

**Matthew Chapter 5: v. 1-12**

And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. <sup>2</sup> Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

<sup>3</sup> “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit,

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>4</sup> Blessed *are* those who mourn,

For they shall be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> Blessed *are* the meek,

For they shall inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

For they shall be filled.

<sup>7</sup> Blessed *are* the merciful,

For they shall obtain mercy.

<sup>8</sup> Blessed *are* the pure in heart,

For they shall see God.

<sup>9</sup> Blessed *are* the peacemakers,

For they shall be called sons of God.

<sup>10</sup> Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup> Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

**Introduction**

We continue our series before Communion, concentrating on the 5 teaching blocks in Matthew’s Gospel. Last month, because of our introduction to Matthew and his gospel, we only had time to cover Matthew Chapter 5: v. 3.

**“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”**

We discovered that the reward for being poor in spirit is a blessing from God and to be given entrance into God’s kingdom.

I closed the message by saying that those who come to God with broken hearts, do not leave with broken hearts.

God wants us to recognise our poverty so that He can make us rich through His Holy Spirit.

Before we come to the next three conditions whereby God will reward us with His blessing, I want to make it very clear that you fully understand the original language in which these words were written, so that the meaning becomes crystal clear.

The Greek word translated “**blessed**” is the word “**makarioi**”.

The word means to be “fully satisfied”.

In classical Greek, the word referred to a state of blessedness in the hereafter. (after death)

However, in the New Testament the word is used for the joy that comes from salvation.

This is the joy that David cried out for in Psalm 51:v.12. (in N.K.J.)

<sup>12</sup> Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,  
And uphold me *by* Your generous Spirit.

This joy and satisfaction is not the result of favourable circumstances in life.

It comes only by having Jesus Christ living in your heart.

This is why it is wrong to translate “Makarioi” as happy. Being happy is a word that connects our outside circumstances as favourable. Blessedness is not a static experience; it is progressive.

The progress depends upon the fulfilment of the conditions set down by Jesus in His teaching in Matthew Chapter 5: v. 3-11.

Although Jesus starts with entry into God's kingdom, through being "poor in spirit", He progresses to other situations of blessing under the umbrella, or cover of Salvation.

In other words, when we first become a Christian, and receive Jesus into our hearts, it is the beginning of a New Life.

If we follow Jesus and His teaching in an attitude of discipleship, then there will be great blessing on the way. On the other hand, if we fail to recognise our needs, and don't turn to Jesus for help, then we will not receive the blessing that we could have received.

So now let us look at the next three blessings that Jesus wants to give those who follow Him.

**1. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." – Matt. 5: v. 4.**

The first thing we need to get clear is this. The English word "Mourn" is usually used in connection with grieving for the loss of a loved one who has died. However, in the context of this sermon by Jesus, the word has nothing to do with grieving the loss of a loved one who has died.

The context here is mourning or grieving about our sin.

In other words, Jesus says that He is going to comfort those people who mourn for their sins.

One commentator said, "Those who claim to experience all the joys of the kingdom without any tears, do not understand its true nature."

(David Jackman – Teaching Matthew, page 39)

**Jesus here is fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah Chapter 61: v. 1-3. –in N.K.J.**

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me,  
Because the LORD has anointed Me  
To preach good tidings to the poor;  
He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted,  
To proclaim liberty to the captives,  
And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound;  
<sup>2</sup>To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,  
And the day of vengeance of our God;  
To comfort all who mourn,  
<sup>3</sup>To console those who mourn in Zion,  
To give them beauty for ashes,  
The oil of joy for mourning,  
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;  
That they may be called trees of righteousness,  
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Mourning over our own sins, the sins of others, and the sins of our nation and the world is not something that we are immediately familiar with. There are some Bible characters that give us a window into that experience.

**Daniel Chapter 9: v. 3-13.**

<sup>3</sup>Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. <sup>4</sup>And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, <sup>5</sup>we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. <sup>6</sup>Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. <sup>7</sup>O Lord, righteousness *belongs* to You, but to us shame of face, as *it is* this day—to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.

<sup>8</sup>“O Lord, to us *belongs* shame of face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You. <sup>9</sup>To the Lord our God *belong* mercy and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against Him. <sup>10</sup>We have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets. <sup>11</sup>Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him. <sup>12</sup>And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup>“As *it is* written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth.

### **Daniel 10: v. 1-3.**

In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message *was* true, but the appointed time *was* long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. <sup>2</sup>In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. <sup>3</sup>I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

Daniel was a righteous man and yet he mourned for the sins of God’s people.

### **Isaiah Chapter 6: v. 1-5.**

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple. <sup>2</sup>Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup>And one cried to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts;  
The whole earth *is* full of His glory!”

<sup>4</sup>And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup>So I said:

“Woe *is* me, for I am undone!  
Because I *am* a man of unclean lips,  
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;  
For my eyes have seen the King,  
The LORD of hosts.”

When Isaiah came close to God, the first thing that he did was to acknowledge and mourn for his sin.

How about us? Have we experienced a mourning for our sin?

Do we know what it is like to have a heart broken for our sin?

Do we understand the seriousness of our sin?

At the age of 25 years, I was very grateful that I went through a period of about 3 weeks, where my experience could only be described as a “morning for sin”.

Wendy will tell you that it was terrible in my life.

I was so bad that I was even vomiting because of the conviction of my sin.

At the time it was a very negative experience, but it made the comfort from the Holy Spirit much more powerful when I finally came back to the Lord at a Church in Exeter in Devon.

This Summer I will meet up with prayers supporters, who were there on the day, and experienced God’s Holy Spirit, bringing me to tears that I could not stop crying for hours.

However, the joy of sins forgiven, the joy of God’s comfort, the love of God’s people on that day, is an experience that I will never forget, and cannot recount with accuracy without tears.

Having a heart mourning for sin is not an experience that is confined to pre-conversion, or restoration after falling away. It can also be a **stirring up for evangelism or ministry to the lost.**

I knew an evangelist from Texas called Sammy Tippet. At the time he was speaking at a convention in Edinburgh. It was sponsored by the Bible College that I attended. (The Faith Mission) At the time he would have been a young man of **about 36 years old.**

I was reliably informed by the Bible College principal that Sammy walked around Belfast in Northern Ireland prior to an evangelistic event.

As he walked around the city, **God broke his heart for the sins of the people.**

**He cried all day for the sins of the people of Belfast.**

This was the preparation he needed, to preach the gospel. God needed to prepare his heart, and that involved mourning for sin.

**It is no wonder that 35 years later, God is still using him at the age of 71 years.**

More Christians mourning for the sins of Japan, would undoubtedly bring about a move of God's Holy Spirit. The question is "are we prepared to be available for God in this dimension?"

**There is a song we used to sing in the U.K. The words go like this.**

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

**Break me, mould me, use me,**

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

What I challenge is for this to be a reality in our lives.

## **2. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth – v. 5.**

As we meditate upon this verse, we are taken back to Psalm 37 v. 9, 11, 22, & 29.

**(in the N.K.J.)**

<sup>9</sup> For evildoers shall be cut off;

But those who wait on the LORD,

They shall inherit the earth.

<sup>11</sup> But the meek shall inherit the earth,

And shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

<sup>22</sup> For *those* blessed by Him shall inherit the earth,

But *those* cursed by Him shall be cut off.

<sup>29</sup> The righteous shall inherit the land,

And dwell in it forever.

Jesus picks up the blessing of the promised land for the Israelites in the old Testament, and applies them to the gospel message of the New Testament. Firstly, we need to understand the word "**meek**".

The word "Meek" comes from a Greek word, "**Praos**" which means mild or soft.

**The term was used to describe a soothing medicine or a swift breeze.**

It is the feeling you get when it is hot at night and you keep the fan going to give you a cool breeze. It is also the feeling that a child might get during its teething period, when they are given medicine to soothe the pain and reduce their discomfort.

**This same word was also used of young horses and other animals whose wild spirits were broken by their trainer.**

In some of the old U.S. western films you often saw a trainer trying to break in a young horse so that it was suitable for riding.

On a human level "Meekness" describes someone who is gentle, humble, unassuming and willing to serve.

**Zechariah 9: v. 9. N.K.J.**

<sup>9</sup> "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!

Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, your King is coming to you;

He is just and having salvation,

Lowly and riding on a donkey,  
A colt, the foal of a donkey.

Jesus is described as coming into Jerusalem lowly and riding a donkey.  
Lowly is the same meaning as "Meek".

Meekness is not weakness. Meekness means **power under control**; Just like a horse that has been broken.

**Quote from A.W. Tozer.**

The meek man is **not a human mouse afflicted with a sense of his own inferiority.**

Rather he may be in his moral life as **bold as a lion and as strong as Samson.**

However, he is a man who has stopped being fooled, about himself.

Jesus talks about inheriting the earth as a blessing of '**meekness**'.

Jesus is **not talking about this earth but the "new earth"** where we will live and serve Jesus. This is the blessed hope of all believers in Jesus Christ.

**God's kingdom is both present and future.**

We are born again into God's kingdom when we put our faith and trust in Jesus.

It takes "**meekness**" to reach the point in our lives when it is not about us and what we want in life, but it is about Jesus, and our desperate need for His forgiveness and love.

It is very simple, blessing results from going the **way that Jesus teaches us**, with the **best to come after death**. But going your own way in life, eventually leads to a life of **searching for fulfilment which is never found**, and the worst is to come after death.

**Mark 10: v. 17-22 in the N.L.T.**

<sup>17</sup> As Jesus was starting out on his way to Jerusalem, a man came running up to him, knelt down, and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

<sup>18</sup> "Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked. "Only God is truly good."<sup>19</sup> But to answer your question, you know the commandments: 'You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. You must not cheat anyone. Honor your father and mother.'"

<sup>20</sup> "Teacher," the man replied, "I've obeyed all these commandments since I was young."

<sup>21</sup> Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. "There is still one thing you haven't done," he told him. "Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

<sup>22</sup> At this the man's face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

The man in the story came to Jesus because he wanted to inherit eternal life.

He went away sad because he was not willing for "**meekness in his life**".

**The man was not willing to give up that which was only temporary, for that which was eternal.**

If you want to become a real Christian, you will need to view the things of eternal life in heaven as a far greater reward than the temporary things of this life.

3. **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. For they shall be filled.** (Matthew 5: v. 6.)

The final blessing for this morning is a very important one.

**Martyn Lloyd Jones** a famous "Welsh" preacher from the U.K. said these words:

"I do not know of a better test than anyone can apply to himself or herself in this whole matter of the Christian profession than a verse like this.

If this verse is to you one of the most blessed statements of the whole of scripture, you can be quite certain you are a Christian. If it is not, then you had better examine the foundations again."

What this old time preacher is saying is that the person who has no hunger and thirst for more of God's holiness, has in fact not received the New Birth, or been born again.

Unless you have tasted the New Life of God's Holiness, there will be no desire in your heart to have more.

**Let me give you an illustration.**

My wife Wendy bakes some wonderful cakes and scones.

**How many of you have tasted any of Wendy's cakes?** (ask for a show of hands)

**Q. Would you like to have some more?**

The reason you would like some more is because you have tasted the cakes before.

The rest of you are not too excited because you haven't tasted Wendy's cakes.

**It is the same with the Christian life.**

If you have tasted the heavenly life with Jesus, although in a small amount, you will hunger and desire for more of God in your life.

**True story**

During the liberation of Palestine in the first World War, a combined force of British, Australian and New Zealand soldiers drove the Turkish soldiers from the desert.

As the troops moved northwards, following after the Turkish soldiers, they ran out of water.

Their mouths got dry, their heads ached, and they became dizzy and faint.

They knew if they didn't make the water wells of Sheriah by nightfall that many of them would die.

They finally made it to the water wells of Sheriah.

As the water was distributed, the weak and wounded were served first.

The other soldiers had to stand to attention and wait.

It was four hours before the last man was able to drink any water.

At that time, it was reported by one of the Christian officers, who said this to the men.

"I believe that we have all learnt our first Bible lesson on the march from Beersheba to the Sheriah Water Wells. If such were our thirst for God, for His righteousness, and His will in our lives, and a consuming, all embracing pre-occupying desire, how rich in the fruit of the Holy Spirit we would be."

I hope that you are hungry and thirsty for more of God's righteousness.

If you are, God has promised to fill you.

**Luke 18: v. 10-13. In N.K.J.**

<sup>10</sup> "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men— extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' <sup>13</sup> And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'

**Jesus told this story because there were some people who were trusting in themselves and their own righteousness.**

**The point that Jesus made in this parable is the same point that Jesus is making in the first four instructions as a condition of our blessing from God.**

The way in to receive this blessing is through the cross of Jesus and all that Jesus has done for each one of us.

Our Communion celebration today is a thanksgiving for Jesus and His great work for our Salvation.