

(Note: Resource for message: Skip Moen, *The Lucky Life*.)

Introduction:

- *"And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: "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 merciful, For they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* (Matthew 5:1-10, NKJV)
- I want to summarize where we have been over the last five weeks in this series on the Beatitudes. And then I want to summarize the series itself.
 - Jesus seeing the crowds went up on a mountain to teach His disciples. He was to give them the culture of His Kingdom in this sermon.
 - Cultures are built by thoughts. Thoughts become our beliefs or our practices and beliefs sustained over time become our culture. This is what Jesus was after. The sermon on the mount lays out Jesus' expectations of the subjects of His Kingdom.
 - The Kingdom revolves around the King of the kingdom. The King comes first and then we have a Kingdom. His word stands! His decrees cannot be changed. The king holds all authority of the kingdom. The king owns everything in the kingdom therefore his wealth determines the strength of his kingdom. The people have no rights, no property and no say. They are considered subjects of the King. This is a great system of government if you have a great King.
 - Every king has thoughts. And every king has beliefs. And the king's beliefs becomes the culture of the kingdom. Our King is good! Our King is kind! Our king is generous! Our King is life giving! Our King does no harm to His subjects! For they are the apple of His eye!
 - So we when speak of the culture of the Kingdom, know that it requires a relationship with God to produce accordingly.
- The beatitudes introduce us to the values of the Kingdom through the King himself. The beatitudes are the introduction points to the sermon on the mount which revolves around Mt 5:20 Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the pharisees you have no place with God.
- Let's go back to where we started and reflect on this statement I made. "Think about this: "Luck is for losers." What the beatitudes have taught us is that we all are losers and having found God we start living the lucky life! Only those who are losing or stand in the face of losing wish for luck. "Winners don't believe in luck. But they do believe in the lucky life. ... Stop waiting for good luck and start living the lucky life - the life God designed." Skip Moen

I want to summarize our series this morning with two things. The power of the paradox and the last great paradox.

I. The Power of Paradox

- A. Each beatitude has a paradox. The power of paradox is shocking. They are like 'brain teasers.' IE. "Less is more." "Spend money to make it." They are contrary to expectations and perceived opinions. Each of the beatitudes is stated in such a way that it is a paradoxical presentation of truth. Jesus does this to shock His hearers into listen carefully for the purpose of thinking and of discovering truth. In them we have found these truths:
1. Those who are destitute in spirit are the very reason God's kingdom has arrived.
 2. Those who grieve are the open doors for God's comfort into the world.
 3. Those who are afflicted under God's sovereignty discover God's promised allotment.
 4. Those who are chronically deficient in righteousness are given the righteousness they lack.
 5. Those who give up justice discover the basis of their own pardon.
 6. Those who have received a clean heart have eyes that are able to see God.
 7. Those who leave behind peace discover they reflect God's character of peace making.
 8. Those who stand for grace no matter what, call for the arrival of the Kingdom.
- B. Each of these are God's foundational values of His Kingdom.
1. They are nothing like the values this world highly esteems!
 2. Here is what matters most in God's world:
 - a) desperateness
 - b) brokenness
 - c) affliction
 - d) emptiness
 - e) losing
 - f) insufficiency
 - g) sacrifice
 - h) perseverance
 3. These are the values of the new Kingdom! These are how God operates in the world with men. If we avoid these values we turn our backs on God's ethics/His system of moral values.
 4. The results of *makarios*/μακαριοσ. (Macarios describes the state of person having already received something from God.) What does the mix of adjectives describing the "happy ones" tell us? It tells us:
 - a) God's kingdom arrives.
 - b) God's comfort reaches us.
 - c) God's order prevails.
 - d) God's righteousness is provided.
 - e) God's pardon is given.
 - f) God's hand is seen.

- g) God's peace reigns.
- h) God's instructions are followed.
- i) As we look at each one of these 8, in them we discover the last great paradox!

II. The Last Great Paradox

- A. The last great paradox is that the man delivering these sacred paradoxes is Himself the fulfillment of each of the given macarios! Jesus is the living sacred paradox! He is the arrival of the Kingdom! He is the One who comforts. He is the righteousness supplied. He is the pardon given. Jesus is Macarios!
1. Jesus is announcing a new world. It seems totally backwards from our perspective (paradox) but it is perfectly normal to the "happy ones."
 2. Jesus is the conduit of each of these values. God's supply flows through Him to us!
 - a) Desperate before God
 - b) mourning life's brokenness
 - c) Trusting in God's sovereign control
 - d) accepting the gift of righteousness
 - e) rejoicing in God's pardon
 - f) Looking for God's handiwork
 - g) Making peace on God's behalf
 - h) Standing for His grace.
- B. Say them again! The following are from Skip Moen, The Lucky Life. Let the beatitudes be spoken!
1. "Happy are the desperate for God; Jesus bring the kingdom of heaven. His arrival is the answer to the pleading of the destitute for God. He is the essence of the Kingdom! God's reign on earth and in heaven. *"I have come that they may have life."* John 10:10
 2. Happy are those in mourning; Jesus is the resurrection and the life. *"If any man die in me, yet shall he live."* His death ends the power of death. He brings what the grieving need—the assurance of life. Isn't that what we all want at the end of our days?
 3. Happy are those afflicted under God's grace; Jesus has come to "release the captives." The fellowship of suffering with Jesus is the weight of glory, the joy of the Lord's communion. His body is broken for you. His blood is spilled for you. He was oppressed and afflicted, a man of sorrows. *"My burden is light!"*
 4. Happy are those who are chronically deficient before God (who will never be good enough); Jesus brings right standing. Righteousness is satisfied. Hunger is fulfilled. Jesus is our Bread of Life!
 5. Happy are those who do not get what they deserve; Jesus provides what justice would have demanded and insures our pardon. *"If the Son shall set you free, you shall be free indeed."*
 6. Happy are the cleansed; Jesus is the One who does the cleansing. *"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "Your sins are forgiven!"*
 7. Happy are those who give up their peace for the sake of others; they are following their Master. *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you."*

8. Happy are those who are driven to grace no matter what stands in their way. Jesus has heard them. *"For this I came into the world."*
9. Out of all these paradoxes, Jesus is the greatest paradox!
- C. Jesus, this man, the paradox:
 1. Showed us what it means to live totally for God.
 2. He wept over the worlds brokenness and separation.
 3. He gave His life on the basis of 'thy will be done.'
 4. He was the means of our righteousness.
 5. He removed the penalty we deserved to grant us pardon.
 6. He made us see God in our fallen world.
 7. He ended the war with the Father.
 8. He delivered the message of grace.
- D. Jesus is the man in the middle! Between humanity and God. The One filling the gap!
 1. God hears our cry and sends His Son.
 2. God sees our grief and the Son brings comfort.
 3. God announces His control and the Son confirms it.
 4. God designates us righteous by His Son's obedience.
 5. God pardon us because His Son takes the blame.
 6. God shows us His love through the life of His Son.
 7. God announces peace with the sacrifice of His Son.
 8. God responds to our pursuit of Him by letting His Son be driven out for us.
 9. Therefore, REJOICE, JUMP FOR JOY, YOU INCREDIBLY HAPPY, FAVORED, LUCKY ONES!

III. Live Like This

- A. This sermon, of which we are looking only at the introduction, is bookended between 4:23 and 9:35 which basically says Jesus went preaching, teaching, and healing. You can't take any portion of the sermon on the mount by itself and understand it.
 1. The beatitudes must be seen by the Jesus who heals lepers, helps up prostitutes, and calms storms. His activity reflects the values of the Kingdom.
 2. The beatitudes are meant to cause us to long for the character of the Kingdom/the values of the Kingdom which Jesus not only demonstrated but he also taught.
- B. The first and last beatitudes are assurances: The Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.
 1. The six promises in between: comfort, earth ownership, satisfied righteousness, mercy, a vision of God, and the awesome title, son of God. You don't have to pick and choose among these promises. They all belong to the kingdom. Tucked in between the assurances of 1st and last beatitude.
 2. The first and 8th beatitude are in the present tense. The six in-between are future. "Another way to put it is that Jesus has brought the kingdom of heaven to earth in his own kingly power and fellowship, and we can enjoy foretastes of it here and now; but the full experience of the life of the kingdom will have to wait for the age to come." John Piper.

- C. This sermon does not say, “Live like this and you will be a Christian,” but rather, “Because you are a Christian, live like this. The beatitudes show how Christians are meant to live. Jesus does not sound like Moses or like Elijah as He speaks. He sounds rather friendly!
1. the Beatitudes are words of celebration for disciples – people who have been awakened by the present power of the age to come.
 2. And they are words of invitation for the crowds – the people who come to worship out of tradition or curiosity or skepticism.
 3. And for some, they are words of transformation – by the power and mercy of God.

Conclusion:

- What are these words to you?
 - Are you the believer who has already seen yourself as spiritually destitute and turning to God received the Kingdom.
 - Or are you the one hearing for the first time, seeing your need and hearing an invitation.
 - Or are you ready to be transformed by Jesus’ words this morning.