

## Living the Beatitudes (Part 1)

### Quick Recap:

- Unexpected and possibly Offensive
- Juxtaposition
  - Future & Eternal Rewards for the Broken, Hurting, & Losers in This World
  - Turning the World On Its Head
  - Kingdom Secrets to Peace-Filled, Authentic Living Now

### Are the Beatitudes True?

## Important Aspects of the Beatitudes

1. **Unexpected happiness and contentment found in situations and attitudes not normally associated with or even seen as barriers to happiness and contentment.**
2. **The Beatitudes are HOW Jesus followers (Kingdom citizens) become and apply “Salt” and “Light” to a decaying and dark world.**

### Matthew 5:13-16

<sup>13</sup> “You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty *again*? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. <sup>14</sup> “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; <sup>15</sup> nor does *anyone* light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. <sup>16</sup> Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

- Without the witness of Living the Beatitudes, the world will be unable to see or experience the nature/power of the Kingdom of God – and the vocation of Jesus followers in serving the world through reclaiming and restoring a broken and lost society cannot be fulfilled.

3. **The Beatitudes are not just a moral code of conduct, but rather a path toward genuine joy and fulfillment through a divine, Kingdom formula for inner-man renewal.**

- Not an external set of moral rules, but a profound, interior and intimate conversion of the heart that exceeds religious piety.

### Matthew 5:20

“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses *that* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

4. **The Rewards of the Beatitudes are always access to the Kingdom.**

- Present realities of difficulty and suffering transformed **now**, and in the **ultimate fulfillment**.
  - A fundamental key to the Gospel is understanding **struggles** and **difficulties** as **opportunities**:

### Matthew 5:10-11

<sup>10</sup> "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, **for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** <sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. <sup>12</sup> Rejoice and be glad, for **your reward in heaven is great.**"

### James 1:2-4

**Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,** <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- Opportunities not just for simple human happiness, but for **experiencing a visitation of the Holy Spirit for divine comfort, strengthening, and maturing.**

### 1 Peter 4:14

If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.

5. **The Beatitudes are a portrait of Jesus and His life – especially His Passion.**
6. **The Beatitudes can only be lived in Community.**

## Poor in Spirit

(5:3) "Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for **theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**"

- The Greek text can be accurately translated:
  - "Oh how blessed are those who have the heart of a poor one!"
  - "Oh how blessed are those with the soul of a poor one!"
- The *Poor in Spirit* beatitude is in many respects, the source and foundation that all the other beatitudes are built on. In many ways, this Kingdom bedrock principle of *spiritual poverty* is the key to the spiritual life.
  - We're not talking about *Negative Poverty* -- material or moral bankruptcy, interior shallowness, emptiness, depravity, or injustice...(see James 5:1-6).
  - Instead, a **Holy Poverty** – and emptying of self (see **Philippians 2:5-7**)

### 2 Cor. 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

*Spiritual poverty is a form of freedom...the freedom to receive everything freely and to give everything freely.*

- Jacques Philippe

The Eight Doors of the Kingdom: Mediations on the Beatitudes

## Matthew 10:7-10

These twelve Jesus sent out after instructing them:... as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'<sup>8</sup> Heal *the* sick, raise *the* dead, cleanse *the* lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give.<sup>9</sup> Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts,<sup>10</sup> or a bag for your journey, or even two coats, or sandals, or a staff; for the worker is worthy of his support.

- **Becoming a Conduit or A Channel of God's Grace & Provision**
  - "Dying to Self"
    - Your Agenda for Life
    - Building Your Kingdom
    - Laying up Your Treasures
    - Your Ego

## Matthew 6:19-20, 24,

"Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal.<sup>20</sup> Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal.<sup>21</sup> Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be."

<sup>24</sup> "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money."

<sup>31</sup> "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?'<sup>32</sup> These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.<sup>33</sup> Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need."

- This is especially hard for us to understand, embrace, or frankly, believe. (American Dream)

## Matthew 19:23-26

<sup>23</sup> And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.<sup>24</sup> Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."<sup>25</sup> When the disciples heard *this*, they were very astonished and said, "Then who can be saved?"<sup>26</sup> And looking at *them* Jesus said to them, "With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

- This Freedom requires a profound transformation in the way we think and relate to God and how we understand our place in relationship to ourselves and others.

## Homework

Consider these passages and how they relate to our definition of *Poor in Spirit* or *Spiritual Poverty*:

Matthew 19:16-26

Philippians 2:5-7

Isaiah 29:18-19

Deuteronomy 8:2-5

Psalms 71:4, 12-13