

# Recipe for Blessings

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What if someone said to you... “You will inherit the earth; heaven is guaranteed for you and you will receive great rewards there; you will definitely see God face-to-face; you will experience extreme comfort when downhearted and never-ending mercy when you mess up; you will experience righteousness in your life; you will have the reputation of being a daughter of God.”

Does it sound too good to be true? You must be thinking, *What’s the catch?*

Yet, this are the blessings the Lord Jesus said we can have according to Matthew 5:3-10, popularly called The Beatitudes. Jesus spoke wonderful phrases to encourage the people who followed Him. They were a downtrodden, conquered people, experiencing just the opposite of these beautiful rewards under Roman rule. Yet Jesus dared to speak these words of hope.

So, what *is* the catch? We look to the beginning phrases of each verse and our hearts sink, “those poor in spirit; those who mourn; those who are meek; those who are persecuted...” Do we always have to experience problems before we see the goodness of God? No! But just like the Jews in Jesus’ time, we face our own 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges – the COVID19 pandemic and its multiple related effects; racial and civil unrest; hurricanes and tornados; political animosity and so on. Struggle is a part of the human existence. So how do we, as women, deal with these difficulties and receive His great rewards from the beatitudes?

First, let’s look at a metaphor for your creating a process toward being blessed. I have a favorite recipe handed down from my family. I can make cornbread dressing that creates smiles on every member of my family. They expect to eat the delectable morsels of that dressing every Thanksgiving. Having it on the table is not an option. The ingredients within the recipe are not necessarily delicious in and of themselves. I mean, whoever came up with the idea that sage and fennel would make pork taste like sausage anyway? But as I work my “magic” and put just the right ingredients and the correct amounts together, the process produces a wonderful reward.

In the same way, God has a recipe for blessedness. He puts ingredients together to make a divine reward for us. So how do we work through the process? What ingredients do we need and how do we put them together? I think the fruit of the spirit from Galatians 5:22-23 can take us over the top.

Look at the first verse of the Beatitudes: “Blessed are the poor in spirit...” This describes those of us who feel like no one loves us...we want to give up. If we stir in a large cup of love to counteract those feelings, life can turn completely around. The circumstances may remain the same but your posture will be one who is beginning to experience their reward.

Here are some other recipes that you might want to try:

<b>BEATITUDE</b>	<b>FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT</b>	<b>REWARD</b>
Those who are poor in spirit	Love counteracts self-pity and doubt	The Kingdom of Heaven
Those who mourn	Peace that views the circumstances from God's view	Supernatural comfort
Those who are meek	Gentleness with strength that defies man's logic	Inherit the Earth
Those who hunger for righteousness	Goodness that permeates each day to right wrongs	Filled with righteousness
Those who need mercy	Kindness toward others without expectations it will be returned	Receive God's mercy
Those who are pure in heart	Joy that goes beyond circumstances and challenges	Will See God
Those who work for peace	Patience that focuses on peace with God more than peace with men	Called the children of God
Those persecuted for righteousness	Faithfulness that is powered by the Holy Spirit beyond your own strength	The Kingdom of Heaven
Those who have been insulted	Self-Control that floods over any desire to avenge	Identity with the saints

I can give you examples from my own life of how challenging situations and the fruit of the spirit have been the key ingredients to make something wonderful. In the Matthew verses, "blessed" is often translated as "happy." How happy are you at this time? I may make my family happy with my cornbread dressing, but that is nothing to what God can do with His recipe for blessedness!

Woman of God, stir up some fruit of the spirit in the midst of your challenge and watch His happy rewards come to your table!