On July 4, 1776, when our founding fathers declared their independence from England, they were taking a bold step in the history of nations. When Jesus gave his Sermon on the Mount, he was doing something even more radical.

“The Beatitudes are a radically bold statement of Jesus’ intent to establish the kingdom of heaven on earth.”

Michael J. Wilkins

Jesus shows us what life in the kingdom is like, but we cannot do this in our own strength. It is Christ in us that makes the difference.

The Sermon on the Mount is the first of five discourses in Matthew. The others are in chapters 10, 13, 18 and 24-25.

This fits with Matthew’s theme and with Jesus’ command in the Great Commission “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:20

Beatitude comes from the Latin word for blessed. The Greek word makarios means blessed or approved by God.

The Beatitudes are the character traits God approves in his people.

I. WE ARE TO LIVE BY THE VALUES OF GOD’S KINGDOM AND NOT BY THE VALUES OF THIS WORLD. MATTHEW 5:1-12
Whenever those values are in conflict, we must follow Christ.

What are the characteristics of those approved by God?

- Poor in spirit – humble before God.
- Mourn – grief over sin in us and in our world.
- Meek – gentleness, freedom from malice and a vengeful spirit.
- Hunger and thirst for righteousness – a longing for righteousness and justice in our world.
- Merciful – compassionate and forgiving.
- Pure in heart – holy, single minded in our desire to follow Christ.
- Peacemakers – instead of delighting in bitterness, divisions, pettiness and strife, they pursue peace.
- Persecuted because of righteousness. The appropriate response on our part is joy, not retaliation or vengeance.

If we were to write our own beatitudes based on this world, it would go something like this:

“Blessed are the rich, for they have it all and have it all now; blessed are the happy, for they are content with themselves and don’t need others; blessed are the arrogant, for people defer to them; blessed are those who fight for the good things in life, for they will get them; blessed are the sophisticated, for they will have a good time.”

James M. Boice

Whose values do you live by? Whose approval do you seek?
Salt and light are common metaphors easily understood. “Nothing is more useful than salt and sunshine.” Pliny

Salt was used, then and now, as a flavoring for food and as a preservative. Savorless salt was tossed out or scattered on flat roofs where it hardened the soil and prevented leaks. It is the impurities in our life that hinder our witness for Christ.

“You are the light of the world.” Jesus is the light of the world. He is the sun and we are like the moon. How do we let our light shine? It is by our good deeds. We are to be a witness for Christ by our words and deeds.

Live by the values of his kingdom and you will be a witness for Christ in this world.

Conclusion
Live by the values of God’s kingdom. Let them see Jesus in you.