

>> ALL AUTHORITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO ME IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH. GO THEREFORE, AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS THAT I HAVE COMMANDED YOU. AND LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN TO THE END OF THE AGE.

>> (SINGING)

CLIFF >> HELLO. MY NAME IS CLIFF GOODWIN, AND I WELCOME YOU HERE TODAY FOR PREACHING THE GOSPEL. AS YOU SEE, I HAVE MY BIBLE IN HAND, AND I WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO TAKE YOUR BIBLE DOWN AT HOME AS WELL AND TO OPEN WITH ME TO MATTHEW CHAPTER 5 AS WE PREPARE FOR A STUDY TOGETHER IN THE BEATITUDES. I'VE ENTITLED THIS SERMON, SIMPLY PUT, BLESSED OF GOD. BLESSED OF GOD. AND AUTOMATICALLY I'M SURE THAT YOU SEE WITH ME THE PERTINENCE OF THAT TITLE TO A STUDY OF THE BEATITUDES. A BEATITUDE IS A STATEMENT EXPRESSING GOD'S BLESSING UPON A PARTICULAR CLASS OF PEOPLE, THOSE WHO ARE CHARACTERIZED NORMALLY BY A SPECIFIC VIRTUE. AND WE'RE GOING TO SEE THAT TIME AFTER TIME AS WE GO THROUGH MATTHEW'S ACCOUNT OF THE BEATITUDES FOUND IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT. BEFORE WE GET THERE, HOWEVER, I WOULD LIKE FOR US TO PREFACE THIS STUDY WITH A STATEMENT WE SEE IN MARK 1:14-15. NOW AFTER THAT JOHN WAS PUT IN PRISON, JESUS CAME INTO GALILEE PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND SAYING, THE TIME IS FULFILLED, AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS AT HAND. REPENT YE, AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL. NOW, WHAT IS HELPFUL FOR US REGARDING TODAY'S STUDY FROM THAT PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE IS THE FOLLOWING: WE NEED TO KEEP IN MIND THAT THE GRAND SUBJECT OF OUR LORD'S TEACHING AND PREACHING DURING HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY, THE GRAND SUBJECT OF IT WAS THE KINGDOM OF GOD. JESUS WAS PREACHING THAT THE KINGDOM WAS NIGH. NOW, IT WOULD NOT COME DURING HIS MINISTRY UPON THE EARTH. ANY CAREFUL BIBLE STUDENT REALIZES THAT THE KINGDOM DID NOT COME INTO EARTHLY EXISTENCE UNTIL THE FIRST PENTECOST FOLLOWING OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION. AND OF COURSE WE HAVE THAT RECORD FOUND IN ACTS CHAPTER 2. BUT JESUS WAS PREACHING CONCERNING THAT KINGDOM. HE WAS PREACHING, TELLING PEOPLE THAT IT WAS NIGH, OR NEAR TO COME. AND THAT HELPS US TO BE IN A POSITION TO BETTER APPRECIATE THE BEATITUDES. THE BEATITUDES, AS JESUS GAVE THEM IN HIS MINISTRY, THEY ARE DESCRIPTIVE OF PEOPLE WHO WILL FIND, WHO WILL ENTER, AND WHO WILL BE CITIZENS IN HIS MESSIANIC KINGDOM, WHICH IS OF COURSE, THE CHURCH AS WE KNOW IT ON EARTH TODAY, THE CHURCH WHICH BELONGS TO CHRIST. SO KEEP THAT IN MIND. AS WE GO THROUGH THESE BEATITUDES, WE ARE READING DESCRIPTIONS OF PEOPLE IN THE KINGDOM, DESCRIPTIONS OF WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIAN, A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. LET'S BEGIN WITH THE FIRST OF THESE POINTS NOW. NUMBER ONE, THE POOR IN SPIRIT. THE POOR IN SPIRIT. NOW, THIS COMES TO US FROM MATTHEW 5:3, BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. THE TERM POOR IN SPIRIT IS A LITTLE DIFFICULT TO EXPLAIN, AND IT MIGHT BE A LITTLE DIFFICULT FOR SOME PEOPLE TO UNDERSTAND. AFTER ALL, WHAT DO WE MEAN POOR IN SPIRIT? WELL, HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE EXPRESSION THAT A PERSON IS FULL OF HIMSELF? HE'S JUST FULL OF HIMSELF. NORMALLY THAT INDICATES ARROGANCE, IT INDICATES PRIDE, AND EVEN SELF-SUFFICIENCY. WELL, IF WE CAN UNDERSTAND THAT DESCRIPTION, THEN WE CAN PROBABLY SEE THAT BEING POOR IN SPIRIT IS CLOSE TO BEING THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF ONE'S BEING FULL OF HIMSELF. THE POOR IN SPIRIT ARE THOSE WHO RECOGNIZE THEIR SPIRITUAL INADEQUACY, THEIR SPIRITUAL NEED FOR GRACE AND FOR SALVATION, THEIR NEED FOR A SAVIOR. BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. STAY IN MATTHEW'S

GOSPEL ACCOUNT AND MOVE OVER WITH ME TO CHAPTER 9. BUT WHEN JESUS HEARD THAT, HE SAID UNTO THEM, THEY THAT BE WHOLE NEED NOT A PHYSICIAN, BUT THEY THAT ARE SICK; BUT GO YE, AND LEARN WHAT THAT MEANETH. I WILL HAVE MERCY AND NOT SACRIFICE; FOR I AM NOT COME TO CALL THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT SINNERS TO REPENTANCE. SEE, THE IRONY IN THOSE WORDS LAY IN THE FACT THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE IN THE VERY AUDIENCE OF JESUS AT THAT TIME WHO IN THEIR OWN EYES, THEY WERE HEALTHY, THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS, THEY DID NOT HAVE ANY SENSE WHATSOEVER OF THEIR OWN SPIRITUAL NEED. FOR THOSE FOLKS, JESUS COULD NOT AND WOULD NOT BE THE GREAT PHYSICIAN. JESUS DID NOT COME TO HEAL THE WHOLE, OR THOSE WHO IN THEIR OWN EYES PERCEIVED THEMSELVES TO BE WHOLE; HE CAME TO HEAL THE SICK. HE CAME TO CALL SINNERS TO REPENTANCE. BUT SEE, ONLY THOSE SINNERS THAT ARE TRULY POOR IN SPIRIT WILL RESPOND TO THE LORD'S INVITATION. WE FIRST HAVE TO RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE OUR OWN NEED. NOW, FOR SUCH PERSONS, THEY SHALL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. THEY WILL ENTER THE CHURCH, HAVING OBEYED THE GOSPEL, AND THEY WILL BE CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM. WHAT A BLESSING INDEED. ALL RIGHT. NUMBER TWO. LET'S MOVE ON IN OUR LIST OF BEATITUDES. THEY THAT MOURN. THEY THAT MOURN. LOOK WITH ME TO MATTHEW 5:4 IN THIS NEXT PLACE. BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN, FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED. NOW AGAIN, THE BEATITUDES ARE DESCRIPTIVE OF THOSE WHO WILL FIND, WHO WILL ENTER, AND WHO WILL BE CITIZENS IN THE KINGDOM, THE CHURCH OF OUR LORD; AND YET THAT BEING SAID, THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY SPIRITUAL IN THEIR NATURE AS WELL. WE NEED TO KEEP THAT IN MIND WHEN WE COME TO THEY THAT MOURN. THIS IS NOT A BLANKET STATEMENT COVERING ALL MOURNING AND ALL MOURNERS REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCE OR SCENARIO. THAT'S NOT THE IDEA. TO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE WHAT JESUS WAS REALLY HITTING AT IN THIS STATEMENT, LET'S GO TO JAMES CHAPTER 4. IN JAMES 4:8 JAMES WOULD SAY, DRAW NIGH TO GOD, AND HE WILL DRAW NIGH TO YOU. CLEANSE YOUR HANDS, YE SINNERS AND PURIFY YOUR HEARTS, YE DOUBLE-MINDED. NOW NOTICE VERSE 9, BE AFFLICTED AND MOURN AND WEEP; LET YOUR LAUGHTER BE TURNED TO MOURNING AND YOUR JOY TO HEAVINESS. IT IS SELF-EVIDENT FROM JAMES' WORDS BY INSPIRATION THAT THE MOURNING HE WAS TALKING ABOUT WAS MOURNING OVER ONE'S SINS, MOURNING OVER ONE'S GUILT BEFORE GOD. NOW, IF JAMES DEALT WITH THAT, I BELIEVE IT'S ALSO THE CASE THAT OUR LORD IN HIS MINISTRY, AS HE GAVE THIS BEATITUDE, THAT'S EXACTLY THE IDEA HE HAD IN MIND AS WELL. THOSE WHO ARE MOURNFUL OVER THEIR OWN SINS ARE OBVIOUSLY POOR IN SPIRIT. THESE BEATITUDES GO TOGETHER HAND IN A GLOVE, AS IT WERE. THEY ARE POOR IN SPIRIT, THEY ARE MOURNING OVER THEIR SINS; BUT IF THEY MOURN IN THAT FASHION, IF THEY ARE TRULY PENITENT AND WILLING TO SUBMIT TO THE LORD, THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED. AGAIN, WHAT A GREAT BLESSING INDEED. ALL RIGHT. NUMBER THREE. IN THE THIRD PLACE, LET'S DISCUSS THE MEEK. THE MEEK. WE FIND THIS IN MATTHEW 5:5. BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH. THIS GREEK WORD THAT IS TRANSLATED MEEK IS A VERY COMPLEX WORD. SO COMPLEX, IN FACT, THAT I DO NOT BELIEVE THERE IS A SINGLE ENGLISH WORD THAT CAN FULLY EXPRESS IT IN TRANSLATION. THUS, WRITERS AND SCHOLARS THROUGH THE YEARS HAVE LABORED TO GIVE US THE BEST DESCRIPTIONS THEY COULD OF WHAT THIS WORD REALLY ENTAILS. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BIBLICALLY MEEK? WELL, SOME HAVE DESCRIBED IT AS QUIET COURAGE. AND THAT'S A GOOD DESCRIPTION. MEEKNESS IS NOT WEAKNESS. BIBLICAL MEEKNESS IS NOT WEAK IN ANY SENSE OF THE WORD. IN FACT, IT IS VERY COURAGEOUS. BUT THAT COURAGE IS QUIET. IT'S HARNESSSED, OR UNDER CONTROL. ANOTHER DESCRIPTION THAT PERHAPS YOU HAVE HEARD THROUGH THE YEARS OF BIBLICAL MEEKNESS IS THE DESCRIPTION, STRENGTH UNDER CONTROL. AGAIN, NOT WEAKNESS. STRENGTH. BUT IT IS STRENGTH THAT IS NEITHER BOISTEROUS NOR BELLIGERENT. IT IS NOT STRENGTH THAT FEELS

COMPELLED TO LASH OUT AS IT WERE IN RETALIATION TOWARD OTHERS. IT IS HARNESSSED. IT'S KEPT UNDER CONTROL. NOW, THINK HOW HELPFUL THAT VIRTUE IS AS WE READ THIS STATEMENT IN 1 PETER 3:15. BUT SANCTIFY THE LORD GOD IN YOUR HEARTS, AND BE READY ALWAYS TO GIVE AN ANSWER TO EVERY MAN THAT ASKETH YOU A REASON OF THE HOPE THAT IS IN YOU, HERE IT IS, WITH MEEKNESS AND FEAR. FEAR BEFORE GOD, OBVIOUSLY, BUT MEEKNESS BEFORE MAN. SEE, THE EPISTLE OF 1 PETER WAS WRITTEN REGARDING SUFFERINGS, IT WAS WRITTEN REGARDING PERSECUTION PARTICULARLY. AND SO PETER IS PREPARING HIS READERS FOR THOSE INSTANCES IN WHICH THEY'RE GOING TO BE CALLED TO GIVE AN ACCOUNT. THEIR PERSECUTORS, THEIR QUESTIONERS ARE GOING TO ASK THEM ABOUT THEIR FAITH. AND PETER SAYS YOU RESPOND IN MEEKNESS AND IN FEAR; EVER FEARING GOD, MINDFUL OF YOUR STATUS BEFORE GOD, AND THAT WILL CAUSE YOU TO BE MEEK BEFORE MEN. STRONG? YES; BUT STRENGTH UNDER CONTROL. COURAGEOUS? ABSOLUTELY; BUT A QUIET COURAGE THAT GIVES A REASONED ANSWER WHEN ASKED. BLESSED ARE THE MEEK, FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH. ALL RIGHT. NUMBER FOUR. IN THE NEXT PLACE, THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS. THIS BEATITUDE COMES TO US FROM MATTHEW 5:6, BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS, FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED. NOW, I DARE SAY THAT VIRTUALLY ALL OF US, ALL OF YOU IN OUR VIEWING AUDIENCE, YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUNGRY. YOU KNOW WHAT IT MEANS TO BE THIRSTY, TO LONG FOR THAT REFRESHING DRINK OF COOL WATER; AND YET HERE JESUS IS NOT TALKING ABOUT LITERAL HUNGER OR THIRST. HE'S TALKING ABOUT THAT KIND OF CRAVING, THAT KIND OF DESIRE, THAT YEARNING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS. NOW, IN THE WORD OF GOD, RIGHTEOUSNESS SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD AS A TWO-SIDED COIN. ON THE ONE SIDE OF THIS SAME COIN WE HAVE RIGHT LIVING, RIGHT DOING. THAT'S INVOLVED IN RIGHTEOUSNESS. BUT ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT SAME COIN, IT IS BEING RIGHT WITH GOD. AND THIS ASPECT ONLY GOD CAN DECLARE. ONLY GOD CAN LOOK DOWN ON A MAN OR A WOMAN AND DEEM HIM OR HER RIGHTEOUS. SEE, IT IS GOD WHO GIVES US THE MORAL STANDARD. IT IS GOD WHO DEFINES AND DELINEATES WHAT IS RIGHT DOING, WHAT IS RIGHT LIVING. AND THEN THAT SAME GOD, AS HE LOOKS DOWN UPON MAN, HE DEEMS THOSE WHO SUBMIT TO HIS WILL, HE DEEMS THEM RIGHTEOUS IN HIS EYES. NOW, DON'T MISUNDERSTAND. WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT SINLESS PERFECTION. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ALL HAVE SINNED AND COME SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD, ROMANS 3:23; AND YET THERE CAN STILL BE RIGHTEOUSNESS. MEN AND WOMEN CAN STILL LEARN WHAT IS RIGHT DOING, WHAT IS RIGHT LIVING, AND THEY CAN STILL LIVE AFTER THAT MANNER, AND GOD CAN STILL LOOK DOWN UPON THEM AND DEEM THEM RIGHTEOUS. BUT HOW? HOW CAN THIS BE? IT'S ONLY THROUGH THE GOSPEL. LOOK WITH ME TO ROMANS CHAPTER 10 BEGINNING AT VERSE 2. FOR I BEAR THEM RECORD, PAUL SAID, THAT THEY, THE JEWS ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, THEY HAVE A ZEAL OF GOD. THEY'RE SO ZEALOUS, THEY'RE SO RELIGIOUS FOR GOD. BUT NOT ACCORDING TO KNOWLEDGE. FOR THEY, BEING IGNORANT OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, THEY DON'T KNOW ABOUT IT, AND GOING ABOUT TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN SYSTEM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, HAVE NOT SUBMITTED THEMSELVES UNTO THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. WHAT WERE THE UNBELIEVING JEWS REJECTING IN THE FIRST CENTURY WHEN PAUL LIVED AND WHEN PAUL WROTE THOSE VERY WORDS? WHAT WERE THEY REJECTING? WHO WERE THEY REJECTING? THE WHO WOULD BE JESUS CHRIST. THE WHAT WOULD BE HIS GOSPEL MESSAGE. NOW, IN THEIR REJECTION OF THE GOSPEL, YOU KNOW WHAT? THEY WERE IGNORANT. THEY WERE IGNORANT THAT THE GOSPEL WAS GOD'S VERY SYSTEM FOR MAN'S RIGHTEOUSNESS. AND PAUL LAID THAT OUT IN THE FIRST CHAPTER OF ROMANS, ROMANS 1:16-17. AND SO THOSE WHO ARE HUNGERING, THOSE WHO ARE THIRSTING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, THEY'RE GOING TO COME TO THE GOSPEL. THEY HAVE TO. THE ONLY WAY THAT MAN CAN BE JUST WITH HIS GOD IS THROUGH THE GOSPEL. AND HAVING COME TO THE GOSPEL IN SUBMISSIVE

OBEDIENCE, JESUS SAID THEY SHALL BE FILLED. A WONDERFUL BLESSING ONCE AGAIN. ALL RIGHT. NUMBER FIVE. LET'S MOVE ON. LET'S DISCUSS NOW THE MERCIFUL. THIS COMES TO US FROM MATTHEW 5:7. BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL, FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY. NOW, IT IS TRUE THAT WE CAN BE MERCIFUL IN PHYSICAL CONCERNS OR PHYSICAL MATTERS. SOMEONE IS HUNGRY, WE FEED THEM. THAT'S AN ACT OF MERCY. SOMEONE IS NAKED AND WE CLOTHE THEM, THAT'S AN ACT OF MERCY. HAVING COMPASSION AND PITY ON SOMEONE WHO IS LESS FORTUNATE REGARDING MATERIAL CONCERNS, THAT CAN CONSTITUTE MERCY. BUT AGAIN, REMEMBER THAT THESE BEATITUDES ARE FIRST AND FOREMOST SPIRITUAL IN THEIR NATURE. THEY ARE DESCRIBING THE SPIRITUAL QUALITIES CHARACTERISTIC OF THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO WOULD BE NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANS, CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM. SO THAT BEING SAID, BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL SHOULD ESPECIALLY CAUSE US TO THINK ABOUT FORGIVING OTHERS. SOMEONE WHO HAS WRONGED ME, THEY NEED MY MERCY. AS THEY REPENT AND AS THEY COME TO ME, WHAT DO THEY NEED ME TO BE? THEY NEED ME TO BE MERCIFUL AND TO FORGIVE THEM. LOOK WITH ME TO MATTHEW CHAPTER 6. JESUS JUST ONE CHAPTER LATER IN THIS SAME VERY SERMON WOULD SAY, FOR IF YE FORGIVE MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL ALSO FORGIVE YOU; BUT IF WE FORGIVE NOT MEN THEIR TRESPASSES, NEITHER WILL YOUR FATHER FORGIVE YOUR TRESPASSES. MY, WHAT A SOBERING REALITY. BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL, FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY. BUT WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE UNMERCIFUL? THEY WILL NOT KNOW THE MERCY OF GOD. AND THAT'S A FRIGHTENING THING TO CONSIDER. ALL RIGHT. NUMBER SIX, I BELIEVE IT IS. WE'RE UP TO THE PURE IN HEART. THE PURE IN HEART. LET'S NOTICE TOGETHER MATTHEW 5:8. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. DEAR VIEWERS, AS WE EXAMINE THIS ONE VERSE, VERSE 8, THERE ARE AT LEAST THREE POINTS OF EMPHASIS IN THIS VERSE. NUMBER ONE, THERE'S THE EMPHASIS ON PURITY. THIS BLESSING IS PRONOUNCED UPON THOSE WHO ARE PURE. HOW IMPORTANT THAT IS FOR US WHO LIVE IN A WORLD OF FILTH. WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF DARKNESS, 1 JOHN 5:19. AND YET WE LOOK FOR THAT BLESSING THAT JESUS HAS PROMISED UPON THOSE WHO ARE PURE. NUMBER TWO, THERE'S AN EMPHASIS ON SEEING GOD. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. YOU KNOW, THAT IS THE END RESULT. THAT IS THE END OBJECTIVE FOR WHICH WE ARE ALL STRIVING AND TO WHICH WE ARE ALL LOOKING. ONE DAY WHEN THIS LIFE IS OVER, WE WANT TO BE WITH GOD, DO WE NOT? WE WANT TO BE IN HIS PRESENCE IN ETERNITY, IN HEAVEN FOREVER AND EVER. WELL, BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. BUT THE THIRD POINT OF EMPHASIS THAT WE FIND IN THIS STATEMENT MIGHT WELL FOR US BE THE MOST IMPORTANT. AND IT'S THE WORDING, IN HEART. THIS PURITY THAT IS REWARDED ONE DAY BY SEEING GOD, IT IS NOT A SUPERFICIAL PURITY. IT IS NOT A PRETENTIOUS PURITY. SOME PEOPLE CAN PUT ON A GOOD ACT. SOME PEOPLE CAN PUT ON A GOOD SHOW SO AS TO APPEAR PURE BEFORE OTHERS. BUT THE BIBLE TELLS US THAT GOD LOOKS UPON THE HEART. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD. NOW LOOK WITH ME TO HEBREWS 12:14. FOLLOW PEACE WITH ALL MEN, AND HOLINESS, WITHOUT WHICH NO MAN SHALL SEE THE LORD. SEE, THIS PURITY IN HEART AND IN LIFE, IT IS ALSO DESCRIBED AS HOLINESS. BEING SET APART UNTO GOD AND FOR HIS SERVICE, LIVING LIFE ON A DIFFERENT MORAL PLAIN, THE BIBLICAL PLAIN, IF YOU WILL, BEING HOLY. BLESSED ARE SUCH PEOPLE. ALL RIGHT. NUMBER SEVEN. IN THE NEXT PLACE, LET'S DISCUSS THE PEACEMAKERS. THIS PASSAGE COMES TO US FROM MATTHEW 5:9. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS, FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD. NOW AGAIN, HERE'S ANOTHER INSTANCE IN WHICH THERE COULD BE SOME EARTHLY CONSIDERATIONS THAT IN AND OF THEMSELVES WOULD BE QUITE VIRTUOUS. IN OTHER WORDS, ANYONE WHO'S ABLE TO STEP IN AND TO SETTLE AN EARTHLY, MATERIAL DISPUTE, THAT WOULD BE WONDERFUL. ANYONE WHO COULD STEP IN AND

HELP HEAL A RIFT BETWEEN TWO PERSONS OVER ANY KIND OF MATTER, THAT WOULD BE GREAT. BUT THE BEATITUDES ARE FIRST AND FOREMOST SPIRITUAL. KEEP THAT EMPHASIS. AND THAT BEING SAID, THE MOST IMPORTANT PEACE THAT COULD EVER BE SOUGHT AND THE MOST IMPORTANT PEACE THAT COULD EVER BE EFFECTED IS PEACE BETWEEN SINFUL HUMANITY AND A SINLESS GOD. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS. NOW, IN THAT WAY THEN, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT CHRISTIANS WHO ARE SPREADING THE GOSPEL. THEY'RE EVANGELIZING AND TEACHING LOST SOULS SO THAT IN COMING TO CHRIST THEY MIGHT KNOW PEACE. LOOK WITH ME HERE TO EPHESIANS 6:15. AND YOUR FEET SHOD WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE. THERE IS NO SOUL WINNING WITHOUT THE GOSPEL. THERE IS NO EVANGELISM WITHOUT THE GOSPEL. AND BY THE WAY, THERE IS NO PEACE BETWEEN GOD AND SINNERS WITHOUT THE GOSPEL. NOW GET OUT THERE, CHILD OF GOD, AND TEACH SOMEONE. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS, FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD. AND NOW THAT BRINGS US LASTLY TO NUMBER EIGHT, THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE. LOOK WITH ME TO MATTHEW CHAPTER 5 BEGINNING AT VERSE 10. BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. BLESSED ARE YE WHEN MEN SHALL REVILE YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU AND SHALL SAY ALL MANNER OF EVIL AGAINST YOU FALSELY FOR MY SAKE. REJOICE AND BE EXCEEDING GLAD, FOR GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN. FOR SO PERSECUTED THEY THE PROPHETS WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU. ISN'T IT STRIKING THAT THIS LAST BEATITUDE IS ALSO THE LENGTHIEST OF ALL WEIGHT? NOTICE THE ELABORATION, THE DETAIL SUPPLIED DIRECTLY BY JESUS HIMSELF WHEN GIVING THIS BEATITUDE. DO YOU THINK THAT WE AS CHILDREN OF THE MOST HIGH GOD, SHOULD WE EXPECT TO BE PERSECUTED? WE CERTAINLY SHOULD. IN FACT, WE FIND THIS IN 2 TIMOTHY 3:12. WE FIND, YEA, AND ALL THAT WILL LIVE GODLY IN CHRIST JESUS SHALL SUFFER PERSECUTION. THAT'S A FACT. AND SO ALL OF US AS CHILDREN OF GOD, IF WE'RE IN FACT LIVING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, WE'RE GOING TO FACE PERSECUTION. AND JESUS GAVE GREAT DETAIL CONCERNING THIS, EVEN TELLING US TO REJOICE AND BE EXCEEDING GLAD; BECAUSE SEE, REALLY, THAT PERSECUTION IS A TOKEN. IT'S A TOKEN OF OUR SALVATION ULTIMATELY ONE DAY TO COME IN HEAVEN. BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH ARE PERSECUTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE, FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. ONLY THE POOR IN SPIRIT WILL ENTER IT, VERSE 3; AND ONLY THOSE WHO ENDURE PERSECUTION FOR IT WILL REMAIN FAITHFUL IN THE KINGDOM.

JAMES >> LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE GOSPEL BROADCASTING NETWORK HAS JUST BROUGHT YOU PREACHING THE GOSPEL WITH BROTHER CLIFF GOODWIN. IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION RELATIVE TO ANYTHING THAT'S BEEN TAUGHT, OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE A CD OR A TAPE OF THE MESSAGE, JUST CALL THE TOLL-FREE NUMBER ON YOUR SCREEN. BE HAPPY TO SEND IT TO YOU. AND BY THE WAY, IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO STUDY THE BIBLE PRIVATELY IN YOUR OWN HOME, WE OFFER FREE A SET OF FIVE STUDIES, AND WE'D BE HAPPY TO SEND THESE TO YOU AT NO COST AT ALL, AND IT WOULD BE OF GREAT ADVANTAGE. STUDY YOUR BIBLE, LEARN THE TRUTH, AND OBEY THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. IT WILL HAVE TO DO WITH YOUR ETERNAL DESTINY. WE APPRECIATE CLIFF, THE EXCELLENT JOB THAT HE DID IN THE PRESENTATION OF TRUTH. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT. MAY GOD BLESS.

CLIFF >> THANK YOU FOR BEING WITH ME TODAY AS WE DISCUSSED THE BEATITUDES IN SOME DETAIL. BEFORE WE CLOSE, HOWEVER, I WOULD LOVE TO GO OVER WITH YOU THE GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION. WHAT MUST ONE DO IN ORDER TO BE SAVED? WELL, ONE MUST HEAR THE GOSPEL, ROMANS 10:17; ONE MUST BELIEVE THAT GOSPEL MESSAGE CONCERNING THE DEATH, THE BURIAL, AND THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD, MARK 16:16; ONE THEN MUST BE WILLING TO REPENT,

TURNING AWAY FROM THE PRACTICE OF SIN IN HIS OR HER OWN LIFE, ACTS 2:38;
THEN ONE MUST MAKE THE GOOD CONFESSION THAT JESUS IS IN FACT THE SON OF
GOD, GOD CAME IN THE FLESH, ROMANS 10:9-10; AND THEN ONE MUST PUT HIM ON
IN BAPTISM FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, ACTS 22:16. THANK YOU FOR BEING
WITH ME TODAY, AND PLEASE VISIT THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

>> (SINGING)