

Sermon on the Mount #2

Overview of the Eight Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3-12 "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.

II. Primary Focus & Goal: The Call to Pursue 100-fold obedience (Mt. 5:48)

A. The sermon on the mount is the longest discourse recorded in scripture and is written to believers. It could easily be a source of condemnation to unbelievers and to believers with an unrenewed mind. Remember, that every directive (command) of scripture is in itself a promise that God has grace (divine enablement) to give in order to attain to that goal, provided that we are hungry for it for the purpose of pleasing Him.

B. The 8 beatitudes describe the character of Jesus, a new beginning of "christlikeness", in us. These characteristics are what the Holy Spirit desires to reproduce in us with our co-operation. The rest of the sermon of the mount describes the conduct that flows out of these character traits and the goals of the one that would pursue them.

C. Jesus' called us to pursue a lifestyle of obedience that seeks to be perfect (mature in obedience). Walking mature in our obedience is relative in this age and absolute in the age-to-come. In this age, we never attain to perfection in the absolute sense. We are to walk in the fullness of the light that we receive from the Spirit. This includes declaring war on all our lust that the Spirit reveals.

Mt. 5:48 You shall be perfect (walk in all the light you receive) as your Father...is perfect.

D. The pursuit of 100-fold obedience includes making a covenant with our eyes (Ps. 101:3; Job 31:1), bridling our speech (Jas 3:2; Eph. 4:29-5:4), managing our time (for service and prayer with the Word, (Eph. 5:15-16) and money to increase the Kingdom beyond our personal comfort and honor (Mt. 6:19-21) as we engage in communing prayer with the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14).

III. The Eight Beatitudes: Brief Definitions (Mt. 5:3–12)

A. True spiritual reality is defined by the 8 beatitudes. This is the character of Jesus, true christlikeness! These describe what pleases God and what Jesus has in mind for creation and will duplicate in the nations through His ministry as King.

B. Implied in all of God's commands is the promise of the enabling grace to walk out the command. Thus, all eight beatitudes are a part of our inheritance. God will bless the pursuit and progressive attainment of these 8 expressions of grace in the heart.

C. Being poor in spirit (theirs is the kingdom of heaven, Mt. 5:3) – to acknowledge that we are in great need of help to sustain wholeheartedness. This is to understand, that we are in a serious dilemma in needing a breakthrough (insight/power) in our heart for godliness.

D. Mourning for breakthrough (for they shall be comforted, Mt. 5:4) – to be desperate enough to be "extreme" in pursuit of a progressive breakthrough (insight/power) in our heart and ministry.

E. Walking in meekness (shall inherit the earth, Mt. 5:5) – to walk in the fasted lifestyle or to have a servant spirit in the use of our natural strengths (time, money, energy, reputation, authority, etc.). Humility or meekness speaks of using our resources with a servant spirit, as we lay down personal rights in serving without regard for receiving the reward (honor, money) from people.

F. Hungering for righteousness (for they shall be filled, Mt. 5:6) – sustained faithfulness in seeking God with wholeheartedness through changing circumstances and seasons of our life.

G. Relating to others with mercy (for they shall obtain mercy, Mt. 5:7) – having a tender spirit in how we treat others in light of receiving God’s mercy in our many failures (Ps. 18:35; 130:3-4).

H. Being pure in heart (they shall see God, Mt. 5:8) – breakthrough of purity in our thoughts (bitterness, immorality) and motives (helping people for their benefit without any personal gain).

I. Becoming an anointed peacemaker (called sons of God, Mt. 5:9) – anointing to bring peace (reconciliation) to that which is out of God’s will (restoring relationships, bodies, legislation).

J. Enduring persecution (theirs is the kingdom, Mt. 5:10-12) – bearing the counterattack for plundering Satan’s Kingdom because we operate in the power of grace and stand for righteousness.

IV. The Eight Beatitudes: Poor in Spirit!

A. In Mt. 5:3-5, we begin the process of transformation as the first three beatitudes (poverty of spirit, mourning and meekness) relate to “perceiving ourselves” differently. Mt. 5:6 points to “sustained zeal” as we break through in mercy (Mt. 5-7), purity (Mt. 5:8), anointed service (Mt. 5:9) that brings persecution that requires endurance (Mt. 5:10-12). The way to awaken a sense of being poor in spirit and desperately mourning for a breakthrough is to set our heart to walk out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle in a literal and consistent way, especially in determining to be perfect (Mt. 5:48) or have a good or single eye (Mt. 6:22-23), and to seek the kingdom breakthrough in us first (Mt.6:33).

1. The Overwhelming Objective:

Matthew 5:48 You shall be perfect (walk in all the light you receive) as your Father...is perfect.

2. The Gateway to Glory:

Matthew 6:22-23 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"

3. The First thing that is First:

Matthew 6:33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

B. The kind of poverty of spirit that is described here is of the most desperate kind. There are two greek words and corresponding concepts that describe poor. The first *penes* poor is used to describe one who labors for daily bread, just getting by with food and basic necessities (the widow giving two mites). The other word *ptochos* poor is used to describe a beggar, one who is dependent upon the good will of another just to stay alive. This is the word used here to describe poor, beggarly, bankrupt or totally dependent.

C. Jesus says “blessed (truly happy) are the spiritual beggars!” The “poor in spirit” person is one who has no self-sufficiency in regards to attaining the life of God on his own merit, strength or abilities. This is the person that readily admits his inability to produce godly attributes apart for the grace that God would give and openly admits it (to others) and regularly confesses this fact in our conversation with God.

John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself,

John 5:30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

John 8:28 Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.

D. There is so little of self-emptying in a church culture were the emphasis is more on “bettering than on burying” of “culturing rather than crucifying” on “cleaning up rather than casting off” or of “developing self rather than denying self.” This is truly a radical message to the people of Jesus’ day and to the church today.

E. To be “poor in spirit” is to be reduced (in our pride) to being a receiver. Receiving is the way of the kingdom for it is a received lifestyle with received grace, life, power etc., etc., etc. In the first parable that Jesus taught about the seed and the soil He taught of the seed being the word of the kingdom and the soil being the heart of the recipient. (see Mt 13:18-23)

Mark 4:13 And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables?"

Mark 10:15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Colossians 2:6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,