

# Character of the Called

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Going from *Dark to Different* is accepting Jesus into our life to *improve* our life in many ways but we are called to a complete *change* in our ways, words, replies and reactions.

That change is the only way to be rescued from the approaching *destruction*. We are to be a “*new creation*” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Jesus came to make us totally *different from* the world—our change in attitude will change our *direction*.

Divine power has “*called us to a holy life*” 2 Timothy 1:9. We are now a *chosen* generation, a *royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own special people* 1 Peter 2:9.

Dark *loses* its power when Light *replaces* it—and if we walk in the light of Christ, our *new ways* will replace the *dark ways* of the world—dark responses like insults, anger, and resentment that are often seen and heard today. Our *new ways* are now compliments and kind words.

Following Jesus has us walking a *permanent path* that leads to a *permanent Paradise*. When we walk in the light of God's Truth, our ways and attitudes give a *visible testimony*—reflecting the character of God—that is *our calling!*

Turning on a light in a cluttered room reveals many things that need attention—cleaning out and putting things in order—like Bible reading first.

When the Light of Christ enters our heart, we can proceed with the *changes and corrections* the Light reveals.

Following the Jesus compels us to *stop excusing* attitudes and to *start obeying* the Bible. Walking in the Light of our Redeemer means living the life of a believer—the life Jesus describes Matt 5-7.

Jesus *calls us* to a life of trust in Him for the *forgiveness* we need and the *eternal life* we desire—it is a *new way* of living, of speaking, and of treating people.

The sacrifice of Christ not only rescues us from the penalty of sin, but it invites us to a transformed way of living.

Jesus clearly defines what our life will *look like* when we give our life to Him without compromise, and He answers the questions *What does a changed heart look like? What will it sound like? And How will I act when obeying His call to follow Him?*

His sermon explains the *inner character* of a believer; the *outward influence* of those who follow Jesus; the meaning of *fulfilling* God's Law; and the seriousness of unrepentant sins—like anger, resentment, and murder.

Jesus tells us who is truly “*blessed*” of God—and shifting focus from *worldly success* that is not important, to the *inner change of character* that *is* of *eternal* importance.

Jesus does something unexpected as He begins His sermon—He doesn't start with *external* rules but begins with *internal character*.

Each Beatitude describes someone who is already responding to God's call to live an obedient life of trust.

## 1 Recognizing Our Need

AV Matthew 5:3 “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*”

To be poor in spirit is knowing we have nothing to offer, so we come humbly before God's throne of grace and pour out our heart to Him. *Change* begins when we realize how much we need His Spirit to obey His Word.

## 2 Grieved Over Sin

Matthew 5:4 “*Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*” We are to regret our wrongs and be sorry for past sins.

It means being saddened over the dark spiritual condition of the world today and grieved when others fall into sin. AV Ephesians 4:30 “*Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*”

## 3 Our Promised Inheritance

Matthew 5:5 “*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*”

*Meek* should never be confused with *weak* because it means *strength under control*. It is humility and self-control—aligning our will with the will of God. It is trusting God to defend our rights when we give ours up for another.

A mild manner is a fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:23 “*Meekness, temperance [gentleness, self-control NKJV].*” Meekness is a core quality in regard to inheriting God's blessings. The world promotes *self-independence*, but Jesus *calls* us to *God-dependence*.

## 4 A New Appetite

Matthew 5:6 “*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*”

A changed heart *wants* what God wants—and He wants to see changed attitudes in us.

This desire for righteousness is not a casual interest but is a serious longing for Christlike ways.

## 5 Reflecting Grace

**Matthew 5:7** “*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*”

If we really *understand* the mercy God has shown to us, we will instantly *extend* mercy to others. We are *called* to be compassionate, sympathetic, and considerate of others.

## 6 Undivided Devotion

**Matthew 5:8** “*Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*”

It would not mean *outward* perfection but an inner *sincerity* of heart. It is a heart that is no longer divided between Jesus and the world, but one that is devoted to God and His Word.

## 7 Active Representatives

**Matthew 5:9** “*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*”

It is not to just *avoid* conflict, but we *actively pursue peace* between two, three, or more people. It is a call for peace and harmony among fellow believers.

## 8 Persecuted but Still Faithful

**Matthew 5:10-12** “*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

**11** *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

**12** *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*”

Following Jesus will eventually cost us something—it is why He said **Matthew 10:38** “*He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.*”

Our calling includes divine courage when facing opposition and persecution. **Joshua 1:7** had to be *strong* and *courageous* so he could “*observe to do according to all the law.*”

## Influence of the called

After Jesus teaches on *who* we are and *why* we are here, He says **Matthew 5:13** “*Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*”

If we are salt, then we will *preserve* the peace and *enhance* the light of Jesus. We will *remain* distinct and different and be effective in bringing peace and influencing others.

## Light is Visible

**Matthew 5:14** “*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.*”

**15** *Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

**16** *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*”

We should not hide the fact that we believe in Jesus when a decision or reaction is to be made. Our witness for Christ should not be a *dim light*, but a *shining beam* so our ways would be a right influence on people. Our calling is not lived privately but shining publicly.

## Authority of the King

**Matthew 5:17** “*Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*”

**18** *For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*”

A common misunderstanding is—**NKJV Matthew 5:17** “*Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets.*”

He does not cancel God’s law—but He fulfills it since He always honors God’s *Word* and because every command reflects God’s character.

**Matthew 5:19** “*Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*”

Jesus raises the standard of true Christianity by saying **WEY Matthew 5:20** “*Unless your righteousness greatly surpasses [exceeds AV] that of the Scribes and the Pharisees, you will certainly not find entrance into the Kingdom of the Heavens.*”

The Pharisees focused on *external* religious appearances, but Jesus demands an *internal* transformation of ways and words and behavior.

It is where the **Character of the Called** becomes unmistakably **Different!**

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