

Lessons: The Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes

Christ preached this sermon, which was an exposition of the law, upon a mountain, because upon a mountain the law was given; and this was also a solemn promulgation of the Christian law. – Matthew Henry (See Matthew 5:1-2.)

- **The Beatitudes: the character of kingdom citizens.** The first portion of the Sermon on the Mount is known as the Beatitudes, which means “The Blessings” but can also be understood as giving the believer his “be - attitudes” - the attitudes he should “be.” In the Beatitudes, Jesus sets forth both the *nature* and the *aspirations* of citizens of His kingdom. They *have* and are *learning* these character traits. (David Guzik)
- **All of these character traits are marks and goals of all Christians.** It is not as if we can major in one to the exclusion of others... There is no escape from our responsibility to desire every one of these spiritual attributes. If you meet someone who claims to be a Christian but displays and desires none of these traits, you may rightly wonder about their salvation, because they do not have the character of kingdom citizens. But if they claim to have mastered these attributes, you may question their honesty. (David Guzik)
- **GENERAL CHARACTER.** The magna charta of Christ’s Kingdom: the unfolding of His righteousness; the sublimest code of morals ever proclaimed on earth; the counterpart of the legislation on Mount Sinai; Christ here appears as Lawgiver and King; Moses spoke in God’s name; Christ speaks in His own.—Its position, contents, connection, as well as the whole tenor of the New Testament, show that it is the end of the law and the beginning of the gospel... (A Popular Commentary on the New Testament)
- **This wonderful discourse of three chapters is to the New Dispensation what the law given from Sinai was to the Old.** That was the moral law of Judaism, this is the moral law of Christianity; that was given from "the Mount that could not be touched," this from the Mount of blessing... (B. W. Johnson)
- **The aim and contents of the “Sermon.”**—No mere sermon is this, only distinguished from others of its class by its reach and sweep and power; it stands alone as the grand charter of the commonwealth of heaven... (The Preacher’s Complete Homiletical Commentary)
- **Note the *passive* side of the blessed life.** To be *poor in spirit*, that is, to be lowly in one’s self-estimate; to be *meek*, not always interested in one’s rights; to *mourn* for the evils of one’s own heart and for the sin and sorrow around; to *hunger and thirst* after Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. These dispositions do not purchase blessedness, but to cultivate them is to be blessed. On the *positive* side are mercy, purity, peace and willingness to suffer all things for Christ. Here is 1 Cor. 13: 1-13 anticipated! (F. B. Meyer)

- **The sermon on the mount describes how the true disciples of the kingdom of heaven should behave in that kingdom. This kingdom was announced by the Old Testament prophets. It is the kingdom under the kingship of God's Messiah. The throne of the Messiah stands then in Jerusalem from where He rules over Israel and from there over the whole world (Dan. 2:44, Dan 7:13-24). (King Comments)**
- **Delitzsch calls the Mount of Beatitudes "The Sinai of the New Testament." (Vincent's Word Studies)**
- **The first thing to notice is that this Sermon on the Mount is not for everybody. The Sermon on the Mount was not for the multitudes. Jesus is not here talking to the multitudes, he is talking to his disciples and unless a person is a disciple of Jesus Christ, they're going to have an extremely difficult time with the Sermon on the Mount because it really doesn't have application to them. It has application only to his disciples. So seeing the multitudes, he left the multitudes. He went up into a mountain and when his disciples had come unto him he opened his mouth and he taught them. (Chuck Smith)**
- **Now in Matthew's record Jesus will speak and teach; it is God speaking but no longer through an inspired human personality like Jeremiah or Isaiah or Samuel; now the truth of God spoke through the exact personality of God. (David Guzik)**
- **The Sermon on the Mount is sometimes thought of as Jesus' "Declaration of the Kingdom." The American Revolutionaries had their Declaration of Independence. Karl Marx had his Communist Manifesto. With this message, Jesus declared what His Kingdom is all about. (David Guzik)**
- **It presents a radically different agenda than what the nation of Israel expected from the Messiah. It does not present the political or material blessings of the Messiah's reign. Instead, it expresses the spiritual implications of the rule of Jesus in our lives. This great message tells us how we will live when Jesus is our Lord. "In the first century there was little agreement among Jews as to what the messianic kingdom would be like. One very popular assumption was that the Roman yoke would be shattered and there would be political peace and mounting prosperity." (Carson, cited by Guzik)**
- **It is important to understand that the Sermon on the Mount does not deal with salvation as such, but it lays out for the disciple and the potential disciple how regarding Jesus as King translates into ethics and daily living. (David Guzik)**