

BE:ATTITUDE — WEEK 2

SURRENDERED & HONEST

Matthew 5:5 & Matthew 5:8

What if the thing standing between you and the freedom you're looking for isn't something you need to fix...but something you need to surrender?

And what if the thing you've been trying to hide is actually the thing Jesus wants to heal?

That's where our focus is going to be today.

Slides 1-3

If you weren't with us last week, we began a new sermon series called BE:ATTITUDE.

We started by looking at the first two Beatitudes

and discovered two simple but powerful truths.

I admit that I need God. We can't do life on our own.

Freedom begins when we stop pretending we have it all together and recognize that we need God. And then: I believe God can help me.

Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

When we are willing to acknowledge what is broken and we bring it to God, healing can begin.

So last week was about admitting our need for God and believing that He can help us.

And today, Jesus takes us to the next step: Am I willing to be honest with Him and surrender my life to Him?

To understand where we're going today, let's go back to the Beatitudes.

The Beatitudes are found in Matthew chapter 5, right at the beginning of what we call the Sermon on the Mount.

The word Beatitude comes from a Latin word meaning "blessed," "happy," or "fortunate."

But Jesus isn't simply giving us a list of attitudes that will make us happier people.

The Beatitudes are Jesus' description of the attitudes and heart postures that lead us into God's blessing.

And throughout this series, we're looking at how these teachings of Jesus connect with the eight principles of Celebrate Recovery.

Because Celebrate Recovery is built around a simple truth: Jesus Christ is the One who brings healing, freedom, and transformation into our lives.

Today we're going to look at two more Beatitudes. Two statements from Jesus that take us on a journey.

The first one is about surrender. The second one is about honesty.

And I want you to remember two simple phrases today.

Open your hands. And...Open your heart.

Slide 4

Because before we can experience the freedom Jesus wants to give us, there are some things we have to be willing to surrender.

And there are some things we have to be willing to get honest about.

So today, we're going to talk about what it means to open our hands and surrender our lives to Christ—and open our hearts and get honest about our past.

Pray

Slide 5

Let's begin in Matthew chapter 5:5 (NIV). Jesus says: "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."

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Now, when you hear the word meek, what comes to your mind?

Maybe you think of somebody who's timid or who's quiet and who allows people to walk all over them.

Maybe you think meek means to be weak. But that's not what Jesus is talking about here. Biblical meekness isn't weakness.

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Meekness is strength that has been SURRENDERED to God.

Slide 8

It's strength that's under control. It's the ability to say: "I could try to control this myself...but I'm going to trust God with it."

That's what meekness looks like. And that's why this Beatitude connects so beautifully with Celebrate Recovery Principle 3 that says: "Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ's care and control."

But notice something. Today isn't primarily about Principle 3. It's about what Jesus said. And Jesus said: "Blessed are the meek." Jesus is telling us that there is blessing when we stop fighting to control everything and begin trusting Him.

Let's be honest.

Slide 9

We want CONTROL

Slide 10

We like knowing what's going to happen. And what's next? We like knowing how things are going to turn out. And we like having a plan. And there's nothing wrong with having a plan.

But sometimes our desire for control goes much deeper than planning. You see, we want to control our circumstances and our relationships.

We want to control what other people think about us. And we want to control our future, our children, and our finances. Our reputation and our circumstances.

And sometimes...We even want to control God. We want to control the creator of all things because we say prayers like:

"God, here's what I want You to do, what I want You to fix, or when and how I want You to fix it." And then we call that prayer faith. [pause]

Faith isn't telling God what we want and how we want it. Having faith would sound more like this: "God, I don't know what You're going to do, but I trust You with whatever You do."

That's surrender. And I want you to see this today,

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SURRENDER isn't giving up.

Slide 12

Sometimes we hear the word surrender and think: "I've lost." "I quit." "I'm waving the white flag." Because "there's no hope." Friends, that's not biblical surrender. Biblical surrender isn't giving up...It's giving it over. [pause]

I'm not giving up my future. I'm giving my future over to Jesus.

I'm not giving up my hope. I'm giving my hope over to Jesus.

I'm not giving up because I'm weak. I'm surrendering because He is stronger.

That's a completely different attitude. We may hear the world telling us to: "Take control of your life." "Follow your heart." "You are in charge."

But Jesus says: "Trust Me with your life." "Give Me your heart." And "Follow Me." That's why I want you to picture something today. [pause]

Picture yourself holding something tightly in your hands. Maybe it's something you don't want to lose. Or maybe it's something you're afraid somebody will take from you.

You hold it tightly. You squeeze it. You don't want to let go.

And sometimes that's exactly what we do with our lives.

We hold on. We hold on to the control. to our plans. to our anger. and to our fears.

We hold on to our relationships. our reputation. and to things God is asking us to release. And Jesus comes along and says:

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"Open your HANDS."

Slide 14

That's surrender.

Surrender is a posture. It's the posture of saying: "Jesus, this belongs to You. My future belongs to You, my family and my finances they all belong to You."

"Jesus, my ministry, my reputation, and my recovery all belong to You." But most importantly, "Jesus, my entire life belongs to You." So let me ask you a question.

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What are you still HOLDING? [pause]

Slide 16

What is that thing or things that you haven't been willing to give to Jesus? What are you still holding on to? Because here's the problem with holding onto everything ourselves.

We become exhausted. And some of us aren't exhausted because God has given us too much to carry.

We're exhausted from carrying the things God never asked us to carry. So remember what Jesus says: "Blessed are the meek." Blessed are those who finally say: "Jesus, I can't control this or fix this." "I can't change this person in my life or I can't change what has happened in the past." "Jesus, I can't control tomorrow." "But Jesus... I can surrender it all to You."

Slide 17

Jesus MODELED surrender

Slide 18

Jesus doesn't ask us to surrender something that He wasn't willing to surrender Himself.

Think about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. He knew what was coming. He knew the cross was coming. He knew the suffering, the betrayal, and the pain that was coming. And He prayed to His Father. Jesus didn't pretend it was easy. He didn't pretend He wasn't hurting.

But ultimately, He surrendered His will to the Father's will. He essentially said: "Father, I don't want my will to be greater than Yours."

And then Jesus went willingly to the cross. The cross is the ultimate picture of surrender. Because Jesus gave Himself. And because Jesus surrendered Himself for us, we can surrender ourselves to Him. Think about that. Jesus didn't surrender because He was weak. He surrendered because He trusted the Father. And today, Jesus invites you and me to do the same.

But there's another step...Surrender is where we begin. We open our hands to what Jesus wants us to surrender. But then Jesus takes us somewhere deeper. Because surrender doesn't just involve what we're holding in our hands. It involves what's happening in our hearts. And that's where the second Beatitude comes in.

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Matthew chapter 5:8.

Slide 20

Jesus says:

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

The first Beatitude we looked at says: Blessed are the meek...And the second says: Blessed are the pure in heart... One is about our posture. The other is about our heart. One says: Surrender. The other says: Get honest.

Slide 21

Jesus goes to the HEART

Slide 22

Jesus goes deeper than our behavior.

He goes deeper than our reputation. He goes deeper than the image we present to everyone else. Jesus goes to the heart. And that's where honesty begins. Because sometimes we can clean up our behavior without dealing with our heart. We can look good on the outside while we're falling apart on the inside. We can even fool ourselves.

But we can't fool God. And here's the amazing thing about that: Because God already knows. God knows your story. And He knows your past. So getting honest isn't about telling God something He doesn't know.

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Getting honest is about finally ADMITTING what God already knows.

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Proverbs 28:13 says: "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy."

Slide 25

In other words, hiding doesn't heal us.

What we conceal, we continue to carry. But when we bring it into the light, when we confess it to God, we find mercy. That's why honesty is so important. We're not confessing because God needs more information. We're confessing because we need to stop hiding. And James takes it one step further.

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James 5:16 says: "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."

Slide 27

Notice what James connects confession with: Healing.

Sometimes healing begins with simply saying, "This is where I'm struggling." "This is what I've done." "This is what happened to me." And "This is where I need help." That's honesty.

Slide 28

HONESTY is not shame

Slide 29

Because when we talk about getting honest about our past,

some people immediately think: “Here comes the shame and the guilt.” “Here comes somebody telling me everything I've done wrong.” But friends, that's not the gospel. Getting honest isn't about beating yourself up. There's a difference between conviction and condemnation.

Conviction says:

“This is what happened. Bring it to Jesus.”

Condemnation tells us:

“This is what happened,
and therefore this is who you are.”

Jesus does not condemn you But Jesus transforms you! [pause] Your past may explain some things about you. But your past does not have to define you. Your worst decision is not your identity. Nor are your struggles or your failures. What somebody did to you or your shame is not your identity.

Jesus is your identity. And that's why we have to be willing to get honest. Because here's a truth I want you to remember:

Slide 30

You can't SURRENDER
what you won't REMEMBER!

And:

You can't HEAL
what you won't REVEAL!

Slide 31

As long as you keep living in denial and saying:

“It's really not a problem.” “It really wasn't that bad.” “I can handle this all by myself.” Or
“Nobody needs to know about this.” You're keeping the door closed to the very thing God may want to heal. Getting honest with God opens the door. And sometimes getting honest means confessing to someone you trust. That's why James says: “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

That's part of what makes Celebrate Recovery so powerful. It's a safe place where people can stop pretending. It's a place where you can say:

“This is my story.”

“This is where I've struggled.”

“This is where I've failed.”

“This is where I've been hurt.”

“And this is where I need Jesus.”

And often the most powerful words you'll hear at CR are:
"Me too."

Because when we finally get honest and come out of denial, we discover: "I'm not the only one." There are other people who struggle with the same things I struggle with. There are other people who have hurts, hang-ups, and habits. And there are people who understand what it's like to need Jesus.

That is where Celebrate Recovery Principle 4 connects with Matthew 5:8. Principle 4 says: "Openly examine and confess my hurts, hang-ups, and habits to myself, to God, and to someone I trust."

That's a powerful principle. But once again, I want us to hear it through the words of Jesus. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." He's not saying blessed are the perfect. He's not saying blessed are those who have never made a mistake. He's saying blessed are those whose hearts are open before God.

Honesty means I stop hiding, pretending, minimizing, and making excuses. I stop rewriting my story. And I say: "Jesus, this is who I am." "This is what I've done and what's been done to me."

"This is where I've failed and where I've been hurt." "This is where I'm afraid and what I'm ashamed of." "This is where I need You." And let me say this:

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PURITY is not perfection.

Slide 33

If purity meant perfection,
none of us would qualify.

Purity means that I'm willing to bring my whole heart to God. Not the version I want everybody else to see. The real me. The one that's broken, hurting and the one that's struggling. And I bring that person to Jesus. That's what honesty looks like.

Maybe somebody here today has a past you're ashamed of. And you've done things you wish you could undo. Maybe you've said things you wish you could take back. and you've made decisions that hurt people.

Maybe somebody else made decisions that have hurt you. Maybe you carry something that happened twenty years ago as though it happened yesterday. And you've been wondering: "Will I ever be free from this?" Listen to me. Your past is real. We don't deny it. We don't pretend it didn't happen. We don't minimize it.

But your past doesn't have to be the final word. Because Jesus is greater than your past.

The cross is greater than your failure. His grace is greater than your sin. And the resurrection means God can bring new life out of places that look dead. [pause]

Now let's put these two Beatitudes together. Matthew 5:5: "Blessed are the meek." And Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart." Surrender and honesty. Open your hands. Open your heart. Think about what happens when you put those together. Surrender says: "Jesus, You can have control." "Purity is not perfection." And "I don't have to control everything."

Honesty says: "Jesus, You can have the truth." "I trust You with my past." "I don't have to hide everything." And when I give Jesus my future...
and I give Him my past...

(Cross Ceremony)

Today, we talked about surrender. But there comes a point when we have to stop talking about surrender... and actually surrender something. So here's the question: What are you still holding onto? What have you been carrying that Jesus is asking you to give Him?

Maybe it's Fear, Anger, Bitterness, Or shame. Maybe it's guilt, regret, or a bad relationship. Maybe it's your future. Or your need to be in control. Maybe it's something from your past that you've never been willing to face. Whatever it is... Jesus says, "Give it to Me."

In just a moment, we're going to give you a chance to surrender what you've been holding onto for so long. As you can see there are two crosses up here. You should have a piece of paper that was on your chair that has Matthew 11:28-30 on it.

Write down the thing you've been holding onto. You don't need to put your name on it. You don't need to explain it. Just write it down. And as you write it, pray: "Jesus, I surrender this to You." Then come forward. Take a nail and a hammer. And physically nail that piece of paper to the cross. It doesn't matter how long this takes. We will have leaders up here to help you.

Continue nailing even through the invitation and communion service. But, understand this: There's nothing special about the paper, the nail, or the cross. All of the power is in Jesus.

The cross reminds us that Jesus already carried our sin, our shame, our guilt, and our brokenness. So when you nail that paper to the cross, you're saying: "Jesus, I trust You with this." "And because I trust you I'm leaving this at the cross." So remember Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God."

Getting honest is part of surrender. Maybe what you're writing down is something you did. Or something someone did to you. Maybe it's something you're ashamed of. Or something you've been hiding. You don't have to tell everyone. But you do need to be honest with God. Because God already knows your story. Honesty isn't telling God something He doesn't know. Honesty is admitting what God already knows.

And when we bring it into the light, we make room for healing. So I want you to close your eyes for just a moment. And ask yourself: What am I holding onto? [pause]

What am I trying to control? [pause]

What hurt, hang-up, or habit do I need to surrender? [pause]

And now ask yourself:

“Jesus, what do You want me to give You today?” [pause]

Now hear this: You don't have to carry it anymore. Jesus carried it to the cross. And because He lives, your past doesn't have the final word. Your failure, Your shame, or Your hurt doesn't have the final word. Jesus has the final word.

(Invitation)

And maybe today you're realizing that you need to surrender more than a hurt, a hang-up, or a habit. Maybe you need to surrender your entire life to Jesus.

If you've never accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, today can be your day. Come to the cross. Let us know.

We would love to celebrate with you as you surrender your life to Christ and are baptized into Him today. And if you need prayer...You come. If you need healing...come. If you need someone to walk with you...Come. If you're ready to surrender...come.

Open your hands and open your heart. Surrender your life to Christ. Get honest about your past. And whatever you put on that cross today...Leave it there knowing that you surrendered it to Jesus. Because what Jesus carried to the cross, you don't have to keep carrying anymore. Surrender it all.

Slide 34

And let Jesus begin doing in you what only He can do.

Let's pray