



The Beatitudes for Today

By James C. Howell

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In this volume of the For Today series, author and pastor James Howell takes us on an engaging exploration of the Beatitudes. Howell considers each of the well-known phrases in these passages from Matthew and creatively applies Jesus' teachings to our contemporary world and Christian lives.

The For Today series was designed to provide reliable and accessible resources for the study and real life application of important biblical texts, theological documents, and Christian practices. The emphasis of the series is not only on the realization and appreciation of what these subjects have meant in the past, but also on their value in the present--"for today." Thought-provoking questions are included at the end of each chapter, making the books ideal for personal study and group use.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Throughout Christian history, the New Testament benedictions known as the Beatitudes (blessed are the meek, blessed are the merciful, etc.) have been interpreted in wildly different ways. So it's singularly appropriate that Howell, a biblical scholar and Methodist minister in North Carolina, begins his concise volume on the Beatitudes with a chapter on what Jesus didn't say: he didn't say "blessed are those who invest wisely; they will own a second home" or "blessed are the Americans," or even "blessed are the happy." Rather, Howell claims, Jesus focused on the downtrodden and planted the seeds for a "long-term moral revolution." Focusing primarily on the Beatitudes listed in Matthew 5 (with some comparison to the heated, more forceful version found in Luke 6), Howell dissects all eight sayings, trying to understand Jesus' meaning in its original context and for us today. He points out ironies—why is it blessed to be poor, or to mourn?—and calls attention to some radical, surprising elements to which many Christians have become inured. He nimbly draws from popular culture as well as classical literature. Each chapter closes with several questions for discussion, making this helpful for individual or group study. Blessed are the readers of this book, for they will come away wiser. (*Jan.*)

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About the Author

James C. Howell is pastor of the Myers Park United Methodist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is the author of a number of books including *Discovering the Will of God: Answering the Hard Questions*; *The Beatitudes for Today*; and *Introducing Christianity: Exploring the Bible, Faith, and Life*, all published by Westminster John Knox Press.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jimmy Hicks:

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Terra Runyan:

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Marylou Beauregard:

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