock market crash of 1929, my mother told me, I knew it from history, but people are jumping out of 40, 50 story buildings here, windows on Wall Street.

Why? Everything that they had that could make them happy, they lost it in three hours, six hours. So what are you left with? Nothing. If you have nothing inside, you're left with your inside.

Now, you have nothing. So Jesus is saying, here are the people who are really happy, but it gets more revolutionary than what I just said. He said, here are the people who are really to be envied.

You really want to look up at someone and say, they got it together. He said, those who are poor in spirit. That's revolutionary.

This is the first thing he ever said, preaching. Well, what's that mean? Well, poor, there's two words in the New Testament that are used basically for poor. The first word is someone who's just eking out a living, but really is struggling.

They barely make enough to get by, and some months they're short. Then there's another word used for poor, and it means totally destitute. You got nothing, which you think Jesus used.

The second one, he said, so happy are the people who are destitute spiritually. Or as some translation has it, how happy are the people who feel their spiritual poverty? How happy is the person who's not trying and looking inside and trying to find something good, trying to manufacture, trying to change on his own, change on her own? How happy is the person who just says, I ain't got what it takes, so I'm going to look totally to God for everything, because God will never let you down. You'll let yourself down.

Haven't you ever let yourself down? The biggest disappointment in my life has never been anybody but me. I'm the biggest disappointment I've ever met. Anybody here with me a little bit? So Jesus said, the happiest person, the televangelist, and the prosperity, and the American gospel now isn't going to go on this verse too much, but it is in the Bible, and it behooves me to be responsible to tell you what Jesus said.

You on the webcast, whether you never heard it before in your life, I want to tell you, the happiest you can be is when you sense your need of God, that you can't make it, that you can't erase your own sins, that you haven't lived good enough to be accepted by God. What's tormenting is to try to change it. Can a leopard change his spots? So Jesus said, the happiest person is the one who says, I don't have it in me to make it to be accepted by God, and I don't have it in me to change this thing I see inside of me, and I don't have the love I need, and I don't have the strength I need, and I don't have the faith I need, and I have just analyzed everything, and you know what? I come out of zero, so nothing's here that will help me.

I better look up for Him, to Him for everything. Oh, how happy is that person who wakes up every day and doesn't, but just says, Father, give me this day my daily bread. Give me this day the joy I need.

I don't even know what peace is. Give me your peace, the peace that passes all understanding. Father, I'm empty.

I'm not looking inside. I've analyzed Jim Cymbala. He's a zero.

He doesn't make it. That emptying of ourselves, Jesus says, is not only the beginning of real blessedness. It's the only way you can get in the kingdom.

The only one who ever becomes a Christian is the one who ends up tired of themselves, gave up on themselves, and say, I got to run to Jesus. You know, it's like the parable of the prodigal son. When did he come to his senses? When he was eating with the pigs.

You know, he spent all the money. He was all full of himself, but God has ways to get you unfulfilled yourself. Does he not? And when he's eating with the pigs, and he looks around, and then he goes, I'm going back, but I can't say anything because I was so full of myself when I asked my father for my money.

So you know what I'm going to say? I'm going to just say, Father, look, I'm not worthy to be called your son. I'm just a mess. I am a mess.

Father, no, but Father, look, you're servants. I'll just, can you just give me a job? I'll do anything. And when he came to end of himself, he found out that his father was running to him.

Because when you come to the end, you get to the beginning. But whenever you're still struggling, no, I can do this. I'll show God that I mean business and all that.

Jesus said, the happiest people to be envied are those who are poor in spirit. Notice, what do they get? Present tense, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Everything that heaven has, God says, I'll give it to people who are poor.

You know what that word actually means? I hate to say it. Some will be turned off by it. It actually means beggars.

Happy are the beggars, because whatever they need, their father's going to give it to them. But how so sad when you're not a beggar and you don't sense your need, and you walk around full of what?

Pretension that you can make it. How many have found in your own life, you don't have to lift your hand unless you mean it, that you need, like God, every minute of every day.

Come on, wave your hand at me. But that's the blessedness that Jesus brought to the attention of the world. When they were listening to this, the proud Pharisees and religious leaders, what? Blessed to be envied, full of spiritual joy, are the people who are in abject poverty inside, not financially.

Poverty is never looked at. The Bible is something wonderful. It can be very painful.

To help the poor, but poverty of spirit, poverty of spirit, because then those people have everything heaven has. God is like, what? You've come to the end. You have nothing but me.

I'm going to give you everything you need. You need wisdom. You need a job.

You need everything, and you're going to trust me for it because you're at the end. Oh, how many want to live every day at the end of so let's put our hands together and say amen. This is, by the way, why being rich and educated can be such a trap when you're following Christ, because instead of trusting him, you start to trust in your education or in your money or your know-how or your connections or who your mommy was or who your daddy is, and it becomes a curse instead of a blessing.

This is what God told the Israelites. When you go into the land, and I'm going to bless you in that land, and your crops are going to be abundant, and you're going to have everything and milk and honey and a lot more, but please do not forget that I'm the one who gave you everything. Otherwise, the very blessings of God will become a trap, and you'll trust in them instead of me.

You'll lose poverty of spirit. When you were in the wilderness, and you didn't even know where to go, and I brought you through the Red Sea, and I fed you with manna every day, and there was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. I led you.

You had nothing. Every morning you woke up, you had nothing. You depended on me, and look how I took care of you, but now watch it, because when I give you these other blessings, they might become a substitute for me, and instead of trusting me and having poverty of spirit, you're going to walk around like, look at my farm.

Look at my land. No, the best you can be is look at my God. Look at my provider.

Come on. Let's say amen. If anyone boasts, let them boast in the Lord.

So just think, not being poor in spirit can just hurt us when God just wants us to fall into our arms. Go low. Just fall into his arms.

There's a story about this lifeguard who went out to swim. Did you know that lifeguards have almost drowned themselves and been knocked out by people who can't swim, and they're out too deep, and the lifeguard gets there, and they're fighting the lifeguard. Lifeguards come out to save them, but no, they're frothing and thrashing and doing all that, and lifeguards have been known not just to slap, but to knock someone out, because when you just get that punch and you go like that, now the lifeguard takes you and just swims you right home.

This was easy. Isn't that the way it is with God in us sometimes? Blessed are the meek to be envied, full of spiritual joy. In the best possible position are the meek.

Another very hard word. The translations run like this, gentle, under submission and control. The kind of person you'd like to be around.

Not full of turmoil and anger and ill will toward other people, but oh, how happy are the meek. How happy are the ones who don't push everyone aside because they gotta go for the gold. The people who are meek, Jesus said, they will inherit the promise.

They'll inherit the earth. Why? Because God gives people in the end the best when they trust him and don't grab for themselves. Sometimes these words are best known or best understood by the antonym, by the word that is the opposite of it.

Meek is gentle. Some are kind. Some, one said, blessed are the mild.

You ever meet a person who's just meek and gentle? Not weak. No, no, no, no. Somebody just thinking now, I don't want to be weak.

The Bible says that Moses, the one who stood in front of Pharaoh and said, thus sayeth the Lord, let my people go. That Moses who stood up and led over a million people in the wilderness, the Bible says he was the meekest person on the face of the earth. He was meek.

The Bible talks in the New Testament about a meek and a gentle spirit, which is a great ornament before God. It's better than any outfit you could buy, women or men, any tie you could put on, any jewelry you get. To God, you're best looking when you're meek and gentle with people.

And you would think after all God has done for us, we would be meek and mild with everybody. I'll say it again because you didn't hear it. You would have said amen if you heard it the first time.

You would think after all God has done for us, we would be meek and mild with everyone. How gentle has God been with us? But the best example is Jesus said, come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you, take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart. When you see preachers, remember this, any preacher prancing around, full of themselves, trying to draw attention, they are a bad advertisement for Jesus.

No, but that's what everyone is. If you're going to work up the crowd, you got to get into that, come on now everybody. But you know what I'm talking about? By the way, when you've sinned and messed up and you come to Jesus, how have you found him? Angry and contentious? Did he yell at you that time? Or did you find him mild and gentle? Isn't that the way you found him? We've developed a Christianity that has very little to do with the one who we're supposed to be following.

Meek does not mean weak, it means gentle and kind because you know what God has done for you. Last thought, now just think, some people are doomed for the rest of their life to be miserable and unhappy, even though they come to church, because inside of their heart they have a storm that won't go out. They are ready to fuss and fight with everybody.

They don't need the devil to bother them. Come on, do I get a witness here? Have you not met people who don't need anything to stir them up? They stir themselves up. One of the biggest fights that they had over here at Dallas BBQ some years ago, you know it started with just that same kind of thing.

Some guy I understand from the owners was just looking at a girl across the table, from across the restaurant, and she went, what are you looking at? That's all it took. And a big riot ensued. There are just people, you don't need to stir them.

They're stirring when you meet them. You don't need to stir anything. They come agitated in the original package, am I right? They are just, and just think, no matter what money they earn, no matter what granddaughter or daughter or son is born to them, they're not going to enjoy it, because they have that tempest in the teapot, agitated, ready to argue, hateful, malicious.

This is what meek is the opposite of. Meek is like this. No, I'm going to be gentle with you because he's been so gentle with me, because if you really knew me, oh, it wouldn't be so nice.

So since he's covered me with the folds of his garment, I'm going to treat you with extra good kindness. Ladies and gentlemen, let's do a hand vote. How many, by the grace of God, God will have to help us because it's not natural for us.

How many want to be more meek and gentle and mild than you've ever been in your life? And I know some of you grew up in a house where all you heard at the table was the opposite of meek and mild. Just agitation, agitation, agitation. You heard your father talk to your mother in disrespectful ways.

You had a mother who would just go off. See, this is the opposite of venting. You know, some people, we boast that we vent.

Oh no, I went off on her. Oh yeah. No, I drew a line and I went off on her.

Like that lady girl, I heard two girls walk in front of me on Fulton Street, about three, two and a half years ago. And I'm walking behind and one girl says the other girl. So I told him on the phone, I told him, no, you don't love me.

Don't say you love me. You don't text me. You don't email me.

You never call me. I'm so tired of you. You're so old.

You're so, you're so yesterday. I'm done with you. And then the girl said to him, you told him that? And she said back to her.

Yeah. And I told him what I told him one last thing. I said, listen, one last thing from the bottom of my heart, shut up.

No, it's not just shut up from the bottom of my heart. Shut up. That's different.

No. You know why that girl acted that way? Because someone put in her head, that's a good way to act. But to hear somebody insult you.

Oh Lord, help us to have somebody be mean to you and not react and be like Jesus who was meek and mild. One more time. How many could use more of that in your life? Just come on, lift up your hand high in the balcony downstairs.

Father God, we thank you for your word today. We pray that you would teach us the secret of a really great life. Not what we have around us, but the climate control inside of us.

Help us every day to have nothing so we can receive everything from you. Give us poverty of spirit so that we're always looking to you, never looking inside for what we can do. Because what do we have that you didn't give it to us first anyway? Finally, I pray that we'll have a baptism of meekness and mildness and gentleness and kindness.

That our words wouldn't be full of acid and poisonous things. Forgive us, all of us, Lord. Forgive all of us for not being mild under provocation, for going off on people, for blowing up.

That's not the example you set, Jesus. Even before Pontius Pilate and the ones who beat you, you were like a lamb. Make us meek and mild like a lamb.

Not weak, but meek. Help us to stand for you and to live for you, but give it a grace and a sweetness. Help the women in the church to have the outward adorning of not the clothes and the makeup and the hairdos, but let them have a beautiful inside spirit that shows out and makes them beautiful in your sight and others.

Give all the men, Lord, a meek and a gentle spirit. Not some mean, over-the-top machismo, but even us husbands, help us to love our wives like Christ loved the church. Save us from some convoluted Christianity that is just crazy, and give us the spirit of Jesus every day, who trusted his father, who walked in humility, meekness, and mildness, while every head is bound.

I just want to ask if there's anybody here who say, pastor, I want that so bad, but just in the past week, I got a dagger in the back. I'm going through something that it is just so hard to bear, and like every minute, I'm fighting with just, I don't want to blow up. I don't want a retribution.

I don't want to get back at anybody. I want to be able to take it, but I need God's help. Just stand right where you are.

You've been hurt behind me, in front of me. Just, pastor, help me that I take this the way Jesus wants me to take it. It is hard.

It is hard. Thank you. Just stand up right where you are.

If someone's standing near you, reach your hand out and touch their arm, okay? Lord, we pray for our brothers and sisters who have been wounded in the battle. Help them not to fight back, not to speak back, not to get ugly back. No spirit of revenge.

We give the problem to you. We give the person to you. We give everything to you.

You handle it for us, Lord. You take care of it, and you just heal them, Lord, right now in their hearts. Come on, congregation.

Let's pray. Heal them in their hearts right now. Heal them in their hearts so they can be meek and mild and sweet, no matter what's happening around them, because they know how you have treated them, Lord, and that we belong to you.

We pray this in Jesus' name, and everyone said, everybody stand in front of me, behind me. I want you to turn around and give a meek and mild hug to about 10 people, okay? Come on, everyone do it.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/26/SID26399.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jim-cymbala/the-weather-inside/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net