

SUMMARY OF THE BEATITUDES

<p>BLESSING #1: <i>BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT</i></p>	<p>We're "poor" in spirit because we acknowledge that we are not self-sufficient and that we need God in our lives. We come to Him in childlike faith, knowing that we cannot make it on our own without Him.</p>
<p>PROMISE #1: <i>FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN</i></p>	<p>When we acknowledge the sovereignty of God over our lives we discover that He does not save us because of what we have done, but because of what Christ has done for us. If we persevere in faith we are promised the gift of eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven.</p>
<p>BLESSING #2: <i>BLESSED ARE THEY WHO MOURN</i></p>	<p>As we yield to spiritual childhood, admitting poverty of spirit and kneeling in His presence, the more clearly we see God. The more clearly we see God the more we become aware of our imperfections. We become humbled in His presence and we feel the burden of our sins. The result is that we mourn our sins. Repentance and genuine sorrow for our sins purifies us. To mourn sin is a natural outflow of surrender to God through "poverty of spirit."</p>
<p>PROMISE #2: <i>FOR THEY WILL BE COMFORTED</i></p>	<p>Not only does the Holy Spirit comfort us in our sorrow and repentance but through living the Sacraments of our faith He gives us the strength to resist sin and also the strength to stand against sin in our community and in the world. We bear our suffering with a spirit of atonement, reconciliation and love and the result is comfort and strength.</p>
<p>BLESSING #3: <i>BLESSED ARE THE MEEK</i></p>	<p>Christian "meekness" is not weakness. It is based on humility which is expressed in the New Testament as the supernatural quality that is the outgrowth of a renewed nature. This renewal can only come when we surrender our lives to God and seek His divine will in our lives. It is this third step, "<i>blessed are the meek</i>" which renews us and places us as a useful tool in the hands of the Master of the universe.</p>
<p>PROMISE #3: <i>FOR THEY WILL INHERIT THE LAND</i></p>	<p>No longer does Satan have the power to dominate us because we have been reborn through Christian baptism into the family of God. We belong to the God who created and dominates the earth, and as His children and his heirs we inherit the earth and the universal kingdom He has established on earth to lead the nations into the family of God, the Catholic Church.</p>

Continued

BLESSING #4: [the turning point] <i>BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS</i>	Christ gives himself to the soul that truly hungers for Him. When the world no longer has any hold on us, all we want is Him.
PROMISE #4: <i>FOR THEY WILL BE SATISFIED</i>	Filled with the Holy Spirit and nourished by Christ who gives all of Himself to us in the Eucharist: Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity!
BLESSING # 5: <i>BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL</i>	As we yield our will to God and are filled with the divine life of His Son, we grow closer to Him, we become more like Him. We forgive others and we offer His love to others because He first loved and forgave us.
PROMISE #5: <i>FOR THEY WILL BE SHOWN MERCY</i>	The more we forgive others the more we receive forgiveness through the sacrifice of the Son.
BEATITUDE #6: <i>BLESSED ARE THE CLEAN OF HEART</i>	With Christ living in us His righteousness cleanses us and our hearts become pure; we reflect the image of Christ.
PROMISE #6: <i>FOR THEY WILL SEE GOD</i>	We will see the face of God in each person with whom we share Christ's love.
BEATITUDE # 7: <i>BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS</i>	As we live our lives with the Prince of Peace within us it becomes natural for us to share His message of peace and salvation with others.
PROMISE #7: <i>FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD</i>	John 1:12: <i>But to all who receive him, who believe in His name, He gave the power to become children of God."</i>
The result of living the Beatitudes	
<i>BLESSED ARE THEY WHO ARE PERSECUTED FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS</i>	When we live God's plan for our lives we may endure injustice and we may be persecuted for His sake and for the plan of God working in the lives of others. We answer His call to take up our cross daily and to follow Him.
PROMISE: <i>FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN</i> [this is a repeat of promise #1]	God saw that his children were trapped in a world of sin. He freed us through His Son's sacrificial death on the cross so we could be reborn through Christian baptism as sons and daughter of God and become the heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven = eternal life lived within the life of the Most Holy Trinity.
<i>BLESSED ARE YOU WHEN THEY INSULT YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU AND UTTER EVERY KIND OF EVIL AGAINST YOU [FALSELY] BECAUSE OF ME</i>	Our commitment to accepting persecution in the name of Jesus has to be a personal commitment.
PROMISE: <i>REJOICE AND BE GLAD FOR YOUR REWARD WILL BE GREAT IN HEAVEN. THUS THEY PERSECUTED THE PROPHETS WHO WERE BEFORE YOU</i>	When we accept our commitment to everything He has taught us we can rejoice in the confidence of His promise of salvation if we persevere in faith to the end. M. Hunt © 1995 www.AgapeBibleStudy.com

Blessed are they (blessed are you) who are persecuted: we take up our crosses and follow Jesus, committing ourselves to everything He has taught us, even enduring persecution for His sake, but doing so joyfully because we know He has promised us eternal life in our Father's Kingdom.

With Christ living in us we become conformed to His image of peace and love. In the image of Christ we become divine children of His Father

"The only ladder to heaven is the Cross"
-- St. Rose of Lima

Blessed are the peacemakers

Our old hearts are replaced with the pure heart of Jesus our Redeemer. We will see God's face in the faces of everyone with whom we share His love.

Blessed are the pure in heart

When we show our mercy and forgiveness we will be given mercy and forgiveness through Jesus' perfect Sacrifice on the Cross

Blessed are the merciful

Seek the King of Righteousness to be filled by Christ in the Eucharist

← **Turning Point**

Blessed are those who hunger & thirst for righteousness

Yield our will to God's will for our lives = renewal → inherit "the Land"; the Church = dominion to bind and loose

Blessed are the meek

Mourn own sins and world sin = purification → comfort & strength, Reconciliation

Blessed are those who mourn

Those who acknowledge their need for God → Kingdom of Heaven = eternal life promised through Baptism and faithfully living the Law of love on a life time journey of faith

Blessed are the poor in spirit

The Progression of the Beatitudes

Beatitudes contain 7 or 8 (depending on how you count them) successive fundamental spiritual states that every Christian must strive to achieve. The Beatitudes must be lived fully and completely just as the 10 Commandments have to be lived in their entirety.

The Righteous man of Wisdom 2:12-24	The Righteous man Jesus of Nazareth
Wisdom 2:16d: <i>and boasts that God is his father</i>	Jesus called God “Father” [Abba], an intimate association that was denied to Old Covenant people through the lost of divine sonship in the Fall from grace [many times including Luke 15:34; John 20:17].
Wisdom 2:16c: <i>He calls blest the destiny of the just</i>	Jesus called the righteous “blessed” in the Beatitudes and other teachings (Matthew 5:1-12, Luke 6: 20-21; etc.).
Wisdom 2:17-18: <i>Let us see whether his words be true; let us find out what will happen to him. For if the just one be the son of God, he will defend him.</i>	God called Jesus His Son [Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:11, Luke 9:35; etc.]; Jesus called Himself God’s Son [Matthew 27:43; Luke 10:22; John 10:36; 11:4; 17:1; etc] and so did the demon spirits (Matthew 8:29). Jesus was accused by the religious authorities through false witnesses at His trial (Matthew 26:59; Mark 14:56).
Wisdom 2:19: <i>With revilement and torture let us put him to the test that we may have proof of his gentleness and try his patience.</i>	Jesus was beaten and tortured (Matthew 26:67-68; 27:26; Mark 14:65; 15:15-20;; Luke 22:63-65).
Wisdom 2:20: <i>Let us condemn him to a shameful death..</i>	Jesus was condemned to death (Matthew 27:66; Mark 15:15; Luke 23:20-25).
Wisdom 2:19: <i>With revilement...let us put him to the test...</i>	The crowd taunted to see if God would save Him (Matthew 27:39-40; Mark 15:29; Luke 23:35).
Wisdom 2:20-22: <i>Let us condemn him to a shameful death; for according to his own words, God will take care of him. [...] nor discern the innocent soul’ reward.</i>	Jesus, the innocent, suffered on the Cross, a shameful death, at the hands of the unrighteous for the sake of both the righteous and the unrighteous and His reward was the Resurrection! (Matthew 27:35-50; Mark 15:29-39; Luke 23:33-34; etc.).
Wisdom 2:23: <i>For God formed man to be imperishable; the image of his own nature he made him.</i>	Jesus was begotten in the image of God and suffered, died and was buried to be resurrected to new life in order to restore us to the image of the Father in Christ (John 1:14; 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9; Matthew 28:6; Mark 16:16:6; Luke 24:5-8).
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Questions for group discussion:

Question: What advice does Jesus give concerning persecution in Luke 12:2-12? What verse in your opinion expresses the key teaching in this discourse?

Question: What are some of the differences or similarities that you have noticed between the Old Covenant Law as presented in the Ten Commandments and the New Covenant Law as presented in the Beatitudes?

Answer: The Ten Commandments presents the moral law while the Beatitudes present the spiritual law. The Ten Commandments are negative commands, "*You shall not*", while the Beatitudes are positive statements, "*Blessed are the..*", however, a negative is implied if the blessing is not embraced. In both sets of the Law, the first three statements address our relationship to God, but in the Commandments the remaining commands which address our relationship to others while the remaining 4 Beatitudes move us spiritually into the life of Christ.

Question: Jesus' command to each faithful Christian is to take up our cross and follow Him just as he invited St. Peter in John chapter 21:18-19. What does this command mean to you personally?

Question: How are you living the present reality of the Beatitudes? Discuss them point by point. Have you suffered persecution and injustice in your walk with Christ? What is your advice to others who are suffering under this burden?