

JCI # 141 The Seven Beatitudes of Revelation

Revelation 1:3 14:13 16:15 19:9 20:6 22:7 22:14

When we hear the term “beatitudes”, we think immediately of the opening statements in Christ’s Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:1-12, each beginning with the words “Blessed are...”

Beatitude, then, is a statement defining who is blessed and why they are so blessed. (Just as with the beatitudes, we see other repeated statements in Revelation found in Christ’s earthly teaching in Matthew, as in the conclusion to the seven letters to the seven churches of Asia: “He who has ears to hear, let him hear...” which Christ often ended his parables with.)

The Revelation Beatitudes are seven in number, beginning in the first chapter and concluding in the last. They serve to remind us of the true and lasting blessings every believer possesses in Christ. They serve to make us grateful, to provide us eternal perspective, and encourage us to live in anticipation of Christ’s soon return.

The Beatitude of the Hearer Rev 1:3 Psalm 119 1 Peter 1:23 Romans 10:17
Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Revelation promises a special blessing to those who read and hear its words, and take to heart and embrace and hold tightly to its truth. While many seem to be frightened of this book, or dismiss it as too symbolic to be practical or useful to daily life, such is definitely not the case. The book of Revelation is intended to bless its readers and hearers by revealing Christ’s glory, sovereignty, salvation, and soon return. It is fitting that the first blessing should flow from the book, since every blessing is made known to us through the word of God. It is by God’s word that we are born again (1 Peter 1:23, Romans 10:17), taught the fear of God, made aware of our sins, brought to repentance and given faith. How blessed we

are to have this book of prophecy to instruct, convict, reprove and lead us into a life of eager obedience to our soon coming Savior.

The Beatitude of the Laborer 14:13 1 Cor 15:57-57 1 Cor 3:11-14 Rev 22:12-13

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

The second beatitude is found far into the book, in the midst of the descriptions of the tribulation and persecuted saints who endure suffering and death for Christ's name. How blessed are those who labor hard and long and faithfully even to death. For them, their death is not a curse, but a blessing. The death of the faithful believer brings rest and reward... rest from the heavy burden of labor, and reward for its results.

The Beatitude of the Ready Rev 16:15 Mk 13:33-37 1Cor 16:13 Col 4:2 1Pet 4:7

"Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

This beatitude takes us back to the night of the Exodus, when Moses told Israel from the Lord: *Exodus 12:11-12 "This is how you are to eat it: with your cloak tucked into your belt, your sandals on your feet and your staff in your hand. Eat it in haste; it is the LORD's Passover "On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn-- both men and animals-- and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the LORD.*

Blessed indeed are those who live in constant readiness of Christ's return. It is our expectation of His sudden return that guards us from spiritual drowsiness and carelessness that otherwise would surely lead us into sin. Christ told numerous parables focused on the necessity of readiness for His return, and the likelihood of the vast mass of humanity who will not be ready, just like the days of Noah's flood.

The Beatitude of the Invited Rev 19:9 Rev 22:17 Matt 22:2-14

Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

This beatitude is for those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb, as contrasted to those who but a few verses hence must eat of "the great supper of God" which is Armageddon. There are 23 great contrasts in Revelation that distinguish between the blessed and the cursed, those who are saved and those who are lost. This beatitude reminds us that to be invited and enter into this blessed marriage feast will be the supreme joy for Christ's own. As a wedding banquet is to be a time of joy and blessing, so this final and supremely joyous wedding will exceed by infinite measure every earthly joy. Consider the final two invitations to this eternal joy found in Revelation 21 and 22.

The Beatitude of the First Resurrection Rev 20:6 Rom 8:11 1 Cor 15 2 Cor 5

Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Like the two feasts, so here we see the two deaths and two resurrections. Those who are Christ's are blessed in their death (14:13), and now blessed in their resurrection! We may taste of the first death, but never of the second and eternal death and its attendant separation from God in the lake of fire. Our blessed resurrection is followed by the declaration of our priesthood and kingship, fulfilling the promise first made in Revelation 1:6. Priests have access to God, kings have dominion from God, and thus we are restored to our first glory as image bearers in Eden! Blessed indeed are we.

The Beatitude of the Possessor Rev 22:7 John 8:51 Luke 8:15 James 1:21-25

"Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

Like the first beatitude, the sixth repeats both the reminder of Christ's soon return as well as the blessedness of the one who possesses in his heart the words of this book of prophecy. "To hear it" is the beginning of blessedness, "to keep it" is the ending of blessedness. Having received an anticipated blessing in 1:3, we now, with far greater understanding receive the confirmed blessing that comes with keeping what we read and heard. This blessing is prefaced by the first of three clear reminders by the Savior of His soon and sudden return.

The Beatitude of the Cleansed Rev 22:14 Rev 7:14 1 John 1:7-10 1 Cor 6:11

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

The seventh and final beatitude is a reminder that all these blessings are for sinners who have been cleansed and washed in the blood of the Lamb. (7:14) We are not worthy, He is. We are not His by our perseverance, but by His purchase. Heaven's blessings are for sinners washed clean by Christ! And this cleansing is full and forever, so that we may enter into the New Jerusalem, into the presence of God and the Lamb, and take of the Tree of Life in an eternally restored Eden of endless joy-filled life. Blessed assurance.... Jesus is mine!

SELF CHECK:

- 1) When the last time you thought about the Lord's soon coming? Are you living in anticipation?
- 2) How do His soon return and your blessedness work itself out in your outlook and attitude today?
- 3) Which beatitude do you most appreciate today? Memorize it!

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

See the passages next to each beatitude.

"O Blessed Savior, thank you, thank you, thank you for blessing me with Your word, your grace, Your promises, Your rest, your reminders, Your reward, Your feast, Your resurrection, Your cleansing. All these are mine by Your blood and covenant. May Your name forever be praised in my life as well as by my lips, O Soon Coming Redeemer! In Your Name alone I pray.... Even so come, Lord Jesus. Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,
spending our time on eternity,
owning nothing yet possessing everything
that matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY