

# The Beatitudes

Beatitudes – The eight ways we can behave to live a blessed life. Jesus teaches us that if we live according to the Beatitudes, we will live a happy Christian life.

1. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Those who are poor in spirit are aware of their spiritual poverty, they acknowledge their need and utter dependence upon God. The reward mentioned here is nothing less than the kingdom of heaven.

This beatitude is not about “literally poor people.” It’s about the poor in spirit. Being poor in spirit is not figurative; Jesus is speaking literally. We need to be poor in spirit. We need to actually, and in reality, admit that even with the gifts of the Holy Spirit within us from Baptism we still need to constantly seek more and more grace from God.

2. “Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

Those who mourn feel sorrow and sadness. Sometimes we personally feel that sorrow and sadness ourselves when we experience a loss of any kind. We also need to be aware of, and feel the sorrow and sadness of others. Jesus promises comfort for those who suffer. When we suffer we have a choice to make: we can become bitter, or we can become more compassionate to others in pain. When we feel the sadness of others, we can bring God’s comfort to them.

3. “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.”

The meek are people who are humble and patient. A person who chooses other ways to resolve conflicts without resorting to violence is meek. A humble person knows their true strengths and uses them to make things better for everyone around them. They are also aware of their limitations and trust that God will provide for them. They are not in competition with others for wealth or power. God will reward their efforts and give them all that they need, including opportunities to rule this world with His justice. God entrusts our world to the meek.

4. “Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.”

This blessing is for people who hunger for justice in our world. Children have a great capacity to see wrongs and often possess a simple view of complex issues. Perhaps our kids can use their creativity to solve some of the local injustices in schools and communities.

# The Beatitudes

5. "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."

Mercy is a word that holds many meanings: forgiveness, kindness, compassion. It is easier to extend mercy to others when you begin with yourself. In our family, rather than keeping track of mistakes, we try to see God's grace among us. With mercy, you receive back the more you give.

6. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God."

Who better to be clean or pure of heart than little ones? They lack malice and have such innocence, at least during the first few years. Of course, they see God, because there is nothing clouding their vision! The clean of heart can also be people who single-mindedly see God first in all situations and people.

7. "Blessed are the peacemakers, they will be called children of God."

What risks do we take to make peace? Jesus asks us all to be peacemakers; we are, after all, children of God. As his children, we must continue to work for unity and understanding. Our families are microcosms of the world in which we learn peacemaking skills. Peace begins at home.

8. "Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

It can be difficult to do what is right, such as standing up to someone who is acting like a bully. But we learn from Jesus, and, through practice in our family, we see that doing the right thing is what it really means to be a follower of Jesus.