



Message: *Hidden Blessings* February 1, 2026 | Speaker: **Pastor Eddie Eddy**

Matthew 5:1-12 New International Version (NIV)

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

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

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

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

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Leader: *This is the word of God for the people of God*

People: Thanks be to God

Hidden Blessings

This is probably one of the most familiar passages in the bible. That being said...have any of you ever struggled with this passage and its intention? I think we may all struggle with the Sermon on the Mount. Think about it...on the surface it goes against our normal thinking. What are we supposed to do with this call to control our deepest thoughts...our rawest emotions...and our seemingly uncontrollable urges?

Maybe one way we could start to comprehend these words...would be to understand that this call from Jesus invites us to allow God to change us from the inside out. That change starts at the very core of our being.

Doesn't it make you wonder...what is Jesus thinking...and how does he think we are really going to act when he tells us to turn the other cheek. That takes every bit of our effort. I for one...wasn't raised that way. I was raised to stick up for myself and for those I love. And to hear Jesus' call to love our enemies...well...that tends to go against our every impulse.

But...thanks be to God and the blessing of sanctifying grace that I have received through the movement of the Holy Spirit...I'm not who I was...completely. I just admitted a week ago that I still have my issues with traffic situations. I'm better than I was and I'm continuing on that path.

So...I have found that I am thankful for the Beatitudes because Jesus starts this great sermon on the mount off by giving us the words of grace and blessing on the front end. Wave after wave of hidden blessings just flow over us as Jesus proclaims them one by one.

I call them hidden blessing because each one seems to be counterintuitive. They leave us with questions, and we have to try to think in an abstract fashion of what we would consider cultural common sense.

I have been in plenty of teaching seminars with a keynote speaker who is sharing concepts that lead us to question our own thought processes. For me...those are usually the best trainings too. I think that this sermon from Jesus...is one of those trainings.

So, let me help you wrestle with this sermon on the mount.

If Jesus were here leading a seminar with this content today...what do you think might be the questions asked of him...especially in today's world? Would there be only questions...or...would there be those who would want to offer a protest about these blessings. I believe that one of our biggest challenges in today's culture is...that people are more willing to protest than they are to gather information and engage in some productive dialogue.

So let me ask you...what kind of protest would Jesus face today if he tried to explain to people that these ancient words of his...are his way of saying that we are truly Blessed?

Maybe we can imagine how some of these protests might sound.

Short Pause:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit."

But, Jesus, how can you say the poor in spirit should feel blessed? The poor in spirit have experienced the pain of life leaching into their hearts...contaminating their minds...poisoning their spirits. Life has worn them down. You can see in their eyes that life has squeezed the fight out of them. Poverty, oppression, fear...all of these things lead to hopelessness...and hopelessness can drain a person's energy and cloud their outlook on life. Those are the poor in spirit. How can we even think of calling them ... blessed?

Yet...Jesus pronounces, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

PAUSE

"Blessed are those who mourn."

What do you mean, Jesus? Grief hurts...it cuts people right to the bone. When we grieve, our emotions are like a tornado inside of us. Anger, hurt, sadness and loneliness...all of these emotions crash in on us and smother us. Grief seems like it lingers forever. Every time we think we see a chink in grief's armor...a birthday reminds us...a holiday brings back the sounds and smells of our favorite memories.

Other people, even those close to us, hurt us without knowing it. In our hearts we know they mean well when they say, "you'll get over it" or that the death was "God's blessing." Or that "time heals all wounds." But we wonder...does it...does it heal us?

Because even after dealing with the pain, we have to deal with the loneliness. And just because the intensity of the grief begins to fade, we still miss the person...the relationship...the pet...the job...the church...the whatever it is we've lost...we miss it for the rest of our life, and with every special event...it's like a re-opening the wound. Jesus...We don't feel blessed when we mourn. How can we even think of calling them ... blessed?

Yet Jesus pronounces, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

PAUSE

“Blessed are the meek.” Don’t you just want to say...In the first place, Jesus, **meekness** will get you nowhere. **Success** is the blessing. Success takes a certain aggressiveness. It takes discipline and dedication. Come on Jesus... you don’t call your followers to failure. And besides, even if we think about meekness apart from the drive to be successful...what about people who really suffer because of meekness?

What about those who feel powerless...people caught in abusive relationships who need real strength and self-confidence to break free from someone else’s control? To them, meekness might sound like a trap. It can feel less like a blessing and more like a sentence, something that keeps them stuck. In fact, urging meekness in these situations might even weaken the motivation they need to step out, reclaim their dignity, and begin a new life. It can unintentionally reinforce the lie that their suffering is somehow what they deserve. So how could we ever look at people in such pain and call *them*...the meek...blessed?

And yet, despite all these concerns, Jesus still proclaims, “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.”

PAUSE

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.” Jesus, how can we not hunger and thirst for righteousness? We yearn for right relationships between people. We see every day the feuds within our own families...we are looking WWII right in the eye...Jesus...we ache in our souls for people to come together. It stinks that we fear for our lives every time we watch the news. It’s not right that we find our country divided in so many ways. It’s not right that we can’t always find a way to get along with each other as the church...whether it be our church or the church you established.

We want healthy relationships between people, but we also want people to know you. We want those who feel alienated to find their place with you. The truth is Jesus... sometimes we don’t even feel comfortable inside our own skins. In our minds...we hunger for things to be at peace.

But our hearts are hard. We dread looking too deep into ourselves. We feel a sense of anxiety...because...we just don’t know how to fix things. We don’t know how to bring people together. Jesus...how can we even think of calling the hungry... blessed?

Yet, even thru our hunger pangs... Jesus pronounces, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.”

PAUSE

“Blessed are the merciful.” Well, maybe sometimes, Jesus. It’s true that sometimes when we offer mercy, we see real healing. Sometimes...we can repair friendships and families. Sometimes...we can end long resentments. Sometimes...we can overcome the past.

But other times Jesus...we find our mercy thrown back in our faces. People refuse to admit their errors. They blame us instead of accepting our forgiveness. We forgive and the person doesn’t change...and we end up right back where we started. Forgiveness and mercy can heal, but not always Jesus. Forgiveness releases our anger, but we can still feel like the victim. So...how can we even think of calling the merciful...Blessed?

Yet, Jesus pronounces, “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.”

PAUSE

“Blessed are the pure in heart.” Jesus, we like to think our hearts are pure. We consider ourselves the good guys. We think our love for you is pure and fulfilled, and that we do our best to reach out in love to others. When in reality, we crash and burn more often than not just trying to control our thoughts and our temptations.

We find maintaining any kind of purity a real struggle. Fighting the urge to give in does not feel blessed; it feels frustrating. Even when we win, the temptation just shows up again the next day. Envy, bitterness, greed and lust...they never never go away. Purity of heart... sounds good...but we have yet to get there.

SHOTR PAUSE

“Blessed are the peacemakers.” Hey, Jesus, don’t get us wrong. We are all in favor of peace...But we all have learned...we just can’t trust the other guy. We have to be prepared to defend ourselves. We live in a dangerous world. How can we make peace with people trying to blow us up...steal our stuff...lock us down...talk bad about us? How can we make peace with drug dealers...gang bangers...crooked politicians...people trying to change the way we interpret your scripture. Can you believe that Jesus...you call us to make peace with people who think they know more than I do...I mean we do??? Peace sounds great...but in all honesty...I’m going to protect myself first.

SHORT PAUSE

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.” Jesus, I thought the decision to follow you was supposed to make life easier. Who the heck signs up for persecution? Yet we hear about the Christians being killed and tortured every day. We watch the TV and see how our love for you...as feeble as it is sometimes...is mocked and ridiculed. We perceived that our freedom to worship you is being taken away and we are feeling helpless.

How can we even think of calling these people...Blessed???

And yet...through the chaos we call life...Jesus still pronounces, “Blessed are those who are pure in heart...who are peacemakers...persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for they will see God... they will be called the children of God...and that theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Can you agree with me that at times we all hear these voices in our heads as we meditate on the lines of the Beatitudes? The protests we raise...point directly to the nature of Jesus’ blessings. **Jesus’ blessings are for those who don’t feel blessed.**

He’s promising a blessing for those whose spirits have felt crushed by life. He wants them to know that the circumstances they are experiencing...are in a weird way...the blessing he is offering.

You see...Those who grieve will experience reunion and joy. Those who could not fight back will experience victory. Those who long for right relationships in the world will experience fulfillment. Those who have offered mercy, even when it was rejected, will receive mercy. Those who have tried hardest to allow God to work in them... will find that even their unsuccessful act of **Just trying** to stay pure in heart...they will be rewarded.

Those who have tried to make peace in the midst of the violence...and hatred...and war...those who have diligently attempted to bring reconciliation, will find that God has graciously used their ministry. And those who have endured persecution while fighting against the darkness of the world...will experience the comfort of God, A God who endured their pain with them. That is so often...**the Hidden blessing.**

Jesus' blessings come to us as promises. They express what will happen in the kingdom of heaven. Yet they also teach us about God's work among us here and now. God redeems our efforts, empowers our forgiveness and draws out the purity that he created and placed within us. Friends...we are all well aware that this thing called life...is not easy...but God notices every step we take...that reflects the values of the kingdom of heaven. So the reality is...when we see God working in and through us in times when we feel overwhelmed...it is then...that we are experiencing the Hidden Blessings that change the world.

To God be the Glory: Amen.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious and faithful God, we give you thanks for the words of Jesus that both comfort and challenge us. We thank you for blessings that do not always look like blessings at first: for the quiet, faithful work you do in broken spirits, grieving hearts, and in lives that feel stretched thin by the weight of the world.

Loving God, we now offer back to you these gifts...the tithes and offerings given this day. Receive them not as a measure of our worth, but as an act of trust and gratitude. Bless these gifts, and bless the hearts from which they are given.

Use them to bring comfort to those who mourn, hope to those who feel forgotten, peace to those caught in conflict, and good news to all who hunger for your righteousness.

Shape us, O God, from the inside out. Continue your sanctifying work within us, so that our lives, our resources, and our witness reflect the values of your kingdom. Help us recognize your hidden blessings at work in us and through us, even when the road is difficult and the outcome is unclear.

We pray all of this in the name of Jesus Christ, the One who calls us blessed.
Amen.

Benediction

Go now in the blessing of Christ to live the hidden blessings of the kingdom, and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always.

Go now into this world in peace,

Amen.

Next Steps:

- I will read Matthew 5:1-12 this week
- I will reflect on God's hidden blessings this week
- I will try to stay pure in heart