

Blessed are...

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- [0 : 00] Heavenly Father, we just pray now that as we open up your word, the words of your Son in Matthew chapter 5, we pray that indeed you would take those words and bring it close to our hearts.
- Help us to hear your voice speaking directly to us today through your scriptures. And may your Holy Spirit be working in us so that we would be ready to live joyfully before you.
- That is our prayer this morning. We pray all this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. All human beings want to be happy.
- I think that's a fair statement to make. You and I want to be happy and you and I want our loved ones to be happy. It's why your parents and grandparents sacrifice so much to make sure you can live in a good home and get a good education.
- All with the aim so that you might have a shot at living a happy life. It's why they often say, along with your friends, that they're okay with your choices, as long as it's not obviously immoral, so long as you are happy.
- [1 : 17] It's a big reason why you decided to study an art subject instead of science, or a science subject instead of arts. It's the reason why you chose Sarawak Laksa over Penang Laksa.
- It's why you decided to watch that romantic movie or sporting event instead of something else, because it makes you happy.
- It's certainly why companies spend so much money on advertising, seeking to persuade you that their fast car or exotic vacation or household appliance will bring you much happiness.
- Christians, however, are sometimes suspicious of happiness. We know after all that self-denial and self-sacrifice are part of the Christian life.
- Maybe you've heard me stress that in sermons and Bible studies. And in your mind, that must mean that happiness is not part of the Christian life. You've concluded that doing what is right does not involve doing what makes us happy.
- [2 : 27] The two just don't go together. The Christian life is simply about duty, not pleasure. And yet when we come to the scriptures, we discover a different picture.
- For starters, God is actually happy. You know, there are times perhaps when we think that God is perpetually gloomy, constantly lamenting the state of His creation.
- Maybe He's like us, we think, needing a break every now and then from His responsibilities so that He doesn't go crazy. But the Bible says God actually enjoys being God.
- Look at Jeremiah 32, verse 41. I will rejoice in doing them good. Or Zephaniah 3, verse 17.
- He will rejoice over you with singing. God is happy. And as John Piper writes in his book, The Pleasures of God, it is good news that God is gloriously happy.
- [3 : 39] No one wants to spend eternity with an unhappy God. You see, if God was unhappy, the gospel isn't really good news.

Because how can life spent eternally in relationship with a grumpy God be good news?
And so our God is a deeply happy God.

And throughout history, Christians have not been afraid to talk about being happy. For the great theologian Augustine, for instance, the attainment of the happy life is a worthy pursuit.

And he says so because he knows God isn't just happy, but wants to share his happiness with us. He wants to pour his happiness into us.

Now look at what Jesus says in John 15, verse 11. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you.

[4 : 43] In Christianity, unlike, say, in Buddhism, being happy is actually a worthy goal. The question, however, is this.

What is the happy life? What is the happy life according to Jesus? That is the question Jesus seeks to answer in the opening words of the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus begins his sermon by talking about happiness. As he opens his mouth, he says over and over again, nine times in total, the phrase blessed are.

That's why this section is often known as the Beatitudes, which comes from the Latin word for blessed, *betus*. But that English word you see in your Bibles, *blessed*, is actually the Greek word *makarios*, which is notoriously difficult to translate.

And it actually means happy. But not in the way we usually mean it. The reason our English translators don't use happy today is because most of us, when we hear the word happy, think about feeling happy.

[6 : 02] In our modern day context, we think of happiness mainly as a search for euphoria. It's associated almost exclusively with pleasurable sensations we subjectively experience after we had a nice dinner or we had an enjoyable night out.

And so because happiness for us is mainly equated with the emotional side, it wouldn't make sense, for example, to translate verse 4 as happy are those who mourn.

It's almost inappropriate. Happiness in ancient times was connected not just with emotions, although it does involve emotions, I'm not saying it doesn't, but it is also connected with a sense of well-being, with a state of well-being.

And so our English translations have settled on the word *blessed*. But to translate *makarios* as *blessed* has its own dangers because it can cause us to misread the beatitudes as if it's a vending machine.

I've used this image before, but I still think it's a very helpful one. In a vending machine, if you put in some coins, out comes a coke. And so if you put in the right kind of behavior, out comes blessing.

[7 : 33] That's a vending machine reading. It reduces the beatitudes simply to Jesus telling people how to behave properly.

But Jesus isn't offering here a list of what sort of people God likes to bless. Rather, he's making a statement about how people who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are meek, and so on, are already in a state of well-being.

Beatitudes are essentially descriptions, not prescriptions. They describe the good life, the happy life, the blessed life.

Let me try to describe this state of blessedness or happiness by using three different images. The first is the sweet spot.

For sportsmen, it's that point when your foot or your tennis racket or your golf club makes the best contact with the ball. For singers, it's that part of your vocal range where you sound your best.

[8 : 47] For investors, it's that position in the stock market where you make your best returns. It's that point where you are blooming and thriving and everything is just right.

Let me give you an Old Testament example. Consider 1 Kings 10, verse 8. The Queen of Sheba has visited King Solomon and seen his kingdom for herself.

And she praises him using these words. How happy your man must be. How happy your officials who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom.

In other words, what a state of happiness and blessedness your men are in. They are thriving because they are in the right place.

They are in Solomon's courts and so are the recipients of his great wisdom. It's not that they are rewarded with a sweet spot in Solomon's courts.

[9 : 57] Rather, because they are in Solomon's courts, so they are in a sweet spot. Or look at Psalm 144, verse 15.

Blessed is the people of whom this is true. Blessed is the people whose God is the Lord. The people know God, so they enjoy a state of blessedness.

They are in the sweet spot. The second image is the light of dawn. It's that moment after the night when you begin to see the first light.

The darkness is not yet gone, but you know the day is coming when darkness will be no more. And the blessedness Jesus is describing here is like that.

It has an eschatological dimension, which is a fancy way of saying that the blessing is not all here yet, but it will be. Let's look at another Old Testament example.

[11 : 05] Isaiah 30, verse 18. Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you. Therefore, He will rise up to show you compassion.

For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for Him. Notice God's display of grace and compassion is a future thing.

It's not here yet. God's people have to wait for it. But like the light of dawn, they are waiting for something that will surely come.

They don't see the day yet, but they hear the promise. And the promise is like the first light. It guarantees the coming of the day.

The promise in itself already gives a measure of blessedness. That's what Jesus also means to communicate in the Beatitudes.

[12 : 06] Notice, the Beatitudes are often future-looking. Blessed are the poor. Blessed are the pure. Blessed are the peacemakers.

For they will, they will, they will. It's future. But the future is certain.

Look at the first and eighth blessings in verse 3 and verse 10. And notice how it ends. Diaz is the kingdom.

This blessing, while its focus is future, begins now. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for example, for they can see with the eyes of faith what is already Diaz.

Now, the third image is the joyful mimic. And let me give you an example from my family life to try to illustrate this.

[13 : 09] I have a three-year-old son and an almost 14-month-old daughter. During this MCO, their mother has been getting my son to do some learning, reading and writing and colouring, which they do at a coffee table.

and whenever my daughter sees her mother and brother get out the books, the colouring pencils and the stool, she gives an excited squeal and wants to go and do the same.

She wants to sit on a Jacob's biscuit tin at the same table in the exact same way as her brother. She wants to open the same books as her brother and try to read them.

she wants to be like them and mimic them. She wants to have the same life, if you like, as them. Well, that's what the Beatitudes are like.

Remember, Jesus is not telling people how to behave properly. Rather, he's describing the good life. But as he describes the good life, he makes us want it as well.

[14 : 19] It's just like when a friend describes to you that incredible meal he had at that restaurant, or that wonderful Netflix show that he watched over the weekend, or that amazing gadget that he's just bought from Lazada, and now you want it as well.

He's not telling you to go and buy those things, but there's something about the way he says it that makes you want to do so. It's an indirect invitation.

And so, as Jesus describes the blessed state of all these people, he's inviting us to be like my daughter. He's inviting us to imitate them the way she imitates her brother.

A good Old Testament example is Psalm 1, our call to worship this morning. As the psalmist describes what the righteous and the wicked person is like, he shows how attractive the way of the righteous is, how he's like a tree by streams of water, how fruitful he is, how his leaves do not wither, so that we long for and desire to imitate him.

So let me summarize what we've said so far. Jesus begins his sermon on the mount with the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are not vending machines, as if Jesus is saying, do this, get blessing.

[15 : 51] Rather, he is describing people who are in a state of blessedness. They are people who sit in the sweet spot, who are exactly in the right place to thrive.

They are people who see the light of dawn, who know that they will come a day when they will experience consolation and happiness in full, which they already enjoy in some measure today.

And so although the Beatitudes are descriptive, they also invite us to become joyful mimics and be like such people so that we too will know true blessing and happiness.

They invite us to live in such a way today that doesn't make sense if we only focus on the here and now, but makes complete sense in the light of the future our servant king has won for us.

Because look at the happy or blessed life Jesus describes. At first and even second glance, it makes absolutely no sense, does it?

[17 : 05] When people talk about the happy and blessed life, what do they talk about? They talk about riches, they talk about joy, they talk about confidence.

Now look at what Jesus talks about. Be honest. When you think about how you can be happy, is this what comes to your mind?

I'll be happy if I hunger for righteousness. I'll be happy if I'm pure in heart. I'll be happy if I'm a peacemaker. Really?

Or when you read your son's essay from school about what he wants to be when he grows up, are you hoping that he'll write, when I grow up, I want to be poor in spirit.

I want to be mournful. I want to be meek. Will you feel embarrassed if he actually wrote that? Will you be worried for his future?

[18 : 06] And yet Jesus says, these are the blessed ones. They are blessed by God himself. He's happy to put his seal of approval on such people.

Now, it's important to recognize that Jesus is not talking about nine different groups of people here. He is not saying, oh, blessed is the Green Road Home Fellowship group because they are the merciful ones.

And oh, blessed is the Arang Road group over there because they are the peaceful ones. No, he's describing one group of people, kingdom people, and they bear all, not just one or two of the marks mentioned here.

Remember Jesus' primary audience. He is speaking to his disciples. So if you're a Christian today, that means he's speaking to you. and he's saying to you, these are simply the characteristics of my disciples.

These are the features of my followers. When you sign on to becoming a Christian, you are signing on to Jesus' culture.

[19 : 22] You are signing on to letting me determine your vision of a happy life, Jesus says. So do you trust me? You won't regret it.

And so let's go through each characteristic one by one. Because of time, I'll probably say more about the first four than the second four, partly because the second four will pop up again fairly soon in the rest of Matthew chapter 5.

So let's start with the first one. Jesus starts by saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

In other words, he's saying that blessed are those who are broken and contrite in spirit. They don't say, God, let me handle this myself.

But rather they cry out, God, I need you. I can't do this. I'm overwhelmed by life. I have nowhere else to go.

[20 : 29] Lord, I need you. Now, Jesus isn't simply talking about being economically poor here. If we have gotten too attached to our bank accounts or our possessions, he will challenge us, perhaps sometimes even asking us to give it all up.

But Jesus is not saying poverty in itself is a virtue. But it's also important to say that neither is Jesus talking about beating yourself up here.

You know, sometimes we think that Jesus is saying, or think more poorly of yourselves and be blessed. We think that he's encouraging us to say, oh, I have nothing to contribute to church.

I have nothing to contribute to society. I have nothing to contribute to anybody. It's almost like a competition as if the more we say we are nothing, the more spiritual we will be.

But the problem with that is that the focus is still on me. The focus is on what I have or don't have.

[21 : 34] The focus is on how I can achieve a certain attitude. But as the late Dallas Willard, the Christian philosopher, once said, Jesus did not say, blessed are the poor in spirit because they are the poor in spirit.

In fact, such a self-focused attitude, holy though it may look, is not being poor in spirit at all. The focus is still on me, and so you're actually being proud in spirit.

Now, the person who is poor in spirit is like the tax collector in Luke 18. It's the person who stands before God, beating his breast, saying, have mercy on me, a sinner.

It's not the person who tells God, oh, I'm so thankful that I'm not like this guy or that guy, but that I fast and give and pray all the time. Rather, the poor in spirit stand before God without pretense, strip of all self-sufficiency, self-security, and self-righteousness.

That's countercultural to the world's ideals. The world says you need to be self-sufficient. Depend on yourselves.

[23 : 00] You need to be secure. Do all you can to ensure that you are beholden to no one. Then you can be proud of yourself.

That's the world's vision. But Jesus says, it is to the poor in spirit that the kingdom of heaven belongs.

You know, sometimes what makes being in God's kingdom such a struggle is not that too much is required of us, but that nothing is.

We simply depend on his grace. And that is a difficult pill to swallow because we don't like to be 100% dependent on others.

We say to him, God, surely you will require some of my prayers, my holy living, my contributions to improving society, my advocacy for the marginalized.

[23 : 59] But God says, all I require of you is to say, nothing in my hand I bring, simply to your cross I cling.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, those 100% dependent on me, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. We come now to the next characteristic.

Blessed are those who mourn. Now there's another shock to the system. Does any culture like mourning? I don't think so. Do any of the family and friends of the 300,000 people who have died from COVID-19 worldwide feel blessed as they mourn the loss of their loved ones?

I really don't think so. But Jesus isn't talking about the sorrow of bereavement here, but the sorrow of repentance.

Right before the Sermon on the Mount, in Matthew 3 and 4, repentance has been a major theme. So it makes sense that this is in view here.

[25 : 11] I wonder, do you mourn over your sin? Do you shed tears when you know you've done something wrong? Or do you sweep it under the carpet and say to yourselves, oh, it's okay, God forgives anyway.

As John Stott says, As I pondered verse 4 this week, it struck me that in recent times, I certainly had little sense of grief over my sin.

Most of the time, instead of mourning, I minimize it instead. It's okay, it wasn't that bad. It's my way of dealing with sin so that I don't have to admit to God that I'm not as good as I think I am.

It's me starting to believe the lie that because I'm a pastor, I'm less of a sinner. When I am not poor in spirit, I am less likely to mourn.

But when I look back over my years of walking with Christ, I realize that it's those times when I know that I am spiritually bankrupt, that I am most likely to pray to God, cry over my sin, and cry out to Him in repentance.

[26 : 41] And I realize that happens often when I carve out time for reflection. But one of the biggest challenges of our digital age is that there are now many more distractions than before.

The constant notifications from my phone, the endless stream of MGAC videos, the torrent of clickbait articles all vie for my attention and make self-reflection difficult.

And yet Jesus says, blessed are those who mourn. And so it's right to intentionally take time to do so.

Yes, there is such a thing as worldly grief, where we are like professional mourners at Chinese funerals who wail mainly for show. But there is also such a thing as godly grief, when we are truly sorrowful over how we've hurt God, change course, and return to Him in faithfulness.

And Jesus says, they will be comfort, comfort, because the grace of God awaits all those who have godly grief.

[27 : 59] As the Christians of old used to say, till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet. And we mourn not just over our own sin, but the state of the world.

It is right to mourn when we hear of terrorists attacking an Afghan maternity hospital and murdering babies, as happened just this week. But once again, sometimes the 24-hour news cycle dull our senses, because too much bad news comes in, and we suffer from compassion fatigue.

But if we intentionally moderate our media intake, we can better mourn the state of our world. And when we do so, we feel Jesus' comfort more when he promises a new world is coming.

Blessed are those who mourn. Next, blessed are the meek. That's another virtue the world looks down on, doesn't it? If you don't stand up for yourself, who's going to stand up for you?

What is meekness but weakness? But Jesus says, a happy life is a meek life. What is meekness?

[29 : 21] The best definition comes from Psalm 37, which Jesus is alluding to. In Psalm 37 verse 11, we're told the meek will inherit the land.

In the context of the psalm, wicked and ruthless men have seized property that doesn't belong to them and seem to have gotten away with it. But the meek are those who, despite the wrong being done to them, continue to trust in the Lord, take delight in the Lord, commit their ways to the Lord, and hope in the Lord.

Those are all phrases used to describe the meek in the psalm. Even amidst their hardship, they are waiting on the Lord and not taking things into their own hands, continuing to live uprightly.

You see, Jesus knows best. The world says meekness is weakness. But do you see how meekness actually requires great strength of character?

It takes strength not to retaliate when you've been hurt. It takes strength not to hit back when you've been slandered. It takes strength not to justify ourselves and insist on our rights simply for the sake of scoring a short-term win, but losing the long-term battle.

[30 : 51] After all, meekness is Jesus. The strength of character I've just described is best exemplified in Jesus, is it not? Does he not let the soldiers and the thieves mock him?

Does he not ask the Father to forgive his oppressors? Would you call Jesus a sissy when you see that? I don't think so. And so Jesus says, blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

The humble can stay upright and not seek revenge, for they know God's inheritance is the earth. We then come to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

righteousness. This is not simply about wanting to be a better person. This is about having a deep desire to see God's will accomplish in our lives. It's about having our appetites reshaped in such a way that it is no longer satisfied by food and earthly passions, but by seeking to do the things of God.

It is this longing to live in conformity with all of God's word. Such people don't choose between personal, and social righteousness because the Bible is concerned with both.

[32 : 11] Sometimes Christians debate which is more prominent, but the two are held together. Those who seek to cultivate personal character will inevitably become concerned with justice for others.

And those who are especially concerned to uphold the cause of minority groups, or the disabled, or the marginalized, will eventually realize that there is no point fighting for such rights when we ourselves are impatient, proud, and full of rage.

Jesus says, blessed are those who long for righteousness in every sphere of our lives. will take action.

We open the fridge, we get ready the frying pan, we take out the recipe book, or if you're like me, we order takeaway. So similarly, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will take action.

They know growth in Christian character doesn't just come about just like that. Yes, only the Holy Spirit changes us. But the Holy Spirit doesn't treat us like passive vessels that are simply waiting to be filled.

[33 : 31] He changes us as we work out our salvation, creating new taste buds, enlarging our appetites for the healthy food of righteousness.

Then we will be filled. And the next few characteristics help flesh out what a righteous person looks like. For blessed are the merciful.

One thing I've noticed as social media becomes more and more prevalent in our lives is how mercy is becoming less and less a part of our society.

All you have to do is click on the Facebook page of any news organisation, the Bonio Post, the Star, the New Straight Times, Malaysia Kini, and read the comments.

Every single day, someone is outraged at one thing or another. Judgment and condemnation are passed in seconds at the click of a button.

[34 : 31] Hiding behind computer screens make it easier to issue moral ultimatums. And Christians can so easily get sucked into the same culture.

We say, look at how bad that person is or that organisation is. But Jesus says, Jesus' culture is different.

It's characterised by mercy. After all, kingdom people are people who have received mercy. That doesn't mean there's no judgement. That isn't the issue in itself.

We make judgements every day, whether we realise it or not. And we need judgement. Society cannot function if there is no standard of right and wrong.

But against God's standard of right and wrong, we've been found guilty. We're fully deserving of condemnation. So it's not just people out there, but we ourselves who are in need of mercy.

[35 : 34] And the good news is, we deserve condemnation, but we have received mercy. Jesus and just God's perfect standard is met by living a perfect life.

And then he shows mercy to us as he takes our penalty on the cross, so that on judgement day, he can be our advocate and plead successfully for our pardon.

And if our hearts know mercy, our actions will show mercy. Those shown mercy will show mercy to others.

Mercy doesn't merely feel, but acts. That's how it works in God's kingdom. They are blessed because merciful people show God's mercy.

Then we have those pure in heart. That's about living with integrity, avoiding hypocrisy, and seeking to please God consistently. And on our own, no one can achieve a purity of heart.

[36 : 39] The Bible is clear that our hearts are consistently wicked. King David himself prayed, create a clean heart in me. The pure in heart never try to clean themselves because they know it's impossible.

Instead, they look to Jesus who proclaimed that the blood he shed establishes the new covenant. And when the new covenant arrives, inner transformation can happen.

A new heart is given by God as part of the new covenant. These are the blessed ones. But this transformation doesn't remain invisible.

God writes the law on our hearts so that love of God and love of neighbor will be made manifest. To be pure in heart is to have God reconnect our inner person with the outer person.

We're going to see plenty of that when we get to the second half of Matthew chapter 5. So we'll leave it for there. But one day, as a person made whole, we will see the holy God experience the radiance of his purity and not be burned.

[37 : 51] What a blessing. Then Jesus says, blessed are the peacemakers. Now this is quite striking because Jesus' vision of the happy life assumes conflict.

In my version of the happy life, there is never any conflict. But once again, Jesus has different ideas. And it's not the mere presence of conflict that's the issue.

It's how we respond to conflict. And every kingdom person, Jesus says, is somebody who pursues peace and restoration.

disciples of Jesus are those who seek to maintain fellowship where others would break it off. Now, to be a peacemaker isn't about pretending.

It's not pretending that there isn't anything wrong when there clearly is. John Stott says, proclaiming peace, peace, when there is no peace, is the work of the false prophet, not the Christian witness.

[38 : 53] peace. Instead, peacemaking is about courage. It's about being courageous enough to have a difficult conversation for the sake of reconciliation.

It's about being courageous enough to work towards healing of deep divisions, to do the hard work of listening, and correcting, and rebuking, and repenting.

It's hard work. But Jesus says they are blessed because they revealed themselves truly to be the children of God. And we come to what is perhaps the most impossible one to believe.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness. You can be happy when you are persecuted. What? Now, notice what Jesus doesn't say.

He doesn't say, blessed are those who are persecuted because of foolishness. if you got into a stupid argument or offended someone needlessly, that was your own fault.

[39 : 56] But over and over again, Jesus and the rest of the New Testament do say, if you are following Jesus authentically, sooner or later, you're going to suffer for it.

Rejection is your reward. But Jesus also says that's not the end of the story. because if you are suffering for righteousness sake, that suffering is authenticating your following.

It's giving you one token of assurance that you are truly following Christ. And if you follow the rejected one to the cross, you are also following the resurrected one all the way to heaven.

Jesus makes that clear by mentioning the true reward. Diaz is the kingdom of heaven. So rejoice and be glad.

This is the good life. This is the happy life, the blessed life according to Jesus. This is Jesus' culture, and it is radically counter-cultural to our world.

[41 : 12] There is no culture like it. It's certainly incredibly different to our own ideas of what a happy life is like. But the servant king says to us now, it really is true.

As you live this way, you will thrive. You will find the sweet spot of God. You will begin to see the light of dawn, foreshadowing the full day of great blessing.

You will find true happiness. for remember, Jesus is not laying down a moral code. He is inviting us into a different culture.

And it's a culture that has his fingerprints all over. For look again at all the characteristics mentioned. If you were to add them together, what sort of person would you get?

you would have just gotten a nearly perfect description of our Lord Jesus. He became poor so we might become rich.

[42 : 19] He mourns over the state of this world. He is meek and merciful, longing for righteousness to win out. He wins peace for us on the cross as he is persecuted all the way to death.

Then look at the end of each beatitude. Add them together and what do you get? You get the kingdom of heaven, a place of comfort, of satisfaction and intimate relationship with God.

This is Jesus' kingdom and he has already won a place for us in this kingdom. And now he sets before us this vision of kingdom life.

He doesn't say, live up to this and you will get in. He doesn't say, think like this and all will be well. Rather, he says, live into this for this is your story.

These are your values. This is your culture. So my friends, do you want to be happy?

[43 : 41] Do you want to be blessed? Come, embrace Jesus' culture. Let's pray.

let me just give us a few seconds now, just to reflect on all we've heard before I lead us in prayer.

heavenly father, we come before you now and we are simply awestruck by the depth of your words this morning.

Lord, they present something that no one else in this world has ever presented. They present such a radical version of the Christian life. One that on one hand sounds so daunting, but on the other hand sounds so attractive.

We thank you, Jesus, that these beatitudes are not entrance requirements, as if these are the ways we earn our way into heaven. But we thank you that we are already in your kingdom when we trust in your son, the servant king Jesus.

[45 : 00] But as we look over this vision of the happy life that you present before us, will you indeed help us to be this kind of follower, to be those who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are meek, who are merciful, who long and hunger for righteousness, who are pure in heart, who are blessed because they are persecuted for righteousness sake.

help us to embrace this sort of Jesus culture, to follow you, knowing that one day we won't just see the light of dawn, but we will see the full day of blessing ahead.

Help us to walk your way this morning and in the weeks and months ahead. All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.