



The Beatitudes

Part 3

March 17, 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!

Throughout the month of March, we have been working our way through the Beatitudes defined by Christ Jesus Himself in the Gospel of Saint Matthew chapter 5. This chapter is as revelatory as it is challenging because these points taught by Christ were not suggestions but rather expectations defined for those who would follow after Him!

And, as I have stated the past few Sundays, if we truly desire to Be like Jesus then we must embrace the “Be-Attitudes” that He defined in His teachings; therefore point #1...

1. When we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, We understand that Christ has called Us to be Peacemakers and not Peacekeepers!

- a. The Bible says, ⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” In this text we see a dichotomy defined to separate the intent and purpose of Christ for His people! There is a major difference between Peace Making and Peace Keeping.
- b. Church family, conflict is inevitable. It’s Inevitable. It is unavoidable. It’s going to happen. But just because it is unavoidable does not mean that the church becomes a warzone, our friendships become our allies and our enemies become the axis of evil.
- c. Church family, conflict is inevitable but war is preventable and it begins with us individually. Note Romans 12:16-18, ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight.¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all.
¹⁸If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.”

- d. Family, not ever battle is worth your time and not every war is worth the wounds. As the Text instructs us, strive to live at peace with all men so far as it depends on you!
- e. Granted I am aware that the Book of Ecclesiastes is clear that there is a time for war and a time for peace. However, if we are not watchful, we will not discern the right time for either War or Peace.
- f. I understand that War and Peace are both monikers of this life but not every war was meant to be fought and every avenue of peace is not always the right path. Hence the reason that Jesus declared in the Gospel of Saint Matthew chapter 5 in verse 9...,
“⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”
- g. Notice the words usage here; peacemakers, not peace keepers. Friends, peace makers are not afraid of waging war to find peace but peace keepers will do anything to forfeit a fight.
- h. Now some may cheer this but without just balance. We must all remember that whatever we are fighting for or with; our endgame should be peace and restoration.

- i. Therefore Seek peace so far as it lies within you and move on!
- j. Friends, remember today that when we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, we understand that the Christ has called us to be Peacemakers and not Peacekeepers! Point #2...

2. When we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, We understand that We are Blessed when We are Persecuted for Choosing to Live for Christ!

- a. The Bible says ^{“10} “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
- b. The question has to be asked of all of us that if we were to be tried in a court of law concerning our faith, would there be enough evidence in our lives to find us guilty?
- c. The Scripture is clear that we will encounter times of persecution and there will be people, including our own family and friends, who will find issue with our faith.
- d. Especially when we choose Jesus over them, over their opinions, and over their influences. Hear the words of Christ Himself on this matter!

- e. The Gospel of Saint Matthew 10:34-39, “³⁴ Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶ And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”
- f. Church, when we choose Christ, we must make the hard decision for Christ to be preeminent and not anything or anyone else.
- g. The Message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing and when Christ said that blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, that persecution may sometimes come from those closest to us.
- h. But in spite of persecution, may we choose Christ! In spite of other people’s opinions of us and our faith, may we choose Christ! In spite of trials and tribulation, may we choose Christ! In spite of the pain of loss of friendships with others, may we choose Christ!

- i. May our hearts cry today be that of the Old Gospel Hymn, “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness! I dare not trust the sweetest frame but wholly lean on Jesus' name!”
- j. Church family, remember today that when we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, we understand that we are blessed when we are persecuted for choosing to Live for Jesus! And Point #3...

3. When we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, We understand that We are Blessed when We are Reviled and Persecuted and Our Reward is Great for Enduring So!

- a. The Bible says 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.”
- b. Church family, the Bible records in the Book of Ecclesiastes that there is nothing new under the sun therefore what was is what shall be.

- c. Note the last portion of verse 12 of which I believe that Christ was trying to inspire Hope and dispel any dissention because He references to the fact that what those, who are of Christ, would endure is no different than what the prophets who were before you had to endure.
- d. Simply put, when we are persecuted for our faith then we are in good company because this type of response from humanity is nothing new.
- e. Therefore we must not shrink back nor retreat when we are faced with adversity because our reward is great when we are willing to endure and not fall away.
- f. May we not be like the rocky ground noted in the Parable of the Sower taught by Christ where we spring up quickly but then wither away when life happens.
- g. May we be as the good soil that receives the Seed of the Word of God into our hearts and lives to then flourish with the fruit of Heaven in our lives by way of the Holy Ghost! May our hearts be transformed by the Word of God and the Power of the Spirit of God in our daily lives!

h. I close with the Words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 2:1-7,

“You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, ² and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men,^[a] who will be able to teach others also. ³ Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴ No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him. ⁵ An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. ⁶ It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. ⁷ Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything.”

i. Church family, remember today that when we embrace the Beatitudes of Christ, we understand that we are Blessed when We are Reviled and Persecuted and Our Reward is Great for Enduring So!