

Those Blessed by God- Nigeria

This morning I want to talk through the first eight verses of His sermon, this is where God is promising where blessing is. I assume everyone in this room wants to be blessed and not cursed. They want to have joy and peace, so with that let's talk about what it means, "blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." First of all, what is the kingdom of heaven? So often we talk about salvation, how we are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ which is an important thing to understand, but He doesn't start there. When Jesus Christ came, He gave the same message John the Baptist gave, which is the kingdom of God is at hand. When the wise men came, they came from the East. Why did they come to see Christ? Because they said the kingdom of heaven was at hand. Do you know what the kingdom of heaven is? Let's consider what the kingdom of heaven is. If you go to Daniel 2, Daniel is the only book in the Bible that was written in the East. It was written by magi, by a wise man. It was written by a wise man from Babylon, probably the same place the wise men that came to worship Jesus Christ. In the book of Daniel, it gives a timeline for what is going to happen. It says Babylon will fall to the Medes and Persians, they will fall to the Greeks, they will fall to the Romans, and then the kingdom of God will be established. The people who had the Word of God, the Jews, they read it and they had no idea what was going on. They had all the Scripture from Genesis to Malachi, but they didn't know what was going on. These wise men in the East, those who followed Daniel in leading that area of the world, they understood what was going on, they paid attention to the revelation of God. They knew what Daniel 2 meant. In Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar had this dream that no one knew, he himself couldn't even remember it. He had this dream of a statue that had a head of gold, shoulders of silver, a belly of bronze, legs of iron and feet of iron mixed with clay. The whole book of prophecy of Daniel says that 483 years later this statue will be destroyed by a new kingdom. Your theme for the year is, "behold, I do a new thing." Do you know what that new thing is that's talked about in Isaiah 3? The context of that is God establishing His kingdom. It's the same thing that's talked about in Daniel 2:34-35, "ADD" He has this vision of this statue made up of these various metals. The wind carried them away so no trace of them could be found. The stone that struck the image became a great mountain that filled the whole earth. What is this stone that was cut without hands? Do you understand, that's why Jesus Christ, when Peter cuts off the ear of the man who's trying to arrest Him, says, 'My servants are not servants of this world or they would fight.' He is establishing a kingdom that was cut without hands. If He raised an army to conquer the world, that's the same that every other kingdom did, but Christ does not do that. He creates a kingdom that is pictured by this rock being cut from a mountain without hands. If you go to 44 in the same chapter it says, "ADD" That is the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom that God sets up at the coming of Christ that the book of Daniel tells exactly when it will be set up. The wise men knew this is how it would be set up and it's the kingdom that will fill the whole earth. Last night at the crusade I talked about so many people want to say that the world is getting worse and worse. I guarantee to you that a hundred twenty years ago, when no one had preached the name of Christ in this city, before the first missionaries came, it was far worse than it is now. The promise of the kingdom of God is that it will crush all the kingdoms of the earth. No kingdom will stand before the kingdom of God. This rock that He cut out, which were the twelve apostles, will expand until it's a mountain that fills the whole earth. Everybody, every single person will either be part of that mountain or be crushed by it. The kingdom

shall not be left to other people, it will break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and shall stand forever. The church of Jesus Christ is to be destroying all the kingdoms of the earth. It's not supposed to do it with hands, it does it through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The kingdom of Nigeria started to fall when missionaries came to Miango. This is how the kingdom of God will crush all the kingdoms of this earth. Verse 45, "ADD" Do you know this is what God said was going to happen? There are so many people who take Daniel and twist it to come up with all other kinds of things, but this is what God says will happen. The dream is certain and its interpretation is sure. All the Pharisees knew Daniel, the Jews knew Daniel, but when Christ came, who recognized Him as King? Not the Pharisees or Jews, they were the ones who read the book of Daniel and believed it. Do you read the book of Daniel and believe this is the kingdom Christ established and the kingdom Christ established? This is why Christ came, He didn't come to save some people. He came to rule a kingdom that He was the ruler of, that will defeat all of His enemies. Then Jesus Christ will return, then He will come for the second time to defeat the last enemy which is death. That's the context that Jesus is speaking in, He's speaking and saying this is how you have the kingdom of heaven because everyone who is not part of the kingdom of heaven will be crushed and destroyed. All these worldly kingdoms, they will be destroyed. There is only one kingdom that is everlasting, and that is the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Are you part of that kingdom? Matthew 5:3 says to be part of that kingdom, Jesus Christ says you must be poor in spirit. The proud are not part of the kingdom of God. Those who say they are self-sufficient are not poor in spirit. The ones who say they will take God for salvation but not for anything else are not poor in spirit and they are not part of the kingdom of God. There's blessing and there's cursing. If you want eternal blessing you have to think lowly of yourself and see yourself as God sees you. The desperate man knows he can do nothing for himself, he needs God for everything. When we think that the only reason we can take a breath is because God took dirt and blew on it to form a man, there is no place for anything but to be poor in spirit. That word 'poor' there is the lowest level of poverty. Do you realize that without Christ you cannot be any poorer? You might have millions of naira, but the reality is that you are poor and until you see that poverty of your spirit, you have no part in the kingdom of God. Those who see their desperate need for God, they will be blessed. Are you blessed this morning? Are you rejoicing in the goodness of God this morning? Matthew 5:4, "ADD" We want there to be great joy and pleasure in this life. That's what those who do not know Christ seek, they seek pleasure. God says seek morning. Ecclesiastes 7:2, "ADD" This was written by the wisest man who ever existed, with the exception of Jesus Christ who was wisdom Himself. He said it is better to go into the house of mourning than the house of feasting because that is the end of all men and the living will take it to heart. I know over the past year in Miango, you have had much death and destruction. You have had many problems with the Fulani. Think of why God sends those kinds of events. He sends those events so you say this is the end of all living. Tomorrow the Fulani might attack again and some sitting in this room might die, have you mourned? It can't be mourning over the dead, it's mourning over your sin for that's what separates you from the kingdom of God. If you are truly in the kingdom of God, the Fulani might kill you but you are still part of the kingdom of God. When Jesus Christ comes and takes those who are in heaven, He rejoins them to their bodies that are buried on earth and He brings those that are living and removes their corruption and that is the final culmination of the kingdom of heaven where He is destroying all His enemies. You're not part of that kingdom unless you have mourned over your sin. You can confess your sin, that's a good thing, but a lot of time people confess their sin because they are in trouble, not because they are mourning over

their sin. Are you mourning over your sin? This is what is required for salvation. Those who are happy, those who are joyful are not just those who confess their sin and continue to do their sin. It's those who mourn over their sin so they stop doing it. The glory of Christ is that He doesn't just forgive us our sin, He causes us to mourn over it so we stop doing it. When we see the end of our sin is death we start to mourn over our sin and that's when He comforts us. He doesn't just comfort us when we confess our sin, He comforts us when we mourn over our sin. The greatest comfort of all is that He gives us strength and power to stop sinning. We stop receiving the wages of sin because ultimately the wages of sin are death, but the wages of sin in this life are extreme as well. The husband who commits adultery has to deal with the fact in his marriage with his relationship with his wife and he has misery all his days. The person who steals is always afraid that somebody is trying to catch him. The wages of sin, God was merciful and kind and made it so you can always see the wages of sin. The person who gets drunk wakes up and his head is pounding and he vomits. When we mourn over our sin He takes the sin away so that we no longer have to suffer the consequences of the sin. This is a blessing from God. Through salvation you get comforted with eternal life when you repent and turn to God, when you mourn over your sin and say you need a Savior. Then He comforts you with salvation, but once you are saved it doesn't end there. As you read the Word, as you hear the Word preached, as you see the holiness of God, it should cause you to mourn over your sin that remains. We put to death the old man, the man of sin that still remains in us by mourning over our sins, by mourning over the fact that it's an offense to Jesus Christ and then He comforts us. He not only forgives us our sins, but He cleanses us and removes that sin from us. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek, ADD" Remember what the kingdom of heaven does, it grows to be this huge mountain that covers the whole earth. The meek are the ones who are part of the kingdom of heaven that will receive the whole earth. They are the ones that are joint heirs with Jesus Christ. They are the ones who will reign with Him, but to be one of the people that inherit the earth, meekness is required. Psalm 37:7-8, "ADD" That's a good description of someone who is meek, they cease from anger and wrath. When you get angry it is always about your pride, it is always because you are exalting yourself, that's why you get angry. That's why no angry man will inherit the kingdom of God, because to be meek means you have forsaken anger. Not righteous anger, not anger because the name of Christ is being blasphemed. There is an appropriate place for that anger, such as when Christ flipped the tables in the temple. Don't deceive yourselves, how often is your anger actually related to the righteousness of God? Cease from anger, forsake wrath, and do not be anxious. Be anxious for nothing, but in all things turn them over to prayer and supplication to God. That's what it means to be meek, for evildoers shall be cut off. Those who trust in God, they inherit the earth and waiting on the Lord doesn't mean you take matters into your own hands. God says to do one thing, but that doesn't seem to be working so I'm going to do something else, that's the opposite of meekness. Meekness is when God says to do something, you do it because you are His servant. The kingdom of heaven will fill the earth, all the kingdoms of the earth will be crushed and be like chaff before the summer winds. That's the promise in Scripture. The meek say they will do it God's way not their way. The proud say they will do it their way because God's way doesn't seem to be working. This is what it means to walk by faith and not by sight. It's not that you figure it out, it's that you figure out what God says to do then you do it. The meek will inherit the earth. Psalm 37:10-11, "ADD" Do you wait on the Lord? Do you trust that those who rise up and do wickedly, that if we are faithful to God and do what He commands us to do, they will only be for a little while? Because God promised the kingdom of

heaven will destroy all the kingdoms of this earth, but it's done without hands. It's not done by rising up and overthrowing a wicked government because that always absolves another wicked government. That's what happened when the Medes overthrew the Babylonians, when the Greeks overthrew the Medes, when the Romans overthrew the Greeks. The kingdom that is cut without hands is the kingdom that Christ is establishing, it's what He sent His people to do, to preach the Word, to conquer the kingdom and to crush all the kingdoms of the earth. How do you crush the evil and corruption in Nigeria? I will tell you. Having a different leader elected is not going to work, the corruption will move around, but it's still the same because those are kingdoms made without hands. The way to crush the kingdom of Nigeria is with the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. The promise is they will be destroyed, the wicked will not last that long. What happens is that we preach for a moment, but we don't wait on the Lord. We are not meek and we take things into our own hands and that is wicked because that's what the wicked do. A lot of people have good intentions when they go into government, but when they get there, because they did it using human techniques, they become just another human government, they are just going to have corruption. It's going to have people taking advantage of other people. The solution is to conquer a kingdom without hands, the meek will just start that, they will continue that. They don't just start by putting their petitions at the feet of Christ, they continue to when He doesn't answer in the time frame that they want because the meek wait on the Lord. Do you wait on the Lord? Those who wait on the Lord, the meek, will inherit the earth. Do you say you will trust in God's ways? Matthew 5:6, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. ADD" Too often in America and Nigeria, people want to say follow Jesus Christ and be rich. The Bible clearly teaches that if you follow Jesus Christ you will be rich, but not rich in the things of this world, rich in righteousness. The most precious thing, if you hunger and seek for righteousness, God will give it to you, you will be filled. God has ordered the world so we can understand things about Him. Every time you go without a meal, where you haven't eaten for a while and you have hunger pain, that should remind you to desire to know what God wants you to do more and more. Every time you don't have something to drink and you get thirsty, that's to remind you that this is the passion you should have to know the Word of God. He promises prosperity for everyone that truly seeks Him. Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness? This coming week, every time you feel a hunger pain or need water, think first what sin should I turn from. God has given you that hunger and thirst to understand what your desire should be for His righteousness. Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness? We see David, a man after God's own heart, he meditates on the law night and day. That's a man who hungers and thirsts after righteousness. If you never read the Word of God, don't deceive yourself about whether you hunger and thirst after righteousness. Right here is where righteousness is declared. If you say you are hungry and you pass by a restaurant, but instead of going in you a place where you can buy blocks to make a wall, you're not really hungry. God has given us the restaurant where we are supposed to eat, He has given us the place where we are to get our food. If you always walk by it and never go into it, you're not hungry, you're not thirsty. God has given us His Word so that we can be filled. He's given us what we need to be filled with righteousness. Proverbs 4:3-7, "ADD" Do you retain the Word of God? Do you desire the words of Christ? That's what it means to hunger and thirst after righteousness. We say Christ is the principal thing, but the Bible says wisdom is the principal thing because Christ is wisdom. He is wisdom taking on flesh. Don't think you can seek Christ without desiring to seek wisdom, without hungering and thirsting after righteousness, because that's what it means to hunger and thirst after Christ. If you don't

care what He says, you don't care about Him. Don't cry that you love Jesus Christ when you don't care about the Word because Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh. Do you desire wisdom? Do you seek it? That's where fullness is in this world. Righteousness is so precious not because it makes our lives easier, it's precious because when we are a holy people that walk in God's ways, then we are glorifying God. We don't just glorify God when we preach the Word or when we sing or pray, or study the Scriptures. We glorify God when we obey His commandments and thirst after righteousness because then people look at us and they see our good works and they glorify our God in heaven. That is why we should desire wisdom. 1 Corinthians 10:31, "ADD" The reason we do them is to obey the Word of God. Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are blessed. Matthew 5:7, "ADD" Remember the parable that Jesus Christ tells of a man who is forgiven a huge amount of money, more money than all the Plateau State has, and then he wants to go and collect 10,000 Naira and he starts to beat the man because he won't pay him. Christ says that's the picture of the kingdom of heaven, God takes that man and sends him to hell. The only ones that receive the kingdom of heaven and who will reign with God and who will inherit the earth are the ones who are merciful. Are you merciful? If you ask your spouse, if you ask your children and the people who work with you or for you if you are merciful, what will their answer be? We can all lie and deceive ourselves because we're really good at that. This is core of what it means to be an unbeliever, God has declared who He is throughout all creation. There is no part of it that does not declare who God is, but yet we lie to ourselves and say there is no God. Every unbeliever lies to himself and says that either there is not God or that God is not the God of everything around us. We are all experts at lying to ourselves. Ask people if you are merciful, for only those who are merciful will receive mercy from God. That doesn't mean this is a work based salvation or we should do works to boast, quite the opposite, this is what it looks like to have the Holy Spirit in you. Where you were merciless, He gives you His Spirit so you now show mercy. He reveals Himself to you through His Spirit so you see the mercy that you have and the only possible response is to go show mercy to others. "Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy." Are you going to obtain mercy from the Lord? Only those who are merciful will obtain mercy from the Lord. It doesn't matter how long you've been in church, it doesn't matter if you tithe, it doesn't matter if you do all these things, if you don't have mercy, God says you are not His. It doesn't matter what your lips say, if you do not have a heart for mercy you do not love God and God does not love you. So often it is preached that when we are judged on the last day that Christ will cover us in His righteousness so we are judged according to His righteousness, but that's not what the Scriptures say. The Scriptures say we have been forgiven through His righteousness, but He will judge us according to our righteousness. If He has saved us through His blood, He does not leave us in the same place. In Matthew 25, He says He will judge based on if you feed those that are hungry. He doesn't say unless you are covered by the righteousness of Christ because everyone who is covered by the righteousness of Christ feeds those that are hungry. Everyone who is covered in the righteousness of Christ shows mercy. So Jesus Christ, when He stands at the judgement seat doesn't judge us based on His righteousness, He judges us according to the righteousness that the Holy Spirit worked in us. Everyone who receives the Holy Spirit walks in the good works that Jesus Christ prepared beforehand for us to walk in so that God could judge us according to those good works not so we can brag, so that we can proclaim the goodness and majesty of God. He doesn't say to a murderer, 'I forgive you, go murder again', He says, 'I forgive you now don't murder anymore, I have put My Spirit in you and He will stop you.' No murderer will inherit the kingdom of God,

that's a promise in Scripture. Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Remember the crowd He is speaking to; He is speaking to all these Jews who are sure they are children of God. They have Abraham as their father so they say they are sure we are the children of God. The Pharisees memorized Genesis through Deuteronomy so they say they know everything God says to do that's right, they have it in their head. Jesus Christ said that's worthless, the ones that see Jesus Christ have it in their heart and not just their head. You can read and memorize the Word of God, but if you're only doing it only to rebel against God by doing it to look holy, because that's what the Pharisees did, and that's what He goes on in much of the Sermon on the Mount to declare. Just because you don't murder everyone, but yet you're angry with everybody, you're not pure in heart. You've taken the literal word, but you haven't taken the meaning. Make sure you're not just professing Christ with your lips, but your hearts are far from Him. This has been a problem throughout history with the people who identify with Christ. Identifying Him with your lips but your heart being far from Him does not mean you will see God. You will be in the place of utter darkness, where you will see nothing. Only those who are saved and with God, they are the only ones that will see Him. Mathew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God." It's really easy for us to think that making peace is making peace with one another, but that's now what God says here. He says to make peace with Him, blessed are those who preach the gospel of Christ for they shall be called sons of God. May you be called the sons of God.