

5:3-5

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. See commentary on 5:10.

5:10-12

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: “Rejoice” is also used in Matthew 2 where it says the wise men saw the star that was going and taking them over to the place where the Christ child was in the house, and it says, “They rejoiced to see it.” So as happy as the wise men were to find the trail towards the new king, that’s how happy we’re supposed to be if we’re **persecuted for righteousness sake**. Think about that. That’s quite the comparison. As happy as the wise men are about finding the king of the whole universe that will soon rule and reign on the throne of His father David; as happy as they were to find that, we’re supposed to be that happy to be **persecuted for righteousness sake**? And then on top of that Jesus says, “You’re blessed.” I’m blessed? “Yes, you’re blessed.” “Blessed” because I’m poor in spirit; because I’m domesticated (verse 5; “meek”). I feel like I’m weak but I’m really just controlled, controlled strength. We might call that a “governor” (if you enjoy working on engines). It’s not that you can’t be out of control, it’s that you won’t allow yourself to be out of control. You could go twenty-three, twenty-four, six thousand (depending on how small the engine is) RPMs, but the governor is in place and you’ve decided to be meek and allow yourself to only go up to a safe speed. So, it’s not that the power isn’t there, it’s that it’s under someone’s control.

for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Now I thought through this a little bit and I thought about the prophets that have already been mentioned in the book of Matthew:

1. Isaiah said, in chapter 1, “He will call His name Immanuel, which is interpreted God with us.”
2. Micah said, in chapter 2, “Thou Bethlehem, Judah, though thou be small...”
3. Hosea said, in chapter 2, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.”
4. Jeremiah said, in chapter 2, “there was weeping...”

Jeremiah was probably stoned in Egypt. Isaiah was cut in half by the King Manasseh. Micah was thrown from a cliff by the people of Ahab. Out of those four prophets, so far, the only one that wasn’t killed by his people, that I can tell, was Hosea. Apparently he was blessed enough to die of natural causes. So when you say, “You are so blessed because you’re being treated like the prophets,” he’s saying you’re as blessed as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah. That’s some company.

5:13

Ye are the salt of the earth: We have this idea of heaven constantly being contrasted with the idea of earth so this doesn’t make any sense to the average reader. I mean, in a way, we get the impression that God’s people don’t belong here on earth. I mean the whole Beatitude idea is that, “You just wait for a better day coming, you don’t belong here.” That’s the whole idea. As a matter of fact, the closest thing we get to something positive actually being said is verse 5:5.

He spends the first part of this basically saying, “You don’t belong here.” It’s basically what He’s getting to. And you know, this shows in our attitudes. It should show in our actions. Because the rest of chapter 5, from 17 and on, He says, “You have heard... But I tell you. You heard... But I tell you. People of earth, they say this, but I—the one from heaven—tell you this.” So our attitudes are supposed to say that

“we don’t belong here on earth.” And our actions, the rest of the chapter are supposed to say, “We actually don’t belong here on earth. We’re kind of a different stripe.” We need to be reminded that our heavenly heartbeat needs to be visible through our earthly bodies. I’m afraid it’s a disservice to the King if all we’re doing is talking about how you can’t wait to see so-and-so again.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, Now what are we talking about? Flavor. You are to bring flavor to this planet.

Psalm 34:8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

But if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. You understand that when an army used to conquer another army, sometimes they would burn the fields and sometimes they would salt them. And what would that do? It would keep anything from growing. The idea there is that people would walk on it and pretty soon the salt would be grinded in. You know it actually would dissolve into the soil and make it pretty unfertile. In other words, don’t lose your savor. No salt desires to be trampled.

5:14-15

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. You can never really miss a city on a hill, especially if you’re in the middle of a plain. And you’re not supposed to be able to miss the salt of the earth either. We are supposed to be unmistakable. There’s no better way to do that than be a light. Now I think there is salt to be had in our lives by picking up trash on a road when it needs to be, and adopting a highway, or maybe even serving at a soup kitchen, you must understand that there is no greater light you can bring to a soul than to give them the Gospel.

5:16

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. You see, why we want people to taste our lives is because we want them to be reminded of our Father.

#1. Faithfulness now means, listen to me, means fruitfulness later.

5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth:

“I thought we weren’t supposed to care about the earth. I mean I’m supposed to be meek so that later on when the kingdom comes I can have the earth.” No. Be salt now, inherit later. Isn’t it amazing the same word is used within eight verses of each other? We’re told in one verse seemingly, “Eh, don’t give a rip about what’s going on around here. To hell with it.” That is how Christians are these days! “Eh, whatever. I don’t really want to hear about what’s going on in the political world, whatever, whatever.” Don’t you understand we’re salt? The attitude of, “I don’t care,” is so forgetful! We’ll never be remembered having that attitude. Our generation will be forgettable. I want to be full of savor. One day the meek inherit the earth, but until then we are the salt of that very earth. This is the same earth in verse 5:18 we’re told will pass away. Look at it. It will pass away. But until then, we’re salt.

5:33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, “Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:” 34. But I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: 35. Nor by the earth; for it is His footstool.

So, when something is your footstool, don't you want it for a while? Isn't it yours? Don't you care for it? Yes, it's a sign that you conquered it, I got that. It's a sign that it's yours, I get that. I know when kings conquered kings they put their feet on the neck of the defeated king and said, "I've conquered this thing," I've got it. When it says the earth is His footstool it means that it is all His, it's all His, which I think is really ironic considering that Satan tried to give it to Jesus a chapter earlier.

So it's the same earth. It's the earth that the Lord controls, that He's conquered. It's the same earth that will pass away one day.

*6:30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which **to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven,***

What is that a reference to? It's a reference to when the earth and the heaven pass away. 2 Peter 3 talks about that. Everything will melt away that day. When will all the grass of the earth be thrown into the oven? When the earth passes away. Heaven and earth pass away, chapter 5 verse 18.

But until then, until then, we are the only salt that exists. The main way that we bring taste to this world is by making sure they are clear on what the gospel is. The gospel is not, "Pray to receive." The gospel is not, "Repent and do better." The gospel is, "Someone was crushed for our sins." Not because He was desperate for attention, but because the Father was unhappy with the creation that was in rebellion to Him. "For God so loved the world." That word "kosmos" is not just people, it is the whole of creation that God wanted restored to Him. Colossians 1:20, "He restored, or reconciled, the world to Himself through the blood of the cross of Christ." The whole world. Romans 8 says that the whole of creation groans and is in travail until the redemption. Friends, if Hebrews chapter 1 is correct, the earth abides forever, and I guess we might as well be salt.

You would think that if I do good works, you would think that the world would go, "Ahhh! Ahhh! It's the Father!" And they'd fall to their knees and repent. Unfortunately, if you look at the end of chapter 5:43,

Ye have heard that it hath been said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." 44. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven:...

If you want to be like your Father you have to have the rejection He feels. And what is that rejection?

...He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

"Hang on a second. Are you telling me that I spend all the time that I can think of being salt of the earth, so that people around me can look up to heaven and then they don't even give thanks for the good works that the Father has done? Are you telling me that?" Yeah....Or Jesus' words mean really nothing. What kind of force does it bring to Jesus' argument if He says, "Love your enemies like God never had to do." But that's not what it says.

You ever heard anyone say, "You're just like your dad?" Yeah, I would love for that to be said of me. How about you? Ok, end of the verse,

He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good,

He's busy showing sun to people who curse His name... They should get nothing but rain when they want sun. Nope. No. They get sun when good people get sun. The end of the verse,

and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

“Wait a minute, that’s not right, that’s not right.” That must be a misprint because if I were God the people that want rain would get blowing sand. And the good people, the ones that are like their Father, they would get rain. And when it’s time for the sun to do it’s work, I would give the people that are unrighteous, I’d give them a whole lot more than sun, I’d give them scorching heat, enough to melt them where they stand. And I’d give the righteous people, I’d give them sun. But no, the Father says, “Those people that curse me, I’m going to love them. I’m going to love them with sun and with rain, just like I do the good.”

And so, we share in the rejection of the Father when we are good to people around us. And remember, chapter 5 verse 16, we’re thinking about context...

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

What Father? The Father who rains on the just and the unjust. The Father who sends sun for the good and the evil. Who are we drawing people’s attention to? A Father that is a whole lot better than us. So it really is important that we point people to the Father. The one who drops rain. The one who forgives sin. Look at chapter 6 verse 14 and 15. Look there please.

*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, **your heavenly Father** will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

That Father. The one who feeds the birds, chapter 6 verse 26. We read that. And the one who gives gifts, chapter 7 verse 11,

*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall **your Father** which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?*

I think sometimes we get so reformation-minded in our idea of justification that we forget that there really is such a thing as “good and bad things Christians do.” And there are some days Bill Sturm doesn’t do right. And I don’t want you to taste my salt and see an imperfect heavenly Father. I’ve got to do right because I am reflecting my heavenly Father.