

Just Checking In #221 July 2020 **THE BEATITUDES PART 2**

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BEATITUDES PART 2

The Beatitudes from Jesus' sermon on the mount in Matthew 5 are well worth meditating on and considering more than just in passing. I memorized them many decades ago, but they keep coming back to mind as they are so applicable to every one of us in every circumstance and stage of life. Last month we looked at the first four. This month we will look at the next four plus two more!

Matthew 5:1 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. 2 Then 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 filled.

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 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 they *revile and persecute* you, and say all kinds of evil against you *falsely for My sake*. 12 "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The first 2 beatitudes display the **FOUNDATION** of our salvation. ***Blessed are the poor in spirit***... Recognition of our true spiritual poverty... ***Blessed are they who mourn***... and deep sorrow for our sin leading to repentance... This is the FOUNDATION of true salvation. This is what drives us to Christ and to find in Him our forgiveness, justification and life.

The rest of the beatitudes describe the **FRUITS** or results of true salvation. ***Blessed are the meek***, the fully surrendered souls who yield to Christ's Lordship hour by hour. ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness***... their innermost desires have been transformed from selfishness and sin to surrender and a longing for righteousness, true righteousness in thought, word and deed.

5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

A heart that is purged from sin, purified, washed and made clean, centered on God and free from idols is truly blessed!

The word for “pure” in the NT is the word *katharos*, the root of *catharsis* – or cleansed. 1 John 1 tells us how we obtain a cleansed heart – verse 7 says “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses (purifies) us from all sin” ... and verse 9 “if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” ... full and complete cleansing. Blessed indeed is the one who knows what it is to have a heart cleansed and purified from sin by the blood of Jesus -

Psalms 24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

Psalms 73:1 ¶ Truly God [is] good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart.

Proverbs 20:9 ¶ Who can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin"? We cannot make our own hearts clean – only God can do that cleansing work and only thru the blood of His own Son.

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart...

Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

Peacemakers – those who bring God’s peace into their daily relationships in word and deed. **Peace is both objective and subjective. It is both legal and experiential.** We have objective peace with God through Christ’s substitutionary death in our place. Wrath has been replaced by justification as Christ’s blood removed our sin and His righteousness imputed to us by faith brings us peace with God. Romans 5:1... therefore being....we have peace with God. This is the peace that is the removal of conflict and antagonism – we are no longer enemies of God, but are His beloved, reconciled sons and daughters through faith in Him who is our peace... Eph 2

And peace is also subjective, as it is the removal of anxiety, distress and fear with that peace that passes all understanding that guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. As Jesus said..John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

We have received the **removal of hostility by His blood** and the **removal of anxiety by His Spirit** in our hearts. Having been thus blessed, we have become agents of peace by being peacemakers in an angry, hostile, distraught world blinded by Satan and headed for hell. We come with the words of peace, the gospel of peace, the good news of peace on earth, good will towards men – through the word of Christ on Calvary. We are also peacemakers by our own words Romans 14:19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another, (speaking the truth in love, gentle and kind in word), by our own responses (love your enemies, pray for those who abuse you), Eph 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. and by our example (as salt and light living in peace with one another.) Hebrews 12:14 Follow peace with all [men], and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

The peace of God is not only something we enjoy, but also that which we are to sow like seeds in our everyday interactions with others, both believers and unbelievers... James 3:18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

We have been blessed with peace that we might become peacemakers as we follow Him who is the Prince of Peace, Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 5:10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

It is hard for us to comprehend that being opposed, slandered, rejected and hated is indeed an evidence of the blessing of God. But it is the very fact that our stand for Christ is clear and true that gives birth to the antagonism; and that the accusations are false; and the underlying motive of our witness is all for the sake of Christ's glory and the good of others that brings this benediction from our Savior. As He himself said... they have hated me, do not be surprised that that hate you too.

It is not that experiencing antagonism is a blessing in itself. But it is the fact that this antagonism comes as the result of your clear stand for Christ and your loyalty to Him above all earthly loyalties. This is what brings the persecution. That Christ is all to you. And blessed are you when this is so evident and real that it brings the anger of a world under Satan's domination.

The disciples in Acts 5 were beaten and commanded to no longer preach that Jesus is the Christ... in 5:41 after having been beaten, they left rejoicing they were counted worthy to suffer for His name and they went right back to the temple and continues preaching that Jesus is the Christ. They knew that this persecution was an evidence of being blessed by God and honored with the privilege of suffering for Christ and with Christ for the souls of others who need the gospel. If increasing antagonism against the gospel brings increased persecution to us, let us not forget the words of our Savior, Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for His sake, for our reward in heaven will be great indeed.

2 More Beatitudes not in the Sermon on the Mount

Luke 7:23 And blessed is [he], whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Vance Havner dubbed this beatitude "The Forgotten Beatitude". You can google Vance Havner Forgotten Beatitude and read it online. I read it decades ago in one of his devotional books and have never forgotten it.

This beatitude springs from John the Baptist's soul struggle with Jesus's seeming lack of attention to John's suffering and impending death. John preached clearly that Jesus was the Messiah and stood his ground fearlessly against all opposition. Yet now, in Herod's prison, he send tow disciples to ask Jesus... "Are you the One who was to come (the Messiah, the King of Israel, our Deliverer) or should we look for another?" Some interpret this as doubt from depression; others see it as goading Jesus into action. In either case, the frustration and "offense" was evident in John's message. Jesus immediately begins to heal numerous people, fulfilling the prophecies of Isa 35 to the letter. There is no doubt that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. But why, then, doesn't He move in miraculous power and release john from prison? Because it wasn't the Father's plan. And as Jesus submitted to the Father's plan, so must john, and so must we. Not because we understand it all, not because it makes sense to us, not because we received a vision or revelation from on high, but because He is Lord and He knows best, and blessed are those who do not become upset and angry at the way He works His will. The word "offended" is the Greek word skandoulos – which sounds just like our English word scandalous... or... offensively wrong. This is the way John was seeing Jesus' lack of response to his imprisonment – offensively wrong!

This is the blessedness of the one who yields to God's sovereign wisdom when all earthly wisdom fall short of making any sense of it. Blessed is the one who is not offended, and who trusts God in the dark when the way seems so wrong and the reasons so absent. John was offended, Job was offended, Peter was offended, and we have been offended more times that we want to admit to, when God seemed absent and uncaring in the midst of our heartaches. But we must learn, as all these servants of God learned, that the blessing is for those who trust like a child, yield like a servant, and accept willingly Christ's hand because we know His heart. We turn our eyes to the cross and we see His wisdom, His love, and His sovereign plan. No one but God could see it when it happened. Now we sing of it with joy unspeakable and full of glory. So let us do the same now, before the veil is lifted, and chose the path of surrender, and not the path of doubting offense.

And our final Beatitude for this study

Luke 11:27-28 And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!" But He said, **"Rather, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"**

This final beatitude from the lips of Jesus were in response to a woman who was so impressed with the wisdom and power of Jesus she responded ... and I paraphrase.... "Your mother is one blessed woman to have a son like you".

Jesus responded in strong and clarifying terms... "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it!" In so saying, Jesus makes it clear that the earthly, human relationship between He and Mary, as precious as it was, did not bring the eternal blessing of God automatically. The eternal blessing of God comes through a spiritual relationship with Jesus Christ. It comes from listening to God's Word, believing it, and responding in faith and obedience to it.

In a similar account in Mark 3 we read... Then the multitude came together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread. 21 But when His own family heard about this, they went out to lay hold of Him, for they said, "He is out of His mind." ... 31 Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. 32 And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You." 33 But He answered them, saying, "Who is My mother, or My brothers?" 34 And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 35 "For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother."

The truly blessed man or woman, boy or girl, is the one who listens to God's Word, and responds in full, loving obedience for His glory and honor. Oh, brothers and sisters, may we know and experience this blessedness today and each day!

Make It Personal:

1) Review these beatitudes and ask yourself if the evidence of their reality is found in your own heart and life. Ask God to work them in and thru your life for His glory and the blessing of others you interact with. Our lives are making an impact either drawing others closer to God or driving them from Him. May we be salt and light and agents of grace each and every day.

2) Pray these beatitudes back to God thanking Him for Jesus, His Son, who lived out these beatitudes perfectly. Thank God for those you know who evidence these fruits and encourage you. And ask God to work these fruits in your own life more fully so we show the love and life of Christ in all we say and seek and do.

Further Study: Read 1 Peter, 1 chapter a day, and look for the ways God uses persecution and suffering to prepare us for glory.

**Remember, you are very special to us and we thank God for you.
Living with leaving in view.... John 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.**