

## **Blessings**

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The sermon on the mount: this was the first time the Lord spoke to the multitudes. What would His first words be? He could have spoken of judgment or punishment. But His first words were words of blessings, "rejoice and be exceedingly glad."

The Lord offers us the ten blessings, the beatitudes. In these blessings, He challenges us to consider blessings that are realistic and genuine. This is the nature of Divine truth: it challenges us, it lifts our minds to something higher and it transforms our lives.

The Lord comes to us and says that these are the blessings He offers: to mourn, to be poor in spirit, to become meek, to hunger and thirst, to be persecuted, to be reviled, to be merciful, to be a peacemaker, and to be pure in heart.

Think back over your life to moments where you had true blessings and you might begin to see the real meaning of the Lord's blessings that He offers us. Think of a time when you truly mourned for another person - you cared for them, you were present with them during their time of trial and temptation, you cried with them... And in that moment we can begin to understand the Lord's words, "Blessed are those who mourn."

Even the blessings we can readily understand are still greater than we can imagine. The Lord offers us the blessing of peace, and this blessing transcends thought. We read, "Regarding the state of peace that exists in heaven one may say that it is such that no words can describe it; nor can any idea of a worldly origin enable it to enter a person's thought and perception, as long as he is in the world." (*Arcana Caelestia* 8455)

Let us, today, reflect on our lives in the context of the ten blessings the Lord offers us. And let us, as the Lord says, "rejoice and be exceedingly glad," for great is our reward in heaven.