The Beatitudes

A Scribe's Testimony — JMD

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

I have learned that strength, intelligence, experience, achievement and confidence can carry a man a long way but none of them can replace God. There is a poverty of spirit that arrives when self-sufficiency finally fails. It is painful, but it is also the doorway through which the Kingdom becomes visible.

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

I have mourned what was lost, what was broken, what could not be recovered by human strength and what I myself helped damage. Mourning stripped away the illusion that faith means never hurting. Instead, I discovered a God who enters grief and meets us there.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

I once understood strength largely through force, determination and the refusal to yield. God has been teaching me another strength: power surrendered to Him. Meekness is not weakness. It is strength that no longer needs to dominate in order to know who it is.

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

There comes a point when achievement cannot satisfy the hunger beneath achievement. Success cannot answer the deepest questions of identity, alignment and meaning. I have learned to hunger for something greater than winning, to be right with God, aligned with His heart, and useful for His purposes.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

A man who has truly encountered the mercy of God becomes progressively less qualified to withhold mercy from others. I have needed much mercy. Learning to give it has been part of learning how much I have received.

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

Purity of heart is not the claim that every motive has always been pure. It is the increasingly painful and liberating work of allowing God to uncover divided motives, hidden loyalties, pride, fear, anger and self-interest until the desire for Him becomes greater than the desire to protect ourselves.

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

Peace is different from avoiding conflict. Sometimes truth creates conflict before it produces peace. I have learned that peacemaking begins when the war inside us is brought under the government of God, and from that place we become capable of carrying reconciliation rather than merely demanding agreement.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Following truth does not guarantee approval. Alignment with God can cost relationships, opportunities, reputation, comfort and belonging. The world system rewards many things, but it does not consistently reward surrender to Christ. Resistance therefore becomes part of the formation of those who decide that truth is worth more than acceptance.

These words are not presented as accomplishments.

They are testimony.

The scribe has not mastered the Beatitudes.

He has increasingly discovered that God has been using them to master him.

That is an important distinction.

This book does not come from someone standing above its questions.

It comes from someone who has lived inside many of them.

Someone who has asked Why?

Someone who has argued.

Someone who has failed.

Someone who has dug.

Someone who has discovered that beneath circumstances, beneath systems, beneath success, beneath loss, beneath human explanation and beneath the shifting foundations of this world, there is still a Rock.

And having discovered Him, the scribe has become deeply grateful.

Grateful enough to write.

Grateful enough to ask difficult questions.

Grateful enough to examine the systems that obscure Him; Our Father, the creator of the universe!

And grateful enough to want every sincere seeker, skeptic, cynic, believer and serious mind to discover not merely an argument for God, but God as He really is.

The scribe can only point.

The Holy Spirit must reveal.

And Christ remains the invitation.

“He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.”

Luke 6:48