

What Did He Say?

Day 1 of the Making

Week of Monday, July 6 through Saturday, July 11, 2026

Anchored in Matthew 5:1-3 NKJV

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

Matthew 5:3 NKJV

Sunday we sat on the mountain and heard the first words of the Kingdom. This week we live with them. One reading a day, Monday through Saturday. Read the passage first, then the devotion, then answer the question and pray. Bring what God shows you into Echo Sessions on Tuesday night and back to the mountain on Sunday.

DAY ONE | MONDAY, JULY 6

Crowd or Disciple?

Read: Matthew 4:18-25 and Matthew 5:1

"And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him."

Matthew 5:1 NKJV

Two groups stood on the same mountain. The multitude followed the miracles. Matthew tells us plainly that the crowds came because of the healings. They came for what Jesus could do. The disciples came for something else. The word disciple means learner, apprentice, someone attached to a teacher in order to become like him. The crowd wanted the product. The disciples wanted the process.

Watch the movement in the verse. Jesus goes up. The crowd stays put. The disciples come to Him. Proximity is not pursuit. You can be near Jesus every Sunday and never actually approach Him. The crowd attends. The disciple climbs.

Jesus told four fishermen, follow Me and I will make you. The making starts with a decision the crowd never makes: to come to Him not for output but for formation. Start your week with that decision.

REFLECT

Be honest before God: this past month, have I been closer to the crowd or the disciples? What would climbing look like for me this week?

PRAY

Father, I do not want to be near You for what You can do and miss who You are. I came for the making. Draw me from the crowd to the climb. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY TWO | TUESDAY, JULY 7

The Seated King

Read: Matthew 5:1-2 and Psalm 78:1-4

"Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:"

Matthew 5:2 NKJV

Before Jesus said one word, His posture preached. He went up the mountain like Moses, but Moses went up to receive the Word and Jesus went up to give it. He sat down, because in the first century a rabbi sat to teach with authority. The seat was the throne of the teacher. And then Scripture says He opened His mouth, an idiom the Bible reserves for solemn, weighted, fully intentional declaration.

God does not ramble. Genesis 1 is God opening His mouth and worlds standing up. Matthew 5 is God opening His mouth and a Kingdom standing up. Proverbs says death and life are in the power of the tongue. So when the Son of God speaks on purpose, everything that follows deserves your full attention.

Tonight is Echo Sessions at 7 PM. Come with your study guide and come expecting. The same Jesus who opened His mouth on the mountain still speaks to people who sit down long enough to listen.

REFLECT

If Jesus never did another miracle for me, would His words alone be enough to keep me at His feet? What does my answer reveal?

PRAY

Lord, You speak with full intention, and I confess I often listen with partial attention. Tonight and this week, give me ears that take Your words as seriously as You spoke them. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY THREE | WEDNESDAY, JULY 8

Blessed Is a Verdict

Read: Matthew 5:3-12 and Psalm 1

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

Matthew 5:3 NKJV

The world uses blessed as a caption. The car, the vacation, the promotion. Blessed means the good life you can photograph. Then Jesus stands in history and pins His first blessed on a beggar, and heaven's definition breaks the world's definition in half.

The word is makarios. It is not a wish, not a prayer, and not a feeling. It is a verdict, a declaration of objective condition: favored, fortunate, to be envied, flourishing under God's approval. In the Greek the sentence does not even carry a verb. It reads like a stamp: blessed, the poor in spirit. Not blessed someday if things improve. Blessed now, ruled from the bench of heaven.

That means your blessedness is not measured by your circumstances. You can be makarios in tears. You can be makarios in a storm. If the King has ruled over your life, no situation on earth can overturn the verdict.

REFLECT

Where have I been letting circumstances tell me whether I am blessed? What does it change to receive blessed as God's verdict instead of my mood?

PRAY

Father, forgive me for grading my blessedness by what I can see. You have ruled, and Your ruling stands. I receive Your verdict over my feelings today. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY FOUR | THURSDAY, JULY 9

The Empty Hand

Read: Luke 18:9-14 and Matthew 5:3

"God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

Luke 18:13 NKJV

Greek has two words for poor. One describes the working poor, the man who labors and barely gets by, but gets by. Jesus did not use that word. He chose ptochos: the beggar, the one with nothing, whose only move is an outstretched, empty hand. Then He located the poverty, in spirit. This is not about your wallet, and it is not weak faith, low

self-worth, or a lack of love. It is the humble spirit that stands before God spiritually bankrupt and knows it.

Two men prayed in the temple. One recited his resume. One beat his chest and asked for mercy. Jesus said the beggar went home justified. The Pharisee's facts were accurate. His hands were just too full of himself to receive anything.

Poor in spirit means God-dependent. Not God-assisted, where He boosts your plan. Not God-adjacent, where He stays nearby but unnecessary. God-dependent. He is not your backup. He is your breath.

REFLECT

What am I still holding in my hands as leverage before God: my record, my effort, my consistency? What would it mean to come to Him empty today?

PRAY

God, be merciful to me a sinner. That is my whole resume. I bring You nothing but need, and I trust You to be everything I lack. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY FIVE | FRIDAY, JULY 10

Watch Me, Join Me, Lead Me

Read: Proverbs 3:5-6, Mark 10:17-22, and James 4:13-15

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding."

Proverbs 3:5 NKJV

Every life runs on one of three postures. Self-dependence prays after it plans. Prayer is the backup generator, not the power source. It worries by default, because everything rides on you, and it cannot rest, because rest feels like falling behind. Its confidence rises and falls with its own performance.

Co-dependence is sneakier. It wants God as a partner, not a King. It brings God a finished plan and asks for a signature instead of bringing Him a blank page and asking for instructions. It obeys when obedience makes sense. That was the rich young ruler. He wanted to add Jesus to a life he was still running, and he walked away sad, because God does not co-sign. He reigns.

God-dependence prays before it plans. It holds plans loosely and God tightly. It can say if the Lord wills and mean it. It receives correction without collapsing, because identity is not performance. And it can rest, because the One who keeps you does not slumber. Self-dependence says watch me. Co-dependence says join me. God-dependence says

lead me.

REFLECT

Run the test: when trouble hit this week, what did I reach for first? Was my last prayer a briefing or a surrender? Which posture is honestly my default?

PRAY

Father, I resign as my own king. I do not want Your signature on my plans. I want Your instructions on my blank page. Lead me, and I will follow. In Jesus' name, amen.

DAY SIX | SATURDAY, JULY 11

The Beggars Own the Kingdom

Read: Matthew 5:3 and Romans 8:15-17

"For theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 5:3 NKJV

Look at the tense. Most of the beatitudes point forward: they shall be comforted, they shall inherit the earth, they shall be filled. But the first one says is. Theirs IS the kingdom of heaven. The moment you come to God with empty hands, the reign of God belongs to you. Not someday. Now. The beggars hold the deed.

Sit in the paradox. The people with nothing get everything. The Kingdom does not go to the qualified. It goes to beggars who know they are beggars, and the only thing that can disqualify you is believing you are qualified. The door is low. You cannot walk through it standing tall on your record. You come through bowed, hands open, spirit bankrupt.

And here is the family secret of the Kingdom: it is inherited, not earned. Romans says we are children of God, and if children, then heirs. You did not buy in. You were born in. Tomorrow we go back to the mountain. Come with open hands.

REFLECT

As I prepare for Sunday, what is the one thing this week's readings asked me to release? Am I walking into worship tomorrow with full hands or open ones?

PRAY

Father, thank You that the Kingdom is inherited, not earned. I come as an heir who arrived as a beggar. I open my hands for tomorrow. Speak, and I will listen. In Jesus' name, amen.

Join us Sunday at 10:10 AM at Omni Cinemas and Tuesdays at 7:00 PM EST for Echo Sessions. Comment SESSIONS on any Echo Church post for the link.

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