# Lesson 6 Matthew 5:1-16 Sermon on the Mount - Beatitudes

Life in Christ: When did you feel closest to Our Lord this week?

1. Moses went up on Mt Sinai and received from God the Ten Commandments, the very Word of God. Jesus, the Word of God made flesh, went up on a mountain and taught the people the heart of the Commandments. Moses and Jesus both summarized the commandments for the people. What is the essential difference between their summaries? Note, holy means to be set apart; perfect means to be ideal for a purpose.

Leviticus 19:1-2

1 The LORD said to Moses:

2 Speak to the whole Israelite community and tell them: Be holy, for I, the LORD your God, am holy

Matthew 5:48

48 So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect

1. The Catechism explains the perfection of the Law of Moses given by Jesus. Highlight some of the ways the Law of Moses is perfected.

Catechism 1967 and 1968

1967 The Law of the Gospel "fulfills," refines, surpasses, and leads the Old Law to its perfection. In the Beatitudes, the New Law fulfills the divine promises by elevating and orienting them toward the "kingdom of heaven." It is addressed to those open to accepting this new hope with faith - the poor, the humble, the afflicted, the pure of heart, those persecuted on account of Christ and so marks out the surprising ways of the Kingdom.

1968 The Law of the Gospel fulfills the commandments of the Law. the Lord's Sermon on the Mount, far from abolishing or devaluing the moral prescriptions of the Old Law, releases their hidden potential and has new demands arise from them: it reveals their entire divine and human truth. It does not add new external precepts, but proceeds to reform the heart, the root of human acts, where man chooses between the pure and the impure, where faith, hope, and charity are formed and with them the other virtues. the Gospel thus brings the Law to its fullness through imitation of the perfection of the heavenly Father, through forgiveness of enemies and prayer for persecutors, in emulation of the divine generosity

The first Beatitude introduces their central theme: the Kingdom of Heaven (or God).

Matthew 5:3

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

1. Jesus’ ministry reveals the nature of the Kingdom of Heaven. From these Catechism references, highlight what is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven.

Catechism 541

541 "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying: 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent, and believe in the gospel.'" "To carry out the will of the Father Christ inaugurated the kingdom of heaven on earth." Now the Father's will is "to raise up men to share in his own divine life". He does this by gathering men around his Son Jesus Christ. This gathering is the Church, "on earth the seed and beginning of that kingdom"

543 Everyone is called to enter the kingdom. First announced to the children of Israel, this messianic kingdom is intended to accept men of all nations. To enter it, one must first accept Jesus' word

544 The kingdom belongs to the poor and lowly, which means those who have accepted it with humble hearts. Jesus is sent to "preach good news to the poor"; he declares them blessed, for "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." To them - the "little ones" the Father is pleased to reveal what remains hidden from the wise and the learned. Jesus shares the life of the poor, from the cradle to the cross; he experiences hunger, thirst and privation. Jesus identifies himself with the poor of every kind and makes active love toward them the condition for entering his kingdom.

545 Jesus invites sinners to the table of the kingdom: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." He invites them to that conversion without which one cannot enter the kingdom, but shows them in word and deed his Father's boundless mercy for them and the vast "joy in heaven over one sinner who repents". The supreme proof of his love will be the sacrifice of his own life "for the forgiveness of sins"

“Poor in spirit” is not an obvious concept as is just “poor” it St. Luke’s Gospel The footnote in the NABRE helps clarify “poor in spirit.”

NABRE footnote to Matthew 5:3

Matthew added in spirit in order either to indicate that only the devout poor were meant or to extend the beatitude to all, of whatever social rank, who recognized their complete dependence on God.

The Catechism provides additional clarification:

2546 "Blessed are the poor in spirit. "How can you be poor in spirit? The Beatitudes reveal an order of happiness and grace, of beauty and peace. Jesus celebrates the joy of the poor, to whom the Kingdom already belongs:

The Word speaks of voluntary humility as "poverty in spirit"; the Apostle gives an example of God's poverty when he says: "For your sakes he became poor."

2547 The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods. "Let the proud seek and love earthly kingdoms, but blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven."

1. How can you be poor in spirit?
2. Moses is identified as the meekest person in the Old Testament. When Jesus drove the money changers who were cheating the Jewish worshipers from the Temple, it was considered an act of meekness. How do these examples change the general notion of meekness?

Numbers 12:3

3 Now, Moses himself was by far the meekest man on the face of the earth.

1. In the Old Testament, the nations or the sea symbolized the Gentiles while the land symbolized Israel, the Promised Land. Jesus promises the meek will inherit the land. Specifically, what is He saying is their inheritance?

5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

1. “Clean of heart” can also be translated “single minded.” The Letter of St James addresses the person of two minds. How would you define clean of heart?

James 1:5-

5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and he will be given it.

6 But he should ask in faith, not doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed about by the wind.

7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord,

8 since he is a man of two minds, unstable in all his ways.

1. When we endure persecution for the sake of our Christian faith, we are promised a great reward in heaven. Jesus, then, adds that the prophets before you were likewise persecuted and rewarded. What do the words “before you” imply about your status as a faithful Christian?

11 Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me.

12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Reading through the Beatitudes, they do not seem to be what people in this modern age would identify as the good life.

Matthew 5:3-12

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

4 Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

6 Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8 Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

10 Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me.

12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

1. Blessed or happy is not what we would normally associate with the Beatitudes. For example, few are happy with the loss of a loved one. Can you think of instances in your life where, at least in retrospect, you have experienced happiness, peace, or a feeling of being blessed for having done or experienced these events? How was the presence of Christ a factor in your happiness?
2. How does Jesus see the allusions to Jerusalem and the Temple?

Matthew 5:14-16

14 You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden.

15 Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house.

16Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father

* Jerusalem
* Temple (3 answers)