

**Matthew 5:1-4 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,

<sup>2</sup>and he began to teach 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 will be comforted.”

40-05-14-The First Two Beatitudes

discipleship, happiness, lifestyle, character, reward

Mat 5:1-4

True blessedness is *taught by* Jesus and *caught from* Jesus.

**INTRODUCTION:**

–The *Beatitudes* are *happitudes* [lit. “blessed”=happy]. They’re a *blueprint for spiritual growth*, a *philosophy of life*, *holy standards of behavior*, *pathways to spiritual empowerment*. They’re both **taught by Christ** and **caught from Christ**, not as empty *ideals*, but as *tested principles* He Himself lived out before His *family, friends, foes, and His Father*. Then He sealed them with His blood on the Cross. **HOM.idea.** *First...*

- I. Taught by Christ**– v.1-2, *Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them, saying...* [Saying what? 9 dispositions of blessedness, to begin His sermon.]
- A. God gave OT law on a mountain, and God’s Son presented the NT lifestyle “on a mountainside.” (The disciples *followed* Him there for a time of intimate teaching, and we’re called to learn from Him in that same intimate way, whenever He leads us *to higher ground*.)
- B. Like a rabbi, He “*sat down*” to teach His disciples. (But Jesus didn’t just whisper [lit. Gk. is “*He opened His mouth*”]—He spoke directly to the disciples about *kingdom living*, but He taught loud enough for the crowd to hear. (The church is a *believer’s meeting*, but it has a message the world should feel welcome to come listen to.)

**TRANS:** After John’s arrest, Jesus announced “*the kingdom*”– Mat 4:17. From that time on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” But in the *Beatitudes*, He taught life-style behaviors of kingdom citizens. [Robert Schuller called them the “*BE-attitudes*”—ways we should think about God and life.] They preface all that Jesus was going to teach in this *Sermon on the Mount*, because proper inner attitudes are the essential context for kingdom living. They’re not just **taught by Christ**, but...

- II. Caught from Christ** [this is exactly why Jesus kept saying, “Follow Me.”]
- A. He wanted us to have the *happy life* He Himself humanly enjoyed through kingdom living—that is, living a life: 1) *dependent on God’s power*, 2) *in tune with God’s heart*, and 3) *in submission to*

God's will. (Jesus gave the **be-attitudes** to describe the special ways kingdom living is to be manifested, and He begins with...)

**B. An attitude of personal poverty**— v.3, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

1. Poverty “in spirit” overshadows all the Beatitudes. [**The Hebrews** portrayed **poverty** as “*the poor*” as being without power; and because without power, oppressed; and because oppressed, dependent on God.]
  - a. Sin had made us spiritually poor, so Jesus took on our human poverty to bring us spiritual wealth— 2 Cor 8:9, For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.
  - b. By acknowledging our utter dependence on God, we follow in His steps— Heb 5:7, During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission. (Jesus always confessed His total dependence on His Father.)
2. By catching His attitude, we receive the promise: “*theirs is the kingdom of heaven*” (Being “*poor in spirit*” and relying only on God for help, we become kingdom citizens now—a present reality!)

**TRANS:** [Some might say, “You Christians put all your eggs in a future basket!” But Jesus brought God’s future basket down to us!] The prayer, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” is answered immediately when we confess our spiritual poverty and become totally dependent on God. He turns “*the poor*” into the truly rich! Yet our poverty persists in...

**C. An attitude of sincere sorrow**— v.4, “Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they will be comforted.” [“**mourn**,” is the strongest Gk. word for *grieving*]

1. Why would Jesus call *mourning* a “*happy*” attitude for *anyone!*?
  - a. It’s true... mournful grief over sin does lead to repentance. But this be-attitude covers more ground than our sorrow over sins.
  - b. Great losses separate the priceless from the trivial. (Pleasure plays on the *surface*, telling us little; Sorrow sounds the *depths*, teaching us precious lessons. [**Someone wrote**: “I walked a mile with Pleasure, / She chattered all the way, / But left me none the wiser / For all she had to say. // I walked a mile with Sorrow, / And ne’er a word said she, / But, oh, the things I learned from her / When Sorrow walked with me!”])
- c. Jesus fully identified with human grief over the loss of what’s

really important, as He “wept” at Lazarus’ tomb, or sorrowfully struggled in Gethsemane, facing His own death with tears.

- d. But He showed us a deeper way to “mourn” as He carried His Father’s sorrow for “the lost sheep of Israel” [**Luther** translated *mourn* as “sorrow-bearing”] (If we would catch from Jesus this kind of mourning, we must grieve over unbelievers the way He does in Luke 13:34, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”)
2. This beatitude’s promise is “*they will be comforted*.” It can mean...
  - a. a downcast soul being uplifted by encouragement. (Normal behavior in “*the communion of saints*” confessed in our Creed.)
  - b. It also means strengthened by “the God of all comfort”— 2 Cor 1:3-4, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (The real *Source* of any *encouragement* we can offer to those around us “*who mourn*.” is God the Father.)

**CONCLUSION:**

—**True blessedness is taught by Jesus and caught from Jesus**. In His humanity, He **learned and adopted** the *heart dispositions* He taught about. AND because He Himself enjoyed the promised rewards of each one, He assures us of their outcome, if we adopt them in our own lives. —They’re “*blessed*” attitudes, because they’re the “kingdom of heaven” ways of responding to life in a fallen world. They stand in sharp contrast to how people usually respond to the imperfections and hardships of earthly life. Jesus came down to teach them to us. He practiced them Himself, and we can catch them from Him by choosing to follow Him.