

=FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

Lesson 14

Matthew 5

INTRODUCTION: For this lesson we will deal basically with what is known as the “beatitudes.” Actually, this means the “blesseds.” Again and again in the Bible God uses the word “blessed.” Psalm 1:1a, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.” Psalm 2:12b, “Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” Psalm 32:1, 2, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven...Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity...” Psalm 33:12a, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.” Psalm 34:8, “...blessed is the man that trusteth in him.” Psalm 41:1a, “Blessed is he that considereth the poor.” Psalm 65:4a, “Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth.” Psalm 84:4a, 12b, “Blessed are they that dwell in thy house...blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”

Yet in no place in the Bible are as many “blesseds” mentioned as in Matthew 5. The word “blessed” means “content” or “to be envied.” It encompasses all of the positive delights in the Christian life such as contentment, peace, joy, satisfaction, fulfillment, etc. It is an all-encompassing word which indicates completeness in the receipt of Christian blessings from the Lord. Let us look at these beatitudes.

I. “BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT: FOR THEIR’S IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN,”

Matthew 5:3. There is a certain blessedness about being poor. There is the blessing of enjoying Heaven more. There is the blessing of knowing who one’s true friends are. There is the blessing that it is easier for the poor to be saved than the rich. There is the blessing of more dependence upon God. There is the blessing of the need for prayer. There is the blessedness of having to work and make one’s own way, which brings self-satisfaction.

(Teacher, stress strongly here the blessing of being poor. Far too much emphasis is placed on the blessings of being rich!)

II. “BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN: FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED,” Matthew 5:4. This

is a very interesting beatitude. We normally associate blessing with joy, fun, happiness, etc., but God says there is a blessedness about mourning. Psalm 94:12a, “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD.” Ecclesiastes 7:1-3, “A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one’s birth. It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart. Sorrow is better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.” Yes, it is nice and blessed to rejoice, but it is also blessed to mourn. Mourning enables us to go through fires of testing; therefore, we depend more upon God. Mourning enables us later to help others who mourn, for we can enter into their suffering. Mourning gives us more fellowship with God. Mourning makes us realize the inevitable awfulness of the results of sin.

III. “BLESSED ARE THE MEEK: FOR THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH,” Matthew 5:5. In

I Peter 3:4 it is said that a good woman is to have “a meek and quiet spirit.” The word “meekness” in the Bible is a word that comes from “evenness.” To be meek is not to feel one’s self to be inferior or superior. Meekness is feeling neither worse nor better than anyone else. It is forgetting one’s self—looking down to none and up to none. Truly, blessed are the meek!

IV. “BLESSED ARE THEY WHICH DO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS: FOR

THEY SHALL BE FILLED,” Matthew 5:6. What a blessedness it is to have an appetite for good things! Happy is the person who looks forward to coming to church on Sunday. Happy is the person who looks

forward to reading his Bible. Happy is the person who can't wait until Sunday school. Blessed is the Christian who can't wait until Wednesday night service. To those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, there is always something to which they can look forward. Hence, these are blessed ones.

V. “BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL: FOR THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY,” Matthew 5:7. Merciful means “forgiving.” Happy is the person who forgives. The simple truth is that forgiveness makes one more Christlike. It is an interesting and blessed truth that it is not Christlike to be forgiven. Jesus never sinned; hence, He never had to be forgiven. It is Christlike to forgive. Then there is the blessedness of knowing that God will give mercy to the merciful. Those who are merciful will obtain mercy.

VI. “BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART: FOR THEY SHALL SEE GOD,” Matthew 5:8. God says that those who are pure in heart are happy. Many times in the Bible do we find such statements: Psalm 139:23, 24, “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me...” In Psalm 19:12, 14, we have such statements as, “...cleanse thou me from secret faults. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.” David prayed in Psalm 51:10a, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.”

The Lord reminds us that as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Someone has said that the heart is the drawing board for the actions of life. If the heart can stay clean, the life will stay clean. If the heart can stay pure, the life will stay pure. If the heart can stay right, the life will stay right. The heart is the architect who devises the plans for the superstructure. This means we are to keep pride, jealousy, envy, impurity, greed, covetousness, etc. from our hearts.

VII. “BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS: FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD,” Matthew 5:9. There is no joy quite as great as the joy of being a peacemaker. Jesus Christ as the Son of God was the great Peacemaker. God looks down and says, “Since My Son is the great Peacemaker, I will call all peacemakers My children.” This does not mean that all peacemakers are His children. A person can be a child of God and not make peace, but God likes to call peacemakers His children.

Here are two fathers watching their sons playing a football game. The son of one father is not doing so well. The son of the other father does well, so he tells everyone around him, “That’s my son!” Now this son is no more the son of his father than the player who is doing poorly, but there is a certain delight in God’s heart when we are peacemakers, and then He wants to call us His sons.

VIII. “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: FOR GREAT IS YOUR REWARD IN HEAVEN: FOR SO PERSECUTED THEY THE PROPHETS WHICH WERE BEFORE YOU,” Matthew 5:10-12. Here is something interesting. In all the other beatitudes combined, there are only 81 words. In this passage concerning persecution for Jesus’ sake, there are 62 words. God says, “The most blessed of all are those who take a stand for Jesus and are persecuted for it.” The person is supposed to take his stand in a kind way. He is supposed to have the right position and also the right disposition. In so doing, he will be persecuted. There is a blessedness about it—the blessedness that we are suffering with Christ, the blessedness that we enjoy more fellowship with Him, the blessedness that we are paying a price for standing for Him, and the blessedness of knowing the peace of doing right.

CONCLUSION: These beatitudes do not tell us the way to be giggly or to be always laughing or always joking. These things may be included, but this is talking about the complete scope of Christian satisfaction and how we can be blessed by the Lord.