

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Today we have Micah and the Beatitudes.  
Two of my favorite scripture passages.  
Micah and the Beatitudes tell us how we are to live as Christians.  
They explore our vocation.  
If we want to be like Jesus, we are called to act like Jesus.  
And we are called to remember whose we are and  
that we are blessed.

This is Jesus' first teaching in Matthew.  
And, he starts by reminding those listening that they are blessed.  
He has just called his disciples and  
the first thing he tells them is you are blessed.  
Not, "you must change your ways".  
Not, "God is watching you. Shape up".  
No, he tells them who and what they are:  
God's beloved children and you are blessed.  
They are blessed without condition.  
They are freely blessed,  
freed to be a blessing to others.

And so are we.  
We are called to be a blessing to others,  
not to earn God's grace and mercy,  
but because we are blessed.  
We do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God  
*because we are blessed.*  
Always and already blessed.  
We begin blessed and move from a place of blessedness.  
Our blessedness goes with us.

Our blessedness comes with us as we seek out  
those Jesus talks about in the Beatitudes.  
Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn and the meek.  
Jesus' words are for those who are desperate.  
For those whose lives have fallen apart.

For those who are miserable.  
For those whose plan for their life fell apart.  
For those who know they've done wrong,  
even very wrong and know it,  
Blessed are you.

The people in these categories are there b/c they did wrong  
or someone wronged them, oppresses them,  
or because they've lost the love of their life.  
They have loved and lost.  
They have acted and sinned.  
They are under the thumb of someone or something.

If this is you right now, or you've been there,  
Jesus sees you.  
Jesus sits with you.  
Hear his words, "Blessed are you".  
Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn and the meek.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.  
Imagine such a desire, such a longing, an ache to imitate God  
that it feels like hunger and thirst.  
Imagine being so focused on God,  
so aware of our own limitations before God,  
but so active in our steps to share God's heart  
that this becomes our food and drink.

At the center of these nine beatitudes is mercy.  
Blessed are the merciful.  
Mercy is our posture toward others.  
The Christian life is one that shows mercy toward others  
because God has first shown mercy toward us.

Blessed are the pure in heart.  
This is where our focus remains on what's important.  
Not what yells the loudest.  
Not what distracts with flash.

The pure in heart focus on God,  
sees God where others can't,  
hears and feels God,  
sees through gospel-lensed glasses.

The last three beatitudes are about what happens to us when  
we follow the logic of Jesus' life and teaching.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

To be a peacemaker you need understand the first group of beatitudes –  
how sin and unfairness and oppression and  
suffering lead to conflicts.

But you also need to embody the second group of beatitudes,  
because peacemaking needs mercy,  
needs a healthy sense of perspective,  
and needs God.

How do you become a peacemaker?

How will you answer the question:

“How am I going to be a reconciling presence in the life of my neighbor today?”

And finally, Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake...

Blessed are you when people revile you and  
persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.”

In both of these final two beatitudes,

Jesus is talking about those who love God so much they don't care who knows,  
how much it costs,

how unpopular it makes them,

and how much it endangers their lives.

This is a faith that follows through the implications of

Christ's love to the very end

even in the face of hostility,

even in the face of hatred,

even in the face of danger.

Even in the face of death.<sup>1</sup>

These Beatitudes are our vocation.

We make a grave mistake if we separate Jesus's words from his actions.

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<sup>1</sup> Wells, Revd Dr Sam. 2011. Duke University Chapel. [Jan30DwellingintheComma - Google Docs](#)

Jesus pronounces blessings on the meek, the hungry,  
the impoverished, and the oppressed.  
But what does he do before and after this pronouncement?  
He empowers the meek,  
he feeds the hungry,  
he cares for the poor,  
and he demands justice for the oppressed.

Jesus spends every waking moment he has on earth alleviating suffering.<sup>2</sup>  
This is our call.  
This is our vocation.

In the annual report, you saw how Covenant, how we  
lived our Christian life like Jesus in 2025.  
Centered by blessing, we have reached out to the hungry,  
the hurting, the young and the old,  
the curious and gregarious,  
the tuneful and tone-deaf,  
the immigrant and refugee.

We're hoping that we can be merciful to people with  
cognitive issues starting later this year.  
We hope to sponsor a Ukrainian family to be able to stay in the US permanently.  
We will need to be pure of heart – focused on the important things  
and show mercy, love kindness and walk humbly with God.

Finally, Jesus spoke to what he saw in front of him.  
These beatitudes are as relevant for us today.  
And, they take work, energy, focus, time, and heart.  
I think if Jesus were blessing today,  
he might add a blessing or two.  
Blessed are the exhausted, for you will receive rest.  
Blessed are the weary, for you will be strengthened.  
Blessed are the fearful, for you shall be steadied.  
Blessed are the despairing, for you shall receive hope.

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas, Debie. [Journey with Jesus - The Blessing and the Bite](#)

Remember dear ones, we are called to work,  
but we are also called to be nourished by the Word and by each other,  
this is part of what it means to walk humbly:  
to step away when you need to,  
be willing to dwell with God,  
and listen to God to receive nourishment for the work ahead.  
God calls and empowers us for the work that is before us.  
Thanks be to God. Amen.