

8-24-2025, COTR

Title: The Path to True, Lasting Happiness, pt.3

Purpose: Provoke people to have a mindset prioritized by the values and attitudes of the Kingdom of God as taught by Jesus.

Truth for Today: The Beatitudes are a promise of true, lasting happiness if we embrace the values and attitudes taught by Jesus.

Text: Matthew 5: 7-12

Topic: Sermon on the Mount, Beatitudes,

Series Title: 100% Jesus...pure, undiluted truth.

Series Purpose: Provoke people to embrace the spiritual reality that true, lasting happiness is found by following Jesus Christ and obeying His words.

The Path to True, Lasting Happiness, pt.3

- I. Class reunion: 3 Pics Cole old: flogging lawyers, gift cards eat bribe...nursery/ diapers
- II. "Make Room", building expansion. Brochure chair back. Last time present in service.
 - A. Guests and internet, please be patient for 5 minutes, talk to church family
 - B. Vision: God's blessing COTR with growth and we need more room. Pics: Parking paid! KZ, PH, Adult classrooms, RR, Nursing moms, Sanc
 - C. The plan: 2 screenshots: 1st floor, 2nd floor. Architect working on plans
 - D. Approx. 17k s.f. Estimated cost \$4 million; as of August 7th, Good news, \$800,400!
 - E. Giving/ Investing: Insert, prayerfully consider cash gift in Sept. and 2-year commitment. We want to save and invest as much as we can to borrow least amount.
- III. Introduction
 - A. Series Title: 100% Jesus...pure, undiluted truth. This is a verse-by-verse study from the words of Jesus, called the Sermon on the Mount, Mt. ch. 5-7.
 - B. The Sermon on the Mount is about how to be right with God. It contrasts the Pharisees legalism, rules, and ceremonies and Jesus' teaching based on forgiveness, faith, repentance and good works. It starts with the Beatitudes, i.e. how to experience God's blessing of true, lasting happiness in this life and in heaven.
 - C. Title: The Path to True, Lasting Happiness, pt.3
- IV. Beatitude #5: ESV vs. 7 "Blessed, (NLT God blesses), are the merciful, for they shall (NLT) be shown mercy.
 - A. Def. blessed: Happy or fortunate. People are truly happy because they are in right relationship with God not just living a carefree, materialistic, and pleasure filled life. Happiness may come in this age, but complete fulfillment comes in heaven.
 - B. The condition: *God blesses those who are merciful*
 - 1. Def. mercy: Mercy is a feeling of sorrow over someone's bad situation and doing something about it. Merciful people are kind, forgiving and generous to needy people. ², e.g., (1) Robert's kindness wheelchair (2) Pic feeding poor Haiti/ Kenya
 - 2. The opposite is being cruel, unforgiving and stingy, e.g., Jesus, parable Mt. 18, a king forgave a man who owed him millions, but the same man threw a man in jail who owed him a few thousand. Both begged for mercy, but the man who received

mercy responded with cruelty and selfishness. Lesson: God has been merciful to us and we should be merciful to others.

- C. The blessing or reward: *they will be shown mercy*. In this life God will be merciful to us and on Judgement Day, God will show mercy to us.²

V. **Beatitude #6: Vs. 8 (ESV)** “Blessed are (*NLT those whose hearts are pure*), for they shall see God.

- A. The condition: *Blessed are those whose hearts are pure*
- B. Def.: The heart refers to our mind or thoughts; people with pure hearts think about how to please God; ² Contrast an impure heart polluted by sinful thoughts. **E.g.** (1) thinks about lying to cover up mistakes, (2) stealing to get what they want, (3) sexually impure thoughts with someone other than their spouse/ porn.
- C. The blessing or reward: *for they shall see God*. ‘To see God’ means to “be where he is”. We won’t physically see God on earth, but we will in heaven. [**Rev. 21:3 (NLT)**]... God’s home is now among his people! ...God himself will be with them.] However, we can experience the Presence of God the Holy Spirit on earth. **E.g.** Mike, Wed testimony sensed God’s Presence in prayer.
- D. How do we change our heart/ mind to be pure? (1) Reading and meditating on God’s Word, the Bible, the standard of truth and purity, (2) Confessing sinful thoughts as sin, (3) Ask God to help you change the way we think, [**Ro. 12:2 (NLT)**] Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think...**

VI. **Beatitude #7: Vs. 9 ESV** “Blessed are the peacemakers, (*NLT God blesses those who work for peace*), for they shall be called (*NIV children*) of God.

- A. The Condition: *God blesses those who work for peace*
 - 1. Def. peacemakers (Dual meaning): (1) “those who cause people to be friends,” “those who help people to live in peace,”² (2) People who help others find peace with God through salvation. [**Romans 5:1 (ESV)**] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ. [**Ro. 10:14 (NCV)**]... **for them to hear about the Lord, someone must tell them...**
 - 2. If President Trump can stop the war between Russia and Ukraine, he’d be a peacemaker. **E.g.** (1) Stopping a fight after a ball game, (2) Getting people to talk who are mad at each other, (3) Apologizing to an offended family member.
- B. The blessing or reward: *for they shall be called children of God*.
 - 1. When we help people get along or help people know Jesus, our Daddy in heaven is pleased with us and will bless us now and reward us in heaven.

VII. **Beatitude #8/9: Vs. 10-11 (ESV)** “Blessed are those who are **persecuted** (*NLT for doing right*); *BRC for their loyalty to God’s way of life*), for theirs is the **kingdom of heaven**. (NLT) ¹¹ “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say bad things about you that aren’t true² **because you are my followers**. ¹² (ESV) **Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven...**]

- A. The condition: *Blessed are those who are persecuted for doing right...*¹¹ ...*because you are my followers*.

- B. Def. persecuted: Suffering or experiencing loss for doing right, i.e. living by Biblical values and commands.² E.g., Open Doors says over 380 million Christians are persecuted around the world, 1/7, ranging from job loss, to being disowned by family to church burning to being killed simply because they follow Jesus.
 - 1. Early church, [Acts 5:40–42 (NCV) They called the apostles in, beat them, and told them not to speak in the name of Jesus...⁴¹ The apostles left the meeting **full of joy** because they were given the **honor of suffering** disgrace for Jesus.]
- C. The blessing/ reward: *Rejoice and be glad; be happy about it for God will reward you greatly in heaven.*² This blessing isn't fun, it's painful now but rewarded in heaven.

VIII. Conclusion/ Response/ Prayer

- A. Prayer summary: Lord, help me follow your path for a blessed life. Help me (1) Be merciful to people in need, (2) Have a pure heart, (3) Help people find peace with their enemies and peace with God, (4) Keep following Jesus if I'm persecuted.
- B. Souls: The starting place to begin a relationship with God is receiving God's forgiveness and turning your heart to follow Jesus. (1) Problem sin/ judgment (2) Solution forgiveness (3) Decision to believe and follow Jesus

IX. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Barbieri, L. A., Jr. (1985). [Matthew](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 29). Victor Books.
2. Newman, B. M., & Stine, P. C. (1992). [A handbook on the Gospel of Matthew](#) (p. 112). United Bible Societies.
3. Blomberg, C. (1992). [Matthew](#) (Vol. 22, p. 100). Broadman & Holman Publishers.
4. Nolland, J. (2005). [The Gospel of Matthew: a commentary on the Greek text](#) (p. 203). W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.
5. Lenski, R. C. H. (1961). [The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel](#) (p. 192). Augsburg Publishing House.
6. <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2025/08/19/president-trump-to-mark-levin-i-love-stopping-the-wars/>

X. Supplemental Material

- A. Background: The Jewish Pharisees taught that righteousness comes by observing external, religious rituals and laws. Jesus proclaimed a radically different way to be in right relationship with God that focused on the heart, repentance, and faith for salvation. The sermon on the Mount expounds on the values of the Kingdom of God and shows how a person in right relationship with God should conduct his life to find true, lasting happiness.
- B. Life App. #1: We'll be happier in this life and the world to come if we show mercy to people in need.
- C. Life App #3: We make God happy when we help people get along with each other and help people find peace with God through Jesus Christ.

- D. Def. Beatitudes (8 or 9): Blessed or God blesses. In the beatitudes, Jesus describes the path to a blessed life now and in eternity. Def. Blessed: Happy or fortunate. 4 "People who are truly happy."2 Blessing is more than a carefree, materialistic, and pleasure filled life. Happiness may come in this age, but complete fulfillment of Jesus' promises often requires waiting for the age to come, heaven.3 The blessing comes from God because we make the right choices.
- E. Those who are merciful are kind to people in serious need. Their mercy is marked by generosity and by emotional identification with the situation of those trapped in their need. 4
1. Why should we be merciful to others? Because God extended(s) mercy to us. [Ja. 2:13 (NLT) There will be no mercy for those who have not shown mercy to others. But if you have been merciful, God will be merciful when he judges you.]
 2. Mercy is one of God's most fundamental attributes. 3 [Exodus 34:6 (NLT) The LORD passed in front of Moses, calling out, "Yahweh! The LORD! **The God of compassion and mercy!** I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness.]
 3. This beatitude is best interpreted in light of a passage such as the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer ("forgive us the wrongs that we have done, as we forgive the wrongs that others have done us") or of Jesus' prayer on the cross in Luke 23:34 ("Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing")2
 4. the point is that a person who does not show mercy cannot count on God's mercy2
 5. Merciful" embraces the characteristics of being generous, forgiving others, having compassion for the suffering, and providing healing of every kind3
 6. Matthew 18:21–35 (NLT) Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?" 22 "No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven! 23 "Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. 24 In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. 25 He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt. 26 "But the man fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.' 27 Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt. 28 "But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment. 29 "His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. 'Be patient with me, and I will pay it,' he pleaded. 30 But his creditor wouldn't wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full. 31 "When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. 32 Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, 'You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. 33 Shouldn't you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?' 34 Then the angry king sent

the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt. ³⁵ “That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

- F. Def. ‘pure in heart’: inwardly clean from sin through faith in God’s provision and a continual acknowledging of their sinful condition.²
 - 1. pure in heart” = *sinceritas*, singleness of heart, the honesty which has no hidden motive, no selfish interest⁴
 - 2. // result of ‘hungering and thirsting for righteousness’. a spiritual appetite, a continuing desire for personal righteousness² Purity of heart is the result
 - 3. Jesus requires of his disciples is a life-style characterized by pleasing God (see comments under 1:18–19). The “pure in heart” exhibit a single-minded devotion to God that stems from the internal cleansing created by following Jesus. Holiness is a prerequisite for entering God’s presence. The pure in heart pass this test, so they will see God and experience intimate fellowship with him. ³
 - 4. Psalm 24:3–4 (NIV) Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD? Who may stand in his holy place? ⁴ The one who has clean hands and a **pure heart**, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.
 - 5. To *see God* is a gift which is impossible for humans to experience in this life. It is available only when we get to heaven. Perhaps the best way to translate *see God* is to say “be where he is, to see him” or “to see God in his presence.”²
 - 6. 2 Cor. 10:5 (ESV) **take every thought captive to obey Christ**
- G. *Sons* does not here refer only to male offspring, but means “children.”²
- H. Show others how to have inward peace with God and how to be instruments of peace in the world.¹
 - 1. These are not unionistic peacemakers who combine contrary doctrines by agreeing to disagree. Truth of God comes first, peace with men second.⁴
 - 2. Contentious, stubborn, obstreperous church members—this beatitude ought to make them impossible⁴
 - 3. Christians, [1 Cor. 1:10 (NLT)... live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. Phil. 4:2 (NLT) Now I appeal to Euodia and Syntyche. Please, because you belong to the Lord, settle your disagreement.]
- I. Strange to say and a general paradox to all the designations of the godly thus far used, in particular also of the last, peacemakers, these people, loving and working for peace, shall themselves be accorded the opposite of peace in this warring world.⁵
 - 1. These qualities contrast sharply with Pharisaic “righteousness.” The Pharisees were not “poor in spirit”; did not “mourn” in recognition of their needs; were proud and harsh, not humble and gentle; they felt they had attained righteousness and therefore did not have a continual appetite or desire for it; they were more concerned with “legalities” of God’s and their own laws than with showing mercy; were pure ceremonially but not inwardly; created a rift, not peace in Judaism; and certainly did not possess true righteousness. ¹

2. They suffered because of what they were in their character and their lives, for the divine approval that rested upon them. God adjudged them righteous, the world, in flagrant opposition to God, adjudged them abominable⁵
3. People possessing these qualities would naturally stand out in the crowd and would not be understood by others. Thus they would be **persecuted**; others would speak **evil** of them (v. 11). However, Jesus' words encouraged His followers, for they would be walking in the train of **the prophets**, who also were misunderstood and **persecuted**¹
4. All of these characteristics which Jesus labels as blessed are usually not welcomed in the world at large. Hostility may well arise against Jesus' followers, but even persecuted people are seen by Christ as fortunate.³
5. *For righteousness' sake* is translated "*because they do what God requires*" by TEV. GeCL and FRCL translate as TEV does, and Brc renders "for their loyalty to God's way of life. because they do what is right" as a translation of *for righteousness' sake*. But as we pointed out above, what is right is in fact that which conforms to God's will, so that the phrase can also be as in TEV, "*because they do what God requires*," or "because their lives are right before God," or "because they live as God wants people to."²
6. To translate *utter all kinds of evil against you falsely*, phrases such as "say bad things about you that aren't true" or "tell all kinds of wicked lies about you" can be used. The phrase *on my account* is taken by TEV to mean "*because you are my followers*." Most translations follow the text literally, while GeCL translates "because you belong to me."²
7. the only persecution that is blessed is that which stems from allegiance to Jesus and living in conformity with his standards³ **E.g.** When you're fired from a job because you're lazy or fail a test because you didn't study you didn't study you're not being persecuted, you're reaping what you sow.
8. It's a paradox that unbelievers attack and persecute peacemakers. Christian martyrs suffer for doing right.⁵

TEV Today's English Version

GeCL German common language version

FRCL French common language version

TEV Today's English Version

Brc Barclay

TEV Today's English Version

TEV Today's English Version

GeCL German common language version

- J. Instead of grieving and giving up on Jesus because of persecution, lamenting in view of this persecution or under the distress it inflicts, Jesus tells his disciples to “rejoice and exult.” The two imperatives are durative: their gladness is never to leave them, no matter what they are called on to endure. An example of how the Twelve lived up to this injunction is found in Acts 5:41: “rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer shame (v. 40, beating) for his name”; add all the painful experiences of Paul and the martyrdom of so many. “Rejoice” is not enough, “exult” or “skip and shout for joy,” ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, is added. At once the adequate reason for the rejoicing under such circumstances is added: “for your reward is great in the heavens.”⁵
1. The blessing or reward: 2 times, ‘*the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs*’
 2. *Rejoice* in the present tense to encourage the disciples to be happy and to keep on being happy in the face of difficult circumstances²
 3. Most translators will treat *rejoice* and *be glad* together. They are close in meaning, and one gets the impression that the two terms together simply emphasize the point being made here that people should really be happy. Besides, many languages simply do not have two separate words they would use together in this kind of context. Therefore translators will use an expression that means to be very happy, to exult, to be overjoyed. They may use an imperative, as in “Be really happy,” “Make this an occasion for rejoicing,” or “Rejoice.” Or they may have a sentence with “should,” such as “You should rejoice greatly” or “You should rejoice and celebrate.”²
- K. The upshot of the Beatitudes is culture but characterizes humanity’s self-centered, self-arrogating pride which invariably seeks personal security and survival above the good of others. the changed life that must flow from commitment to Christ³
- L. the translation can be “God is keeping a valuable reward for you in heaven,” “God will reward you greatly in heaven,” or “the gift God is keeping for you in heaven is great.” *For so men persecuted the prophets who were before you:* the Old Testament tells how prophets like Elijah, Amos, and Jeremiah were persecuted. In addition the Jews of the first century A.D. believed that the prophet Isaiah had been sawn in two, after he had hidden himself in a hollow tree.²