



The Beatitudes

Part 1

March 3, 2024

The Gospel of Saint Matthew 5:1-12, "Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: ³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ⁵"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 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. ¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹“Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. ¹³“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. ¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word today, in Jesus Name! Amen!

I recently read the following story written by Jude Seddon and felt prompted to share it with you all because it truly speaks to the heart and intent of our new sermon series. “His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans, and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of college.

He is brilliant, kind of esoteric and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college. Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students, but are not sure how to go about it. One day Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt, and wild hair... The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat.

By now, people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer and closer to the pulpit, and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. (Although perfectly acceptable behavior at a college fellowship, trust me, this had never happened in this church before!) By now the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick. About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill.

Now, the deacon is in his eighties, and has silver-gray hair, and wears a three-piece suit. He is a godly man, very elegant, very dignified and very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is thinking that you can't blame him for what he's going to do.

How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breathing. The minister can't even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor.

With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with him so he won't be alone. Everyone chokes up with emotion. When the minister gains control, he says, "What I'm about to preach, you will never remember. What you have just seen, you will never forget." Be careful how you live. You may be the only 'Bible' some people will ever read."

Church family, the Bible refers to us as Living Epistles known and read of all men! And my question for us all is simple, "does our life read Jesus?" When people look at us, do they see the Character of Christ in our lives? Friends, the greatest tests of our testimony of Christ is found when we are challenged to step outside of our comfort zone and connect with those who are seemingly different than us...

And if we truly desire to Be like Jesus then we must embrace the “Be-Attitudes” that He defined in His teachings; and with that said, point #1 today...

1. When we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, We understand that we are Truly Blessed when We are Poor in Spirit!

- a. When we read through the chapter, it would seem that some of what Christ teaches is backwards to what we would consider to be truth. Take the opening 3 verses for example...
- b. ¹“Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: ³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
- c. The beatitudes that Christ is teaching us provides some great insight when we allow the Holy Spirit to minister the truth of what Christ is teaching! Furthermore, we have no means of payment to gain access to the Kingdom except for the Price that Christ paid for us upon the Cross!
- d. Church, when we are poor in Spirit, we embrace the Riches of Christ, of Hope, and Mercy and Grace that we cannot garner nor create on our own.

- e. Our spiritual poverty forces us to cling to His Spiritual riches! For His truly is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory Forever and Ever!
- f. Remember that when we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, we understand that we are Truly Blessed when We are Poor in Spirit because He is the Riches of our Faith!

2. When we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, We understand that We are truly Blessed because We do not Mourn Alone!

- a. Death is a regrettable byproduct of the human condition and sadly each and every one of us will face death. No one makes it out of this life alive. But in spite of this sad and yet sobering fact, Jesus provides to us some insight and therefore comfort into this mystery that we call death. **“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”** And this promise is echoed by Paul as well.
- b. When the Apostle Paul was speaking to the Church at Thessalonica, there were those who were grieving over the loss of fellow believers and loved ones who died in the beloved faith of our Lord.

- c. Paul, knowing this pain all too well, pens these words to encourage the church and I pray that we will find comfort in these words today as well. Friends, Grief is real and loss is hard but the Lord promised that we would be comforted when we mourn.
- d. The scripture can be found in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: And this is what that Old Apostle said, “Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.”

- e. Friends we can find encouragement in these words because there is a great reunion day coming for the Church! A great family reunion indeed!
- f. Remember that when we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, we understand that We are truly Blessed because We do not Mourn Alone! And in closing, Point #3...

3. When we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, We understand that We are truly Blessed because meekness is strength that comes with an inheritance!

- a. I want you to notate that the posture of our hearts determines our inheritance; if meekness is a blessing then the opposite of both would be true. Pride is a Curse. Jesus said that, ⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”
- b. Jesus instructs us that the posture of our heart directly impacts our lives and state of being; both now and in the future.
- c. Meekness is not weakness; it is strength that has been bridled and subjected to Christ alone. Our hearts posture in Meekness is directly determined by our worship and our heart towards Christ!

- d. It has been said that Doxology determines Theology and Theology determines Doxology. Doxology is the study or practice of worship; theology is the study of God. Simply put, how one worships (One's Doxology) determines how one believes (One's Theology) and how one believes determines how one worships.
- e. Our meekness and gentleness and kindness is directly connected to the God that we Serve and Worship
- f. Remember that when we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, we understand that We are truly Blessed because meekness is strength that comes with an inheritance!