

The Beautiful Beatitudes

To follow Christ is to seek lowliness, humility, mercy, and righteousness. The Ten Commandments summarize God’s teaching to his people. Jesus gives us a new law that builds on the old. Before it was “You shall not...”; now it is, “Blessed are you when...” He calls us to greater happiness, greater blessing, but it comes with a challenge. Saint Augustine says that Jesus went up the mountain to preach the Beatitudes because he was preaching a higher moral doctrine: “greater precepts of righteousness.”

The new law contradicts what our wounded human nature tends to think and feel. We are challenged to believe blessings can come from tears, meekness, and poverty; that living meekly leads

to strength and security. Appreciating these truths requires transforming our minds and hearts. Faith is required. Deeply desiring and living in the right does bring satisfaction. There is consolation in mourning the things that sadden Christ’s heart.

If we live by the beatitudes, many will treat us more generously. We know people who are merciful, and we are quick to show them mercy. When our hearts are clean, we can see God more clearly. Those who seek and create peace are considered by all to be children of God. They are not without trials and suffering, but they are blessed and happy.

Christ calls us to store up treasures in heaven, spiritual blessings that cannot be taken away. Even if we experience difficulty, we will still receive the highest and greatest gift: the kingdom of heaven.

—Fr. Mark Haydu, LC

For Reflection

Am I renewing my heart and mind in Christ? How do I live out the beatitudes?

Piece: *The Sermon on the Mount*, circa 1482
 Artist: Cosimo Rosselli
 Location: Sistine Chapel



*“Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness”
 (Matthew 5:10).*