

Embracing What the World Scorns

The Sermon on the Mount Series – Part 4

Scripture text: Matthew 5:1-12

Introduction

- The world _____ the Beatitudes; Christians _____ them and say “*Lord, make me _____ that.*”
- Structurally, the 2nd 4 Beatitudes are the _____ of the 1st 4.

Blessed are the Merciful

- On the surface, Jesus appears to be saying that God’s mercy is _____ on our mercy.
- 2 rules for interpreting the Bible:
 1. Interpret a passage in _____.
 2. Let _____ interpret Scripture.
- The correct interpretation: The merciless & unforgiving have _____ for the Lord’s mercy & forgiveness and hence have never experienced it for _____.
- “Mercy” is _____ in action . . . to relieve the suffering of another regardless of the _____ of the suffering.
- This is possible for those who’ve been _____ by their own sinfulness.

Blessed are the Pure in Heart

- Historical context: The Pharisees advocated strict & _____ adherence to the law as the means to righteousness. Jesus said it’s the _____ that matters.
- It’s _____ to fool ourselves & others with external conformity to a set of rules or practices. Jeremiah said the heart is _____ above all things (Jeremiah 17:9).
- Only _____ can cure the human heart, which He does by giving us a _____ heart.

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Blessed are the Peacemakers

- The essential quality in being a peacemaker is _____, defined as having a _____ & _____ spirit.
- Jesus calls upon his people to do 2 things:
 1. To be _____ in our manner.
 2. To actively work for _____ where there is conflict.
- We are never more like _____ than when we are making peace.

Blessed are the Persecuted

- Being persecuted is the natural _____ of living the 7 other Beatitudes.
- Why? Because living the Beatitudes makes us _____ and the world hates _____.
- Why aren't we being persecuted?
 1. One possibility is that we haven't been living truly _____ lives.
 2. Another possibility is that we're _____ to be.
- Trevin Wax: "*An increasing number of [powerful] people see Christian morality as not only old-fashioned but also _____ and _____.*" Unless we _____, this will result in persecution.
- The appropriate response to persecution is to _____ and be _____ for great is our _____ in heaven.

Who's Who in Today's Sermon

- Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) -- a German philosopher who has had enormous influence on Western civilization and its move toward secularism. He is the father of nihilism, the idea that life is ultimately meaningless.
- Bill Hybels (1951-) – the founder of one of America's largest churches. He pioneered the "seeker-sensitive" model of worship. He also urged the use of standard business practices in leading the church.
- Trevin Wax (age unknown) – teaching pastor, seminary professor and author. He is the general editor of *The Gospel Project* curriculum, which we use in BYF.

Family Discussion Questions

1. What is "mercy"? To whom can we show mercy this week (and how)?
2. How can we prepare ourselves for persecution? Is that even possible, or is it purely something we react to if/when it comes?