

## Matthew 5:1-2 “The ‘Be’ Attitudes”

8.9.15

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### **#4 Verse of the Month:**

#### **Ephesians 4:29**

**29** Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

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### **Turn in your Bibles this morning to Matthew, chapter 4.**

Today we are going to begin looking at one of the most wonderful sections of Scripture in all the Bible. We are going to begin a study of the Sermon on the Mount and today we are going to look specifically at what are called the Beatitudes. But, I'm calling them the “Be” attitudes. Because it's indeed how Jesus wants us to BE.

Now, the Sermon on the Mount is the longest recorded sermon of Jesus in the Bible. It's found in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7 and if you read it from beginning to end, it will take you about 15 minutes. It's often described as the “Manifesto of the King” or “The Message of the Kingdom,” in that Jesus taught how citizens of His kingdom should live.

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Now I want you to think back with me to last week. Jesus has just finished healing pretty much anyone who was sick in the entire region of Galilee. He's gone throughout the 200 villages and towns; making what was probably a six-month tour, teaching (didasko) and preaching (kerusso-proclaiming with passion) and healing anyone and everyone who was sick. Now look at verse 25 in chapter 4.

#### **Matthew 4:25**

**25** And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

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Jesus' popularity had grown because of all of His miracles to the point that tremendously massive crowds were following Him and hanging on every word and Jesus knew the timing was now right to deliver the message of His Kingdom. And let me tell you something folks...this message...to that audience of people, was literally a bombshell that went off when He delivered it. In fact, what He shared literally flipped on its ear the understanding of what it meant to follow God for most of those people listening. The Apostle Matthew records these words...

#### **Matthew 5:1-2**

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. **2** And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

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Now it's important for us to understand Jesus was likely teaching a summary of what He taught in the synagogues in the 200 towns and villages of Galilee. Yet, the crowds had grown so large, there was no synagogue big enough to hold the crowds and so, Jesus decided to use a mountainside to give room for all the people. Let me show you where scholars believe Jesus preached this message. We can't be 100% sure...but, we are pretty confident the message was preached here:



See at the northern part of the Sea of Galilee about 11 o'clock is what is called, "The Mount of Beatitudes." This mountain is between Capernaum and a town called Tabgha on the northwest shore. I was there in 2007...



See the banana nets covering and protecting the banana trees. Imagine those trees being people.

So, Jesus went up on this mountainside and He stood up and shouted with His hands cupped, like this guy, right?



Well, that used to be what I thought and it's even what I've heard taught, but it's wrong.

Remember from last week... When a Rabbi or Teacher taught, what did they do? They sat down, right?



Here's an artist's depiction of Jesus teaching in the Temple and He's seated and that's exactly what Jesus did on that mountain. He sat down...

**Matthew 5:1**

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to

him.

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You say, “But how did they all hear?” They didn’t. He expected them to pass the word. He was training them to spread what He was saying, even on that hillside with thousands of people. And that’s how we are to spread the Gospel today. This is our hillside. I am your teacher for today...I’m not a Rabbi, but I am one of your Elder/Pastors and I’m teaching you so that you can go spread the word of Jesus.

Now, what I want to share with you now is really a summary or overview of the Sermon on the Mount. I want to take this 15-minute message and break it down for us and try to understand in a broad-brush kind of way what Jesus was saying. Now think with me...

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If you go through your Bible and just look at the headings in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 you’ll see all kinds of topics. Let me show you a few:

**Topics Discussed in the Sermon on the Mount**

- Anger
  - Lust
  - Divorce
  - Prayer
  - Fasting
  - Anxiety
  - Judging Others
  - The Golden Rule
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That’s a lot of stuff and it can truly leave your head spinning. Listen, what Jesus taught was so counter and so opposite of what the people were used to hearing from their synagogue rulers and the Pharisees, that it had to make their heads spin. The purpose of what Jesus taught on that mountain was to show the difference between religion and a relationship. And He’s going to begin by describing how a person can truly have joy or be blessed with a divine happiness.

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You see, the rulers of the synagogue and the scribes and the Pharisees, (as the religious leaders of the people), had an artificial, external righteousness. They were truly the first “legalists.” But Jesus’ teaching went to the heart. His teaching went to the motive of our actions, while the Pharisees were only concerned about outward appearances.

The Pharisees majored solely on the Law of Moses and as I thought about that, it struck me that Moses received the 10 Commandments on a mountain and here we are with Jesus teaching on a mountain.

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Remember Moses...



...went up on Mt. Sinai and God came down and met with him. But here, Jesus goes up on a mountain to meet with the people. On Mt. Sinai God spoke in thunder and lightning, but on this mountain, Jesus spoke with the tongue of a man. On Sinai the people were ordered to stay away from the mountain, but on this mountain, Jesus invited all who would to draw near to him. Oh the contrast! And that's the point of the Sermon on the Mount.

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In fact, I believe the key to the Sermon on the Mount is found in Matthew 5:20. Look at it. Jesus said:

### **Matthew 5:20**

**20 For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.**

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What Jesus does with the Sermon on the Mount is to take the Law of Moses and internalize those teachings and drive us to look at the heart and motive of what we do. It's all about the heart of the matter.

Yet, understand this...what Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount is just as impossible to do in our human flesh as it is to try to keep the Law. They are one in the same. NO ONE can live up to or attain the righteous demands of the 10 Commandments, nor the teachings of Jesus on our own. Just as the 10 Commandments show us our need for a Savior, that's exactly what the Sermon on the Mount does as well. **John MacArthur says:**

**“Christ plumbs the depth of the Law, showing that its true demands goes far beyond the surface meaning of the words and sets a standard that is higher than the most diligent students of the Law can ever realize.”** John MacArthur, pastor, theologian

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Folks, we need a Savior! We are hopeless and helpless and doomed in our sin. We are not righteous...no, not one. You see, Jesus' message on that mountain closed off every possible avenue of human merit or goodness and left the people to see themselves as sinners who are totally dependent on nothing but the divine mercy and grace of God to save them. Jesus simply takes the Law of Moses and frames it in a way that drives us to Himself...the Savior.

Let's look at how He begins...as we look at these BE-Attitudes. You will notice if you look at chapter 5, that Jesus says the word “blessed,” 9 times. Now what does that word “blessed” mean? The Greek word is:

**Blessed (Makarios):**

bestowed with divine happiness or joy; perfect bliss

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Here's the idea... Divine happiness or joy doesn't come from within you; instead it's bestowed upon you...it's given to you by God. The emphasis is on the fact that we can't manufacture true happiness because it's divine. The emphasis is on God as the "Bestower" of this divine joy! It's God who gives those who trust in His Son Jesus the inner satisfaction and sufficiency that doesn't depend on our outer circumstances.

You see, the world says happiness is found in riches, abundance, leisure and fun, but that's not divine happiness. That's worldly, fleeting, temporary happiness, based upon your circumstances. And we all know that can change in heartbeat when you have no riches or abundance or leisure or fun. Now you're unhappy. What Jesus is talking about is the absolute opposite.

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Listen, the stuff of this world will leave you empty. Oh...it can make you "happy" for a while...but, it's only temporary...because the new will eventually wear off that new car...the shine eventually fades off the trophy... Divine happiness...true joy comes from being satisfied in Christ and Him alone. You see, you will never know this kind of joy while you have your eyes on your circumstances. You've got to get your eyes off your circumstances and look to Jesus for your joy and your strength.

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Can I ask you a question? Are you happy? Now I need to ask another question don't I? Do you have divine happiness, even though your circumstances might not be what you want them to be? The truth is, if you're unhappy today, it's most likely a sign that you're looking for some THING or some ONE to make you happy and you've taken your eyes off the Lord.

Gordon Crosby, who was a chaplain and pastor during WWII says it better than I can.

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***"Part of the scandal of the gospel of Jesus Christ and His calling is that when you meet the abandoned, crucified Messiah, he grabs you and you belong to him. Wherever you are in privilege and power and status and opportunity, you start down until you are powerless, except for his power; you go down until you find yourself with the "riffraff" of life. The evangelists I listened to in my youth didn't make that clear. But the evangelists in the New Testament make that devastatingly clear. We are taught that we must live a lifestyle of sacrifice, service and suffering for the sake of this Messiah to know true and unmitigated joy in this life."***

Gordon Crosby, WWII Chaplain, Pastor

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Listen, the teachings of Jesus on that mountainside to those people created for them a divine paradox. What they were hearing from the Messiah was not what they expected to hear. It's not what they anticipated. What Jesus was teaching is happy are the ones who are: poor in spirit, those who mourners, the meek, those who hunger and the thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, the persecuted, the reviled.

That's not what they expected to hear! They expected the Messiah to be the conquering King. They expected Him to talk about the overthrow of the Roman Government. ...Meek, merciful, peacemakers, persecuted? It just didn't fit! For them and even for us today, we would have to say:

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**"Wait a minute. How in the world do you get happiness out of that? I'm not sure I want that**

**kind of happiness. That sounds like...well...MISERY...just with another name! Come on Jesus...you got to be kidding!”**

And you see that’s the point! There is a paradox...what Jesus was teaching doesn’t make sense because in order to know the divine happiness...the divine joy of the Savior, you have to wield the sword not to overthrow an earthly government like Rome, but against your own kingdom...against your own self...in that in order to know joy, you have to deny yourself and take up your cross and follow Jesus.

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Sound absurd?

To most they can’t handle this paradox and they reject Jesus and try to find happiness their way.

One writer said it this way: **“It’s as if Jesus crept into the large display window of life and changed all the price tags.”**

It seems all backwards doesn’t it? We think happiness goes to the guy who can push everybody out of his way and gets what he wants, when he wants it, where he wants it and how he wants. We think happiness is doing your own thing. We’re told this is happiness...

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Some big old party on a beach with some beer...grabbing all the gusto you can! The world’s idea of happiness...is what I call the “Happi-tudes” and they go something like this: Happy are the rich, happy are the famous, happy are the popular, happy are the thin, happy are those on top.

Yeah right! That describes Hollywood and they’re some of the most miserable people on the face of the planet. Listen, Jesus’ teaching on that mountainside absolutely destroyed these worldly Happi-tudes.

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But, those people on that should have known better. Their synagogue rulers read to them all the time about a man who had it all. Do you remember King Solomon, David’s son? He had it all, but he was absolutely miserable.

Think about Solomon. Solomon was the most magnificently wealthy and famous King who ever lived. If anybody should have been happy according to the world’s standard, it should have been Solomon. He had nobility. He had a palace that was bigger and better than Taj Mahal.





Have you heard of it? It's a mausoleum that was built in 1653 by 20,000 artisans in India for the Emperor's third wife to be buried and according to today's dollars, it would cost \$1 billion to build. And that's just a tomb!

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Solomon's palace would have dwarfed the Taj Mahal. His wealth was so immeasurable and his treasure was so vast the Old Testament writers describe the fact that silver was as common as rocks in his kingdom. He had thousands of horses, the best food known to man, hundreds of servants, vineyards, lakes, gardens, fishponds. And oh...the women. He had 700 wives and 300 mistresses called concubines. And his intelligence? Why, he was the most intelligent man who ever lived. In the world's evaluation, he had it all. You want to know what Solomon had to say about all of this...

### **Ecclesiastes 2:10-11**

**10** And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. **11** Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

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Can you believe it? Solomon had all the world had to offer and yet all he could say was: "Vanity, vanity, all is vanity." The word "vanity" means "emptiness." It's all in vain. It's nothing!

You see, some of you still believe money and a bunch of stuff will make you happy...

But Solomon said:

### **Ecclesiastes 5:13**

**13** There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt.

Solomon would say later in Ecclesiastes: "Naked you came into the world and naked you'll leave it."

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Do you know what Solomon would tell his sons?

### **Proverbs 23:4-5**

**4** Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. **5** When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven.

The New Testament says:

### **1 Timothy 6:6-9**

**6** But godliness with contentment is great gain, **7** for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. **8** But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be

content. **9** But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.

**When will we learn that external things do more to bring discomfort to the soul than to bless it?**

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What was Jesus teaching? There's no satisfaction in what the world offers. And when Jesus came into the world He wasn't offering the world's stuff...He offered Himself. And yet, today there's a lot of people passing themselves off as Christians who are chasing offer the worlds' stuff with their tongues hanging out.

But, it won't make you happy. What Jesus was offering and what He still offers today is more than circumstantial happiness. What He offers is a divinely-bestowed well-being that belongs only to the who choose Him over the world. It's a divine nature and a divine happiness that comes only through salvation. You can only know this state of true, divine happiness, if you possess the divine nature.

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### **2 Peter 1:3-4**

**3** His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, **4** by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

Listen, the stuff of this world has nothing to offer anyone and you'll never know true happiness until you experience the divine nature that's only found in giving your life to Jesus Christ. If you're looking for happiness apart from Jesus Christ, you're going to be sadly disappointed. If you keep looking for a happiness that comes from getting a raise, or going on vacation, or getting the latest and greatest gadget, you've been sold a bill of goods by the Devil. He's sold you a pig in a poke.

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Listen, what Jesus offered those poor, haggard, first century folks is the same thing He offers today. He offers life through Himself.

He said:

### **John 10:10**

**10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

What is abundant life? Abundant life is not in what you have...but is **who has you!** Who HAS YOU?

Abundant life comes through Jesus to those who choose to be poor in spirit and meek...to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful peacemakers, abundant life goes to those who are pure in heart and who are willing to suffer persecution.

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But understand this... the Sermon on the Mount can only be lived out by people who are loyal subjects of the King. What does that mean? It simply means: **you must be born again**. To know the divine happiness that Jesus offers, you must come to Him. You must be, saved and regenerated by calling on Jesus... confessing and repenting of your sins. Otherwise, you'll only experience fleeting happiness that's totally dependent on your circumstances and when you die and leave this world, you'll leave with nothing and you'll spend eternity with nothing but weeping and gnashing of your teeth in Hell. Because apart from Jesus...there is nothing...no happiness...no joy...no peace.

Some of you here today have gotten off track. You're been chasing the stuff of this world with your tongue hanging out and you know better. And you see it now. And I say, "Good" Be like...get back on track... see the emptiness of chasing money and the stuff of this world. Get your eyes back on Jesus. Get your focus back on His BE-attitudes and not the world's Happi-tudes, because that and that alone is the only way you'll know joy in this life or the life to come.