

Beatitudes (Part II) Series

November 4, 2020

Scripture: Matthew 5:7-12

7. Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Summary: Part two of the beatitudes describing our relationship with others as instructed in the final four beatitudes by Jesus.

Introduction:

[ILLUS: Helen at the checkout at Walmart.]

A man got saved one Sunday night and before he left the service he spoke to the CO about how the other men were going to receive him at the lumber camp (he was a logger). The following Sunday, he came back to church not seemingly to look any worse for the wear. During the testimony meeting he talked about how he got saved Sunday past and wondered how he would be received at the logging camp. He went on to say things went much better than he expected. In fact, the men didn't notice anything different about me. I don't think they even found out I got saved.]

As we discussed this tonight, there are to be some major differences between those who profess Christ as Savior and those who don't.

You ask: what differences should there be between believers and nonbelievers??

They are listed in point form in what we call the beatitudes in Matthew 5.

The noted first 4 had to primarily deal with our relationship with God, whereas the final four deal primarily with our relationship with others.

Remember you can only learn how to properly deal with others, after you have your relationship with God in order.

In other words, the 1st four deal with what it means to be a Christian, the 2nd four deal with how a Christian ought to behave.

In the first four the focus is on the person's need.

In the later ones, the focus is the person's responsibility.

5. BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: (v. 7 – READ)

7. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

The first work that is required of the Christian is that of mercy, not piety or religion, but mercy.

Mercy is a sense of pity plus a desire to relieve the suffering.

In other words, mercy = pity + action.

Therefore, just to be emotionally moved by a story or event is not being merciful.

Those who take pity and don't act are like the saying "Too heavenly minded to be of any earthly value."

[ILLUS: Good example - The Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37 – review story.]

[APPL: When we give our lives to God, our view of ourselves and others changes in such a way that we not only see people as people BUT we see them as individuals who desperately need to be saved of their sin.

You see people as being victims of Satan and his tactics.

Our attitude should be like that of the Good Samaritan, who acted w/o judgment BUT with great love and mercy.]

Scripture says that those who are merciful will be shown mercy.

It is almost like the measure by which you show mercy to others, God will also show mercy to you.

Just as much as we need the merciful hand of God each day, likewise we need to extend our merciful hand toward others.

6. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART: (v. 8 – READ)

8. Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

This beatitude shifts our attention from charity to purity; from practical Christianity to internal holiness.

What is meant by the heart? We discussed last week that God is only interested in your heart. If one contains purity of heart then it's almost a guarantee that the rest of him/her is pure as well.

The opposite is also true: if a person's heart is impure then you can be sure so is the rest of him.

Jesus said in scripture: (Matthew 15:11,19):

11. “What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’

19. For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly.

All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’”

What kind of internal purity does Jesus have in mind?

A pure heart is a heart without defilement (dirty, unclean or contamination).

The word “pure” literally means clean. A pure heart is a clean heart that is free from dirt. But purity is more than the absence of dirt.

It is also the presence of good things.

Paul says in, (Philippians 2:5) that we must fill our minds with Christ.

Because each and every day we are being bombarded with the filth of this world. Therefore, it is necessary to as much as possible to stay away from such harmful and impure activities.

[APPL: Is it realistic for you and me to even think it is possible to be pure?

I’ll say one thing: in the world in which we live it certainly is not easy...

A. TV programs exploiting sexuality and the family unit,

B. Peer pressure to conform to the world standards,

C. Global erosion of morals and values (starting at government levels),

Considering the type of person you are and the world that bombards you – is it possible for you to have a pure heart? ABSOLUTELY!!! HOW??? We can never do it on our own.

This can only be possible through the grace and mercy of God.]

To those who are pure in heart, Jesus promised that they will see God.

I'm not sure if you count that a privilege or not, but it is certainly meant to be one.

Remember when Moses went up Mt. Sinai and saw only the back of God. He said the experience was too overwhelming for a human being.

I wonder how we are going to react when we finally get the opportunity to see Jesus face to face.

Some of us think we'll just walk up and talk to Him – scripture says that the angels can't even do that – they cover their faces.

We sing... “We shall see Jesus just as they saw Him, there is no greater promise than this...” (You better believe it!!!!!!!)

7. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: (v. 9 – READ)

9. Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, deals with the Christian's social responsibility.

How does my faith impact not only on me or my personal life, but how does it impact on the world around me, on society and culture at large – family and friends?

We need to get some sort of understanding of what it means to be a peacemaker??

A peacemaker is not someone who settles for peace regardless of the cost.

For example, not to cause some controversy, the person brushes the issue under the carpet – that's not being a peacemaker.

Again, being easygoing or passive is not the same as being a peacemaker.

A Peacemaker is someone who is prepared to pursue peace and pay the high price if necessary.

At times peace is costly, like the grace of God.

[ILLUS: God was willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice. God established peace with people, through the death of his son.

It was costly and it was not achieved overnight.

Think about World War 2, before world peace was possible 100,000s of people had to die. World peace was very expensive during the 1940s.]

[APPL: There are three realms of peace.

First in the home, if you cannot keep peace at home among family members because of the arguments or disagreements or some cases violence, then chances are you will have a difficult time in your other environments.

Your home life will set the stage for further arguments and disagreements at your work, social activities, church, or school.

Secondly, in the community, Paul writes in Romans 12:18: “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with all men.”

(Example: In my position that becomes difficult at times because I deal with people and people’s issues every day. Not all the time will people agree with every decision – make it personal.)

Finally, in the society at large: Society does not always agree with the morals and values of the church and Christians. Yet, we are called and expected by God to uphold them. If someone takes exception to us because of what we stand for then that’s unfortunate.

Scripture says the peacemakers will be called sons of God because they reflect the work of the Son of God who brought peace Himself.

What an honor for you to be called a Son of God, alongside the Son of God! An honor and privilege not to be taken lightly.

8. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE PERSECUTED: (vs. 10-12 – READ)

10. Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11. Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

How the beatitudes progress from one to another is not by accident, there is purpose behind it.

I’m not sure if you noticed before, but PEACE is followed by PERSECUTION – quite the contrast.

I believe Jesus does not want to give his disciples the impression that the Christian life is a Rose garden.

From time to time, some people try and paint that type of picture. Come to Jesus and all will be hunky dory.

Jesus will take away your sin, your suffering, your pain. He will make you prosperous. He will guarantee you a first class ticket to heaven and a front row seat. He will give you that Mercedes Benz if only you have enough faith. That's so far from the truth!!!

We discussed last week that true discipleship of Jesus Christ is very costly. For Jesus and his disciples it involved suffering and persecution by others who don't agree with our faith.

Just so we get it, Jesus repeats Himself in verses 11-12.

[ILLUS: Paul describes the persecution and suffering one can expect for following Christ. (1 Peter 4:12-19 – READ) One of the harsh realities of being a Christian is that it is going to be costly.]

[APPL: In recent years especially, people don't want to hear about the costs of being a Christian just the benefits thank you. What happens: the church softens the gospel message and presents it as a cheap product. They sell Jesus and the gospel off in a way that's attractable to the listener just like selling an item at Walmart.

Salvation is free but discipleship is costly, BUT never too costly because of the reward.]

Scripture says blessed are those who are persecuted for they will receive the kingdom of heaven.

In fact, we are to rejoice when we are persecuted because we know that great is our reward – CITIZENSHIP IN HEAVEN!!!

Conclusion:

When you look at this passage as a whole, it can be very easily seen that not everyone is going to go to heaven; not everyone who says they are a Christian is a Christian.

Being a born-again believer is not just a title that you wear (like a badge that you find on the ground and put it on your clothes), although some are living their lives like it's a title.

Being a Christian involves set criteria and guidelines NOT just because you say that you are.

It involves a solid, deep relationship with Christ and a character and actions as described in the beatitudes.

If your life is not measured according to that then God needs to do some restructuring. Maybe tonight!!