

SOTM - The Fruit of the Kingdom (Mt 5:7-12)

The Joy Of the Lord Is Your Strength!

Hardly anything beats a "radiant face"

INTRO:

1. Good morning friends!
 2. VISION/MISSION/FIRST TIME
 3. BAPTISM SUNDAY - MAY 31st.....
-
1. In just a few (Lord Willing) short weeks, we're going to begin building our PERMANENT CHURCH BUILDING. (PICTURE)
 2. And one of the things I've learned talking with builders and walking through this process is that some of the most important work in construction is the work nobody ever sees.
 - a. Before there are walls...
 - b. before there's a lobby...
 - c. before there's a room for us to worship in,
 - d. *there's the foundation.*
 3. And honestly, the foundation phase is not the exciting part.
 - a. It's dirt work.
 - b. Concrete.
 - c. Measurements.
 - d. Rebar.
 - e. *Things buried beneath the surface.*
 4. Nobody drives by a construction site and says, "Wow, look at how well they laid out the plumbing pipes."
 5. But every builder knows this: *what's below the surface determines whether what's above the surface can stand.*
 6. *BUT, it's what's under the ground that allows the structure to stand strong!*
 7. And that's exactly what Jesus is doing in the Beatitudes.
 8. Last week we looked at the foundation of the Kingdom life —
 - a. I am spiritually bankrupt. (poor in spirit)
 - b. So I grieve my sin. (blessed are those who mourn)
 - c. And that produces humility instead of self-protection. (Meekness - under authority)
 - d. Which awakens a deeper hunger for God Himself. (hunger and thirst for more of Christ)
 - 9. Those Beatitudes describe what God does in us before He ever does something through us.**
 10. GUYS - THIS IS SO IMPORTANT *Because Jesus does not START with outward performance.*
 11. *He starts with inward transformation.*
 12. Before God ever does anything THROUGH you, He'll first do something IN you...
 13. That's an important distinction...
 14. And now, beginning in verse 7, *Jesus moves from the foundation to the visible structure.*

15. Because of the first 4 things Jesus says - now it changes how we LIVE...
 - a. It changes how you treat people.
 - b. How you respond when wronged.
 - c. How you handle conflict.
 - d. How you move through a broken world.
16. So let's jump in on how Jesus describes the FRUIT of living in the KINGDOM.
17. Look at verse 7.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy" (v.7)

1. Jesus is QUICK to say that we are TO BE MERCIFUL people.
2. Let me debunk a common thought - *Mercy is is not simply feeling bad for someone.*
3. *Mercy is an action.*
4. **Mercy moves toward people.**
5. Jesus says, "Blessed are the merciful."
 - a. Not the merely emotional.
 - b. Not the merely compassionate in theory.
 - c. Merciful people act.
6. The Good Samaritan is a great example of mercy.
7. Because - he did more than *feel sorry for the injured man* - he stopped to help him.
8. While others ignored the man, the Samaritan treated his wounds and made sure he was safe.
9. He gave his own time, money, and effort to care for someone in need.
10. This shows that mercy is taking action to help others with kindness and compassion.
11. He doesn't just notice suffering — he enters it.
12. **And mercy is different from justice.**
13. **Justice gives people what they deserve.**
- 14. Mercy gives kindness where judgment could have stood.**
- 15.
16. But here's the important part: Jesus is not saying we earn God's mercy by being merciful.
17. That is not the gospel at all...
18. **Jesus is saying that when mercy has truly reached you, *mercy begins flowing through you.***
- 19.
20. GUYS - The reason Christians can forgive, move toward people, and show compassion *is not because we're naturally nicer than everybody else.*
21. **It's because we know what it feels like to be spiritually bankrupt people who were met by the mercy of God.**
- 22.
- 23. Mercy flows from those who've received mercy.**
24. *You cannot give what you haven't received.*
- 25. One of your greatest enemies is SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS.**
26. **Self-righteousness is an enemy of mercy because**
27. ***it convinces people they are spiritually superior instead of spiritually needy.***

28. When someone forgets that they were "spiritually bankrupt" and rescued by the mercy of God, they become more critical, harsh, and unwilling to forgive others.
29. Mercy flows from remembering what it felt like to receive undeserved grace firsthand.
30. People who truly know they've been rescued do not look down on others.
31. People who know they've been rescued tend to dispense mercy.
 1. So who is hard for you to show mercy to right now?
 - a. The spouse repeating the same pattern?
 - b. The parent who failed you?
 - c. The coworker making your life miserable?
 2. Mercy does not pretend sin didn't happen.
 3. Mercy sees clearly - and still chooses to move toward the person.
 4. That is exactly what God did for us in Christ.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (v.8)

1. Now Jesus talks about purity - and honestly this is one that can be weaponized...
2. I'd say, down deep, you and I both want a pure heart.
3. We want to live a life of purity - but no matter how hard we try, sin seems to find it's way into different areas.
4. When Jesus says, "Blessed are the pure in heart," He is not talking about sinless perfection.
5. He's talking about an undivided heart.
6. In Scripture (Old and New Testament), **the heart** is the control center of a person — your desires, your will, your direction.
7. So purity of heart means your life is moving in one direction instead of being split in two.
8. Here's how it works: The impure heart is divided.
 - a. It wants God... but also wants control.
 - b. It wants holiness... but also wants sin.
 - c. It wants Jesus... but also wants the world.
9. Jesus says the pure in heart will "see God."
10. This is astonishing - here's why:
 - a. Not just know about Him.
 - b. Not just talk about Him.
 - c. See Him.
 - d. Experience Him.
 - e. Walk closely with Him.
11. Think of it this way: *Purity means your heart is pointed in one direction.*
12. **God isn't looking for flawless people, but wholehearted people.**
13. Frankly this is the key idea of integrity.
14. What we MUST constantly be evaluating as believers - Do I live my life like a CAMELION?
 - a. In one room, I'm this.
 - b. In another room, I'm this.
15. Purity of heart means that through and through - although not perfect, you have no unrepentant sin lingering in your life.

16. Not making excuses, not just saying "it's how you're wired", it's genuinely pursuing holiness.
17. GRADUATES...
 - a. I know you can't stop thinking about graduating... BUT - the next 5 months are probably the most important 5 months of your life.
 - b. These months will EITHER be a SPIRITUAL GREENHOUSE or a SPIRITUAL WASTELAND...

A few questions:

1. Is your private life aligned with your public life?
2. Are you the same person at home that you are at church?
3. Jesus is not calling you to flawless performance.
4. He's calling you into wholeness.
5. I love you enough to tell you this: **Bring the divided places into the light.**
- 6. That's where healing begins.**
- 7.
8. Now, if it hasn't gotten all up in your business yet - Jesus bursts in like the koolaid man...
9. He says...

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be sons of God" (v.9)

1. Notice Jesus DOESN'T say peacekeepers. *Peacemakers*.
2. There's a difference.
3. Peacekeeping avoids conflict.
4. Peacemaking *moves into conflict* for the sake of reconciliation.
5. Peacekeeping says, "Let's not talk about it."
6. "Peacemaking says, "Let's heal what's broken."
- 7. And real peacemaking is costly.**
8. Why? Because this is exactly what Jesus did for us.
9. Jesus did not stand at a distance and shout peace toward us.
 - a. He entered the conflict.
 - b. He absorbed the cost.
 - c. He reconciled enemies to God through the cross.
10. Jesus made peace.
- 11. Peacemakers move toward conflict, not away from it.**
12. They carry the family resemblance of Jesus.
13. That's why peacemakers are called sons of God — **because they resemble their Father.**
14. **Listen, I'm not proud of everything in my life - but my family, that's one thing I'm proud of.**
15. I'm proud of our family resemblance - not only do we look alike - but we carry very similar mannerisms.
 - a. My kids get their deep love for people and doing what's right from their mother.
 - b. They get their incredible wit and charm from me...
 - c. They're Patricks!
16. Guys - when we are PEACE... MAKERS... *we carry the family resemblance of Jesus.*

1. And honestly, Christians can struggle here.
 - a. *Some of us avoid conflict entirely.*
 - b. *Others escalate every conflict into war.*
2. Neither is peacemaking.
3. Peacemaking means you take initiative *toward reconciliation.*
4. It means hard conversations.
 - a. Humility. (Not just saying "That's THEIR problem")
 - b. Listening. (Not just always getting the last word in...)
 - c. Owning your part. (It's rarely a "You always and I never" situation)
 - d. Crossing the room first. (It's ours to take the first step)
- 5.
6. Is there a relationship you're waiting for the other person to fix?
7. Listen - I never once said this was easy - but I am saying this is not only what Jesus teaches, it's also what he LIVED.
8. They move first because Jesus moved first toward them.
9. Ok, lastly... Jesus says...

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

1. Jesus ends the Beatitudes in a surprising place: *persecution*.
2. Which tells us something important.
3. If you actually live the Beatitudes, *not everyone will celebrate it*.
4. Look at me: when you live a life transformed by Jesus - it will not make sense to the rest of the world.
5. (Double blessing?)
6. *Now listen closely: Jesus is careful here.*
 - a. He is not talking about you said something dumb online and you got blasted for it,
 - b. He's not talking about the kickback you received because you were harsh,
 - c. He's not talking about the response you got because you were arrogant, or obnoxious.
7. Guys, not every attack is "spiritual warfare" - Sometimes it's just your bad behavior and you need to blame someone - *so you blame Satan*.
8. *And satan's like "Dude - that was all you, I had nothing to do with it..."*
9. Jesus says, "Blessed are those who are persecuted **for righteousness' sake.**"
10. In other words: this is the world's response to genuine Kingdom living.
- 11.
12. And then Jesus says something shocking: **rejoice**.
13. Why?
14. Because persecution is not always proof you're doing something wrong.
15. Sometimes it's proof you're actually walking with Jesus.
- 16. Persecution is not always proof you're failing — sometimes it's proof you're following Jesus.**

17. Now for many believers around the world, persecution still means prison, violence, and death.
18. Most of us will not face raised fists. *But we for sure face raised eyebrows.*
 - a. Social pressure.
 - b. Professional cost.
 - c. Relational tension.
 - d. Cultural suspicion.
19. And the temptation will always be to soften the sharp edges of Jesus so nobody feels uncomfortable.
20. But Jesus never promised the Beatitudes would make us popular.
21. **He promised they would mark us as His.**
 1. The question is not, "How do I avoid resistance?"
 2. The question is: "Does my life actually look enough like Jesus to create friction with the world around me?"
 3. Now, let me just flip it really quick - what if you're NOT experiencing pushback for your faith?
 4. I'm not saying you're NOT a Christian - but I am saying you might want to ask some questions as to why.
 5. If the only people who know you're a Christian is you and Jesus - there is a problem.

CONCLUSION

1. Ok... So as we close, I think there are two things Jesus is calling us to.
2. First — courage.
3. Second — To behold.
4. We need both.
5. **ONE - Courage.**
6. If we're honest, this kind of life is not natural to us.
 - a. It takes courage to show mercy when someone hurt you deeply.
 - b. It takes courage to live with an undivided heart in a distracted world. It takes courage to make peace instead of avoiding conflict or escalating it.
 - c. And it takes courage to endure misunderstanding, resistance, and even rejection for following Jesus.
7. Yes, the Christian life is grace from beginning to end.
8. Yes, this transformation is the work of the Spirit in us.
9. But at some point, *you are going to have to say yes to what God is forming in you.*
10. You are going to have to choose forgiveness.
11. Choose integrity.
12. Choose reconciliation.
13. Choose faithfulness when it costs you something.
 - a. Not perfectly.
 - b. Not flawlessly.
 - c. But courageously.
14. And where does that courage come from?

15. *That leads to the second thing.*

16. TWO - We behold.

17. Because the secret of the Christian life is not merely trying harder.

18. It is looking longer at Jesus.

19. Think about this for a moment: Jesus is preaching this sermon... but ultimately the sermon is about Him.

20. Every Beatitude finds its fulfillment in Jesus.

a. He was poor in spirit — He emptied Himself.

b. He mourned — He agonized in Gethsemane, not over His sin, but ours.

c. He was meek — He did not grasp for power or privilege.

d. He hungered for righteousness — HE WAS COMPLETELY RIGHTEOUS.

e. He was merciful — to the woman caught in adultery, to Peter after the denial, to sinners like us.

f. He was pure in heart — completely undivided in devotion to the Father.

g. He was a peacemaker — reconciling us to God through the cross.

h. And He was persecuted — rejected, mocked, beaten, crucified.

21. Jesus is not just the teacher of the Beatitudes.

22. He is the embodiment of them.

23. So when you lack courage, look at Him.

24. When mercy feels costly, look at Him.

25. When purity feels impossible, look at Him.

26. When peacemaking feels exhausting, look at Him.

27. When following Jesus costs you something, look at Him.

28. We become like what we behold.

29. FOLLOWING JESUS is about looking longer at Jesus, not trying harder.

30. *We cannot produce the Beatitudes through sheer effort.*

31. It is beholding the One who perfectly lived them — until, slowly by grace, His life begins to take shape in ours.

32. So yes, pray for courage.

33. But even more — behold Christ.

34. Because the courage to live this way comes from seeing the One this whole sermon has always been about.

THE GOSPEL: Jesus Christ is the ultimate hope for every person. Though we are all sinful and our sin separates us from God, God made a way for us to be in right relationship with him again. That way is Jesus. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice for our sins. God promises that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ will be saved. This is the good news of the Bible.

COMMUNION: 1 Corinthians 11

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, ^[b] "This is my body, which is ^[c] for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

"May the Lord bless you and protect you;
may the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;
may the Lord look with favor on you^[b]
and give you peace."