

THE BEATITUDES
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Matthew 5:1-12

1. The verses we just read are usually referred to as the Beatitudes.
2. The word “beatitude” means blessedness or blissfulness.
3. Those who know and follow Jesus Christ are a blessed people because God has done, and is doing, a work in and through their lives.
4. Just prior to preaching the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, after having spent an entire night in prayer, called those who were His disciples to Himself and appointed twelve of them to be Apostles.
5. From that time forward Jesus’ ministry involved three groups of people: the multitude, the disciples, and the Apostles.
6. Notice that when Jesus saw the crowds (multitude) He went up on a mountain, or high hill, sat down, and, after His disciples (including the Apostles) came to Him He began to teach them the truths that were to distinguish them from the crowds and equip them to represent Him.
7. Personally I view the Sermon on the Mount as an ordination message delivered to the Apostles and those who were at that time true disciples.
8. What we refer to as the Beatitudes contain some foundational truths and principles upon which we can build a life that is truly blessed of God; a life that will be used by God.
9. Some translations use the word “happy” here instead of the word “blessed,” but there is a difference between happiness and blessedness.
10. The word “happiness” is built on the prefix “hap,” which has to do with luck, chance, or circumstances, and from which we get words like happen, haphazard, and hapless.
11. Blessedness is a state of being based on our relationship with God, while happiness depends on, and is impacted by, our circumstances.
12. Over the next several weeks we will focus on what Jesus said would be true of those who constitute the blessed.

I. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

- A. A paraphrase of this verse would be, “Blessed are those who recognize their spiritual poverty, for theirs, and theirs alone, is the Kingdom of Heaven.
- B. In order to be genuinely converted we must understand both our poverty of spirit and our peril.
- C. Jesus pointed out that one aspect of the ministry of the Holy Spirit is the ministry of conviction; convicting people related to sin and sin’s consequences. John 16:5-11
"But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' 6 "But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. 7
"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; 9
concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”
- D. We cannot fully appreciate the mercy, grace and love of God until we understand it in relationship to our own sinfulness.

E. Those outside of the Kingdom of God need to understand that they have no hope and face certain judgment unless they repent and embrace Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

1. John 3:16-19

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him **shall not perish**, but have eternal life. 17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 18 **"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.** 19 "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil."

2. John 3:36

"He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but **he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.**"

II. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

A. Blessed are those who mourn their spiritual poverty.

B. Blessed are those who manifest contrition and subsequently repent towards God because of the enormity of their sin.

NOTE: Total depravity is a doctrine that used to be emphasized, but most churches prefer to talk about committing sins rather than teaching what the Bible declares to be true. Isaiah 64:6

For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

C. We need to understand that it was because of our total depravity that Jesus Christ was nailed to the Cross, and that understanding should cause us to mourn.

D. A good passage to meditate on is Isaiah 53:4-20, and while doing so we should ask God to help us feel the full weight of the prophet's words.

Surely **our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried**; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But **He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him**, and by His scourging we are healed. 6 All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but **the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him**. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due? 9 His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth. 10 **But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief; if He would render Himself as a guilt offering**, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand.

E. Genuine sorrow leads to repentance. 2 Corinthians 7:10-11

For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

NOTE: Many people weep over the personal consequences of their sins, but that sorrow has nothing to do with offending God or causing Jesus' suffering and death.

III. Blessed are the gentle (humble, meek), for they will inherit the earth.

- A. Blessed are those who humble themselves before God, acknowledge their sin, repent of their sin, and embrace Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives.
- B. Blessed are those who, once they have been genuinely converted, humble themselves before God and live accordingly.
- C. Those who do will one day rule and reign with Christ.
- D. Gentleness, or meekness towards God, is that disposition of spirit in which we accept His dealings with us as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. Gentleness or meekness is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. It stems from trust in God's goodness and control over every situation.

IV. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

- A. The Beatitudes build one upon the other.
- B. Blessed is the person who has come to recognize their poverty of spirit, come to mourn their spiritual poverty, and subsequently humbled themselves before God by repenting towards God and embracing Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.
- C. Having been clothed with the righteousness of Christ (imputed righteousness) there is now an intense and earnest desire to be righteous in a practical and real sense.
- D. If we are not growing in righteousness (Christlikeness) it is because we are not hungering and thirsting for righteousness.
- E. Jesus declared that all those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will have their hunger and thirst satisfied.

NOTE: Many people are satisfied to just think they are saved.

APPLICATION

1. Desire is a powerful thing.
2. Many, because of their desire for this world and the things of this world, forfeit their souls.
3. Others come to see the worth and preciousness of knowing Jesus Christ the Lord.
4. Their sanctified desire can only be described as a hungering and thirsting after God and the things of God.
5. They can never be fully satisfied because desires met awaken new and higher desires.
6. When they are glorified at the point of their death they will have the glorious perfection they hungered for.
7. One day every human being must stand before Jesus Christ to be embraced or judged.
8. Blessed are those who have nothing to fear.