

10.05.25: Matt 5:7-9

The Character of a Kingdom Citizen: Part 2 – Relational Priority

Title: The Character of a Kingdom Citizen Part 2 – Relational Priority

Scripture: Matt 5:7-9

Main Idea: These three beatitudes reveal the character of one who shares God's priority for relationships

Intro:

- Kingdom Citizens
- Discipleship
- Soil of the OT
- Beatitudes – some of the most familiar texts because of beauty and simplicity, are profoundly simple and simply profound
- Beatitudes from the Latin *beatus* meaning blessed or happy
- “The more we explore their implications, the more seems to remain unexplored. Their wealth is inexhaustible. We cannot plumb their depths. Truly, ‘We are near heaven here.’” Stott quoting Bruce
- False views
 - that psychologizes the beatitudes as keys to emotional attitudes for the happy life. Stott
 - That present them as a new law, a new set of rules to keep
 - That are for only “super Christians” and not for the everyday believer
- The fact that Jesus began the Sermon on the Mount with such pronouncements of blessing on His disciples before placing demands on them is significant. This order suggests that the righteousness described in the sermon is a result of divine blessing rather than a requirement for divine blessing. Quarles SM
- Not a formula or recipe, but an overall description
- Reminders from Lloyd Jones
 - These apply to all Christians
 - All of these apply to all Christians
 - None of these are natural disposition of us as human beings
 - These are the result of our radical transformation in Christ Jesus

Blessed

- *makarios* in Gk
- no good translation into English or German

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- “happy” is misleading because happiness is often based on circumstances and “Jesus was not referring to an emotion or feeling that is based on present circumstances.” Quarles SM
- it is seriously misleading to render *makarios* 'happy'. For happiness is a subjective state, whereas Jesus is making an objective judgment about these people. He is declaring not what they may feel like (happy'), but what God thinks of them and what on that account they are: they are 'blessed'. Stott
- The adjective “blessed” identifies a “privileged recipient of divine favor.” Quarles EBTC from BDAG
- the deep inner joy of those who have long awaited the salvation promised by God and who now begin to experience its fulfillment." Hagner quoted by Quarles
- This joy results from divine blessing since the verbs in verses 4,6,7, and possibly 9 are "divine passives."20 "They will be comfort-ed," "they will be filled," "they will be shown mercy," and perhaps "they will be called" mean that God will comfort Jesus' followers, fill them, show mercy to them, and call them His sons. Quarles SM
- What does it look like to be blessed? The second half of each verse tells us
 - Possessing the kingdom of heaven
 - Being comforted
 - Inheriting the earth
 - Being filled/satisfied
 - Receiving mercy
 - Seeing God
 - Having the status as a son of God
- Are the blessings present or future? Stott claims the only possible answer is both
- “the gloriously comprehensive blessing of God’s rule, tasted now and consummated later.” Stott

Main Idea:

These three beatitudes reveal the character of one who shares God’s priority for relationships.

They follow from the previous four but turn from our need, our abject poverty before the Lord, our complete dependence upon him.

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- We are poor in spirit, having and bringing nothing spiritual to God.
- Because of our spiritual state, we mourn over the condition of our hearts and of the world because of sin and its ravishing effects.
- We cannot help but be humble our rebellious spirit has been broken and brought under willing submission.
- Our hunger and thirst for righteousness has resulted in being filled with his righteousness.

As a result of all of this, our disposition toward others changes dramatically – for we must see others in light of who we were. The beatitudes make a turn here that is connected to the previous four and flows out of our being filled with righteousness.

As we concluded last time, these beatitudes collectively provide a mirror for reflection for us. They help us to see clearly

- Whether we are in Christ or still in the world.
- Whether we have experienced true transformation or whether we are still struggling to change ourselves.
- Whether we are serving our king in his kingdom or whether we are still serving the king of this world and the kingdom of this world.

But I think this mirror analogy is helpful in another way – we in a sense become a mirror that reflects God's work in our lives out into our relationships with others.

Jesus when asked what was the greatest commandment said that it was to Love God and then secondly to love others. If God's love is in us, then it cannot help but work its way out to others.

Transition/Coordinating Thought:

These next three beatitudes reveal to us what it looks like to reflect the transformation that God has wrought in our loves out to others.

The first is way we reflect our king is seen in how

1) Kingdom Citizens Reflect God's COMPASSION and FORGIVENESS

EXP:

- Vs 7
- Mercy is not simply passive, dismissive, or easy-going
 - Does not negate truth, but is in light of truth

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- Cannot be such because God is called merciful and his mercy certainly does not mean that He disregards the breaking of his Law
- Mercy contains in its essence these two components of compassion and forgiveness
- Mercy deals with the effects of sin, the pain, the misery, the guilt – it sees others in the state of the sin and has pity on them, recognizing that there once was I and were it not for God's grace there still I would be!
- Compassion
- Forgiveness
 - ““Mercy” is closely linked with forgiveness, but is broader here than just the forgiveness of specific offences: it is a generous attitude which is willing to see things from the other's point of view and is not quick to take offense or to gloat over others' shortcomings (the prime characteristic of love according to 1 Cor 13:4–7). France

ILLUSTRATION:

- Good Samaritan
- Matt 18
- Jesus himself

APPLICATION:

- Demonstrating mercy is not a ticket to receive mercy – on the contrary, we demonstrate mercy because we have already received mercy!
- Showing mercy does not earn mercy from God but is reflective of humble repentance that is essential to receiving divine mercy/forgiveness Quarles SM

The first way we reflect our king is seen in *how we reflect his compassion and forgiveness.*

The second way we reflect our king's priority for relationships is seen in how

2) Kingdom Citizens Reflect God's HOLINESS and SINCERITY

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 8
- Ps 24 – clean hands and a pure heart as conditions for worshipping God Quarles SM
 - Who has not lifted his soul to vanity (idolatry)

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- Or sworn deceitfully to his neighbor (honesty)
- x2 important themes that continue in the Sermon on the Mount
 - 5:33-7 prohibits deceitful oaths
 - 6:19-23 addresses pursuit of Mammon as form of idolatry
- His holiness – cleansed, without defilement
- Lloyd Jones - Who are the pure in heart? Essentially, ... they are those who are mourning about the impurity of their hearts. Because the only way to have a pure heart is to realize you have an impure heart, and to mourn about it to such an extent that you do that which alone can lead to cleansing and purity.
- Ps 51:10 – create for/in me a clean heart
- ‘purity of heart’ seems to refer in some sense to our relationships. ... more precisely the primary reference is to sincerity. ... [Ps 24] in his relations with both God and man he is free from falsehood. So the pure in heart are ‘the utterly sincere.’ Their whole life, public and private, is transparent before God and men. Their very heart—including thoughts and motives—is pure, unmixed with anything devious, ulterior, or base.” Stott
- Contra hypocrisy and playing parts
- The dichotomy between the two options (inner purity and singlemindedness) is a false one, it is impossible to have the one without the other. Carson

ILLUSTRATION:

- Matt 15:19-20 - ¹⁹ For from the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual immoralities, thefts, false testimonies, slander. ²⁰ These are the things that defile a person;

APPLICATION:

- You have often heard me say that the problem is sin and the solution is Jesus but this could also be restated is the problem is our heart and the solution is a heart transplant!
- From that transplant comes an authenticity, a sincerity in our lives before God and before men
- We glimpse God in the present and will gaze upon his glory fully in the future
- In the present we
 - See God in nature, creation

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- We see God in history
- We see God in our own story
- We see God the presence of God in so many ways that unbelievers cannot
- We alone know God and more specifically what it is like to have a back and forth genuine relationship with the one true creator of the universe
- Even though we see God in these ways, our sight is yet limited in some ways and we will see him in all his glory one day

The first way we reflect our king is seen in *how we reflect his compassion and forgiveness*.

The second way we reflect our king is seen in *how we reflect his holiness and sincerity*

The third way we reflect our king's priority of relationships is seen in how

3) Kingdom Citizens Reflect God's Work of RECONCILIATION

EXPLANATION:

- Vs 9
- Peacemakers – those who actively pursue peace
- The word peace generally means the absence of strife
- Peace and appeasement are not synonyms – Stott peacemaking is costly but not talking about peace at any price. Cheap peace and “peace, peace when there is no peace” Stott
- (We will be reminded in 10:34, however, that not all conflict can or should be avoided; the issue there is not inter-personal relationships but faithfulness to God's cause in the face of opposition.) France
- This beatitude goes beyond a merely peaceful disposition to an active attempt to “make” peace, perhaps by seeking reconciliation with one's own enemies, but also more generally by bringing together those who are estranged from one another. Such costly “peace-making,” which involves overcoming the natural desire for advantage and/or retribution, will be illustrated in the extraordinary demands of 5:39–42 which overturn the natural human principle of the *lex talionis* [law of retaliation] France

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- “The sequence of thought from purity of heart to peacemaking is natural, because one of the most frequent causes of conflict is intrigue [plotting, deception, the opposite of purity/sincerity], while openness and sincerity are essential to all true reconciliation.” Stott
- Peacemakers as those who work to reconcile alienated parties, bringing enemies into relationship of unity and harmony – Quarles SM
- Peacemaking is divine work because it involves reconciliation Stott
- This is not a complete disregard of wrongs committed, but a process of working through those wrongs to arrive at a place where those wrongs may be identified and forgiveness may be sought and given and in this sense, justice served – the presence of justice. Without this we are left with an endless cycle of retribution. The cycle must be broken.
- This centers on relations with others. The term “peacemaker” only appears elsewhere in verb form in Col 1:20, where Jesus made peace by his blood on the cross, but the concept is found often (Ps 34:14; Isa 52:7; Rom 12:18; 14:19; Jas 3:18; Heb 12:14; cf. 1 En. 52:11). This connotes both peace with God and peace between people—the latter flows out of the former. Osborne
- H. D. Betz (*Sermon* 140) well comments that the discourse “recognizes war, persecution and injustice as part of the evil world.... Peacemaking is a means of involvement in the human predicament of warlike conditions” which “implies assuming responsibility against all the odds, risking peacemaking out of a situation of powerlessness, and demonstrating the conviction that in the end God’s kingdom will prevail.” Quoted by France
- In other words sin has led to war being the normal condition and thus those who actively pursue peace as being contra the world and its norm

APPLICATION:

- We can argue that he is a man who is finally and ultimately concerned about the fact that all men should be at peace with God. Actively pursuing this!
- We need to be careful because misunderstanding this will lead us to do exactly the opposite and nothing would delight the enemy more. I have heard and read many who claim that Charlie Kirk is not to be celebrated because he was divisive. I will admit that in one sense this is true. But this is true in the sense that

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- the word of God is divisive – it cuts to the heart and reveals what is there
- the gospel is necessarily divisive in that the good news is only received as good news by first acknowledging the bad news and thus it necessarily divides us into two camps – those who are forgiven and saved through the gospel and those who reject the gospel
- Finally, even Jesus himself was divisive – Matt 10:34
- Be slow to speak
- Be devoted to truth in love
- Honor one another above ourselves
- We receive status as his sons and daughters

Conclusion:

- First relationship first –
- Before we can show mercy, we must admit our need for mercy and receive mercy
- Before we can be holy and sincere, we must mourn over the impurity of our own heart
- Before we can be engaged in the ministry of reconciliation with others, we must first be reconciled to our Creator