

**Kingdom Manifesto**  
**Studies in the Sermon on the Mount**  
**Part 2 – The Shape of the *Blesseds***  
**Matthew 4.23-5.12**

Most people interact with the Beatitudes with 1 of 3 options:

- Laudable qualities to *replicate* so we can be blessed
- Laudable qualities to *recognize* so we can be blessed
- Laudable qualities are *results* of the Kingdom coming in our lives

These options do not provide a *consistent framework* for interpreting the *Blesseds* and lead to a kind of thinking that is salvation by works, salvation by discovery, or salvation by circumstance – a place where we don't need Jesus, will live under this new law, and can give God a reason to be on our side – there is no grace there (even when it sounds like it)

Thesis: *Jesus is emphasizing the availability of the Kingdom to all sorts of people*

**Demonstrates it to the crowds (4.23-25)**

- No super-saints – no merit among them and most got more than they bargained for
- Ostracized – we have a different list, but the Kingdom is available to them too
- Broken – even those resigned to their brokenness (not only those who recognize it) – through His death and resurrection, Jesus transforms brokenness into wholeness
- Distant – those “too far gone”

**Declares it to His disciples (5.1-2)**

- Disciples
  - Can't be the 12
  - Not just the 4 of 4.18-22
  - No secretive meeting with hushed tones – declaration of availability
- People from the crowds experienced His power and heard His teaching (7.28-29)
- People from the crowds responded to His invitation
  - How? Repent – rethink your thinking and realign your life in light of Jesus
  - Moved beyond fans (in the stands observing) and fascination (groupies) to followers
  - NT: no distinction between disciples and Christians, only disciples and crowds
    - Don't just hear His teaching or have interest in what's being said but have moved into a posture of trusting willingness
  - Jesus' timetable – not ours! – for bringing people to Himself

### Describes it in His teaching (5.3, 10, 12)

- Consistently uses the plural *heavens* to describe the Kingdom
  - Jewish understanding of 3 Heavens
    - The air around us (6.26)
    - The place of the stars / hosts (Psalm 8, etc.)
    - The throne of God (2 Cor. 12 – “third heaven”)
  - In contrast with specific times he uses *heaven* in the singular (5.18, 5.34, 6.9-10, 6.20, 6.26, 6.32)
- He reigns in every level of the heavens
- He emphasizes the “here-ness” of the Kingdom
  - Matt. 4.17 – repent, because it’s at hand
  - Luke 17.21 – kingdom in the midst of you
  - Luke 12.32 – don’t fear, the Father loves to give you the Kingdom
    - NOT a then-there reality but here and now! He’s talking about their worry and everyday life – right here, right now!

### Questions for Discussion

1. When you think about the Sermon on the Mount (especially if you grew up around church, but even if you didn’t), what is your favorite part or the part that sticks out the most?
2. To whom do you find it most difficult to believe that Jesus is making the Kingdom available? We talked about the ostracized, broken, and distant. Make those specific – what kind of person do you find it hard to believe that the Kingdom is available to *them*?
3. Why do you think that the New Testament has no difference between “disciples” and “Christians,” but draws a distinction between “disciples” and “crowds?” How would you identify a disciple? Can you think of certain teachings of Jesus that help with that identification? (cf. Luke 9, 14, John 13, etc.)
4. Reread Luke 12.32 and its context. Now think about your own life and worries. What would it look like in your actual life for the Father to delightfully give you the Kingdom?
5. COVID Check-in: how are you? Your family? Your neighbors? Your One?