

The Richest Blessing of God – Matthew 5:1-12

The Grace, Mercy, and Peace of Jesus Christ rest upon each and every one of you this morning. Amen

Dear baptized member our text for meditation in from the Gospel of Matthew 5:1-12, which I read before. This text gives eternal blessings to all those who believe in Christ. Yet for many, this passage is often distorted and leads many people to despair. Many people follow this text literally and they strive to be better each day because if they do, they will be counted as holy and blessed. These people struggle to be better than the average population, and they think they are on the right track to satisfy the demands of God. But is this way of thinking and acting right in relation to God? Is it possible to accomplish all that Jesus says in our text, and consequently be blessed?

Jesus gives us standards in our text: to be merciful, to be pure in heart, and to be peacemakers. As we examine ourselves, we may conclude that sometimes we are merciful. Are we merciful enough? Sometimes we make peace. Sometimes, we end up unable to make peace, but we can always blame the other guy for not compromising with us to reach peace.

So the reality is that we cannot accomplish all this through our efforts. If we examine carefully what the text requires we conclude that we are unable to meet their demands no matter what we do. If we realize this there is good news for you and for me. By the grace of God we have made an honest confession of our condition of sinners. We have checked ourselves in the mirror of God's law and we have concluded that we cannot keep up with the requirements of our text. We cannot do anything to love God or to earn our salvation and now we are ready for the good news that Jesus saved us and He has freed us from sin.

Friends, you and I are already blessed by what Christ did on the cross. This is good news. Believing this removes the anguish that is created when we think we can achieve salvation and holiness through our own strength. If we think we have done enough to meet the approval of God, let me tell you that we are headed for a life of despair and no hope. It is a great affliction to work hard through our own effort and strength and then to know that we are incapable of pleasing and satisfying God's demand trying to live a pure and holy life.

How attractive is the temptation to proclaim these Beatitudes as if they give power and joy to those who work hard to accomplish them. But to encourage people to be 100% meek, humble, compassionate, peace makers and encourage them to accomplish all of this by their own effort is to lead people by the wrong path. We would be teaching that by our own reason and deeds we can satisfy God's demands. If we teach people that we can accomplish all these on our own, we are teaching people that they do not need a Savior, and consequently they obtain salvation by their own effort.

When we recognize that we are incapable to accomplish these Beatitudes as they are called, we are ready to hear about Jesus who has accomplished each of them. Our text gives us the opportunity to watch and rejoice in our Savior Jesus Christ. He has accomplished these beatitudes perfectly for you and me and here is the good news of the Gospel. Now, you are called the sons and daughters of God - for that is what we are. Through Jesus Christ we are saints and children of God.

We read in V. 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven". Nobody has been so poor in spirit, except our Lord Jesus Christ so that we obtain the kingdom of heaven. He showed humility from His birth till His death on the cross. Christ could have been comfortably seated on His throne and not come into the world to save us. However, He came for us, not in order to be served but to serve us and to give His life as a ransom for many.

The Son of God healed the sick, fed the hungry, taught sinners, forgave the penitent, and raised the dead. He did not perform a service of pride and honor for Himself but to His Father in heaven. He gave His humble service to others even to the point of death on the cross.

We read in V.4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted”. Jesus wept not only for the death of Lazarus, but also by the destructive effect of sin in men. He grieved over Jerusalem, knowing that many of its people would not repent. He suffered the cruelest of all deaths for us in order that we be comforted.

We read in V.5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth”. Jesus did not use His almighty power for His own gain. He used it for others. He cured diseases, multiplied bread and fish and expelled demons. He suffered an unfair trial and a painful death by the hands of sinners. He did not wipe them out with His mighty Word, nor demanded that His Father destroy them. The Son of God obediently went to the cross to be crucified. Our Lord was humble so that you and I can rest forever in the new heaven and the new earth. There is a great reward waiting for you in heaven. This present life is only a brief moment compared to eternity.

We read in V.6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” Remember the temptation of Christ in the wilderness? He suffered hunger and was thirsty. He also heard the temptations of the devil to turn stones into bread. He was hungry but His desire for justice was great that He cling to the Word of His Father so that you and I be forgiven by God. Remember His Words on the verge of His death on the cross? "I am thirsty." He was thirsty and He died on the cross, shedding His blood for us to give us a drink of eternal life.

We read in V.7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” Being compassionate is not to give to a criminal what he or she deserves. The Lord Jesus did not destroy those who arrested him, cursed, mocked or crucified Him. He could have done it. He could have come down from the cross. He could have been saved Himself and destroyed His enemies. Instead of giving them what they deserved, He forgave them and He died for them in order to give all sinners the forgiveness of their sins.

We read in V.8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Because of Jesus Christ we now have access to His throne of grace with confidence knowing that He intercedes for us when we sin. Jesus is pure in heart so that you and I through faith in Him will be one day, in front of the throne of God in white robes and with palms in our hands “crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Rev.10) We thank the Lord for His mercies shown to those saints who have entered into the presence of God. They are in glory and see God face to face. Their happiness is very great, since they are removed from all troubles of this life. Their joy is not yet completed, as they await the Resurrection of their bodies.

We read in V.9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Our Lord Jesus Christ has brought us peace tearing down the wall of separation between men and God. “For He himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility,” says Paul in Ephesians 2:14. Jesus has removed the sin that deprive us access in the presence of God. He has given us peace so that we become children of God and heirs of heaven.

We read in V.10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness ‘sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” Who has been more discredited and persecuted than Jesus Himself? Who has been insulted, beaten and falsely slandered than our Lord? He suffered all these things despite that He owns the kingdom of heaven. He shares His victory over sin and death with us in order that His Kingdom be ours.

My dear friends in Christ; Our Father in heaven sees that we are incapable to accomplish His Law; He sees that we struggle day by day due to our rebellions. So He sent Jesus Christ for us to pay for our transgressions. Jesus Christ is the One who despite of being His beloved Son became poor in spirit, went through sadness, was patient, suffered hunger, and was thirsty for justice for us.

Our text shows us our incapacity to accomplish God’s Law and its demands, how deep and dark is our

sin, and how terrible are our failures. But our sadness turns in joy when we see that Jesus Christ fulfilled God's Law. He has done everything for us. He has accomplished these things perfectly for you and me. Jesus Christ has removed our sins away and He has nailed them to the cross where He suffered the wrath of God due our failures. In His death, He has made you a saint. In His rising, He showed that saints are immortal. In your Baptism your heart has been washed clean of every spot. You are pure, since purest water, the water of God's holiness, has been poured upon you. So never forget that you are the saints of God, full of His light and life and holiness, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

Now the peace of God which passes all human understanding, keep your hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.