



The Cross and the Beatitudes

Fulton J. Sheen

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Fulton J. Sheen was remarkable in his ability to uncover many layers of meaning in the life and words of Jesus of Nazareth. The Seven Beatitudes and The Seven Words from the Cross -- both were delivered from a mountain, but the connection runs deeper than that. As Bishop Sheen points out, Our Lord began His Public Life on the Mount of the Beatitudes and closed it on the Mount of Calvary. On the first He uttered the words central to His message; on the second He spoke to the deed central to His mission. Two avenues were thereby opened: one for spreading the Good News throughout the world, the other for reconciling all men to God through Christ. Fulton Sheen's profound meditations will slake the spiritual thirst of all who desire a fuller understanding of the Gospels and seek to draw closer to Christ.

The Cross and the Beatitudes Details

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From Reader Review The Cross and the Beatitudes for online ebook

Patricia Poff says

Fulton Sheen is an amazing author. This book is one that I go back to every year for a few pages or a few chapters...

Marianne C says

Best Explanation of the Beatitudes

I read this in preparation for a women's retreat on the Beatitudes. So glad I did— now I understand them better and feel prepared for discussion. The book is both precise and concise, which helped this reader: No getting lost in the author's wordiness and wandering.

Andrew says

These were excellent, short meditations on both the Beatitudes and Jesus' Seven Last Words from the Cross and a great look at growing in virtue. I read this on retreat, and hope to read it again sometime.

James Andersen says

As I often say with these small books, I am amazed by their wisdom and depth despite how short they are, but now add the fact that it was written by a Venerable Archbishop of the previous century who is on his road to Sainthood and you would be surprised the degree of the relevance that suddenly gets added to it. This book will keep you engaged, I have tried to read Patristic commentaries on the The Beatitudes, but nothing seems to compare for me then when I read this short book. Highly recommended, highly re-readable too.

Stuart says

The Cross and the Beatitudes is a short work by Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. I won't go into great detail on who Venerable Sheen is as I expect my older audience will immediately recognize that name. However, for my younger audience, I encourage you to find out more about this great man. He was a brilliant writer and "televangelist" who was VERY popular in the 1950s with his television show called "Life is Worth Living." He was definitely a prophet for his time and Blessed (soon to be Saint) John Paul II said of him, "You have written and spoken well of the Lord Jesus Christ. You are a loyal son of the Church." That's very high praise.

At under 100 pages, The Cross and the Beatitudes, is a quick, but profound read. If you're like me, you have read or been taught a lot about both the Beatitudes and Jesus' last words from the Cross. However, I have never seen them juxtaposed, and it was a truly fascinating study. Archbishop Sheen explains to us that Jesus

preached the Beatitudes at the Sermon on the Mount. However, he lived them at Golgotha. One may wonder how he was able to link the Seven Last Words on the Cross when there are eight beatitudes. He was able to do this, because the eighth Beatitude, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, "is a confirmation and a declaration of all those that precede."

While each of these seven chapters provided wisdom and clarity, the one that spoke to me most was "The Second Word," which juxtaposed "Blessed are the merciful" for they shall obtain mercy," with, "This day you shall be with me in Paradise." In this chapter, Archbishop Sheen elaborates on the Parable of the Lost Sheep and the Parable of the Lost Coin. He explains how Heaven rejoices over the lost soul being found (saved) as opposed to the already saved souls. He then talks about the Good Thief to the right of our crucified Lord, who showed the full amount of mercy he could to not only Jesus, but also the thief on the left of Jesus. Tradition refers to him as St. Dismas, and as he was the saint I chose going through the RCIA program, I have a special devotion to him.

The Cross and the Beatitudes is a book you can read in an hour, but it is not one that you should attempt to read in an hour. If you speed through this book, you will surely miss some of the great truths it contains. Take the time. Meditate on this book. It would make a great book to read during Lent, but its message is applicable at any season in the year. So pick up this 5-star book and expose yourself to the wisdom of Venerable Fulton Sheen. Pray for his intercession so that he may become a saint. Then, read another of his works. I recommend A Brief Life of Christ.

Tyler Hochstetler says

A great relation of Jesus' ministry on the Mount and to his testimony on the cross. Short book but worth every page!

Sabine Terky says

Short but beautifully written spiritual book. I never thought of any connection between the Beatitudes on the Mount and Christ's last words on the cross. The approach is remarkably fruitful as it addresses the struggles we all face: forgiveness, mercy, and humility. Highly recommended.

Matthew says

Excellent spiritual reading.

Fulton Sheen is a paragon of quotability, and sentence after sentence of his writings could easily be put on a poster or the back of a t-shirt. So though this is a short book, it is not one to fly through. I found myself just pondering some of the insights and aphorisms as they came at me like an avalanche.

Connecting the Beatitudes to Christ's words on the cross is a remarkably fruitful approach, and the book is replete with Sheen's characteristic rousing call to evangelization. Definitely a book I will be returning to.

Erik says

CWN review: A pithy, meditative book, long on thought. Powerful meditations tying the Beatitudes in with persons mentioned in the New Testament. Worth reading several times.

Amy says

What a beautifully written book. After I read the first chapter I had to put it down and then start over again a few days later because this is a book that requires your full attention and meditation afterwards. The last chapter when he speaks of the Lesson of Mourning touched my heart so profoundly that I could barely read through my tears because what he was saying was so absolutely beautiful. Everything that he wrote about in this book that was relevant decades ago is still relevant today. I look forward to reading more books written by Venerable Fulton J. Sheen.

Jason King says

A short, pretty standard book from Fulton Sheen. He's eloquent with his words, expressive in his ideas, and traditional in his religious approach. If you're Catholic like that, he'll probably speak to you.

Joanne says

Great Great Book! Fulton Sheen writes so beautifully. This book is a very easy read. It addresses all the small things we all struggle with, like forgiveness, mercy, and humility. I am really glad I read this book.

El Udyr says

a brilliant similitude between the last words of Jesus & the beatitudes...

Michelle A says

I have come to love reading Archbishop Sheen's works because of the solid teaching, encouragement and challenge these books provide. The Cross and the Beatitudes is no exception. Taking the seven last words of Jesus as yet another invitation to live the beatitudes, Archbishop Sheen provided an opportunity to grow closer to Christ through His passion. Truly suffering adds depth to our beatitude!

Deborah says

This is a great book tying the words of Jesus on the cross with his words in life (the beatitudes). It was interesting, informative and relatable to one's own life. Also, it is not too long -- good shorter read.
