

WHAT BLOCKS BLESSING

Pastor Chad Gilligan | October 2, 2022

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matthew 5:1-2 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said:

“It describes what human life and human community look like when they come under the gracious rule of God. And what do they look like? Different! Jesus emphasizes in this Sermon that his true followers, the citizens of God's kingdom, are to be entirely different from others. They are not to take their cue from the people around them but from Jesus, and so prove to be genuine children of their heavenly Father. The character of Jesus' followers is to be marked by qualities that are distinct from the world. They are to shine like lights in the prevailing darkness. Their righteous deeds are to exceed the deeds even of the religious leaders, while their love is to be greater and their ambition nobler than what is displayed by their unbelieving neighbors. The followers of Jesus are to be different - different from both the compromised church and the secular world. The Sermon on the Mount is the most complete delineation anywhere in the New Testament of the Christian counterculture. This is life in the kingdom, a fully human life lived out under God's rule.” — John Stott

Matthew 5:2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

Matthew 5:3-5 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

II. THREE THINGS THAT CAN BLOCK THE BLESSING OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE

1. When You Are Full of Yourself

Matthew 5:3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- To be poor in spirit means that you are dependent on God, not on yourself.
- Self-reliance is self deception.

Philippians 2:3-13 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking

the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

- **God's Kingdom comes to those who recognize their need for Him.**

2. When You Fail to Mourn

Matthew 5:4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

- **Mourn for your sin.**
- **Mourn for the sin of the world.**
- **Mourn for what has been lost in a broken world.**

James 4:4-10 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

- **Hope for future comfort.**

3. When You Force Your Own Way

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

- **Meekness is not weakness. It is power under control.**

Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Psalms 37:10-11 A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found. But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.

- **You cannot force your way to peace.**
- **God's promised blessings will come to the meek.**

Psalms 73:12-28 This is what the wicked are like— always free of care, they go on amassing wealth. Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure and have washed my hands in innocence. All day long I have been afflicted, and every morning brings new punishments. If I had spoken out like that, I would have betrayed your children. When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. Surely you place them on slippery ground; you cast them down to ruin. How suddenly are they destroyed, completely swept away by terrors! They are like a dream when one awakes; when you arise, Lord, you will despise them as fantasies. When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.

In a world focused on self, Jesus promises blessing to those who embrace dependence, mourning, and gentleness.