

Matthew 5

The Beatitudes

3/8/2020

Introduction

In the Old Testament, when the Law was given (in Exodus, ch 19-20): *the Lord came down...and the whole mount quaked...and there were thunders and lightnings...and the voice exceeding loud ...* and the people were commanded to keep their distance.

Paul later wrote, *Jesus was made a surety of a better testament*, and here he demonstrates it when he lays out the precepts of his kingdom. Our Lord went up into a mountain and beckoned the hearers to draw nigh. He begins not with maledictions on the wicked, but benedictions on his people as he spoke in a still, small voice. He ministers to the afflicted and reveals that his kingdom has the key to blessings that are hidden from the world of the unsaved who suppose that outward comforts and luxuries bring happiness.

1 *Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

key : *poor in spirit*

Not : poor in monetary resources. Many living in poverty have an angry, envious, covetous spirits which puff them up as they strut about complaining incessantly. Their pride often rivals the affluent.

To be *poor in spirit* is the opposite of the defiant, haughty, self-asserting attitude that the world admires. The *poor spirit* opens sin-blinded eyes and recognizes the poverty and emptiness of self

2 *mourn* 1. natural - loss

2. sinful - grief when caught, e.g. Cain,

grief when your plans don't work out, e.g. Judas, Ahab

3. spiritual *mourning* - is blessed by God

Luke 7:36-50 *Woman ...washed his feet with tears*

Luke 15:11-32 the Prodigal son...*I have sinned against heaven ...no more worthy*

Luke 18:9-14 the publican...*would not lift up his eyes...smote his breast*

These "Be-attitudes" of the heart are both *initial* and *continual*

3 *the meek* Ps 37:11

4 *hunger after righteousness*

5 *the merciful* Ps 18:25

6 *the pure in heart* 1 Tim 1:5; Pr 30:5

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7 *the peacemakers*

(i) make peace between man and God - Rom 5:1; Eph 2:12-14

(ii) make peace between men - Rom 14:19; 2 Tim 2:24; Pro 20:3

The world has it troublemakers (grumble, murmur, complain...bitter)

8 *persecuted for righteousness*

category 1 : Any believer who has received Christ's righteousness - 2 Pet 1:1

how: Believer's are verbally abused, mocked, criticized, ridiculed, ostracized...

why: They refuse to agree with the world's sinful ways : sex, LGBT, abortion, evolution, socialism
psychology, 'saving the planet'

what : We strip away the world's 'aprons' : (i) it's laws

(ii) it's religions

9 *persecuted for my sake*category 2 : ministers who prophesy (*prophets*, v12) - Mt 10:5, 7, 16-22

The world's persecution of believer's reveals that this world is evil, Gal 1:4.

The Christian who lives and speaks righteously is opposed and persecuted.

This world fights those who truly care for their souls; those who spread Bible truth, love, wisdom, justice and salvation.

Paul warned Timothy (2 Tim 3) that *in the last days ...proud, disobedient, fierce, unholy blasphemers, who are lovers of pleasures...shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived* as rush onward in madness to judgment.

why : Jesus gives the answer in John 15:21 & 16:3.

Rejoice and be exceeding glad - for three reasons :

1. We get to share in His suffering, Phil 3:10
2. We shall be richly rewarded in the next life, Rom 8:17
3. We enter into the company of the martyrs: Abel - Gen 4:8; Zechariah - 2 Chr 24:21;
John Baptist - Mk 6:27; Stephen - Acts 7:58; James - Acts 12:2; and others - Heb 11:37.

v 13 - 16 The Influence of the Blessed

salt - is cheap, common, plentiful, insignificant. A "humbling" analogy.*light* - is illuminating, noticeable, elevating. An "encouraging" analogy.

Salt is God's antiseptic in a decaying earth. It's woven into the very rocks and soil of our planet. As water flows through these natural filters, it is purified. Salt was used to preserve meat from putrefaction; it draws out superfluous toxins and moisture. Also, salt is a necessary element (an electrolyte) in blood. It is one of God's natural means of fighting decay and preserving life.

Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel are *the salt of the earth*. Their presence purifies the flow of society as they draw out the toxin of sin through their intercessory prayers for the lost around them.

Light : Believers sayings and doings are open to the view of men. Spiritually the world is in darkness, living in the shadow of death (Mt 4:16). Believers carry the lamp of truth (Ps 119:105) and bring light to darkened souls.

How should we "shine our light" ?

answer - Ps 51:15 Pr 12:17 Phil 2:15-16 James 3:13