



The **Beatitudes** are eight simply stated, yet profound guidelines Jesus revealed to His followers during His Sermon on the Mount. Jesus uses the words of The Beatitudes to paint a picture of what the true people of God look like. Not physically, but morally and spiritually.

The word *beatitude* is defined as a state of *utmost bliss*. The eight Beatitudes are therefore, the roadmap Jesus gives to us to help us find the *utmost bliss* in this world and in the next. Those not familiar with The Beatitudes may be taken aback when they read them and discover that the secret to happiness is hungering, thirsting, and being persecuted for what is right, living meekly, mourning, and being merciful. The word beatitude literally means blessedness or a state of bliss. The first part of what is commonly known as the "Sermon on the Mount" begins with a number of beautiful and spiritual declarations called the Beatitudes. In these statements, Jesus makes it clear that the most important things in this life are the spiritual things.

All of the beatitudes apply to all followers of Christ. They are rooted in the fact that true blessedness does not come from earthly sources but from heavenly sources. The Sermon on the Mount introduces some radical ideas that run counter to our fallen human nature and the norms of our society.

It is difficult to bless those who persecute us and to love our enemies, to practice what we preach and to correct our own faults instead of judging others. It is also difficult to keep the commandments and to teach others to do the same. Only with the grace of God are these things made possible. Jesus, being God incarnate, has the authority to illuminate the meaning of the Ten Commandments. He tells his disciples that sin does not only consist in evil deeds, but in evil thoughts and intentions as well. We all need to pray that the Holy Spirit helps us to purify our intentions as well as our actions.

The [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) explains that The Beatitudes "are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulation." The Beatitudes are difficult for us to understand because they are the antithesis of everything that the world we live in pushes us to believe; that in order to be happy, we have to be rich, own a huge home, be physically attractive, have an extensive wardrobe, etc.

[1716](#) The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching. They take up the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham. The Beatitudes fulfill the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven.

[1719](#) The Beatitudes reveal the goal of human existence, the ultimate end of human acts: God calls us to his own beatitude. This vocation is addressed to each individual personally, but also to the Church as a whole, the new people made up of those who have accepted the promise and live from it in faith.

[1720](#) The New Testament uses several expressions to characterize the beatitude to which God calls man: - the coming of the Kingdom of God; - the vision of God: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God"¹⁷, - entering into the joy of the Lord;¹⁸ - entering into God's rest:¹⁹ There we shall rest and see, we shall see and love, we shall love and praise. Behold what will be at the end without end. For what other end do we have, if not to reach the kingdom which has no end?²⁰

[1721](#) God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to paradise. Beatitude makes us "partakers of the divine nature" and of eternal life.²¹ With beatitude, man enters into the glory of Christ²² and into the joy of the Trinitarian life.

[1723](#) The beatitude we are promised confronts us with decisive moral choices. It invites us to purify our hearts of bad instincts and to seek the love of God above all else. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, or in any human achievement - however beneficial it may be - such as science, technology, and art, or indeed in any creature, but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love.



Like any bad habit, we have to break away from this way of thinking and follow instead the blueprint of The Beatitudes. If we can do it, we'll have the full blessings of the Kingdom of Heaven to look forward to.

1. **Blessed are the Poor in Spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs:** Humility is realizing that all our gifts and blessings are given to us by God. There is nothing arrogant or self-righteous about someone who is truly humble. Furthermore, when we are humble, we acquire an inner peace that allows us to do the will of God. *To be poor in spirit means to be humble before God.*
2. **Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted:** We are to mourn not only the violence, hatred, and injustices present in this world, but also our sins and the sins of others. *When we mourn, we open our heavy hearts to the Lord, and in turn He comforts us.*
3. **Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth:** To be meek means to be have a spirit of gentleness and self-control. The meek aren't violent, vengeful, or willing to exploit others.
4. **Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right; they shall be satisfied:** Jesus doesn't mean literally going without food or drink; rather He's referring to one's passion and drive to do God's will.
5. **Blessed are the merciful; they will be shown mercy:** Like the phrase in the Our Father, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us..." those who are merciful to others (treat them with kindness and forgiveness) will be shown mercy.
6. **Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God:** St. Augustine explains, "A simple heart is a heart that is pure; and, just as the light which surrounds us cannot be seen except through eyes that are clear, so neither is God seen unless that through which He can be seen is pure." A pure heart is one that shows acts of love and mercy, and beats for righteousness and justice. There is no hatred or jealousy in a pure heart.
7. **Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called the children of God:** God is the source of peace and He empowers us to be bearers of peace. We show ourselves to be children of God when we actively work to reconcile with others, bring together adversaries, and work in harmony with one another.
8. **Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of what is right, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** Like the phrase in the Our Father, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us..." those who are merciful to others (treat them with kindness and forgiveness) will be shown mercy. A prime example of those who are persecuted for the sake of what is right are the saints and the martyrs. All of us are called to be saints. And like the saints, when we suffer for Christ and others, the Kingdom of Heaven is our reward.

The message of The Beatitudes takes on a whole new level of meaning when we realize that they're a mini biography of Jesus' life. He is the ultimate peacemaker, He has the purest heart, He is merciful, and most importantly, He was persecuted—for us! The road to happiness may not be easy, but Jesus gave us the blueprint. All we have to do is follow it!

1724 The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostolic catechesis describe for us the paths that lead to the Kingdom of heaven. Sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we tread them, step by step, by everyday acts. By the working of the Word of Christ, we slowly bear fruit in the Church to the glory of God.²⁵



IN BRIEF

1725 The Beatitudes take up and fulfill God's promises from Abraham on by ordering them to the Kingdom of heaven. They respond to the desire for happiness that God has placed in the human heart.

1726 The Beatitudes teach us the final end to which God calls us: the Kingdom, the vision of God, participation in the divine nature, eternal life, filiation, rest in God.

1727 The beatitude of eternal life is a gratuitous gift of God. It is supernatural, as is the grace that leads us there.

1728 The Beatitudes confront us with decisive choices concerning earthly goods; they purify our hearts in order to teach us to love God above all things.

1729 The beatitude of heaven sets the standards for discernment in the use of earthly goods in keeping with the law of Go

Resources:

[The Beatitudes Explained – YouTube](#)

[The Beatitudes: The Key to Joy \(by Bishop Robert Barron\) YouTube](#)

[The Beatitudes: Blessings or Curses? - YouTube](#)

..... **THE BEATITUDES**

Matt. 5:3-12

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

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.