

JESUS ON LIFE IN HIS KINGDOM (MATTHEW 5:1-12)

Video One

Matthew tells us that Jesus' teaching took place on a mountainside. Why are we given this detail?

In the Bible, God often reveals himself on mountains. Perhaps most famously, it was on Mount Sinai that God gave the law to Moses, giving his people a pattern for how they were to live.

But mountains are also linked with revolution. At the time, if you were a revolutionary, or you wanted to bring in a new kingdom, you'd be a hunted person. So you'd hide out in the mountains.

So, as Jesus heads to the mountains. He's giving us a dramatic hint. He's bringing about a revolutionary new kingdom. A pattern for how his people are to live.

But what will it be like to live in this kingdom?

Jesus describes the people within his kingdom as 'blessed'. Lucky. Envious.

And he describes these people in two surprising ways.

Firstly, you can count yourself blessed if **you know that you're helpless to change your situation.**

Jesus says this in three ways. He opens:

Blessed are the poor in spirit.

In the Bible, when the phrase 'in spirit' is used, it often means 'from your very core.' If you're proud in spirit, it means you're deeply arrogant. To be crushed in spirit means that you're absolutely broken-hearted.

So what does it mean to be *poor* in spirit?

It means to feel poor to your very core. You totally lack resources to help yourself.

Jesus is probably referring to people who were materially impoverished. But his words suggest that he's referring to poverty in a broader sense too.

It's hinted at in where Jesus turns next. **Those who mourn** are also blessed. And so are **the meek.**

It's clear mourning people are helpless to bring back what they've lost. But the meek?

'Meek' isn't a word we commonly use. What does it mean to be meek?

Jesus is quoting Psalm 37. Psalm 37 is about how seemingly unfair it is when good things happen to bad people – and vice versa. But the psalm encourages God’s people to be patient and put it all in perspective. He says, remember: the meek shall inherit the earth.

To be meek then, is not about being a doormat. But about patiently accepting hard things now, because you know they’re part of a bigger picture. Meek people know that they are helpless, but they are able to patiently and resiliently commit themselves to God. Even when times are tough.

So let’s put this all together. Who are the blessed people of Jesus’ kingdom? It sounds strange, revolutionary, even. But it’s those who are helpless.

Why?

Because, when *Jesus’* kingdom is fully realised it will be radically different.

Those who mourn will be comforted. Meek people will find their hope well placed. Those who are helpless will find all the help they need.