

Have this Attitude

Matthew 5:1-12

August 22, 2010

Intro

After Jesus was in the desert 40 days and 40 nights fasting, he was tempted by the devil. As the Scripture says in the book of Hebrews, he was tempted in all things, yet without sin. As our representative for our sin, it is such an encouragement to know that Jesus was victorious in that spiritual battle.

Jesus began his ministry in the area around the Sea of Galilee. He settled in Capernaum which is by the sea in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. The first message that he preached was that people should, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was also during this time that Jesus called his disciples. There was a Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother. There was James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother. And we will read of others he called as well.

Jesus was teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom. He was also healing every kind of disease and sickness among the people and great multitudes followed him from all over the nation of Israel. The power of Jesus to heal was significant. It should remind us of when the prophets Elijah and Elisha did miracles, but Jesus did much, much more. It was a testimony of God that heaven had come to earth. That God was among them and was calling them to Himself.

When we come to chapter 5, Jesus gives one of his most famous sermons, which is now called the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus sat and spoke to his disciples. To be a disciple means to be a learner. To be a disciple of Jesus means that we are learning, growing, changing, by the Word He spoke.

Illus - there was a great difference between when I was a student at Oregon State and when I was a student at Multnomah University, studying the Bible. The difference was in the desire to learn. If you are teachable, Jesus will change your life!

What Jesus taught to those listening was life-changing. It was revolutionary. It was nothing like anything they had ever heard before. It confronted the religious attitude of the day. They were used to those who taught religion; who emphasized the outward conformity to God's Law.

But through Jesus, God was speaking to his people about what He wanted to see in their lives and that there would be many blessings that would come from the transformation of their heart.

I. Pursue this Happiness

- We begin with what are called the Beatitudes.
- These are attitudes of the heart. There are many blessings that come simply from being in Christ, but then there are blessings that come from the transformation of the heart.
- We must begin by looking at the word, "Blessed." Some suggest that it means to be, "happy," but there is more to it than that. It means, "The favor of God is on you when you have these attitudes, and there is fullness joy in your heart because of it."
- Many people are in the pursuit of happiness in their lives. In fact, in our Declaration of

Independence it says, “*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*”

- The problem is that people are pursuing happiness in what they have, or what they do, or by what the experience; the fulfillment of the American dream.
- But true happiness is not found in what you have; no, true happiness is found in who you become!! And Jesus came to change you and me to be like him.
- Here again, Jesus is our representative. He shows us how God wants a man to be. By becoming like Jesus, we are truly blessed, we are truly happy, and there is a fullness of joy in our hearts because of it.

A. Blessed are the poor in spirit

- Jesus is not referring to how much money or possessions a man may have, he was referring to a spiritual attitude of the heart.

James 1:9-10, But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation...

- No, Jesus is speaking about having a heart of humility; it is a heart that understands that we have no spiritual power without God, that we have no bargaining chips, no negotiating leverage against God, that we must wholly entrust ourselves to his mercy and grace.

- Blessed are we when we have such a humble attitude before God.

Illus - Do you know anyone who has had the heart attitude of raising their fist at God and saying, “I’ll do things my own way; I don’t need you directing my steps.” Can’t you just hear God’s response, “Good luck with that, let me know how that works out for you;” for luck is what they’ll need, certainly the blessing of God is not on it.

- Actually, humility of heart is very freeing. You are free from having to prove that you are better than others around you, you don’t have to defend yourself when your imperfection becomes obvious.
- In contrast, an attitude of pride makes life difficult, for you will always be under pressure to prove that you’re better than others.

Illus – To quote from the famous American philosopher Mac Davis, “Oh Lord it’s hard to be humble when you’re perfect in every way. I can’t wait to look in the mirror because I get better looking each day.”

- But the poor in spirit will inherit the kingdom of heaven. In other words, God will entrust to you the things of the kingdom because of your heart.

B. Blessed are those who mourn

- Here again, the definition of Blessed is very helpful; “The favor of God is on you when you have these attitudes, and there is a joy in your heart because of it.”

- The heart attitude of mourning is similar to being poor in spirit. When we mourn over our broken condition, it causes us to turn to God and that's when we receive the healing and the blessing that God desires in each of us.

Isaiah 61:1-4 To grant to those who mourn in Zion...

- Paul said something similar to the church in Corinth.

2 Corinthians 7:10, For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

- Paul makes a great point; that the sorrow or mourning that Jesus refers to is different than the sorrow of the world which produces death.
- Notice that Jesus said that those who mourn would be comforted. That's what we see in Isaiah 61 and that's what we see in many places in the scriptures.

C. Blessed are the meek

- First of all, meekness is not weakness. It is strength and power under control. It shows great gentleness and patience under provocation.
- This is the attitude that Jesus had and this is the attitude God wants us to have for the favor of God is upon those with this heart and there is a fullness of joy because of it.

Matthew 11:28-30, "Come to Me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke

upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

- In 1 Corinthians 13 Paul gave a great definition of the person who loves the way God would have us love.

1 Corinthians 13:5 Love does not seek its own, is not easily provoked, and does not take into account a wrong suffered...

Illus – Meekness is like a powerful horse that is under full control. That is the horse that is effective and useful.

- We live in an angry and aggressive world but this is not a blessed way to live.

Illus - Try driving when you're wound up and impatient and you will immediately recognize that God was right when he said, "Blessed are the meek..."

- "They will inherit the earth" is another way to say, "*Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.*"

II. Hunger for these Blessings

- Jesus continued speaking to them of the attitudes of the heart that God desires.
- And it's so important to see that God wants them to have the favor of God and the fullness of joy in their lives.
- This next attitude of the heart speaks powerfully about what we should be hungry and thirsty for.

A. Hunger and thirst for righteousness

- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, Jesus said. Hunger and thirst are very strong drives.
- We live in a society of abundance so many people do not understand the strength of these desires. If you are truly hungry or truly thirsty, it becomes the drive of your heart.

Psalm 42:1-2, As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for You O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God...

- But when the soul becomes empty, that's when it becomes thirsty and many people do not recognize the power of such loneliness or despair or emptiness.
- If we hunger and thirst for righteousness, then, Jesus said, we will be truly **satisfied**. In other words, the stuff of the world will leave you empty and unsatisfied and there is even a depression that can come from the world's stuff.

John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

B. Blessed are the merciful

- Jesus is talking here about an attitude of heart that God wants us to have toward others, and he promises that there is a great blessing with it.
- "Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy." In other words, it comes back to you.

God will see to it that it does, for this is his principle and his blessing that he gives to those who are merciful.

Luke 6:38, "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure - shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

- Jesus was saying that God wants us to give grace, kindness, mercy, and to give people the benefit of the doubt.
- Some people are afraid to give mercy because they don't want to be taken advantage of; but do it by faith that God's Word is right. Otherwise, you will become a very bitter person.

App - fullness of joy comes from who you are. If you allow your heart to become bitter, then you will have sacrificed the blessing that God desires for you.

C. Blessed are the peacemakers

- In verse 8; "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." A heart after God in pure intention is a heart that will be very blessed.
- Jesus also said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." In other words, God doesn't want you to have a heart of contention, but rather a heart of peace.

Romans 12:18, If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

2 Timothy 2:24, The Lord's bondservant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged.