

Awaiting Fullness as Disciples of God  
Matthew 5:1-12

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. May the words of my mouth and the ears of our hearts be open to the word of God this day. AMEN.

In today's world every thing is so quick. We expect to get things quick and easy. Remember back when you had to wait to get your roll of pictures developed. You would drop them off and wait a few days and they would come back developed. That was just 20 years ago. Just ten years ago the stores came up with the one hour developing. Now how many people even have cameras that even take film anymore, they are instant digital cameras. We see the picture on the camera screen as soon as we take the picture. Every thing has to be instantaneous. We can't wait. High speed internet connection by wireless satellite anywhere you go why wait until your home. We can have super fast foods microwaved in an instant why wait to make mashed potatoes. Why go to the library and walk through the stacks, we have all the world's information at our finger tips in little hand held computers. Why wait and save up to buy something, we have credit cards, debit cards, Gift cards, atm Cards, just swipe them through and worry about it later. Does it take too long to go grocery shopping, why not try out what some grocery stores around the country are now doing, just go online and via your computer order your groceries ahead of time. Then they will be collected, bagged and ready for you to swing by and pick up and for an extra charge you can have them delivered so you don't even have to swing by the store. Time is essential. Everything is quick and convenient for us now. How did we ever live before modern technology?

Everything is fast, want it now, want it my way, when I say, that's our society and the only thing we can't have today in our world is patience. Patience is hard for many people today, because that is not what we expect. We want everything now, instant gratification, patience is a old fashion dead way to live. Don't save, don't anticipate, or look forward to something. We want fulfillment now. We want what we want today! Right now this instant!

Today we begin a five week examination of the Sermon on the Mount. A part of Matthew's Gospel where Jesus sits the people down and begins to preach to them about what it means to follow God, to be a disciple of the Lord, to be God's children. Today's reading is the most familiar part of the entire Sermon on the Mount – the beatitudes. They are beautiful images and blessings, but so often we forget that there are two verbs used in these sections. The present and future tense. What we are now and what we will become.

The problem we have in this world today is that we want it now. It is one of the biggest struggles we face as Christians in this life. I am sure when Jesus first said those beatitudes the

people listening also wanted it now. They lived in the pain, the suffering, the hunger, the thirst, the mourning, they most assuredly wanted that fulfillment that Jesus spoke of. Today we're not any different we want this peace and rest and blessings now in this time, in this place and time.

A common heresy that many Christians still say and believe is that if you have enough faith you will be blessed with riches and a big house and never get sick. Christians shouldn't have problems with their marriages, our children or our parents. As God's faithful we should be filled with all the bliss of heaven and earth and everything we wish should take place right when we want it to. Then when it doesn't happen that way, when things do indeed happen and we fall into shame, anger, fits of despair, mourning, vices of alcohol, gambling, drugs, abuse, we feel that something must be wrong with us or even better we blame God. If God really cared for us then we wouldn't be going through this.

But Christ talks quite clearly what it means to be his followers, what we are and what we will become. The Beatitudes are words of hope and promise to a people that feel no hope, that feel no promise. These words are told to a people that are being crushed by the law, by sins, by human fallenness, but Christ gives them words of redemption, salvation, peace that will come to pass.

Just listen again to those words- **blessed are the poor in spirit.** Those who right now feeling pressured in their faith, they have doubts, they question, they wonder what is the truth. They are the ones who seek to find the answer, those who come to worship looking for answers, who spend time in prayer seeking the word of God. who study the scriptures hoping to glean some wisdom from God's Word, those are the ones who are blessed, because in this time you are troubled in faith seeking the truth, seeking God. And yet in that seeking God promises that you will receive the kingdom of God, where all truth, all wisdom, all knowledge will be revealed. We live in this time of questioning, and the answers are coming, we just need patience to endure this time. To wait upon the Lord and seek the wisdom by being faithful in worship, to be in prayer, to read the word, to seek the Lord.

**Blessed are those who mourn.** Yesterday we had a funeral here at church of Robert Wentz. A member that has now entered into God's kingdom. A family mourns the death that separates us from him. But they are not alone. Many if not all of us fear and struggle in mourning. Lose of loved ones, loss of youth, loss of home, loss of health. We mourn many things. But God promises us that we will be comforted. This world has sadness and grief, but the promise victory to come has eternal comfort, where there is no longer crying or tears.

**Blessed are the meek.** We are taught to be loving and caring, to put others first. But in this world it is tough to do this. Squeaky wheel gets the oil, stepping on others to get to the top,

burn your bridges, good guys finish last; are all a familiar sayings. It is tough being meek in our society that seems the only the bold, the brazen, the risk gamblers get ahead. We wonder sometimes why bad people prosper while faithful meek quiet people lose out everytime. But that is in this world. The promise for those who are meek in Christ is that they will inherit the world. Being meek now may be tough but your reward is great in heaven.

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.** This goes beyond simply hungering and thirsting, even though many people do in fact die every day with lack of nourishment, lack of foods and clean water. It goes beyond simple nourishment to include the very bread of life, the righteousness and justice of God. Life in this fallen sinful world is not fair, good people get sick, nice people go broke, happy people lose loved ones. That is what we are living in right now. But in God's promise we will receive fulfillment, righteousness, justice.

**Blessed are the merciful.** How many people here have forgiven someone only to regret it later? But yet God calls us to be merciful and to do it again. How many people here have helped someone that just later on needs your help again and again and again, until finally they wear you so far down you give up. And yet God calls us to be merciful. It is not easy being merciful in this world. But yet for those who show mercy now God promises that we also will receive mercy in the kingdom to come.

**Blessed are the pure in heart.** Jesus tells us to be pure in heart, that I believe is one of the hardest of these beatitudes. To not have any negative, bad thoughts, fits of anger, frustration, gossip, even in our hearts. The nicest person and kindest person still may have impure thoughts. But Jesus tells his disciples to strive to have a pure heart in this time and place and they will see God.

**Blessed are the peacemakers, blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you.** Peacemakers, persecuted and reviled for the sake of God is terribly hard in this day and age. We don't want to stand out, be different, not well liked. We want to blend in and be part of the crowd. But Jesus tells his followers to be brave enough to seek peace when others are divided, seek righteousness and truth even under persecution, seek to be God's people even when reviled and your reward will be great in heaven as a child of God forever.

This list of beatitudes has a list of what we are to be now and what we will become. The trouble is we have no patience, we want our reward now. But instead Jesus tells those people on that mountain and us to keep striving to fulfill these blessings, to live in this world, of hunger, poor, mourning, pain and anguish, and stay to the faith, and we will receive God's blessings.

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May we follow the Lord in patience and duty, hearing the promise again of Christ who gives us these words of redemption, salvation, peace that will come to pass. Amen.

May the peace and Grace of God be with you this day and throughout the week to come. Amen