

Heirs of the Kingdom, Matthew 5:3-12
(James 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:3-6; Rev. 11:13)
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Description of Jesus' Repentant Followers	Equivalent	Other References	Their Coming Inheritance
Negative (defining repentance)			
1 poor in spirit	realize spiritual bankruptcy	Isa. 66:2	the kingdom of heaven
2 mourn	beg God to pardon & cleanse	Isa. 61:2; 2 Cor. 7:9-10	will be comforted
3 meek	surrender selves to God for Him to control	Ps. 37:11; Phil. 2:5-11	will inherit the earth
4 hunger and thirst for righteousness	seek to be like God & help others to do so	Isa. 55:1; John 7:37-39	will be filled (with righteousness)
Positive (emphasizing results of God's grace)			
5 merciful	seek good for the helpless and lost	Ps. 41:1-3; James 2:13	will be shown mercy
6 pure in heart	a) are honest with God & others, meditate on all He says b) are cleansed	Ps. 24:3-6; 73:1; Matt. 6:20-21; 12:34-35	will see God
7 peacemakers	are committed to resolving conflicts & making peace	Matt. 5:38-48; 2 Cor. 5:19-20	will be called sons of God
8a persecuted because of righteousness 8b people insult you, persecute you, falsely say...evil against you because of me	willing to stand for God & the right at any cost	Matt. 10:16-42; 1 Peter 4:12-16	the kingdom of heaven great is your reward (stored up) in heaven

(continued)

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These eight descriptions and eight promises are known as “beatitudes.” Much of their content came from Old Testament Scriptures, such as, Psalms 24:4; 37:11; 41:1-3; 73:1; and Isaiah 55:1; 61:2. In them Jesus spoke to and described repentant Jews who followed Him. All eight descriptions were true of each one—and are true of His sincere followers today. They were responding to two great realities they were witnessing: (a) a constant message and (b) convincing miracles.

- a. They were hearing this message repeated constantly by John the Baptist and Jesus: “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has drawn near” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; literally). The same message was later widely announced by Jesus’ apostles (Matt. 10:7), even on His final and deliberate journey to Jerusalem (Luke 10:1-2, 9, 11).
- b. They were seeing miracles Jesus was doing, and later His disciples (Matt. 4:23-25; see chapters 8-10; Luke 10:9). These miracles were the sort that could bring the predicted kingdom.

What was this “kingdom of heaven” that had drawn near? Certainly not God’s universal kingdom nor His rule over individual hearts; those have always been present and cannot draw near. None of the heralds defined it, confident that the Jews already knew what it will be. The Jews called it “the kingdom,” “the kingdom of God,” and “the kingdom of heaven.” They knew about it from many Old Testament prophecies, which described it as spiritual, material, and political (e.g., Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-16; 35:1-10). It will be a kingdom forever covering the earth. When they called it “the kingdom of heaven” (used only in Matthew because confusing to Gentiles), they reflected Daniel 2:35, 44-45. The kingdom will **not** be **in** heaven (location) but **from** heaven (origin). The Old Testament descriptions were ratified in passages such as Luke 1:32-33, 67-79; 19:11-27; and Acts 1:6; 3:19-21. Though Jesus did not inaugurate that kingdom in His first coming, He promised to do so when He comes again (Matt. 25:31). We have no right to change its meaning. It should be the great goal of our lives.