

Huh?

Part One: *Beatitudes*

March 5, 2023

In this fourteen-week message series, I will help you make sense of some of the hard sayings of Christ, and I will challenge you to conform your life to Christ's will. For time's sake, I'm going to confine this message series to the hard sayings Jesus made in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount is unique in four ways:

1. It lasted for an entire day.
2. It dealt with many different subjects.
3. It was internally focused rather than externally focused.
4. It begins with a list of conditional blessings (beatitudes).

Each of the beatitudes begins with the word blessed which means *"a happiness that does not depend on things or circumstances."*

The Beatitudes – Matthew 5:1-12

1st - Jesus promised happiness to the poor in spirit.

Matthew 5:1-3

- To be poor in spirit means to recognize one's spiritual poverty.

"The poor in spirit are those who recognize that there are no saving resources in themselves and that they can only beg for God's mercy and grace. Their pride is gone, their self-assurance is gone, and they stand empty-handed before God." John MacArthur

The poor in spirit understand they are spiritually bankrupt before God and need His grace to become children of God and spend eternity in Heaven (Luke 18:9-14; 23:39-43). The poor in spirit are happy because they are part of the Kingdom of God.

2nd – Jesus promised happiness to those who mourn.

Matthew 5:4

- To mourn means to be sorry for your sins.

God promises punishment to those who laugh at, ignore, or try to hide their sins. But the Lord promises comfort to people that confess their sins and ask for forgiveness (Psalm 51:1-4, 7-10; James 4:8-10; 1 John 1:8-10).

3rd – Jesus promised happiness to the meek.

Matthew 5:5

- Meek means to put yourself under God's control.

One day Jesus will take the earth from the hands of those who have used it for their selfish purposes, and He will give it to those who gave their lives to Him. The meek will rule the world (Psalm 37:11; Daniel 7:27; Revelation 20)!

4th – Jesus promised happiness to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Matthew 5:6

- To hunger and thirst for righteousness means to pursue right living.

In verses 5-6, Jesus uses words that describe extreme hunger and thirst. Jesus wants us to constantly have extreme hunger and thirst for right living because only right living can satisfy us. Sinful living leaves us feeling empty, but right living makes our lives full!

5th - Jesus promised happiness to the merciful.

Matthew 5:7

- The merciful help the helpless.

Mercy is giving food to the hungry, comfort to the bereaved, love to the rejected, forgiveness to the offender, and companionship to the lonely. The merciful are happy because they receive help from God (James 2:13; Matthew 18:21-35).

6th – Jesus promised happiness to the pure in heart.

Matthew 5:8

- The pure in heart are focused on pleasing God.

The word translated as *pure* in verse 8 means “*to refine*.” A person with a pure heart is happy because their life is spent on one thing - pleasing God!

7th – Jesus promised happiness to peacemakers.

Matthew 5:9

- A peacemaker brings peace to our angry world.

Peacemakers speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and pursue every possible means to bring about a peaceful solution without forsaking their convictions (Romans 12:16-21). Peacemakers are happy because they are seen as God’s children who preach reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17-21).

8th - Jesus promised happiness to those who suffer persecution for right living.

Matthew 5:10-12

- The persecuted for right living are Christians who suffer harm for doing God’s will.

The Bible says faithful Christians will experience some type of persecution because Satan hates Christ and His followers (Philippians 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:12). Jesus promises the persecuted will receive rewards when they get to Heaven (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

The Beatitudes serve as the introduction and foundation for Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount. The eight conditional blessings were meant to show that Jesus and his followers live differently than the rest of the world.

Two Personal Questions...

1. *Are you a Christ follower?*

2. *Are you living differently than the rest of the world?*