

**Sermon on the Mount
Bonhoeffer Class 2025
Pastor Ryan Brodin**

The Beatitudes

⁵ When Jesus^[a] saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

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

⁴ “Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they will be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the **meek**, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they will be filled.

⁷ “Blessed are the **merciful**, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the **pure in heart**, for they will see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they will be called children of God.

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

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people **revile you and persecute you** and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely^[b] on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- Do the beatitudes reflect a position of power and might? Why or why not?
- What is the reward for those who are “Blessed”?
- What do these beatitudes say to those who do NOT behave like the “Blessed”?
- When you think about Bonhoeffer, how might the beatitudes influence his life and thinking?

Salt and Light

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything but is thrown out and trampled under foot.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵ People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

- How might Christians lose their saltiness?
- How do Christians bring light to the world? How do they hide their light?

Concerning Our Neighbor

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister,^[c] you will be liable to judgment, and if you insult^[d] a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council, and if you say, ‘You fool,’ you will be liable to the hell^[e] of fire.

³⁸ “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ ³⁹ But I say to you: Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also, ⁴⁰ and if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, give your coat as well, ⁴¹ and if

anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. ⁴² Give to the one who asks of you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

⁷ “Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. ² For the judgment you give will be the judgment you get, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. ³ Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye but do not notice the log in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.

⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

¹² “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

- What do these passages teach us about living in community?
- Who are we supposed to love? Why? Is this hard or easy?
- What do these passages teach us about anger?
- Why is it so hard to love others?
- How do you think these passages influenced Bonhoeffer?

Heavenly Reward vs Earthy Reward

⁶ “Beware of practicing your righteousness before others in order to be seen by them, for then you have no reward from your Father in heaven.

² “So whenever you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be praised by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, ⁴ so that your alms may be done in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

⁵ “And whenever you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, so that they may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.^[a]

¹⁶ “And whenever you fast, do not look somber, like the hypocrites, for they mark their faces to show others that they are fasting. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward. ¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, ¹⁸ so that your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

- When we love our neighbors, when we share from our resources, or when we pray are we seeking human approval or God’s approval?

- Are the German Reich Church pastors looking to please God or humans?
- What is the value of humility (the meek) in our faith?

Concerning Wealth

¹⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust^[u] consume and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust^[v] consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²⁴“No one can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.^[w]

- How can wealth influence our faith and our actions?
- Bonhoeffer came from a wealthy family. How do you think these passages spoke to him? How does it speak to us?

Concerning Faith

²⁵“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink,^[x] or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to your span of life?^[y] ²⁸

⁷“Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. ⁹

- What is the connection between faith and worrying?
- Why do we worry so much about almost everything?
- Asking, knocking and searching are not passive, but active. How do we ask, knock and search today?
- What lesson do you think Bonhoeffer might have learned from these passages?

Hearers and Doers

²⁴“Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

- What happens when we act on the Word of God? What happens when we do not?
- What warning did Bonhoeffer hear in the Sermon on the Mount?
- Bonhoeffer knew faith was about actions of love. How did this influence his theology?
- What are the main themes you hear in the Sermon on the Mount?
- How are we doing today living according to those themes?