

Mourning, Meek, and Hungering Kingdom Basics, Part 2

Opening Hymn – Beatitudes Hymn

Sermon – “God’s Way to Heaven” (Kingdom Basics, Pt 2)

Scripture – Matthew 5:1-6

Closing Songs – Hymns and Choruses

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

REVIEW

- The whole goal of the Beatitudes is to bring us into a personal relationship with Jesus and show us how to live with each other in this world—and prepare for life in heaven.
- The Beatitudes describe in outline form how we come to Christ and experience salvation—the **STEPS OF SPIRITUAL AWAKENING** that we go through in coming to God.
 - You can read them as a **ROADMAP** to see where you are in your relationship with Jesus and how to come to Him.
- They also are the **ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS** to God’s kingdom now and HEAVEN later.
- They also describe the **ATTITUDES** we will have when God’s Spirit begins to change us. **BE-ATTITUDES**
- The Beatitudes are in **TWO TABLES**, like the 10 Commandments. The first 4 deal with our relationship with God; the second 5, our relationships with others.
 - **RECOMMEND:** “Thoughts from the Mount of Blessings.”
- So in the Beatitudes, Jesus is describing how we get into His kingdom. It is through a spiritual process which **BEGINS** with becoming aware of our spiritual poverty and need.
 - **LAST WEEK** we studied for 1st Beatitude. ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

- This means that those who recognize their spiritual poverty before God and turn to Him for salvation, are accepted as members of the kingdom of heaven.
 - WE ALL need God's help whether we realize it or not. The Bible says that all have sinned and continue to come short of the glory or perfection of God. Our disease is sin. Sin comes in many forms. Pride, self-sufficiency, and self-righteousness is the worst because it feels little need of God.
 - MANY TIMES it is when we are overcome with trouble or temptation or addictions that we feel our need of God the most.
 - Jesus said the prostitutes and the tax collectors were going into the kingdom of God before the self-righteous Pharisees.
- We learned last week that, it is the Spirit's job to help us enter Jesus' spiritual kingdom.
 - **Salvation**, new birth into God's spiritual kingdom, **is the result of God's work**. God initiates it. Jesus said, "All who the Father gives to me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." (John 6:37) A little later, He said, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." (John 6:44)
 - **Salvation is so simple**. Recognize your need; turn sincerely to God, repenting of your sins; trust Jesus for His gift of salvation.

What did Jesus say next in the Beatitudes?

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

- It is true that God comforts the grieving. God comes closest to those who are experiencing the losses of life. The Bible says:

The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." Psalm. 34:18

³ He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." Psalm 147:3

As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; Psalm 66:13

- Jesus lived here in this world. He experienced loss like you and I do. He lost His father while still a young man. He was rejected by those He came to help. He was not understood by His closest friends.
- Many people find God, or a closer relationship with Him, in the deepest, darkest chapters of their lives.
 - But the mourning Jesus is describing here is not primarily grieving the losses of life.
 - Remember, He is talking about the steps we take to come into a relationship with God.
- He is talking about the MOURNING OF REPENTANCE. REPENTANCE It is the AWARENESS of our distance and unlikeness to God. It is realizing that we are not like Him and that we have hurt Him. It can be a feeling of sadness we feel when we recognize our brokenness and sinfulness and distance from God.
- **ILLUSTRATION** – When Dad drove over the ducks.

- As we become aware of our spiritual poverty and sin, we begin to mourn, feel sad about, our condition.
 - This is the result of the continued work of the Holy Spirit. Having helped us see our sinfulness, the Spirit shows what it really means.
 - But it is MORE than feeling bad about the sins themselves. It is recognizing that we are out of touch with God, and we desire to turn to Him.
 - I studied the Bible with a lady from Hawaii who had drifted away from God. And one day she said, "I started to miss Him." That's why I came back.
- This is what the Bible describes as repentance.
 - REPENTANCE is turning away from our sins AND turning to God. It is the work of God's Spirit speaking to us, tugging on our hearts. Telling us that what we are, what we are doing, and where we are headed is not good or right for us.
 - Repentance is not a work we have to do so God will accept us. Some preachers give you the idea that you have to repent and then God will accept you.
 - NO! Jesus is the one who draws us and creates repentance in us.
 - If we recognize our spiritual deadness, the thing we need to do is just come to Him, and He will create the desire in us.

²⁸“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you (submit to my teaching, leading) and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matt. 11:28-30

ONE MORE THING

- The Beatitudes are not just describing a checklist of things we need to do as we come to Jesus.
 - Ok, I've recognized that I am poor in spirit- Check
 - Ok, I've repented – Check.
- They really describe a deepening and ongoing experience in the Christian life.

The closer you come to Jesus, the more faulty you will appear in your own eyes; for your vision will be clearer, and your imperfections will be seen in broad and distinct contrast to His perfect nature. This is evidence that Satan's delusions have lost their power; that the (life-giving) influence of the Spirit of God is (resurrecting) you.

No deep-seated love for Jesus can dwell in the heart that does not realize its own sinfulness. The soul that is transformed by the grace of Christ will admire His divine character; but if we do not see our own moral deformity, it is unmistakable evidence that we have not had a view of the beauty and excellence of Christ.

The less we see to esteem in ourselves, the more we shall see to esteem in the infinite purity and loveliness of our Saviour. A view of our sinfulness drives us to Him who can pardon; and when the soul, realizing its helplessness, reaches out after Christ, He will reveal Himself in power. The more our sense of need drives us to Him and to the word of God, the clearer and higher views we have of His character, and then we will reflect His character better. SC 64-65{SC 65.2}

"And repent." The life we live is to be one of continual repentance and humility. We need to repent constantly, that we may be constantly victorious. When we have true humility, we have victory. The enemy

never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus! {7BC 959.9}

A true sense of repentance before God does not hold us in bondage, causing us to feel like persons in a funeral procession. We are to be cheerful, not sorrowful. But all the time we are to be sorry that after Christ had given His precious life for us, we gave so many years of our life to the powers of darkness. We are to feel sorrow of heart as we remember that after Christ had given His all for our redemption, we used in the service of the enemy some of the time and capabilities which the Lord entrusted to us as talents to use to His name's glory. We are to repent because we have not endeavored in every way possible to become acquainted with the precious truth, which enables us to exercise that faith which works by love and purifies the soul. {7BC 960.1}

THIS IS A GOOD WORK

- It is like Kelation Therapy. (Tom Mayhew)
- It is like my Uncle Bob blowing the carbon out of his 1965 Thunderbird.
- It is a good SOUL CLEANSING.

Next, Jesus said:

"Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth."

- By meek, Jesus did not mean weak. The Bible calls Moses the meekest man who ever lived, and I don't picture Moses as weak.
- Meek means humble, teachable—especially by God. It means being open to God in a deep way. Looking to HIM to help us and lead us.
- The meek are teachable. The opposite of meek is proud, arrogant, self-important, know it all.
 - The meek get it that, "God is God, and I am not."
 - Those who begin to understand their spiritual poverty, and mourn their sins and sinfulness, become humble and teachable by God.
 - They stop thinking they have all the answers and start looking to God for answers, to help them and teach them.
 - AND, they become open to the wisdom of others in a new way. They start listening for what God's Spirit might be saying to them through their brother or sister in Christ.
 - This is the Christian basis of UNITY.
 - All of these qualities are in relationship with God.

Converts seldom rise at once in spirituality above the level of their teachers. How important, then, that those teachers should habitually put their trust in God, and seek for the manifestations of His divine power upon their labors; that they should be meek, spiritually-minded, and in constant communion with Heaven. Then those who are converted under their labors will partake of their spirit, and emulate their graces.--RH Aug. 8, 1878. {PaM 207.2}

God said about His people in the Old Testament: “. . . I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill. But I will leave within you the meek and humble, who trust in the name of the LORD.” Zephaniah 3:11-12

- There is an interesting story about meekness in the Old Testament. One of the most arrogant and wicked kings in Israel was Ahab (husband of Jezebel). He was a baaaad guy. God sent warning after warning to him and finally said, “I am going to bring judgment on this city and on Ahab.

²⁷ When Ahab heard these words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and fasted. He lay in sackcloth and went around meekly.

²⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: ²⁹ “Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son.” 1 Kings 21:27-29

God values meekness highly. Pride was caused Lucifer to fall in heaven and become Satan. Pride has led to the spiritual downfall of so many people. Meekness, humility, being teachable keeps us open to the wisdom of God and others.

The Early Church was very meek—humble and teachable—in their relationship with God. They fasted and prayed often. They looked to the risen Jesus and the Holy Spirit, to lead them. That’s why they were to powerful. They did not trust to themselves, but to God.

The Fourth Beatitude says:

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled.”

- Righteousness is GOODNESS, WHOLENESS, HOLINESS. IT IS BEING LIKE GOD. HOLINESS IS Spiritual wholeness and freedom from inward and outward sin.
- The teaching of the Bible is that human beings are not righteous. In fact our hearts are sinful. Our desires and motives are often bad. Why? Because we have sinful hearts (Rom. 3) (Ps. 51) “I was born in sin, in sin did my mother conceive me.”
 - God’s plan of salvation is to take people who do not know God or care about God; who are living separated from Him and restore them to Himself, and also make them holy.
 - We were created for this. HOLINESS is all the good that God is.
 - Those who realize their spiritual poverty and mourn their sinfulness and distance from God, and become humble and teachable by Him—something begins to happen in their lives. I have seen it over and over. They become hungry for God, for his word, and for the kind of life that only God can give. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to create this kind of desire in us.
 - I told you about Thomas and Sandra, the couple from Hilo, I studied the Bible with in Thousand Oaks. Thomas and Sandra attended the Hilo church when they were young. Sandra’s mother was an Adventist. But as they got older, they drifted away. God involved in sports and drugs. They moved in together and started partying. Then they attended an Adventist evangelistic series like is going on at Central Church right now, but after the meetings, Thomas joined the national guard and had an accident that disabled him. They drifted away again. Sandra was working hard trying to make ends meet for both of them. Then something happened. Sandra

began to feel her need of God. She told Thomas she was going back to church. He said he would go too. They both began to read their Bibles.

- **Righteousness and holiness have gotten a bad** name because of what people have done with them. Sometimes we cringe when we hear them. People have been legalistic thinking they have to earn God's love and acceptance.
 - Some have created whole systems of religion based in self-effort, legalism. The result is pretty joyless.
 - **John Eldridge wrote a book, "The Utter Relief of Holiness."** It is one of the most profound books I have read.
 - On page 17 he explains the title of His book.
 - On page 159, he describes what this world would be like with holiness.
- I WANT TO SHARE **SOME GOOD NEWS** with you. The good news is that **Righteousness is a gift**. It comes to us in Jesus. And God gives it in two closely connected parts.
 - 1 - When we believe in Jesus, God credits His perfect life to us. One of the reasons Jesus came to this world and lived here for 33 years was to develop a perfect life for us, a perfect character. He came as the REPRESENTATIVE MAN, the HEAD OF THE HUMAN RACE and lived a perfect life.
 - Because He was perfect man and also God, He can credit His life to us when we turn to Him and believe in Him.
 - Gal. 3:6 says, "Consider Abraham: 'He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.'" "God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead." Rom. 3:24

1. Look upon Jesus, sinless is He;
 Father, impute His life unto me.
 My life of scarlet, my sin and woe,
 Cover with His life, whiter than snow.

Refrain

Cover with His life, whiter than snow;
 Fullness of His life then shall I know;
 My life of scarlet, my sin and woe,
 Cover with His life, whiter than snow.

2. Deep are the wounds transgression has made;
 Red are the stains; my soul is afraid.
 O to be covered, Jesus, with Thee,
 Safe from the law that now judgeth me! [Refrain]

- **Part 2**- As we begin a relationship with Jesus and feed on God's word, the Holy Spirit begins to produce in us a righteous life like Jesus. ² Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, ³ now that you have tasted that the Lord is good." 1 Pet. 2:2
- God has put in the Bible all the elements we need for spiritual growth (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

- As we come to Jesus each day and learn from him, we become more like him. Paul says we are filled with the fruits of righteousness that come “filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”
- If we are not taking time to read the Bible, we are starving to death. We are missing the nutrition that will make us whole and holy.
- Everything we need in the spiritual life, we can find in Jesus.

Paul says, “Jesus Christ has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” 1 Cor. 1:30

Jesus is our Helper, our Salvation, Our Comfort, Our Holiness—everything we need.

GO TO THE CROSS.

APPLICATION

- How does the sermon apply for parents of young children?
- How does the sermon apply in my devotional life?
 - We desperately need time with God. Pray for the time. Take it.
- How does it apply in my relationships?

Closing Songs - Hugh Winn