



# Unexpected Blessing: Living the Countercultural Reality of the Beatitudes

*Cameron Lee*

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"We have always needed God's blessing, though we forget this when the course of life seems smooth and steady. But when trouble visits, we turn to God and invoke his favor. Yet do we really know what we are asking for? And is it possible to live in such a way that blessing becomes part of the very fabric of life?" - from the introduction

When someone says, "God bless you," what does it mean? What does the blessing of God on our lives look like? Too often Christians have understood God's blessing in terms of the priorities of our popular culture. But in the Christian life, blessedness is more than good fortune, emotional happiness or material prosperity. True blessing runs counter to how the world operates and only comes through participating in the kingdom Jesus announced.

One set of lenses for viewing this blessed life is found in the Beatitudes of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The Beatitudes are not a set of moral rules or a how-to manual. Nor are they "Eight Simple Steps to God's Blessing" or a self-improvement plan designed to guarantee God's favor. Instead, Cameron Lee sees the Beatitudes as a window through which we may view the new landscape that Jesus called the kingdom of heaven. He illustrates the nature of this kingdom by contrasting each Beatitude with the ways that our self-centered culture tugs at us. His exposition helps us reevaluate our cultural assumptions and challenge the world's values.

As we live in light of the Beatitudes, those around us will see the appealing uniqueness of God's kingdom. And we will discover life as God meant it to be--marked by wholeness, transformation and freedom.

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