

## Attitudes Of The Citizen Matthew 4:23-25

### Gospel Of The Kingdom

Good news

John proclaimed "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" to prepare the way for our Lord  
Jesus came with a similar message of repentance

A call for the Jews to return to God

During his second year, at the height of popularity, we have record of a sermon emphasizing the  
kind of character and way of life that is required of those who are citizens of Heaven

Had an overview lesson a few years ago

Will take several lessons to cover this one sermon

Two lessons in mind for what we commonly call "The Beatitudes"

### Two Questions Answered

Who are these citizens? What do these citizens gain?

The blessedness is tied to the character, thus "be-attitudes"

Must begin with characteristic attitudes of those who would be blessed as citizens of the kingdom

These attitudes are not according to normal nature of man

They are at odds with the "be the best you can be" focus of most of the human race, especially in  
the developed world

All spiritual qualities and will draw us away from worldly pursuits and near to God - **James 4:8**

They make us different than the world around us

These qualities are inter-related like the qualities Peter relates **2Peter 1:5-11**

Almost impossible for them to exist alone as one 'feeds' the other.

### Three Areas Of Concern

Govern entirety of our walk as they focus on our three main relationships

#### Self

"Poor in spirit"

Humble opinion of self; understand I am sinner, and have no righteousness of my own; to be  
willing to be saved by the grace and mercy of God (Barnes)

Convicted of one's spiritual poverty - **Luke 18:13; Isaiah 57:15**

The sinful emptiness of an absolute spiritual bankruptcy in which a person is compelled to plead  
for that which he is powerless to obtain and to which he has no right, but without which he  
cannot live. (Paul Earnhart - Invitation To A Spiritual Revolution)

Opposite of "poor in spirit" would be "proud of heart," - **Luke 18:11-14; Revelation 3:17**

"Mourn"

over spiritual poverty, (sinfulness) - **Psalms 51:3-4**

Note relationship between first two characteristics

Unless one is first "poor in spirit" will not "mourn" over their spiritual poverty

This is a grief that we choose to engage - **Isaiah 66:1-2**

Only those who "sigh and groan" over their sins will find comfort - **Ezekiel 9:4**

Such sorrow brings true repentance and change - **2Corinthians 7:10**

"Meek"

gentle, easy to be entreated - rather suffer injury than inflict it. Not from weakness, but humility,  
realizing one's own poverty of spirit, own sinfulness

Moses - zealous for God, yet willing to suffer in place of others - **Exodus 32:19-20,30-34**

Very humble when personally attacked - **Numbers 12:1-3**

Hating every false way - **Galatians 1:8-9**

This meekness also applied to a tamed animal taking burdens of others - **Galatians 6:2**

## God

"Hunger and thirst for righteousness"

Look for righteousness which will meet their spiritual poverty and their mourning over the same  
It is not so much the "hunger" as the seeking to fill the soul with what is needed.

A desperate need to satisfy that life destroying emptiness in our mind when we come to grips  
with our sin and the lonely worthlessness of life without God - **Ecclesiastes 5:10–11**

Not half-hearted search, exemplified by: David and Paul - **Psalms 42:1–2; 19:12–14; Philippians 3:7–15**

"Pure in heart"

(Yes, I skipped one. We will look at it in a moment)

"Singleness of heart, the honesty which has no hidden motive, no selfish interest, and is true and  
open in all things." (Lenski)

Refers to one who is sincere, honest, without hypocrisy

A quality necessary to see God - **Psalms 24:3–4**

The citizen of heaven cannot be "double-minded" - **James 1:6–8**

## Others

"Merciful"

Loving toward those in misery "Good Samaritan" **Luke 10:30-37; 23:34; Acts 7:60**

Possessing a forgiving spirit toward those who sin against them (Hendricksen)

Jesus stressed this characteristic on several occasions - **Matthew 6:14–15; 18:21–35**

A virtue that comes from our own experience with what God has done - **Romans 5:8**

"Peacemakers"

Devote lives to making peace following Prince of Peace - **Romans 5:1; 12:18–21; Colossians 3:12–15**

"At peace with God and thus themselves filled with sweet peace, they live in peace, if possible,  
with all men and work to keep and to make peace where peace is threatened or lost. Theirs is  
the work of true Christians who follow in the footsteps of the Prince of Peace." (Lenski)

"Persecuted for righteousness' sake"

"The tense and voice of the verb (passive perfect) may be regarded as permissive: "Who have  
allowed themselves to be persecuted, or have endured persecution" "The idea is that they did  
not flee from it but willingly submitted to when it came to them." (Lenski)

Verse 11 explains how - Reviled or reproached; Persecuted; Slandered falsely - All for Jesus' sake

Such persecution often afflicts citizens of kingdom - **Acts 14:21–22; Philippians 1:29–30; 2Timothy 3:12**

## Citizens Of The Kingdom Of God

Before I can gain the blessings that belong to God's family, I must recognize my own weakness and  
inability to gain those blessings on my own

I must be poor in spirit (realizing my sinfulness)

I must mourn (for my sins)

I must be meek (gentle and lowly in heart)

I must have a hunger and thirst for righteousness (which I desperately need)

I must be pure in heart (single-minded focus on God)

I must be merciful (know I need mercy)

I must be a peacemaker (helping others find the peace I have with God)

I will be persecuted for the kingdom of heaven (misunderstood by the proud and arrogant who  
are still in their sins)

These all work together to make me a proper representative of God's Kingdom

Is it worth it?

We will look at the "Blessings of Citizenship" in few weeks.

Are you ready to enter the Kingdom? - **Acts 22:16**

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