

The Beatitudes and the Fulfilled Law

Matthew 5

What We Found

- The road we have been tracking (Egypt, water, wilderness) arrived at a mountain. Like Moses at Sinai, Jesus ascends and God's teaching is given, but Jesus gives it as his own: the Lawgiver has come in person.
- The Beatitudes are a portrait before they are a program, and the face in the portrait is Christ's. They answer the human hunger for happiness, and their first and last lines promise the kingdom now.
- Jesus came not to abolish the Law but to fulfil it, and "but I say to you" moves every command from the hand to the heart.
- The righteousness of 5:20 is impossible on our own strength, and the Church agrees. The New Law is the grace of the Holy Spirit, which does not merely cover us but truly transforms us, so the Sermon can actually be lived: gift before it is task.
- Salt and light are for others: Jesus wants our good works visible so that glory passes through us to the Father.

Voices of the Church

Voices of the Church: St. Augustine (Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount)

This sermon is the perfect measure of the Christian life, and the Beatitudes are an ordered ascent: from poverty of spirit the soul climbs step by step to the vision of God. It is the pattern for every disciple, not advice for the few.

Voices of the Church: St. Gregory of Nyssa (Homilies on the Beatitudes)

The Beatitudes are a mountain the Word himself leads us up, each blessing a higher step. The climb is possible because the One who commands the ascent climbs with us; the summit is seeing God, for which the heart must be made pure.

Voices of the Church: St. John Chrysostom (Homilies on Matthew)

Christ entrusted the flavor and brightness of the world to his disciples. Our good works are meant to be seen precisely so that praise passes through us and lands on the Father.

Live It This Week

- Pray one Beatitude each morning, slowly, asking Christ to make his portrait true in you.

- Take the antithesis that names your battlefield to confession or to honest prayer, asking not for willpower first but for grace.
- Do one good work someone could see, and when it is noticed, deflect the glory upward.

Scripture Memory

Matthew 5:16 (RSV2CE): *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*

Before Next Session

Read Matthew 6–7, the rest of the Sermon on the Mount.

Catechism References

CCC 1716–1719 · CCC 577–578 · CCC 1965–1968