

# THE BEATITUDES

*“As Moses had covenanted with God by virtue of the law received on Mount Sinai, so Jesus, from a hill on the shore of the Lake of Galilee, gives to his disciples and to the crowd a new lesson which begins with the Beatitudes. ...*

*The Beatitudes are the path that God indicates as the answer to man’s innate desire for happiness, and they perfect the Commandments of the Old Covenant. We are accustomed to learning the Ten Commandments ... but we are not used to repeating the Beatitudes. Let us try however, to remember them and to impress them upon our heart. ...*

*The Beatitudes are the portrait of Jesus, his way of life; and they are the path to true happiness, which we too can travel with the grace that Jesus gives us.”*

*-- Pope Francis, General Audience – 8/6/2014*

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- 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 obtain 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 men 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.

Beatitudes – Mt 5:3-12 (Lk 6:21-24 has 4 beatitudes and 4 woes)

## **10 Commandments**

Opening to OT’s 613 commandments  
Mountaintop delivery  
God to Moses; Moses to people  
All but 2 are negatives: “You shall not ...”  
Covenant promises: Land and People

## **8 Beatitudes**

Opening to Jesus’ teachings  
Mountainside delivery  
Jesus to disciples & crowd  
Positive motivators: “Blessed are ...”  
Promise of God’s Kingdom

Both provide guidelines for living and growing closer to God

8<sup>th</sup> Day = Resurrection // 8 Beatitudes = pathways to the promised resurrection

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[Adapted from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #s 1716-1724]

The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching. They take up the promises God made from the time of Abraham, fulfilling them through the possession of not merely the earthly "Promised Land," but of the Kingdom of heaven itself. [1716]

The Beatitudes:

- show us Jesus Christ and portray his charity
- express the Christian's vocation associated with the glory of Christ's Passion and Resurrection
- shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life
- are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations
- proclaim the blessings and rewards already secured for Christ's disciples [1717]

The Beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness. This desire is of divine origin: God has placed it in us to draw us to the One who alone can fulfill it. [1718]

The Beatitudes reveal the goal of human existence, the ultimate end of human acts – God calls us to his own beatitude. This vocation is addressed to each individual personally, but also to the Church as a whole, the new people made up of those who have accepted the promise and live from it in faith. [1719]

The New Testament uses several expressions to characterize the beatitude to which God calls man, including:

- the coming of the Kingdom of God
- the vision of God
- entering into the joy of the Lord
- entering into God's rest [1720]

God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to paradise. Beatitude makes us "partakers of the divine nature" and of eternal life. With beatitude, we enter into the glory of Christ and into the joy of the Trinitarian life. [1721]

Such beatitude surpasses human understanding and power. It is God's entirely free gift and so it is called supernatural, as is the grace that leads us to the divine joy. [1722]

The beatitude we are promised confronts us with decisive moral choices. It invites us to purify our hearts of bad instincts and to seek the love of God above all else. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, or in any human achievement (however beneficial it may be), or indeed in any creature, but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love. [1723]

The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostolic teachings describe for us the paths that lead to the Kingdom of heaven. Sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we walk them, step by step, by everyday acts. By the working of the Word of Christ, we slowly bear fruit in the Church to the glory of God. [1724]