

SECRETS OF THE BEATITUDES

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The Amazing Secrets Of The Beatitudes

A moralistic interpretation of the Beatitudes has distracted us from seeing the Amazing Mystery they contain. On closer look we see that they are they opposite to moralistic exhortations.

In fact they are not about the performance of the believer but about the LIFE of the Lord Himself, living and Manifesting Himself through those who come to Him. They are the keys of the life of faith - connection points that link us to the life, reality presence, protection and provision of the kingdom of God. They are nine pillars of wisdom on which we can build our house on the Rock of Jesus & His teachings. No wonder the enemy has tried to conceal their real meaning under a shroud of religious effort.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus calls us to build our lives on Him and on His teachings, rather than on our own puny abilities or on the unstable political and humanistic systems of the world. The Kingdom that He announced is REAL. It is not an imaginary kingdom. It is not a "Never-Never" land or somewhere over the rainbow in a make-believe place of escape. It is the REAL order of things as arranged by the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe.

Jesus announced that this Kingdom of God is at hand. We can enter it and experience its life, power and blessings today through faith. The Beatitudes are nine keys, each of which opens an essential element of God's wonderful Kingdom.

Blessed Are The Poor In Spirit Theirs Is The Kingdom Of God

The poor in spirit are those who recognize their need of God's help. God, Our Loving Heavenly Father, can only help us if we acknowledge our need of His help. This is the gateway to His Kingdom. If we accept Gods'

help - we will receive it. If we refuse or ignore His help we obviously cannot receive it. The sad thing about the atheist, the agnostic and the humanist is that by ignoring God, they cut themselves off from His marvelous help and care and from the source of their own happiness.

Poverty of Spirit- living in dependence and reliance on God rather than oneself - is the gateway of faith. Through faith we become receptors of the limitless mercies of God. The poor in spirit are those who through faith turn and receive what God makes available.

Traditional Christianity has taught us to look to God for forgiveness and to the world for everything else, but Jesus invites us to look to God, Our Loving Heavenly Father for EVERYTHING - for love, life, meaning, provision, health, and direction. In the Kingdom of God, He is the Source and supplier of Everything. "*And my God shall supply your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus*" Adam lost paradise by going His own way and deciding to choose for himself what was good or evil rather than dependence on God's care and guidance. We, on the other hand, coming back to the Father, through Jesus are voluntarily *choosing* to be *dependent* on Him and to receive His help in every area of our lives. We rejoice in our restoration to the blessing, care and providence of our loving Heavenly Father.

Blessed Are Those Who Mourn, They Will Be Comforted

As soon as we are restored to the kingdom of God though the gateway of poverty of spirit, we are filled with rejoicing. Then we begin to mourn for those who are still estranged from the joy and blessing of this kingdom. Those who mourn are not smug and

complacent. They are saddened and burdened that most people do not enjoy the grace and favor they enjoy. We also mourn over the limited way we ourselves have entered this kingdom and over our own residual independence and lack of trust in God Our Loving Heavenly Father. This moves us to continual repentance and ever-increasing progress in discovering the wonders of Our Heavenly Fathers' grace and care.

Blessed Are The Meek, They Will Inherit The Earth

The meek have been presented as passive feckless, non-assertive weaklings. Who wants to be like that! In fact the meek are the courageous ones who swim against the tide of the world, its ways and its opinions. They are those who *trust in the Lord with all their hearts and lean not to their own understanding*. They are not content only to be restored to God's love and providential care - they want to *walk in His ways*. They choose to walk in the ways of His kingdom. They have chosen like Joshua. *"As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."*

Whereas poverty of spirit has to do with **trust**, meekness has to do with **obedience**. The meek are those who seek God's will. They realize that the counsel of the ungodly and their own opinions are unreliable. They follow God's advice and seek to be directed by His Spirit.

Following God's advice means they choose to be led by the WORD & SPIRIT of God and not by the world. They are wary of tradition, because they know that even Jewish and Christian tradition can make void the word of God and lead us away from the way of the spirit and word by adding or subtracting from it. The meek are people of the Word, followers of The Good Shepherd and are led by the Spirit of God.

They inherit the earth, because, like Abraham they look for *"the City with a foundation whose Builder and Maker is God."* They look for God's kingdom and devote themselves to pursue its way and its King! *"He who hears these words of mine and does them*

is like a wise man who build his house on the rock."

Lukewarm Christianity has made meekness and obedience an option but it is essential to God's kingdom. *"Learn of me for I am meek"*. Jesus gave us an example of courageous obedience. The meek are strong - they yield their own plans to the plan and purposes of God. (Pr. 3-5)

Blessed Are Those Who Hunger And Thirst For Righteousness, For They Will Be Filled.

*Here Jesus speaks of **spiritual** hunger and thirst.* The world and its vanities leave us strangely empty. God uses this emptiness (which becomes spiritual hunger, if we acknowledge it) to draw us to His Kingdom.

Just as food comes to us from outside of ourselves so the righteousness of the kingdom has to be received as a gift. We first have to discover the inadequacy of our own self-righteousness before we can receive the righteousness that comes from God through Jesus' Cross. The spiritually thirsty acknowledge the emptiness of their own hearts and receive the drink of living water - the Holy Spirit. This is the great gift of God. The world knows nothing of it. Philosophy and religion are ignorant of it but Jesus offers it to the hungry and thirsty. Righteousness - right standing with God - and inner righteousness are not human achievements but gifts we receive from God because of what Jesus did on the Cross. We cannot generate this righteousness from within ourselves; we can only RECEIVE from outside ourselves like food and drink.

Blessed Are The Merciful, For They Shall Receive Mercy

Mercy is the attitude of the one who receives help and gives help. The merciful are those who receive not only God's forgiveness but His help, intervention and assistance for everything. They devote themselves to extend the help they themselves have received to others. They are channels of the help (mercy) they themselves have received to others. They

have first received and now they are hilarious givers. They are devoted to giving and to helping. They give from the love God had poured into their hearts and from the provision God has made available to them. They give their time their love their wisdom and their talent to others. It is a magnificent obsession. They do not patronize - they simply pass on to others the mercy that they continually receive. They freely receive and they freely give.

Blessed Are The Pure In Heart They Shall See God

The gospel is primarily about the heart (spirit) and only secondarily a matter of the head and conduct. Religion and the Law deal with external behavior - what Jesus call "the outside of the cup." Only Jesus can clean the inside of the cup. Cleaning the heart is the essence of the New Covenant. *"I will take out the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh and put my spirit within them and cause them to walk in my ways."* (Ezek. 36:26)

The Holy Spirit is the great gift of God. God's plan is to transform us from sons of Adam into sons of God. He wants take out the corrupted nature we received from Adam and replace it with the Holy Spirit - the Spirit of the Resurrected Jesus. Jesus said: *"If your eye is single then the whole body is full of light."* (Matt. 6.22) The pure in heart see God's hand in everything - in nature, in circumstances and even in tribulation. They live in the realm where all things (both good and evil) work together for their good"(Romans 8.28)

From the new heart - the Holy Spirit - come the fruit of the Spirit: *"love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control"*. (Galatians 5:22) The pure in heart guards his heart from covetousness, rage, uncleanness, fornication etc. *the "evil things which come from within and defile a man."* (Mk 7)

The pure in heart are focused on the issues and interests of the kingdom. They are not distracted with the strife of politics or the

cares of this world. They live for God and for His interests. For them *'to live is Christ.'*

The reward for the pure in heart is that they shall see God. They see God with the eyes of their hearts and His hand, working in all circumstances.

"Blessed Are The Peacemakers, For They Shall Be Called Sons Of God." (Matt. 5.9)

The peace of the kingdom of God is not the peace of the world. "Shalom" is a state of well being that we receive when we are restored to right relationship with God Our Loving Heavenly Father. It is not a mere psychological state of calm achieved by ruling over our emotions and controlling stress. It is not a psychological state because it is based on the *reality* of being restored to the personal care of Our Heavenly Father through the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus.

The peacemaker first finds personal peace with God through faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus. He **then** labors to extend that peace to others. This is what makes him a peacemaker. He functions in the ministry of reconciliation and reaches out to those who are alienated from God's love, life and blessing with the merciful good news. (2 Cor. 5.17-21) The peacemakers are God's worldwide army of evangelists bringing good news, hope, help, healing, salvation and good cheer to every corner of the earth.

Because we live in total trust in our Heavenly Father we are able to live without fear, anxiety or strife. We are at peace with God , peace with ourselves and peace with others. We have no fear about the future. This makes us peacemakers. The peacemakers live without bitterness, un-forgiveness, or fear. They live in good will towards all and seek to maintain the bond of peace not only by not participating in strife but also by not fueling strife with words. Our world is being torn apart by religious and sectarian strife, political strife, ethnic strife, ideological strife, and strife between left and right, rich and poor. The peacemaker refuses to participate or contribute to any of this and lives in another realm.

He seeks **"as far as possible to live peaceably with all men"** (Romans 12) but this is not always possible as the message for which he stands arouses the hatred of the world.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.' For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'." (Matthew 11:34-38)

A disciple of Jesus is not someone with a bland attitude of tolerance towards all - he is actively concerned that all men find peace with God and are restored to His Kingdom here on earth. The message of the gospel for which he stands arouses the hatred of the world. No disciple is above his master in this regard. His message, lifestyle and values are contrary to the ways of the world around him.

Though the disciple of Jesus is a bringer of the good news his life is not always one of Arcadian, idyllic, trouble-free peace. On the contrary, because of the opposition that comes from the world, the carnal nature of man and the demonic opposition to the gospel, he will often face tempestuous times, tribulation and difficulty. Disciples do not start the fight, or add fuel to the fight. He will be hated because of what he stands for. The presence of Jesus in him provokes the insane hatred of those Satan can control. The "Law of sin" in carnal people arouses opposition against him. (Romans 7.22-23)

The fullness of the Kingdom on earth will not manifest until Satan is driven from the earth at the Second Coming. In the meantime

the disciples often experience persecution as they promote and live the gospel. Jesus tells us not to be discouraged when this happens but on the contrary to rejoice. Persecution for the gospel's sake is the evidence that the kingdom of God is advancing.

Fear of persecution has caused the church to conform to the world and to compromise its values. It has caused us to hide our light and lose our saltiness. When we throw off this fear and accept the undeserved disapproval of the world, we recover the power and vitality of the Kingdom. In the western world we have been taught to fear persecution and to try to avoid it. However Jesus turns our thinking upside-down when He declares that persecution is a blessing. It is one of the blessings of the kingdom of God - provided it is not brought on by our own insensitivity, provocation or misconduct.

All believers should be prepared for persecution and not be dismayed when it happens; instead they should rejoice and be very happy that they are in God's Kingdom and their light is shining.

Persecution detaches us from the vanities of the world, shatters our fears, sharpens our message and aligns us with the life and ways of the kingdom. When Jesus' followers embrace the reality and inevitability of persecution, they lose their fear and become increasingly more fruitful and joyful in the kingdom.

Conclusion

Through the nine blessings of the beatitudes the believer abides in, and lives as a receiver and transmitter of the glory and blessing of the Kingdom of God. The Beatitudes are not mere exhortations as to how we should strive to behave morally. They are a call connect with the possibilities of the life of the perfect ONE in us and through us .

In each Beatitudes Jesus said "Blessed ARE you". What an amazing state of BEING if we cooperate with Him. **BE BLESSED AND BE A BLESSING.**