

The Basis of Blessing (Part 1 of #2)

Matthew 5: 3-12

As we begin our study of The Sermon on the Mount, we come to the most familiar passage of the message that Jesus preached. This great discourse begins with what has become commonly known as the “Beatitudes.” The term beatitude comes from Latin and literally means “*happiness or bliss.*”

If you remember in our introduction, the Old Testament closed with a warning of judgment and Jesus begins His public ministry with the hope of happiness and joy. The heart of this passage focuses on the joy that believers can experience in the Lord. Our circumstances may not lend themselves to real happiness, but we can have joy in the Lord.

Jesus uses the word **blessed nine times** in these opening verses. Clearly there is a significant emphasis on being blessed. This has the idea of “*spiritual joy and satisfaction that lasts regardless of conditions; that carries one through pain, sorrow, loss, and grief.*” He reveals the presence and assurance of blessing to those who follow Him.

Now on the surface much of what Jesus says here appear to be contradictions: **Blessed are the poor in spirit; Blessed are they that mourn; Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake.** To the world these would appear as contradictions, but we must remember that God’s economy is much different than ours. This passage deals with those who know the Lord. These blessings are not promised to those who have no personal relationship with Him.

Let’s take a few moments this evening to begin looking at the Beatitudes. I want to consider the **assurances** that our Lord reveals as we think on: **The Basis of Blessing.**

I. Blessed are the Simple (3) – Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. On the surface this statement from our Lord seems to be a contradiction to what we’ve been taught and experienced in life. Those who are poor often find themselves dealing with the harsh effects of poverty: hunger, improper clothing, housing, etc. We must understand that Jesus is not teaching from a physical perspective. Those who read this from a physical standpoint miss the great truth that Jesus has taught.

- While it is true that those who are poor in material wealth are often closer to the Lord and depend solely upon Him, this is not the context of what Jesus has said. The word **poor** means what one would think: *reduced to begging; destitute of wealth, influence, position, and honor; to be poor and needy, lacking.* He is speaking of those who are poor in spirit, those who have come to the realization that they needed something in their life that this world could not give. These have realized that Jesus alone can supply what one truly needs in this life.

- What we have in material possessions really isn't the issue. It is often difficult for those who have need of nothing too see their need for the Lord, but Jesus wants us to realize that spiritually we are poor and undone before Him. Without the good hand of God working in our lives we have nothing to rejoice about or to boast in.
- Nicodemus was a man who was rich by the standards of this world, but he got to the place in his life that he was poor in spirit. He realized that he needed more than what he had gained in this life. Those who are poor in spirit are truly blessed. They no longer are depending upon themselves or their financial gain, but in the finished work of the cross. [Ps.37:16 – A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked.](#) [Is.66:2 – For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.](#) Blessed are those who have a humble spirit before the Lord.

I. Blessed are the Simple (3)

II. Blessed are the Sorrowful (4) – Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

There seems to be little blessing in mourning and sorrow, but Jesus declares that those who are sorrowful and broken, those mourning over sin shall be brought to laughter and joy.

- Clearly we all need godly sorrow in our lives. I rejoice for the day that I was sorrowful in spirit. I saw the error of my ways, the wickedness of sin that had consumed my being and my need for a Savior. There was a brokenness over sin and the realization that Jesus had given Himself upon the cross, suffering for my sin, that I might have redemption and forgiveness.
- It was through the sorrow and shame of my sinful condition that I saw my need. Had I never been broken over sin, I would've never been able to rejoice in salvation. Blessed are those who have been brought to a place of sorrow for their sins.
- There are still times that I am broken over sin. There are days when I stumble and fall, coming short of what Christ desires of me. It is in these times that I feel godly sorrow for my failures. (Thank God for those times of sorrow; it is then that I am reminded that I belong to Him.)
- We need an attitude of sorrow for those around us who have never trusted Christ, those who remain in sin and separated from the Lord. The church needs to be broken over the needs of a lost and dying world. May we never get to the place in our Christian lives that we are numb to the condition of others. We need to be sorrowful and seek the Lord to touch their hearts and

lives so that they might be saved. How can we live from day to day with joy in our lives when so many around us are lost and headed for hell? Fellowship needs sorrow for those who need the Lord. [Jer.9:1 – Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!](#) [Ps.126:5-6 – They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.](#)

I. Blessed are the Simple (3)

II. Blessed are the Sorrowful (4)

III. Blessed are the Submissive (5) – Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Here the word [meek](#) is very interesting. It speaks of “*mildness in disposition, a gentleness of spirit; often used to describe a soothing medicine or a gentle breeze; a term used to speak of a colt or oxen that had been broken and was useful for work. It deals with a strong and yet teachable spirit.*”

- Here we need to take a moment to consider the context of the passage. Jesus had come to the Jews. He had been born among them. They were the chosen of God. For centuries these proud Jews had laid claim to their heritage through Abraham. They were zealous in keeping the Law of Moses. In their minds, they were as righteous as man could be. Jesus rebukes their pride and reveals the great need for meekness. He reveals that God desires those who are humble before Him.
- This goes hand in hand with the need for being poor in spirit. Our poverty of spirit recognizes our sinfulness and the meekness of spirit recognizes God’s holiness. It is that attitude of meekness that humbles us before our God and Creator.
- One cannot see either without meekness and humility. A proud heart would never recognize its sin or need of salvation, nor would it recognize the holiness of God and the need to submit to Him.
- Would you not agree that America is much like Israel was when Jesus came to them? We have been blessed beyond measure and it seems as if most are unwilling to recognize or admit their need of anything. Our society is unthankful and arrogant in that we see no need to honor the Lord or submit to His Word and will for our lives.
- Even among the church there is a sense of pride and arrogance. We have gotten to the place that we feel we have arrived. We are good at seeing the sin and need of others, but we

cannot see the needs within our own lives. We are much like the Jews of old, quick to point out our righteousness and contrast it with the sinfulness of those around us.

- Are we willing to humble ourselves as others have before us? Would we be willing to endure the difficulties that others faced for the glory of God? Would we be willing to continue to follow the Lord, even though we had no idea where He was leading? Consider the meekness that Abraham had, that of Joseph, Moses, David, Peter, Paul, and ultimately Jesus. That is what we need in our lives, a humble, teachable spirit before the Lord.

➤ Quickly I want to address the issue of the meek inheriting the earth. This is quite profound and it has a twofold application.

1. There is a present application. Those who are meek, humble and teachable of the Lord, would enjoy their present situation. That is not to say that they would never face difficulty, but their lives are lived in light of Jesus and their relationship with Him. They are comforted and secure in Christ.

2. Also there is the future application. Clearly Jesus is making reference to the new heavens and new earth that will be revealed after the Tribulation. Our blessed Lord will return to this earth and establish His kingdom for 1000 years to rule and reign. During that time the redeemed will be with Him. At the conclusion of His Millennial Reign, we will enjoy the presence of our Lord for all eternity. We will inherit all that our Lord provides!

I. Blessed are the Simple (3)

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IV. Blessed are the Seekers (6) – Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Once again Jesus makes a statement that is hard to be understood from a physical standpoint. What could possibly be good about being hungry? We have never been hungry as some in this world have, but when we need to eat we become very miserable and irritated. Clearly Jesus doesn't desire people to suffer hunger. Had He desired this, why would He have multiplied the loaves and fishes?

- The truth that Jesus is teaching is to hunger after those things which the Lord gives. He reveals that those who seem to never get enough of His word, His presence, and His fellowship are truly blessed. Those who seek the direction and help of the Lord each day and in every circumstance are blessed of the Lord.

- What is that you desire and hunger for in this life? Are you hungry for the things of God or the things of the world? When we were saved, the old man died and we were resurrected a new creature in Christ. However, we still live in a body of flesh, and we must continually battle the desires to feed the flesh. There is a hunger within the flesh to satisfy its desires. Those who are truly blessed have made the commitment to feed the spiritual man and deny the flesh. (Illus. the Indian chief who was saved and asked about his conversion. He described his life as a battle between two dogs, one white and one black. When asked which one was winning the battle, he replied, "The one I feed the most!")

- [Ps.42:1 – As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.](#) If you want to enjoy the blessings of God and His goodness in your life, hunger after the Lord. Never get to the place that you are satisfied and content. We could all feed more on the ways of God. I don't know a one of us who doesn't need to draw closer to the Lord and feast at His table.

- I fear that many Christians in our day are suffering from spiritual malnutrition. The only spiritual nourishment they receive is on Sunday mornings. Eating once a week would never be enough to sustain our physical bodies and it is never enough to sustain us spiritually. In fact, the spiritual man needs to eat more than the physical man. Develop a hunger for the Lord and be blessed!

We have come to a good place to conclude tonight and we will pick up here again next week. As we close tonight, I wonder how it is with our hearts and lives? Are we genuinely poor in spirit? Have you recognized the sin in your life and need for a Savior? Has there been a brokenness over sin? Are you fully committed to seeking the Lord and following His will for your life? Do you hunger and thirst after His righteousness?

If not you need to come before Him today and begin afresh and new. If you have never been saved, you don't know the blessedness that Jesus gives. Christian if there is sin in your life, you are not living according to the joy and victory that Jesus desires you to have.