

Jesus Taught His Disciples on the Mountain

In our last topic, we saw that we want to show our physical and spiritual children how to become fishers of men in the same way that Jesus showed His disciples how to become fishers of men. In this topic, we will see what Jesus taught one day as Jesus was teaching His disciples on a mountain because of the crowds of people that were coming.

Jesus saw the crowds coming to hear Him from many of the surrounding areas in addition to those coming from Galilee. Matthew 5:1-4 says, “And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying: ‘Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed *are* those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.’” Here, we see something that Jesus often did when large crowds came to hear Him. He would either go to the mountains or to the seashore because mountains and water both carry sound and that makes it possible for those at the back of a large crowd to hear. We also see that Jesus did what most Jewish teachers did as He sat down to teach, even though there was a large crowd. When Jesus sat down, we see that His disciples came and gathered around Him. This meant He was primarily teaching His disciples and the crowd was being given the opportunity to listen. Then, Jesus began to teach.

We see that Jesus began this sermon by talking about nine groups that could look forward to blessing. The word translated “blessed” means *blessed or happy*. This happiness is not just a feeling. In John 13:16-17, we read, “‘Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’” Here, we see that such happiness is much more than just a feeling. Jesus had just washed the feet of the disciples and said that He had given them an example to follow. We will have a desire to follow the example of Christ if we are His true followers. Here, we see that action will give us a real inner sense of blessing because we are modeling godly character.

First, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” The phrase “poor in spirit” means *to be poor, needy or powerless to reach a goal*. A person who is “poor in spirit” realizes that he or she has nothing to offer in themselves. Instead, the total dependence of such a person is on the Lord. Jesus said in John 15:5, “‘I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.’” When we realize that we can do nothing in ourselves, we realize that we must abide in Christ and yield our human spirit to the Holy Spirit so that He can work in us and through us. Then, we will experience blessing and peace. We can also look forward to being in the kingdom of heaven.

Second, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” The word translated “mourn” means *to have true sorrow for sin*. David said in Psalm 51:17, “‘The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart—These, O God, You will not despise.’” Here, we see that to mourn means to be broken in spirit and contrite in heart because of sin in a person’s life. Such an attitude toward sin will bring about restoration and blessing in the life of a Christian. 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 says, “‘Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance *leading* to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.’” In this case, a whole church experienced such blessing.

Matthew 5:5-8 says, “‘Blessed *are* the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed *are* those who hunger and

thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” Third, the word translated “meek” means *gentleness of spirit* and is used three times in the New Testament. Matthew 21:5 says, ““...Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”” Here, we see that Jesus had a lowly (meek) attitude as He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey. 1 Peter 3:3-4 says, “Do not let your adornment be *merely* outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on *fine* apparel—rather *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible *beauty* of a gentle (meek) and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God.” Here, we see that a Christian who accepts opposition with a gentle spirit, realizing that God is permitting whatever happens to develop godly character, will experience great blessing.

Fourth, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” The Pharisees were very self-righteous. In contrast, true righteousness means that we hunger and thirst for those things which are pleasing to God. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, we read, “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” In this verse, we see that we received the righteousness of God at the time of salvation. Romans 6:19 says, “I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading to more* lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.” When we yield our spirit to the Holy Spirit, we are slaves of righteousness and live a holy life that pleases God.

Fifth, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” “Merciful” means *to show mercy to others*. This word is used to describe Jesus in Hebrews 2:17, where we read, “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like *His* brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.” Jesus had to become human like us but without sin so that He could pay the penalty for our sin. “Propitiation” means *that which satisfies*. When we sin, Satan accuses us to God. Jesus is our merciful High Priest who speaks for us and says, “I paid for the sin of that person and that person received Me.” The Father says, “I am satisfied with the payment.” That is why Romans 8:1a says, “There *is* therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” Certainly, we have obtained mercy.

Sixth, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” “Pure in heart” speaks of *one who is free from sin and guilt*. 1 Timothy 1:5 says, “Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith.” Here, we see that one with a pure heart is led by love. Paul told Timothy how to be pure in heart in 2 Timothy 2:22, where we read, “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” Those with a pure heart can look forward to being with God for all eternity.

Matthew 5:9-12 says, “Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. 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.”

Seventh, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” It is important to understand the difference between a peacekeeper and a peacemaker. A peacekeeper gets between two people or nations who are fighting and keeps them apart. In contrast, a peacemaker makes peace between two people or nations and brings them back together. 2 Corinthians 5:18 says, “Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.” God brought us back together with Himself by Christ’s full payment for our sins so that those who receive Christ had all our

sins blotted out and the sins that we commit today are no longer put to our account. God has now given us the opportunity and privilege to be peacemakers by sharing with others how they may have their sins blotted out.

Eighth, Jesus said, “Blessed *are* those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake are people who are persecuted for doing what is pleasing to God. In Acts 5:40-41, we read, “And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.” The apostles were beaten for preaching the message about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Instead of complaining, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name and they could look forward to spending eternity in heaven with Him.

Ninth, Jesus said, “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.” Here, we see that Jesus made it very personal. “Revile” means *to speak evil*. “Persecute” means *to make us suffer*. “Speaking evil falsely” means *people are speaking lies about us*. Jesus said that all of those things may happen to us for His sake. Instead of complaining, we can rejoice and be exceedingly glad. 1 Peter 2:21 says, “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.” Jesus gave us His example to follow when He suffered for us, in our place, for our sins. In the same way, we want to help our physical and spiritual children understand that they can look forward to the blessing of the Lord if they develop the attitudes that are given in these verses. They can also rejoice and be exceedingly glad for the privilege of suffering for Jesus. May the Lord richly bless you as you provide your children an example of the fact that it is a privilege to suffer for Jesus.