

Sermon given at the Anglican Parish of Kingscliff, 1 February 2026

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Bible Readings: Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

Topic: Your Kingdom ID

Dear brothers and sisters. I hold two passports. When I leave Australia, I show my Australian passport. At that moment, I'm recognized as a citizen, with all the rights and protections that come with it. When I land in Nigeria, I present my Nigerian passport. I'm recognized there, welcomed home, with all the rights of that citizenship. One person, two identities. The passport I show declares where my allegiance lies and whose kingdom I belong to.

In our text today, Jesus climbs a mountainside, sits down, and begins to teach His disciples. This is no casual moment. By going up the mountain, Matthew is pointing us back to Moses on Mount Sinai, receiving the Law. Jesus is the new Moses—but He doesn't bring stone tablets. He brings a new revelation of God's heart. This is the constitution of His Kingdom. And the first thing He gives us—the Beatitudes—is far more than good advice. It is a revelation of identity. First, it shows us who He is. Then, it shows us who we are called to be as His followers.

Look at this list: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted.*

We often hear this as a checklist for us. But look deeper. This is, first and foremost, an inner portrait of Jesus.

He is the one who is poor in spirit—completely dependent on the Father.

He is the one who mourns over a broken world.

He is the meek King, riding a donkey.

He hungers and thirsts for righteousness more than food.

He is the merciful forgiver on the cross.

He is the pure in heart—the perfect image of God.

He is the ultimate peacemaker, reconciling us to God.

He is persecuted for righteousness—the innocent sufferer.

This is Jesus. The Beatitudes are His identity card. They show us the character of our King.

Then, Jesus turns this portrait toward us. “Blessed are you,” He says to His disciples. This is the radical invitation. When we decide to follow Jesus, we are issued a new passport—a Kingdom ID. Our calling is not just to admire Him, but to become like Him. Our purpose of existence is to truly become Christians -those who are like Christ. Am I like Christ? Are you like Christ? Are we Christlike in our words and deeds? We are to grow into the likeness of this portrait: to learn meekness in a world of arrogance; to show mercy in an economy of revenge; to make peace in a culture of conflict; to hunger for what God desires, not just what we want.

This is the evidence of our true citizenship.

So I want to leave you with two questions today.

First, a question for reflection: What is your ID card? If you were taken to court tomorrow, accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you? Would your daily life—your reactions under stress, your use of time and money, your forgiveness, your priorities—match the portrait of Jesus? Or would they dismiss the case for lack of evidence?

Second, a question for mission: Our world doesn’t need more people who just talk about Jesus. It needs witnesses. It needs to see the Beatitudes alive. It needs to see people who are peacemakers in a divided world, who are pure-hearted in a cynical one, who are merciful when retaliation is expected.

We are called to be those witnesses—to live so authentically that people look at us and glimpse the King we serve. We are called to make God credible by our lives.

You have been offered a Kingdom passport. It is stamped with the image of Jesus. Live today in the blessed, joyful, counter-cultural freedom of that identity. Carry it well. Let it be seen.

May God help us; may the Holy Spirit inspire and accompany us, Amen.

The Reverend Constantine Osuchukwu
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