

Beatitudes 2025

All too often we become blind to the familiar. All too often words which had a living relevance in decades or centuries past, take up new meaning as a result of abuse.

It is always therefore essential to look with fresh eyes at the Gospel, and to attempt to take nothing for granted.

Blessed are those who mourn. There is no truer statement. Although the cost of love at times can be so painful. I have seen grief and it can be beautiful. This couple separated by death shared a life of forty years. That daughter had a parent who gave her such hope. That friend laughed and knew the trust of someone who really understood. These are not just memories. For the goodness you received is now a part of you.

Blessed are the meek. My whole existence is held in being by the creative gaze of God. Without that breath of life poured into me, I am as nothing. I am as nothing without that love. To know this is to be aware that each second of my life is gift. It is to feel as those who emerge from illness and walk again in the goodness of the day. Or as someone who emerges from a car crash, with neither cut nor scar, and oh so short a realisation of what matters. The meek know what they are, and are thus free to celebrate what they have been given.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. We immediately think of those beyond the day to day. Martin Luther King, Mahatma Gandhi. Day to day there is the struggle to believe in yourself. Day to day there is the challenge of seeing through the masks and preconceptions of social media. Day to day there is the response to a lazy world that would have you join the tired and weary and give up. Don't give up.

Blessed are the merciful. This is so true. How often have I lost my temper. Left the place of disturbance. Then in my own head travelled around and around in small circles of argument, insult, misunderstanding and bitterness. To be free of this grudge which colours all else that I do. To know deeply that in 900 and 99 times out of a thousand, it does not matter. It's not my problem. I can do nothing about it. The merciful let go. Wouldn't that be nice?

Blessed are the pure in Heart. There but for the grace of God go I. Having nothing to hide, living with such consummate honesty is another form of freedom. Indignation is all too often the cry of the hypocrite hiding behind condemnation. The law must be seen to be done. The law must be done, but why all this screaming. Those with clear conscience do not act from fear, but from justice.

Blessed are the peacemakers. As a student during holidays one of my uncles gave me work on building sites. Arranged that I be paid far more than I was worth. Did the same thing for brothers and cousins. This paid for the independence of those years. His motto was, **firm but fair. Firm but fair.** In charge and providing work for all those other labouring men, which clothed the children and put food on the table. No abstract notion this, Uncle Neil was a peacemaker.

Blessed are those persecuted. Here perhaps we should look to the saints and prophets. We should thank God that the police do not monitor our movements. Or that building a church does not incite riots.

That we can act politically for justice.

And yet still

This is a fallen world

Thus

Within your heart

Within your home

Within your community

You will experience repression

And persecution

If you attempt to live within the truth

Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven

For your reward is great in heaven