

Matthew 19-05-05a

Good morning, welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. It is a beautiful morning here in the heart of the Cherokee Nation and it's a privilege to join with you this morning as we appreciate the Lord Jesus both as our Savior, our Comforter, our Intercessor, our Advocate before the Father, but also in the active prosecution of His ministry in Galilee as we see it before us, continuing our study in the Gospel of Matthew, resuming at chapter 5. We're going to begin the well-known, oft-quoted, and perhaps most memorable section of Jesus' teaching. It is known and recognized in both the believing and the unbelieving world as a central expression of the tenets of Christianity.

The unbelieving world looks at it as a summary of Christian ethics. It is the longest, unbroken section of Jesus' teaching to be found in the Gospels. It is going to cover three chapters here in the Gospel of Matthew and will extend beyond that, as we'll see this morning, even a bit further structurally speaking.

So it has a setting, it has an introduction, it has a symmetry to it which will help us see it and understand it more fully, and it's a wonderful section of Scripture to look at together this morning. As we prepare to do so, let's ask God's blessing on our fellowship and our study as we go to the Lord in prayer. Father, what a wonderful privilege to be resurrected, as it were, each morning into a new day, a new opportunity, a fresh start, a clean slate, knowing that our sins are forgiven, our failures are separated from us, and the circumstances that we face each day are a fresh opportunity for faith, for obedience, for trust in your promises, your character, your love for us expressed most fully in the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

We thank you for Him and for His wonderful ministry of healing, of communication, of self-sacrifice, picturing bodily the ineffable truths of your person and your desire for fellowship with us. We pray that as we look at this portion of your word this morning that your Holy Spirit will minister to each heart as a source of comfort and encouragement, motivation, and challenge so that we will redeem the time, even though the days are evil. We will recognize our opportunities and, enabled and empowered by your Spirit, make application of the truths that we see presented before us this morning in the wonderful light of your word.

We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen. Well, the section of Scripture, as I mentioned, is known as the Sermon on the Mount, found in Matthew chapter 5, 6, and 7. The word sermon is not found in the text. This goes back centuries to the days of Augustine and others who wrote commentaries on this portion of Scripture, and in Latin it is the Sermon in Monti, where it has come to be known as the Sermon on the Mount.

But we will see that sermon may not be the best term to use. What Matthew says is, in

verse 2, he opened his mouth and taught. It is teaching.

I was given to understand in seminary that there is a difference between teaching and preaching, and as such, the style of presentation I suppose that we have followed for all of the years we've had Grace and Truth Bible Church would be identified by those who choose to identify such things as teaching rather than preaching. Preaching is characterized by a large amount of exhortation and of overt challenge. There is evangelistic preaching.

There is revivalistic preaching. It concentrates on the need for change of mind, which is certainly genuine. And teaching, on the other hand, focuses more on delivering the content of God's truth, assuming in many cases that the person who receives it is going to avail themselves of the opportunity for change of mind and for fresh perspective on their own.

So they overlap in great measure, but we have in the common parlance, you know, don't preach at me, don't tell me what I ought to be doing. Even in secular matters, we talk about preaching to the choir when somebody is telling people to do something they already know to do and are trying to do and are having various levels of success at doing. So sermons are associated with preaching in many cases.

You preach a sermon. We don't normally have the phrase, well, he taught a sermon or he's teaching a sermon. We say you preach a sermon.

And while there is an element of exhortation, this section is teaching. The Bible says in other places that Jesus went about preaching in their synagogues. Here, this is a section on teaching.

Teaching, *didasko* in Greek. So as an introduction overall, we want to note that this is largely delivery of content as a major emphasis. Jesus wants an understanding to be had of what he is saying.

There will be some exhortations. There will be some commands, some hortatory, we like to say, imperatives. But this is given to us to look at and consider and make up our minds about rather than the kind of prophetic discourse you find often in the Old Testament where problem is identified and change is mandated or else.

You see the difference often with preaching. There is a mention of consequences if you don't change. So with that said, we're going to actually back up just a bit to observe the structure here to Matthew 4.23-25 as the introduction.

If I were doing the chapter divisions, my chapter 5 would start at 4.23 and you'll see why here momentarily. But it tells us Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Notice in the synagogues there is teaching.

He is preaching the gospel of the kingdom. What is the primary note in the gospel of the kingdom? Who first preached the gospel of the kingdom? John the Baptist. And what did he say? Change your mind, the kingdom is at hand.

Preaching the kingdom, preaching the good news of the kingdom is an appeal to change of mind. In the synagogues, he is opening the scriptures. He is taking the scroll.

People come to the synagogue if they're properly motivated for the same reason they come to church, and that is to be fed, to be restored and renewed and energized and given that spiritual power that comes from the Word of God which is living and powerful. So there's a distinction. In the upcoming three chapters 5, 6, and 7 that we know as the Sermon on the Mount, and I will continue to call it that for convenience, but you know from this introductory comment that this is really the teaching on the Mount.

The teaching on the Mount. You'll have additional reason to remember that here momentarily. But he is teaching in the synagogues.

He is preaching the gospel of the kingdom all over Galilee. In the synagogue he's teaching when he's out amongst the crowds and the multitudes and there are people who are sick. The word here for sickness is interesting in the sense that it is used for something is wrong.

Doctor, something's wrong with me. I don't know exactly what it is. In some cases they knew, in other cases they did not.

They didn't understand the nature of epilepsy. They didn't understand the nature of paralysis and many other things that he would be presented with, but he healed all kinds of this sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. So his fame went throughout all Syria.

This is the Roman province of Syria and this means that it spread beyond Galilee. His fame is known widely and they brought to him all sick people. This is a third word.

We had sickness and disease. Nosos is the word for sickness and this is a more common and direct understanding of physical sickness. Disease is the word malakion and this is another, you can see the word begins with mal and this has the idea of badness within it.

We could talk about the differences, but it's not important in this context. Then it says in verse 24, they brought to him sick people, not six people, that would not have been the multitudes. I'm sure there were more than that.

But they brought to him sick people and this is kakos. You'll notice and remember this word kakos just means wrongness, badness. It can be moral, it can be physical.

In this case it is physical and it says that they are afflicted with various diseases and

afflicted just means it's literally having. Having various poikilos. This is a third word now.

We've had sickness, disease, we've had sick and now we have poikilos nosos. So we're back to various kinds of diseases and torments which is basanas. So this heaping up of vocabulary here speaks of all kinds of things.

He didn't just do one, he wasn't just casting out demons, he wasn't just healing palsy or paralysis or leprosy or fevers or wounds and injuries, broken bones, internal injuries, genetic congenital problems. Everything you could think of is being brought to him and he heals them all. Demon-possessed, it says here epileptics in verse 24 and this is seleniasomai which is a middle voice and it is sometimes the authorized version translated it to be lunatic and back then they spelled it, the ending is ck, lunatic.

So it was fits and uncontrollable movements, seizures and the like and then paralytics and this is the Greek word is the same as the English paralytikos. He healed them. So look, great multitudes verse 25, great multitudes followed him from Galilee, from Decapolis, this is the five city collection in that area and actually ten city area, Deca is ten.

I've got five on my mind for other reasons but Galilee, the ten city area, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan. Now notice Jerusalem and Judea, that's all the way down in John's territory and beyond the Jordan, the Transjordan, this is the old early settlement area. So there are great multitudes, huge crowds, every different kind of people from every different kind of place with every different kind of disease.

It is a smorgasbord of early first century Israel. Now it's important to note this because this is the introduction to one of our favorite structural elements in scripture which is the chiasm, the chiasm. The chiastic structure of this has been long recognized.

It's not original to me. In fact, one of the more recent expressions of this was done by the professor of New Testament at the University of Bern, Switzerland. His name is Ulrich Luz and he published something on this back in 2007.

There's a hermeneia series of commentaries and he distilled a lot of earlier thought, expanded it, defined it, did a really good job in my opinion. I hesitated at first to pay much attention to it because you usually refer to commentators by their first initial and last name and if you do that, it is you lose. But I thought, well, I should look at the work and not be skittish about some sort of early sign that it might have problems.

And Ulrich Luz, this is L-U-Z by the way, Ulrich Luz, and he is of the opinion that the gospel was not written by Matthew but a compilation post 70 A.D. and so on. So he is going to fulfill his name in other ways. But you can get a lot of good information out of bad commentaries and this is a good distillation.

It's not original to him but there is a chiasm present in scripture and believe me, I am not

the first to see it. One of the things that you will observe here is that in 423, Jesus goes about all Galilee teaching, preaching, and healing. Keep your finger here in chapter 4 and 5 and flip over to chapter 8. This is going to be the, if 423 that he is teaching, preaching, and healing is the A element in a chiasm, you know how we do.

We go A, B, C, D until we get to the center and then we come out. If the center is G, then we come back out to F prime, E prime, D prime, C prime, B prime, A prime. And as you indent, you're coming back out and you can line things up vertically and see the parallel, see the chiastic symmetry.

It makes kind of an X when you do that. You indent your A, B, C, D, E, F, G is the central and most important element. And then you come back out the other side.

So if 423 is A, I'm going to show you the corresponding A prime. And this is what's going to let us know to look for the chiasm. And this is sort of the outermost element.

So turn to Matthew 9, verse 35. 935, Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them because they were weary and scattered like sheep having no shepherd.

So he said to his disciples, and you've got the mention of the harvest. But we have this second very similar notation that the Lord Jesus is seeing the multitudes. He is teaching, preaching, and healing.

So that would be your outside bracket with 423. Within that, Matthew 424, they're bringing the sick who are suffering, the demon-possessed, and all are being healed. Well, this healing is detailed in chapter 9. Jesus heals the paralytic in the first part of the chapter.

He calls Matthew the tax collector after that. Then he restores the girl to life. And the woman with the issue of blood, you may recall us covering that in earlier times, those two are always linked.

The ruler of the synagogue, Jairus' daughter, and then the woman with the issue of blood. Then two blind men are healed. And then there is a mute man in verse 32.

So these are the healings that are summarized in chapter 9, verse 35. They are detailed there, but they're mentioned earlier in chapter 8, verse 16. When evening had come, they brought to him many who were demon- possessed.

He cast out the spirits with a word, healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled, spoken by Isaiah the prophet. He took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses, 8-16. So that's a step in to parallel with Matthew 4-24.

Matthew 4-25 says there are large crowds, multitudes that are following Jesus. And in Matthew chapter 8, verse 1, when Jesus had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And a leper came and worshipped him.

And so you're going to have more healing. Healing the centurion's servant, healing Peter's mother-in-law, many healed after the sunset, two demon-possessed men on the other side of the lake, and so on. So Matthew 4-25, you have Matthew 8-1.

And you can see that 8-1 and 8-16 and 9-35 are sort of echoes of 4-23, 4-24, and 4-25. They're elements in all of that outcoming area. And Matthew 5-1 says that when he saw the multitudes, and then Matthew 5-2, he's going to start teaching.

And if you look at Matthew chapter 7, verses 28 and 29, which is just inside of Matthew 8-1, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. So this is coming out of the 5, 6, and 7 section that we call the Sermon on the Mount. The people are astonished at his teaching.

We'll have more to say about this. And notice in 29, he taught them as one having authority. This is teaching rather than preaching.

So with that as a guide, and we're going to see even more symmetry because the section 5, 6, and 7 itself has a chiastic structure. And I will tell you now that the center of the chiasm is the Lord's Prayer. That's going to be the G element.

But it will benefit us more to look at that structure after we've covered the first half of the chiasm. But just be aware, and if you want to look for it ahead of time, what we're starting in Matthew 5-3, heading into the Lord's Prayer there in Matthew chapter 6, verses 9-13, all of this is going to be heading for that as the central point. And then everything else is going to come back out as a parallel.

And the Lord's Prayer has been rightly recognized as important. I'm not sure people have understood why it is important. It's not a lucky charm.

It's not a mantra. It's not a formula. But it is a distillation.

And the Lord's Prayer itself, believe it or not, and you won't see it to look at it, but it itself is chiastic. So we have a three-fold chiasm in these next four and a half chapters. The structure of Jesus' teaching, this largest teaching section, is symmetrical for its setting, coming in and coming out.

The teaching itself is symmetrical, and at its heart and at its center is the Lord's Prayer, which is symmetrical. It is the most intriguing and unexpected and not immediately recognizable that symmetry. But once you line it up, it's a head smacker.

It's like, why didn't I see this before? Well, let's begin. It's always good to start with the content. The word itself and the content is being taught.

So the emphasis is not so much on the structure. The structure is a means to an end. We're not looking for structure for its own sake any more than we memorize scripture just so that we can recite it.

There is a purpose. This is the plate. If you spend a lot of time preparing a dinner for family and friends, a lot of people are coming over, watch any of these cooking shows, any of these chef-in-charge shows, and they'll tell you it's not only the food and its preparation and its seasoning and its cooking, but it is presentation.

You don't throw your Thanksgiving dinner on a paper plate and hand out plastic forks, right? But the presentation is not going to help any if you don't eat the food, if you don't benefit from the food. The presentation is designed to enhance your enjoyment, your experience, and your benefit from the meal. So keep in mind, any time we talk about structure and chiasm, and any time we look at vocabulary and try to dig out the meaning of words, that's all great, but that's not what the Holy Spirit is going to minister to your heart in a time of challenge, a time of opportunity for application.

It is the content. It is the teaching. Preaching makes you want to pay attention and realize the importance of a thing, but it's like the Surgeon General warning.

You can tell somebody it's important not to smoke, but the proof is in the pudding. Do you, to mix my metaphors, are you going to pay attention to the preachment that says don't smoke by not smoking? The content is here's why it's bad, here's what it can do to you, and you say I will go out and change my ways. So the content is what we're after.

Let's read the content. We have a few introductory remarks here because it is important not only to understand what is being said, but who it is being said to. To reinforce my impression and my memory of such things, I went to our wonderful internet resources, and you know how whichever search engine you use, they generally will say image search.

Go to Google and you can put in a phrase or a term and you say I want to look at pictures. I was trying to find a coffee mug that I had had for years and years and it finally could not be rehabilitated. I had repaired it several times, and I had actually used a shovel handle repair tape.

You know you get a crack shovel handle and you get this fiberglass tape with glue. I used that to fix the handle. I loved that cup.

Well I wanted to find another one and so I did an image search, and I looked at I think upwards of 300 pages of images. Nobody had that cup. Anyway, you can do an image search.

So just for an experiment sometime put in the phrase Sermon on the Mount and do an image search. How do people visualize this occasion? If you think in your mind, you go back to The Greatest Story Ever Told or any of the Jesus movies that have him teaching, I think it is depicted in Ben-Hur. What do you see? Sermon on the Mount, what is the image that comes into your mind? This is a pop quiz.

What image do you have in your mind? Is Jesus high or low? He's on a mountain. He's not in a boat. He's not using the amphitheater effect of sound.

He's up high, and what is on the slopes below him? How many people? No multitudes, right? The multitude, he's up on high. You realize it's interesting to picture the setting. In some cases, Jesus is low and the people are high.

In other cases, Jesus is high and the people are low. Well, this is one of those Jesus high, people low, but. Now there are a few pictures, and I was gratified to see that some pictures have got this right.

The vast majority did not read their Bible, and the reason I introduced the chiasm sort of out of order here is because we're going to see the same thing on the other side of the chiasm. Let's begin at chapter 5, verse 1, tell me if you notice anything this time reading Matthew chapter 5. And seeing the multitudes, he went up on a mountain, and when he was seated, his disciples came to him. Then he opened his mouth and taught them.

What do you see? Jesus is at the mountain height. Who else? The disciples. His disciples.

He's got an audience of 12. Now disciples is somewhat of a loose term. I think you could probably count Mary and Martha and Lazarus as disciples.

When you're not talking about the 12, disciples is that hardy group of dedicated followers who will go anywhere Jesus is to hear him teach. And this is probably a larger group than the 12. But it is not the multitudes.

He's already in the midst of multitudes. He is already in the midst of multitudes. Read verse 25, great multitudes followed him from Galilee, from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, beyond the Jordan.

This is thousands of people. Seeing the multitudes, he went up on the mountain. Now what happens when you climb a mountain and other people are trying to keep up? Unlike drawing out a short distance from the shore and preaching to people on a slope in an amphitheater, why do they build stadiums the way they do? The activity is at the bottom and people can surround it.

Many times these little inlets where they would anchor boats had three sides. It's just like an ancient Greek or Roman amphitheater. You can seat hundreds if not a few thousand in a venue like that.

Why is it that they don't make stadiums on a mountain deal? The sound is not amplified. If you're at any great distance, it just disappears. Seeing the multitudes, why wouldn't Jesus go to the Sea of Galilee and pick a big inlet with a lot of seating? Where did Jesus go when he called his disciples? What's your recollection of that? What did he do even after he was raised? He goes to a mountain and calls his disciples and twelve and only twelve come up there.

This is to thin the crowd. This is to get away from the masses. This is so that people aren't constantly saying, oh Lord, my brother is sick with the palsy.

He's got a withered hand. He's lame. He's blind from birth.

He's mute. He's throwing fits. Jesus needs quiet.

He needs concentration and he needs a small group. This sermon, although it has been almost universally thought to be Jesus' word to the masses, he could have just said here in Matthew, seeing the multitudes, he went up on a mountain and taught them, saying, them the multitudes. It's not them the multitudes.

It's them the disciples. People who are there for other reasons have been thinned out. As an aside, this warms my heart when you think about Bible churches being small churches.

You need genuine disciples. You need those who are motivated and interested in living their lives to please God and prepare for the coming kingdoms. Live well in this life.

Reflect the glory of God so that you can live well in the next life and reflect the glory of God. Those are disciples. It is nearly impossible to teach at that level with that intensity and have meaningful results with big crowds.

I personally don't think it can be done. Jesus didn't do it. Paul didn't do it.

John didn't do it. Peter didn't do it. All of the effective teaching that you see in Scripture is to house churches in Paul's day, the inner circle of disciples in Jesus' ministry.

When he's got something important to say, he will teach his disciples. He'll preach parables to the masses. He explains the parables in private to his disciples.

So don't gloss over the introduction here. Seeing the multitudes, Jesus said in his mind, I am interpolating here, I'm not going to be able to do meaningful teaching so long as there are these masses of swarming throngs as my dad used to say, it's the roar of the grease paint and the smell of the crowd. So he's got to thin them out and find who will climb the mountain.

Who will climb and put out the effort to hear the important things Jesus has to say. And when he climbs the mountain, he's going to teach his disciples. We saw over in chapter

8, notice when he had come down from the mountain, 8-1, great multitudes followed him.

Great multitudes are hanging around at the base of the mountain, the way the Israelites hung around at the base of Mount Sinai waiting for Moses and Joshua, the one guy Moses could teach. For some reason Caleb wasn't in there, but Joshua's got a special commission. Joshua's going to follow Moses the way that the disciples are going to follow the Lord Jesus.

But when he had come down from the mountain, 8-1, great multitudes followed him. And this is when a leper comes. And then you've got these other healings and interactions with many other people, but they are all down below.

Only disciples make it to the top of the mountain. Only the disciples are willing to climb. This goes back to our well-traversed passage in Proverbs.

My son, if you're going to receive my words and hide my commandments with you, if you are going to incline your heart, if you're going to apply yourself, if you're going to lift up your voice for it, if you're going to seek it as silver and search for it as for hid treasures, then you will understand. Then you will find. There are an increasing level of dedication expressed in effort reflecting commitment.

Dedication, effort, and commitment are required in a disciple. Jesus is going to say in an upcoming section, if any man will follow after me, if any man will come after me, let him take up his cross and follow me. It's not an easy path.

Take up his cross and follow. So this word that we are about to examine here in these next three, three and a half chapters, is for disciples. Disciples are equipped, qualified to understand it and are ready to live in its light, not the masses.

So when you say, well, it's sort of a generalized Christian ethic, sorry, no. This is going to be the five paragraph order for a small, dedicated, committed group of disciples. Seeing the multitudes, he went up on the mountain and when he was seated, his disciples came to him.

Notice Jesus seems to have been a more rapid climber than they. Jesus gets up there and you can imagine there are people thronging, oh look, he's getting away from the crowd, this is my chance. Jesus is in good shape.

If you want a little minor point of application here, if you want to follow the Lord Jesus, you better be in good shape. He's in good shape and of course we're speaking largely in spiritual terms here, but physically speaking, the Lord Jesus could climb. He got there and had sat down by the time the rest of the disciples and we're talking about fishermen that haul nets and swim for a living.

Jesus outstripped them, outclimbed them. He had climbed the mountain and was seated, then his disciples caught up. He's been there for some time.

Just saying, it is a reflection in this instance of the importance of being ready for your mission, being able. So when his disciples came to him, then he opened his mouth and taught them. Now, are there going to be a few people from the multitudes who are dedicated enough to climb up there and maybe sit on the outskirts? I have no doubt.

Lazarus could possibly be in this group. There could be some other disciples of John that have followed in the wake, but the Bible tells us for sure that the disciples are there. And if you look at the context previously, you will find that the disciples refers specifically to the men that have been named.

You go back to chapter 4, Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee, sees the brothers and calls them. And the term disciples is virtually always applied to members of the Twelve. So that's who is listening to this.

Now, I will tell you even before we read this, it's very familiar. So to keep your interest fresh, watch the pronouns. Do a pronoun watch.

How many times have we done this? What person is being employed? Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted, and so on. I'm going to read this, but just so that it will strike your ear a little bit more the way the disciples heard it, I'm just going to change the order of these phrases a little bit.

This is how it would have struck the hearts and the minds of the disciples who were listening. The poor in spirit are blessed because theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Those who mourn are blessed because they will be comforted.

The meek are blessed because they shall inherit the earth. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness are blessed because they will be filled. The merciful are blessed because they will obtain mercy.

The pure in heart are blessed because they will see God. The peacemakers are blessed because they will be called sons of God. Those who are persecuted for righteousness sake are blessed because theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

You are blessed when they revile and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. As you reflect on this in upcoming hours or days, I encourage you to read the verses that way.

The poor in spirit are blessed. Those who mourn are blessed. The meek are blessed.

And here's why. Do you see it? This section, verses 3-12, is known as the Beatitudes. And you've heard the old saw, they're called the Beatitudes because they are attitudes which should be.

But the word Beatitude is another Latin term. We get sermo in monte from Latin. And we get this because the word blessed in Latin is beatus.

And when you write it in English it looks like beatus, which is sort of the opposite. But beatus, the beatific vision, you know the blessed vision and so on, comes from this, even beautiful has the idea of this B-E-A-T-U-S, Latin word. So these are the Beatitudes.

Blessings are a part of Jesus' teaching and it begins, as you might have noticed in your pronoun check, with talking about the third person. They and them are blessed. Those in this category are blessed and here's why.

People are always looking for symmetry and comparisons and thesis antithesis and so on. And people have said, well, this is the new Ten Commandments. You've got ten commandments.

The problem is you've only got nine Beatitudes. And so they say, well, but the tenth one is rejoice and be exceedingly glad. That's Jesus' tenth commandment.

But there's just no relationship here. These are not commandments because this is not preaching. Now there is a symmetry and there is a structure and there is a beautiful idea here that centers.

There is a symmetry and we'll see it when we come back from the break. But concentrate first on what Jesus leads with. The gospel of the kingdom, the word gospel is euangelia.

Angelia is the message in the way that angelos is messenger. A messenger delivers a message. The euangelia, EU, means good.

The good message of the kingdom. What is the good message of the kingdom? Jesus has been preaching that good message and he has been teaching to elaborate it and impress it on the hearts of disciples. This is teaching along that line.

There's all kinds of different approaches. It's dispensational and this is talking about the future kingdom. It only applies in the millennium.

You can't turn the other cheek until then and so on. Right now the focus is Jesus is talking to his disciples in the present and he says, you are blessed in this category now because something is going to happen later. Do you remember our Resurrection Sunday message? We went to Revelation chapter 2 and 3 and we said the overcomer blessings are possible because of resurrection and they are all future reward, blessing,

opportunity, function, status, access based on present decisions, present levels of dedication, effort and commitment.

This is the same thing. Jesus is the last words that Jesus has recorded in scripture are Revelation chapter 2 and 3 and some in 20. The first words are here.

The first teaching words are here. The meek are blessed. The poor in spirit are blessed.

Those who mourn are blessed. The merciful are blessed. The pure in heart are blessed.

The peacemakers are blessed now because of a certain future fulfillment of promise. It depends on resurrection. It depends on a new dispensation, a new kingdom and this is the message of the kingdom.

You're blessed now if you have these qualities and these characteristics because this is what will happen when the kingdom comes. Something to think about. Let's pause here and take a break.

When we come back we're going to look at the details here and find out why this is what Jesus' first teaching to his disciples recorded in Matthew contains. Why this? We'll see it when we come back.