

Our Society Has a Warped View of Happiness

- We are told “*do what makes you happy*” or “*God doesn’t want you to be unhappy.*”
- Society suggests that happiness and obeying God’s commands cannot co-exist.
- Using “happiness” as our only guide often gives us a license to sin.
- We are told...
 - ✓ If you are unhappy in your marriage – get a divorce!
 - ✓ If you are unhappy with your unplanned pregnancy – get an abortion!
- Little to no regard is given to what may be approved or disapproved by God.
- This is not the kind of happiness that is talked about in the Bible.
- Happiness is always associated with doing God’s will & being approved by Him.
- Happiness and obeying God’s commands can co-exist!

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)

- The term “Beatitude” comes from the Latin word *beatus* meaning “Blessed”.
- *Makarios* is the Greek word that is translated “Blessed”
 - ✓ “supremely best, fortunate, well off, blessed or happy” (Strong’s)
 - ✓ This word is translated “Happy” in Deut. 33:29.
- Beatitudes are found in OT & NT and always describe those who are approved by God.
 - ✓ Deut. 33:29 – “Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord...”
 - ✓ Psalm 1:1 – “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly...”
 - ✓ Psalm 2:12 – “...Blessed are all those who put their trust in Him.”
 - ✓ Psalm 32:1 – “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven...”
 - ✓ Psalm 86:5 – “Blessed is the man whose strength is in You...”
 - ✓ Prov. 3:13 – “Happy is the man who finds wisdom...”
 - ✓ Rom. 14:22 – “Blessed is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.”
 - ✓ Rev. 1:3 – “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy.”



“The beatitudes are not simple statements; they are exclamations! That is most important, for it means that the beatitudes are not pious hopes of what shall be, they are not glowing but nebulous prophecies of some future bliss; they are congratulations on what is... The beatitudes in effect say, ‘O the bliss of being a Christian! O the joy of following Christ! O the sheer happiness of knowing Jesus Christ as Master, Savior, and Lord!’. The very form of the beatitudes is the statement of the joyous thrill and the radiant gladness of the Christian life. In face of the beatitudes a gloom-encompassed Christianity is unthinkable.”

(William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible, The Gospel of Matthew*, 83-84)

The Happy Life of Those Approved by God

A Study of the Beatitudes

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A Study of the Beatitudes

I. Those Who Are Poor in Spirit Have a Happy Life (v.3)

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A. "Poor" literally means absolute or abject poverty.

1) "... it describes poverty which is beaten to its knees." (William Barclay)

2) The Hebrew word for "poor" underwent a four-stage development of meaning

- Simply poor
- Because poor, therefore, have no influence, power or prestige.
- Having no influence therefore meant one was down-trodden and oppressed.
- The man who, because he has no earthly resources whatsoever, puts his whole trust in God.

I. Those Who Are Poor in Spirit Have a Happy Life (v.3)

- A. "Poor" literally means absolute or abject poverty.
- B. To be poor "in Spirit" suggests the idea of humility.
 - 1) It is the opposite of "haughty in spirit" (Prov. 16:18)
 - 2) The Pharisee was "haughty in spirit" while the tax collector was "poor in spirit" (Luke 18:9-14)
- C. It is realizing one's own smallness and insignificance compared to God (Psalm 144:3)
- D. Those who view themselves as "Rich" - lose their dependency on God (Rev. 3:17)
- E. Their Reward: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - 1) Those in the kingdom are under the rule of God.
 - 2) The kingdom is both present (church) and future (heaven).
 - 3) One must be "humble as a little child" to enter the kingdom (Matt. 18:1-4)
 - 4) We become heirs of an eternal home (Rom. 8:17)

The Point:

- The one who is “Poor in Spirit” is one who puts their whole trust in God and therefore renders complete obedience in order to be approved by God.
- Those who have this attribute are living a happy and blessed life!


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A Study of the Beatitudes

- I. Those Who Are Poor in Spirit Have a Happy Life (v.3)
- II. Those Who Mourn Have a Happy Life (v.4)

II. Those Who Mourn Have a Happy Life (v.4)

- A. The word translated “mourn” is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek.
- 1) It is the word used for mourning over death.
 - 2) The Septuagint uses this same word in describing Jacob’s grief (Gen. 37:34)
- B. What might Christian’s mourn over?
- 1) Death (1 Thess. 4:13)
 - 2) Persecution/Trials (James 1:3)
 - 3) Sin/wrongdoing
 - Sins of the world (Rom. 9:2-3; 10:1)
 - Sins of brethren (1 Cor. 5:2)
 - Own sin (James 4:8-10; 2 Cor. 2:7; 7:10)



Arabian Proverb:
“All sunshine makes a desert.”

II. Those Who Mourn Have a Happy Life (v.4)

- A. The word translated “mourn” is the strongest word for mourning in the Greek language.
 - 1) It is the word used for mourning over death.
 - 2) The Septuagint uses this same Greek word in describing Jacob’s grief (Gen. 37:34)
- B. What might Christian’s mourn over?
- C. Their reward: “They shall be comforted.”
 - 1) Comfort to know when one “dies in the Lord” (1 Thess. 4:13; Rev. 14:13)
 - 2) Comfort is given by God now, that we may be able to comfort others (2 Cor. 1:3-5)
 - 3) Comfort is given by God in eternity (Rev. 21:1-4)
 - 4) Comforting to know our faith will be strengthened (1 Pet. 1:6-9)
 - 5) Comforting to know sins are forgiven (Heb. 8:12)
 - 6) Example: 3,000 mourned over their sin and were made glad (Acts 2:37, 41, 46)

The Point:

- Those who “Mourn” are those whose heart is broken by sin and wrongdoing. Out of that sorrow they find joy in being forgiven and **approved by God**.
- Those who have this attribute are living a **happy** and **blessed** life!

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A Study of the Beatitudes

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- II. Those Who Mourn Have a Happy Life (v.4)
- III. Those Who Are Meek Have a Happy Life (v.5)

III. Those Who Are Meek Have a Happy Life (v.5)

- A. In the English language we often equate meekness with weakness & timidity.
- 1) “Nowadays it carries with it an idea of spinelessness, and subservience, and mean-spiritedness. It paints the picture of a submissive and ineffective creature.” (Barclay)
 - 2) “The English word for ‘meek’ has largely lost the fine blend of spiritual poise and strength meant by the Master. He calls Himself ‘meek and lowly in heart’ (Matt. 11:29)... It is the gentleness of strength, not mere effeminacy.” (A.T. Robertson)

III. Those Who Are Meek Have a Happy Life (v.5)

- A. In the English language we often equate meekness with weakness & timidity.
- B. The word “meek” literally means gentle, mild, or humble (Strong’s)
 - 1) Same word used in reference to training a domesticated animal.
 - An animal “which has been trained to obey the word of command, which has learned to answer to the reins... and which has learned to accept control.” (William Barclay)
 - 2) Complete mastery of oneself. Power under control (i.e. Jesus – Matt. 26:52-54)
 - 3) “[Meekness] begins with humility, leads to submission to God, then causes one to be gentle toward others.” (Vines)
 - 4) Aristotle defines meekness as the happy medium between too much and too little anger.

III. Those Who Are Meek Have a Happy Life (v.5)

- A. In the English language we often equate meekness with weakness & timidity.
- B. The word “meek” literally means gentle, mild, or humble (Strong’s)
- C. Their reward: “They shall inherit the earth.”
 - 1) Not the idea that they have unlimited direction as to what they can do on the earth.
 - 2) Same phrase used in Psalm 37:9, 11, 22
 - 1) Blessed in this life – live life to it’s fullest (v.34) – living life as God intended.
 - 2) Could include eternal life (v.18)

The Point:

- The “Meek” are those who have every instinct, passion, and impulse under control because we are God-controlled, thus making them approved by God.
- Those who have this attribute are living a happy and blessed life!

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- II. Those Who Mourn Have a Happy Life (v.4)
- III. Those Who Are Meek Have a Happy Life (v.5)
- IV. Those Who Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness Have a Happy Life (v.6)

IV. Those Who Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness Have a Happy Life (v.6)

A. Few if any of us have ever experienced true hunger and thirst.

- “The hunger which this beatitude describes is no genteel hunger which could be satisfied with a mid-morning snack; the thirst of which it speaks is no thirst which could be slaked with a cup of coffee or an iced-drink. It is the hunger of the man who is starving for food, and of the man who will die unless he drinks.” (William Barclay)

B. The idea is having a voracious appetite for righteousness.

- 1) A hunger for the whole, not a part - craving for complete, and total righteousness.
- 2) Righteousness = desiring to be right with God and a desire to do right before God.
- 3) One will go to great lengths to satisfy this desire.
- 4) It is not a half-hearted approach
 - As babies (1 Pet. 2:2)
 - As deer (Psalm 42:1-2)
 - As desiring gold (Psalm 19:7-14)

IV. Those Who Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness Have a Happy Life (v.6)

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 - “The hunger which this beatitude describes is no genteel hunger which could be satisfied with a mid-morning snack; the thirst of which it speaks is no thirst which could be slaked with a cup of coffee or an iced-drink. It is the hunger of the man who is starving for food, and of the man who will die unless he drinks.” (William Barclay)
- B. The idea is having a voracious appetite for righteousness.
- C. Their reward: “They shall be filled.”
 - 1) Jesus is the water and bread that satisfies (John 4:13-14; 6:35)
 - 2) God’s word gives us a well-balanced diet (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

The Point:

- Those who “Hunger & Thirst” are those who have an extreme desire to be right and want that more than anything else in order to be **approved by God.**
- Those who have this attribute are living a **happy** and **blessed** life!

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- V. Those Who Are Merciful Have a Happy Life (v.7)

V. Those Who Are Merciful Have a Happy Life (v.7)

- A. "Merciful" = to show kindness, sympathy, and compassion.
 - 1) Noun = "outward manifestation of pity" (Vines)
 - 2) Verb = "to feel sympathy with the misery of another" (Vines)
 - 3) Adjective = "actively compassionate" (Vines)
- B. The idea of kindness in excess of fairness
 - 1) The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
 - 2) Putting oneself in the place of another (Phil. 2:4)
 - 3) The Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12)
 - 4) Forgiving others when they have wronged us (Luke 17:1-6)
- C. Their reward: "They shall obtain mercy"
 - 1) We show mercy towards others because we recognize our own need for mercy.
 - 2) "[This virtue] grows out of our personal experience of the mercy of God." (Lenski)
 - 3) Mercy is not given to those who refuse to show it to others (Matt. 18:21-35; James 2:13)

The Point:

- The “Merciful” are those who have the ability to sympathize with others and feel what they feel so they can easily forgive while at the same time recognizing our own need for mercy in order to be **approved by God**.
- Those who have this attribute are living a **happy** and **blessed** life!

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- VI. Those Who Are Pure in Heart Have a Happy Life (v.8)

VI. Those Who Are Pure in Heart Have a Happy Life (v.8)

- A. "Pure in Heart" = simply means "clean" as in a soiled garment that is washed clean.
 - 1) Pure of sin.
 - 2) The heart is clean with no hidden motives or self interest.
 - 3) It is not contaminated with dishonesty, selfishness or hypocrisy.
- B. It carries the idea of single-minded devotion.
 - 1) It describes one who is wholly devoted to the kingdom of God (Matt. 6:33)
 - 2) Not one who tries to straddle the fence (Matt. 6:24)
 - 3) "[The word 'pure'] is used of an army which has been purged of all discontented, cowardly, unwilling and ineffective soldiers, and which is a force composed solely of first-class fighting men." (William Barclay)
- C. Their reward: "They shall see God."
 - 1) Figuratively in the sense we will see his blessings because of our relationship to Him.
 - 2) Literally in the sense we "shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3:2-3)
 - 3) Purity of heart is a quality that is necessary to see God (Psa. 24:3-4)

The Point:

- The “Pure in Heart” are those whose heart is unadulterated, whose motives are pure, and whose devotion is solely to being approved by God.
- Those who have this attribute are living a happy and blessed life!

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- VII. Those Who Are Peacemakers Have a Happy Life (v.9)

VII. Those Who Are Peacemakers Have a Happy Life (v.9)

- A. Not just one who desires peace but one who makes peace.
- B. Times of strife and struggle will come. (Rom. 12:18)
 - 1) Often tolerant of things in order to “keep peace” and “avoid trouble”.
 - 2) “There is many a person who thinks he is loving peace, when in fact he is piling up trouble for the future, because he refuses to take the action which the situation demands...What this beatitude demands is not the passive acceptance of things because we are afraid of the trouble...but the active facing of things, and the making of peace, even when the way of peace is through struggle.” (William Barclay)
- C. Who might Christians make peace with?
 - 1) God (Rom. 5:1)
 - 2) Brethren (Rom. 14:19)
 - 3) All men (Rom. 12:18)

VII. Those Who Are Peacemakers Have a Happy Life (v.9)

- A. Not just one who desires peace but one who makes it.
- B. Involves more than just “avoiding trouble”
- C. Who might Christians make peace with?
- D. Their reward: “They shall be called the sons of God”
 - 1) We are adopted as a “child of God” (Rom. 8:14-15)
 - 2) We are heirs (Rom. 8:17)
 - 3) We take on the characteristics of God.

The Point:

- The “Peacemakers” are those who seek peace with their fellow man because they desire to have peace with God and be **approved by Him.**
- Those who have this attribute are living a **happy** and **blessed** life!

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- VIII. Those Who Are Persecuted for Righteousness Sake Have a Happy Life (vv.10-12)

VIII. Those Who Are Persecuted for Righteousness Sake Have a Happy Life(vv.10-12)

A. “Persecuted” – in what way? (v.11)

- 1) Revile you.
- 2) Say evil things against you.
- 3) Falsely accuse you.

B. “For Righteousness Sake”

- 1) Not just any type of suffering (i.e. health issues, financial issues, etc.)
- 2) Suffering because you are a Christian. (2 Tim. 3:12)

C. Being persecuted gives us an opportunity to show our loyalty to Christ.

- 1) The tense of the verb is passive perfect and more accurately reads “those who have allowed themselves to be persecuted”.
- 2) “The idea is that they did not flee from it but willingly submitted to when it came to them.” (Lenski)
- 3) It is a way to walk the same road the apostles and prophets did before us (v.12)

VIII. Those Who Are Persecuted for Righteousness Sake Have a Happy Life(vv.10-12)

- A. "Persecuted" – in what way? (v.11)
 - 1) Revile you.
 - 2) Say evil things against you.
 - 3) Falsely accuse you.
- B. "For Righteousness Sake"
 - 1) Not just any type of suffering (i.e. health issues, financial issues, etc.)
 - 2) Suffering because you are a Christian. (2 Tim. 3:12)
- C. Being persecuted gives us an opportunity to show our loyalty to Christ.
- D. Their reward: "Theirs is the kingdom of heaven"
 - 1) Enter into the kingdom (church) (Matt. 18:1-4)
 - 2) They are heirs to the heavenly kingdom (Rom. 8:17)

The Point:

- Those “Persecuted for Righteousness Sake” are those who willingly accept whatever suffering they might have to endure in order to be **accepted by God.**
- Those who have this attribute are living a **happy** and **blessed** life!

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I. Those Who Are Poor in Spirit Have a Happy Life (v.3)

II. Those Who Mourn Have a Happy Life (v.4)

- Only those who possess all these qualities are truly approved by God.
- These beatitudes do not describe 8 different people but rather 8 characteristics of the same person.

V. Those Who Are Merciful Have a Happy Life (v.7)

VI. Those Who Are Pure in Heart Have a Happy Life (v.8)

VII. Those Who Are Peacemakers Have a Happy Life (v.9)

VIII. Those Who Are Persecuted for Righteousness Sake Have a Happy Life (vv.10-12)