

Today look at three more of the Beatitudes...Merciful – Pure in Heart – Peacekeepers

Beatitudes are all about how we should act as citizens of a Heavenly Kingdom

All of the beatitudes are the opposite of what the fallen world expects from its citizens
Jesus goes up on a mountain side...sits down and starts preaching things so contradictory

- If you were sit down every day and read Matthew 5-7 it would challenge you each day
Because Truth contained withing the Sermon on the Mount challenges the worlds systems

As Christians we have our own language, behaviors, ways of interacting with world and God

As Christians we must Look – Love – Live different than world...or is Christ really our Lord

Do you know why it would be terrible for me to move to Portugal? (Explain) I'm not a citizen

Do you look more like the world you're in or more like the world you're made for?

Christ...in these verses is calling you to a different paradigm...a different way of living

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Forced making decision...imagine you're walking down a hallway | Two Doors | My vs God

When you read the beatitudes that is what you're doing...making a choice | Your way / Gods

Last week we talked about **Christ's kingdom transforms who we are** ← BIG IDEA

Choose: Christ over conceit (v3) Authenticity over appearances (v4)

Choose: Lowliness over loftiness (v5) Righteousness over resources (v6) This week...

Big Idea: Christ's kingdom transforms how we live

His kingdom changes more destination—changes our daily decisions, desires, and behavior

- Christ's Kingdom Changes Our Priorities – 'What do I want' vs 'What does King want'

- Christ's Kingdom Changes Our Practices - Kingdom people live differently belong King

- Christ's Kingdom Changes Our Perspective - See life the eyes of eternity | Coming

When Christ becomes our King, His values become our values, His priorities become our priorities, and His character becomes the pattern for our lives

This week we have three more choices to make with one more the week after...starting with

1. **Choose Compassion Over Condemnation**

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Because we have received God's mercy, we should choose compassion toward others

Mercy is compassion shown to someone who has no claim to it and deserves punishment

We live in a culture that is quick to judge and slow to forgive

- **Instant Reaction Culture:** Digital platforms incentivize immediate reactions | 3 Days

- **Permanence of Digital Memory:** In the past, mistakes faded from memory over time

Glad your worst day wasn't videotaped & put on YouTube for millions of clicks | 2 Ways

a. **Resist the Desire to Condemn Others** - **7 "Blessed are the merciful,**

Jesus is Confronting Judging People Harshly – We are quick to judge and slow with mercy

We love to judge people...favorite pastimes...inkling joy when celebrity goes down | Will

We see someone's sin, and our first response can be, "Let em fry...let em fall"

Here's what we never know...the whole story | Paul Harvey – 'The rest of the story'

Homeless shelter...male prostitute...dying of AIDS...parents died...uncle turned him out 13

How mercy is distributed must be taken on a case-by-case basis...no one size fits all

There is a difference between discernment and condemnation

- Bible commands Christians to confront sin biblically | Mercy is sin confronted

- Mercy does not mean calling sin acceptable – Brenda and Colorado...Inpatient...Christ

When people get caught up in sin it shouldn't fill us with joy it should break our hearts

Pause before passing judgment – Examine Your Own Heart – Speak Truth with Grace

b. **Recognize the Mercy You Have Received – Praise Jesus...don't get what we deserve**

Eph. 2:4-5 "God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ"

Think about what God could have given us: Justice – Condemnation – Sin Deserved = Hell

God gave us infinite mercy through Christ...stands at the gates of hell and turns away soul

Christian should never look at another struggling sinner and say, "How could they possibly do that?"

We should remember: "Apart from the grace of God, that could be me."

pastor falls sexual sin...I get mad (Steve Lawson) ...remember only by God's grace it's not me

- Before you condemn someone else, remember what God has forgiven in you

- Before you criticize someone's weakness, remember your own weaknesses.

- Before you become impatient with someone else's spiritual growth...remember God

Mercy received should produce mercy demonstrated

2. **Choose Holiness Over Hypocrisy** - **8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

Biblical word 'hypocrisy' from a term associated with an actor or stage performer

Hypocrisy is pretending to be what you are not spiritually to appear righteous before others

- *Appearance over authenticity* — caring about looking righteous than being righteous.

- *Performance over purity* — Religious things to impress people while neglecting heart

- *Public righteousness with private rebellion* — claiming allegiance God living contrary

Hypocrisy hides sin - more concerned w/ protecting reputation than confessing sin | 2 ways

a. **Pursue a Pure Heart** - Jesus begins with heart because it is the center of who we are

- Inner Person: Our thoughts – Our desires – Our Motives – Our Affections – Our Will

⇒ **Purity begins on the inside** – Constantly confronted outward religious inward corrupt

Matt. 23:27 (Speaking to Pharisees) "For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones"

God is not impressed by religious appearance when the heart is resisting Him

⇒ **Purity means integrity** - Pure heart is not a perfect heart...genuine before God

Hypocrite asks 'What do people think of me' | Purity asks 'What does God think of me'

⇒ **Purity requires continual surrender** - Cannot manufacture purity behavior modification

We need God to transform our hearts | David "Create in me a clean heart, O God."

Christian life is not Cleaning up outside - Allowing God to continually transform the inside

Baccarat Highball Glass - \$4000 | Waste Treatment Center...would you drink it?

Polish our outward behavior allowing bitterness, lust, pride, jealousy, or greed reman inside

- **Examine your heart regularly** – Don't just ask 'What am I doing' – 'Why am I doing it'

- **Confess sin quickly and completely** - God reveals something wrong your heart, confess

- **Pursue God above everything else** - Purity is about having an undivided heart

b. **Prioritize God's Presence** - **8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

- This is the promise attached to purity – Not human approval...gives us God Himself

When we are bound in the confines of repetitive sin...it distorts our view of God | Glasses

⇒ **Purity produces spiritual clarity | Priorities – Perception – Purpose**

- Priorities – God / God's People / God's Word | **Knows everything about hobbies...inept**

- Perception - Increasingly able to see circumstances through God's truth | **See how God**

- Purpose - More aware of His presence and more sensitive to His leading | **Sin is noise**

Choose God's approval over people's applause - Even when nobody notices to applaud

What would change your life if you cared more about being holy before God than anything else

Entertainment – Friendships – Conversations – Thoughts – Internet Usage – Social Media

Schedule – Spending – Attitude – Ambitions – Tolerate – Dress – Marriage – Parenting

Choose holiness over hypocrisy by pursuing God rather than an image impresses people

3. Choose Harmony over Hostility

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Because we have been reconciled to God through Christ, we should actively pursue peace

Families Argue - Friendships Fracture - Marriages - Churches Split – Social Media Outrage

Jesus does not say, “Blessed are the peaceful.” He says, “Blessed are the peacemakers”

Peaceful person avoid conflict. Peacemaker enters conflict w/ desire to bring reconciliation

Jesus made peace between me and God, how should that change way I respond to conflict

a. Refuse to Create Hostility - A peacemaker is not someone who ignores problems

- A peacemaker is someone who seeks to resolve problems in a godly way

- People who seem to thrive on conflict | Fight or Flight always set to fight | Family 1

Enjoy arguing, stirring up controversy, holding grudges, and keeping old offenses alive

Proverbs 15:1 - “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Sometimes we don't create original conflict, but we make it worse by the way we respond

A peacemaker refuses to add gasoline to a fire | List of 5 questions ask yourself

- Am I easily offended? Allow other people's words to control their emotions

- Do I enjoy arguing? Can turn ordinary conversations into conflicts – Challenge / Correct

- Do I keep bringing up past offenses? – We all have a bag of faults | 99 New Years Kissed

- Do my words calm situations or inflame them? Trash – You sound like your mother

- Do I need to win every disagreement? Always punching lower until you win...defeated

⇒ Pursue reconciliation intentionally - The word “peacemakers” describes action

- Jesus isn't calling us merely to *want* peace. He calls us to make peace

Romans 12:18 - “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

- Can't make someone forgive – apologize -agree...you can control your response

“What can I do to move this relationship toward peace?” | Two ends of a rope

The conflict continues because both are more concerned with being right than being reconciled

b. Reflect the Character of God - “Blessed are peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Peacemaking demonstrates that we belong to God - God made peace with us

We were not naturally God's friends | We were sinners separated from Him.

Yet God took the initiative to reconcile us to Himself through Jesus Christ | Think Gospel

- We were hostile toward God, but God pursued us

- We were separated from God, but God reconciled us

- We deserved judgment, but God provided mercy through Christ

People who have been reconciled to God should become people who pursue reconciliation

What Does a Peacemaker Look Like?

I. Controls their words - They don't use their mouth to create unnecessary conflict

II. Controls their pride - They are willing to admit when they are wrong

III. Controls their anger - They don't allow rage to dictate their response

IV. Pursues forgiveness - They don't keep score of every offense.

V. Pursues reconciliation - They seek to restore relationships when possible.

Big Idea: Christ's kingdom transforms how we live

Choose Compassion / Condemnation - Holiness / Hypocrisy – Harmony / Hostility