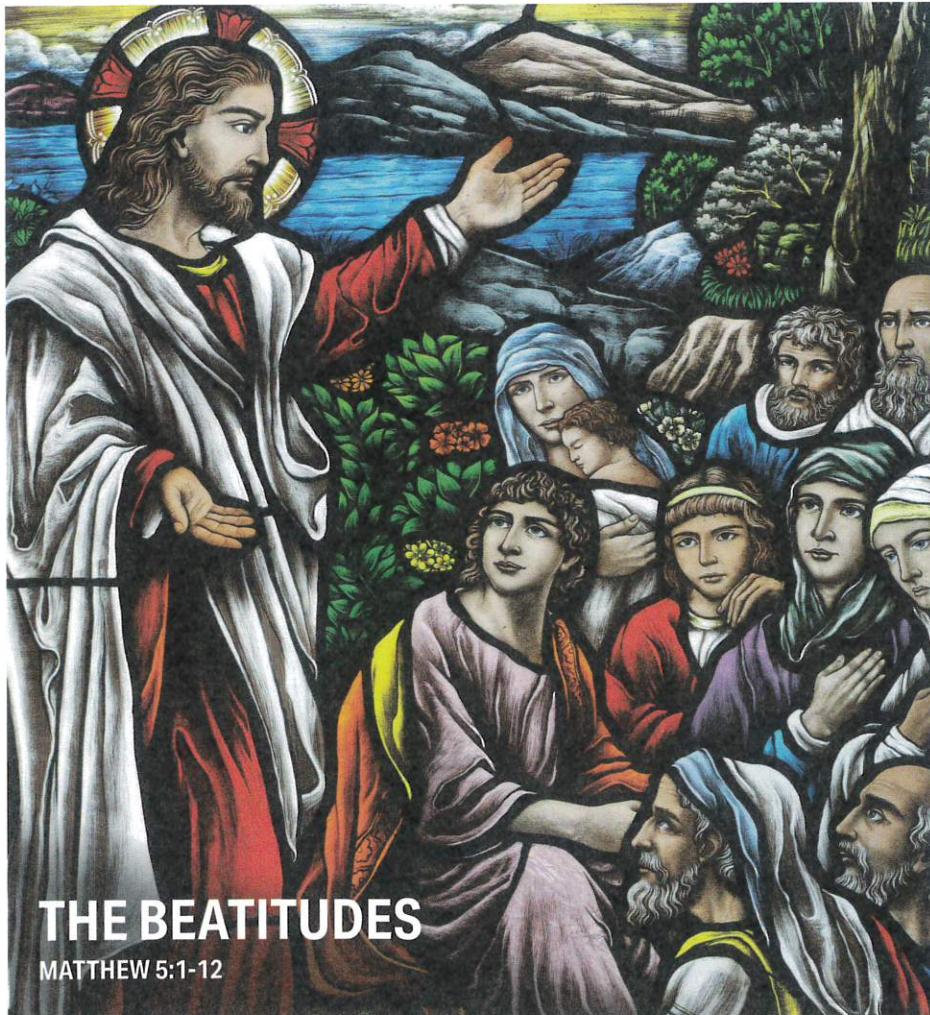


# Sunday Message

## THE WORD

Year A • 1 February 2026 • Psalter Week 4



### THE BEATITUDES

MATTHEW 5:1-12

In this passage, Jesus goes up a mountain and begins to teach the crowds. What He says is surprising – even revolutionary. He doesn't praise the strong or the successful. Instead, He calls the poor in spirit, the gentle, the grieving, the merciful, the peacemakers, and even the persecuted, "blessed".

The world often tells us that blessing means wealth, comfort, or popularity. But Jesus turns that upside down. He shows us that God's blessing is found in humility, compassion, and a heart open to others – even in suffering.

To be "poor in spirit" means knowing our need for God. To be "meek" is not weakness, but strength that is kind. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are people who long to see justice and goodness in the world.

Jesus isn't offering a list of rules – He's painting a picture of the kind of people who live close to God. And more than that, He is describing Himself. The Beatitudes show us the heart of Christ.

When we try to live them – even imperfectly – we reflect His light in the world. The road may be hard, but Jesus promises: "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven." ■

#### DO

Choose one Beatitude to focus on today – for example, being merciful or making peace – and find one simple way to live it out in your words or actions.

#### LEARN

True blessing isn't about wealth or success – it's about having a heart like Christ's: humble, merciful, peaceful, and open to God, even in difficulty.

#### REFLECT

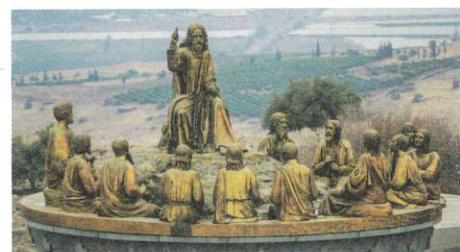
**W**hen Jesus sits down on the mountainside and begins to teach, He doesn't give us a set of commands – He gives us a vision of a blessed life. But it's not the kind of life the world usually admires.

He says the poor in spirit are blessed – not the proud. The gentle, not the powerful. The grieving, not the cheerful. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, not those who settle for comfort. The merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and even those who are insulted or persecuted for doing the right thing – Jesus calls all of them "blessed."

Why? Because the Beatitudes show us the heart of God. They show us the kind of life that brings us closest to Jesus. This is not about pretending we have it all together. It's about being honest in our need for God and choosing love, mercy, and justice – even when it's hard.

Jesus doesn't just speak these blessings – He lives them. He mourns, He makes peace, He is meek, and He suffers for righteousness. He invites us to follow Him along this same path.

The world may not always notice or reward that kind of life – but Jesus does. And He calls it blessed. ■



#### SAY

Father God,  
Thank you for the example of Jesus,  
who blesses the poor in spirit and the  
peacemakers.  
Help me to open my heart to your  
grace,  
to show mercy to others,  
and to stand strong in faith even in  
difficult times.  
Amen.

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*Save us, O Lord our God!  
And gather us from the nations,  
to give thanks to your holy name,  
and make it our glory to praise you.*

**COLLECT**

Grant us, Lord our God,  
that we may honour you with all our mind,  
and love everyone in truth of heart.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

**FIRST READING** Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13

A reading from the Prophet Zephaniah.

Seek the Lord, all you humble of the land,  
who do his just commands;  
seek righteousness; seek humility;  
perhaps you may be hidden  
on the day of the anger of the Lord.  
I will leave in your midst  
a people humble and lowly.  
They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord,  
those who are left in Israel;  
they shall do no injustice and speak no lies,  
nor shall there be found in their mouth a deceitful tongue.  
For they shall graze and lie down,  
and none shall make them afraid.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 146(145):6c-7. 8-9a. 9b-10  
R. Matthew 5:3

**R:** *Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Or **Alleluia.**

1. It is the Lord who preserves fidelity for ever,  
who does justice to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord who sets prisoners free. **R.**

2. The Lord who opens the eyes of the blind,  
the Lord who raises up those who are bowed down.  
It is the Lord who loves the just,  
the Lord who protects the stranger. **R.**

3. The Lord upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
your God, O Sion, from age to age. **R.**

**SECOND READING** 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

A reading from the First Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

Consider your calling, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the

world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; so that, as it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL** Matthew 5:12a

**R:** *Alleluia, Alleluia.*

Rejoice and be glad,  
for your reward is great in heaven.

**R:** *Alleluia.*

**GOSPEL** Matthew 5:1-12a

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

At that time: Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And 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 satisfied.'

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive 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. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

O Lord, we bring to your altar  
these offerings of our service:  
be pleased to receive them, we pray,  
and transform them  
into the Sacrament of our redemption.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*Let your face shine on your servant.*

*Save me in your merciful love.*

*O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.*

Or

*Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

*Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by these redeeming gifts,  
we pray, O Lord,  
that through this help to eternal salvation  
true faith may ever increase.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**