

A landscape photograph oriented upside down. At the top of the image is a vibrant green field. Below it is a clear, bright blue sky. In the lower right portion of the image, a single, large, leafy tree is reflected in a body of water, which appears as a dark, inverted mirror image of the tree and the sky above it.

THE BEATITUDES

Living right-side-up in an upside-down world

MATTHEW 5:1-16 ~ NLT ~

1 One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, 2 and he began to teach them.

3 “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him,

for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

4 God blesses those who mourn,

for they will be comforted.

5 God blesses those who are humble,

for they will inherit the whole earth.

6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice,

for they will be satisfied.

7 God blesses those who are merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure,
for they will see God.

9 God blesses those who work for peace,
for they will be called the children of God.

10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

11 “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad!

For a great reward awaits you in heaven.

And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

13 “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavour? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

14 “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.

15 No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house.

16 In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

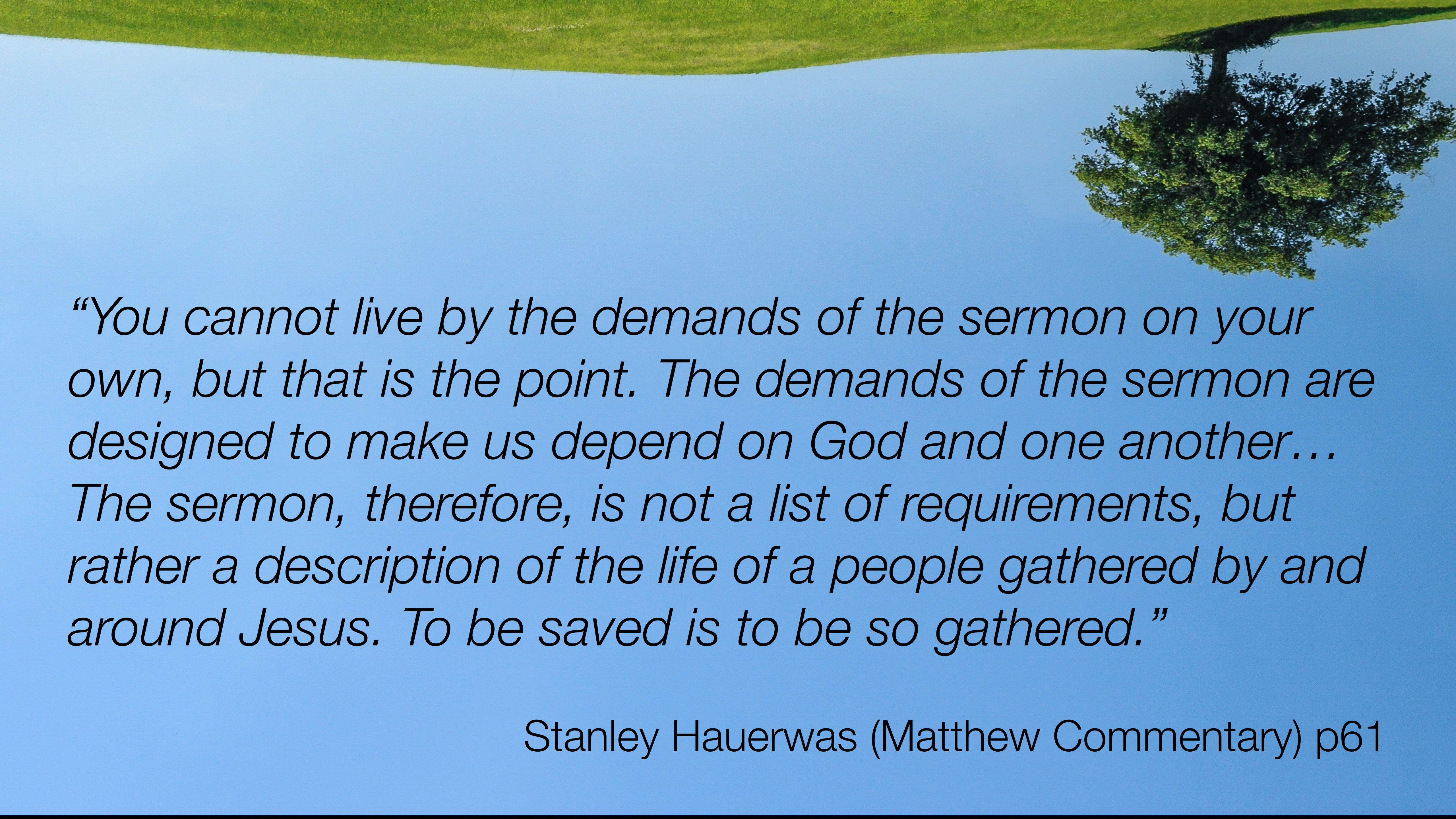


BEATITUDE:

a pronouncement of blessing

BLESSED

happy, joyful, blissful, honourable



“You cannot live by the demands of the sermon on your own, but that is the point. The demands of the sermon are designed to make us depend on God and one another... The sermon, therefore, is not a list of requirements, but rather a description of the life of a people gathered by and around Jesus. To be saved is to be so gathered.”

Stanley Hauerwas (Matthew Commentary) p61

“(Jesus) gathers people around his word so that a society comes into being like no other society the world has ever seen:

1. This was a voluntary society: you could not be born into it. You could come into it only by repenting and freely pledging allegiance to its king.

2. *It was a society that, counter to all precedent, was mixed in its composition. It was mixed racially, with both Jews and Gentiles; mixed religiously, with fanatical keepers of the law and advocates of liberty from all forms; with both radical monotheists and others just in the process of disentangling their minds from idolatry; mixed economically both rich and poor.*

3. *When he called his society together Jesus gave its members a new way of life to live. He gave them a new way to deal with offenders - by forgiving them. He gave them a new way to deal with violence - by suffering. He gave them a new way to deal with money - by sharing it. He gave them a new way to deal with problems of leadership - by drawing upon the gift of every member, even the most humble. He gave them a new way to deal with a corrupt society - by building a new order, not smashing the old. He gave them a new pattern of relationship between man and women, between parent and child, between master and slave, in which was made concrete a radical new vision of what it means to be a human person."*

Stanley Hauerwas (Matthew Commentary) p68

A landscape photograph featuring a vibrant green field in the foreground, a clear blue sky in the middle ground, and a single tree reflected in a body of water in the background. The text "BLESSED are you..." is overlaid on the sky area.

BLESSED

are you...