

The Beatitudes Direct Us to Happiness

We all desire happiness. We spend much of our lives seeking happiness or avoiding what will make us unhappy. Spending time with friends or family, playing sports, or reading our favorite book can bring us enjoyment. While these things are good in themselves, God offers us an even deeper kind of happiness, a happiness that lasts even when we experience things that are difficult or unpleasant. Jesus tells us that true happiness is the kind we can have even in the midst of suffering.

Jesus teaches us about true happiness in the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are found in the Gospel of Matthew, at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. The word “beatitude” means “blessedness” or “happiness.” God had promised Abraham that all peoples would be blessed through Him. Christ and His Church fulfill God’s promise to Abraham. When we live in Christ and His kingdom, we receive the fullness of the blessedness promised to all peoples through Abraham. In this promise, our desire for happiness is truly and perfectly satisfied.

Jesus teaches us that happiness is found in the Kingdom of God living in our hearts, not in what we find in this earthly life. Jesus tells us that the poor in spirit will inherit the kingdom, that the mourning will be comforted, and that the meek shall inherit the earth. He tells us that those who seek righteousness will be satisfied, that the merciful shall receive mercy, and that the pure in heart shall see God. He tells us that the peacemakers shall be called God’s children, that the persecuted will inherit the kingdom, and that those who suffer for Jesus will receive great reward in Heaven.

The Beatitudes teach us what will make us truly and perfectly happy. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches us, God has placed a desire for Himself in our hearts (see CCC 1725). We are made truly and perfectly happy by inhabiting God’s kingdom and by seeing God face-to-face. We are blessed when we share in God’s own life and receive eternal life. We reach beatitude when we become God’s children and find our rest in Him.

Journal Reflection

How can you be happy even when things are difficult? Write your answer on the journal page. Journal pages are available on the parent and student portals.

