

Becoming Children of God

By Joe R Wheeler

Matthew 5:1-12 *And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. 7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. 8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. 9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. 10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

In this sermon, Jesus teaches principles of the coming kingdom. He is describing the internal qualities. The Pharisee's focused on external appearances. The heart is what truly matters in the sight of God. Those who would enter the kingdom of Heaven will enter in through the narrow way. This Way was Jesus Himself. They will be known as Christians.

In Matthew 5:1-12, Jesus Refers To Them As:

A. The Poor In Spirit...ver 3, The humble, in contrast with the haughty; those sensible of spiritual destitution. The same state of mind is referred to when he speaks elsewhere of a contrite and broken spirit.

2Corinthians 6:10 *As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.*

B. Those That Mourn...ver 4, Not all mourners, for there is "a sorrow of this world that worketh death." Godly sorrow is meant, a mourning over sinfulness.

2Corinthians 7:10 *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.*

C. The Meek...ver 5, The mild, the gentle, opposed to the proud and ambitious, the kind who succeed in such a kingdom as the Jews expected. Moses, the meekest man who ever lived... **Numbers 12:3** *(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.),* showed that meekness does not mean someone who won't stand up when it counts...

Exodus 32: 30-32 *And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. 31 And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. 32 Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.*

D. They Which Hunger And Thirst For Righteousness...ver 6, This implies the same sense of spiritual needs as Matthew 5:3-4. Hunger is a felt want, in this case a want of righteousness before God, the righteousness that comes from the forgiveness of

sins.

Psalms 63:1-2 *A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.*

E. The Merciful...ver 7, The merciful, those who, instead of resenting injury, are ready to forgive, shall obtain the divine mercy. The fifth petition of the Lord's prayer implies that we must forgive if we expect to be forgiven. Also, the merciful take care for the disadvantaged...those who couldn't possibly repay them for what they expend to aid them.

Matthew 25:31-40 *When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

F. The Pure In Heart...ver 8, The Jews, under the tuition of the Pharisees, cared little for the state of the heart, just so that outward forms were duly kept. Jesus, however, demands that the heart, the affections, the mind, shall be purified, as the fountain from whence flows the moral and religious life. A pure heart begets a pure life; an impure heart, a corrupt life.

James 1:27 *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*

G. The Peacemakers...ver 9, Not the soldiers of a Warrior King, such as the Jews expected but the men who, in the name of the Prince of Peace, go forth to proclaim peace and good will among men. Christ is the great Peacemaker. Emphasis on peacemakers, not simply peaceful, but those who help to promote peace with others. Those who try to heal rifts and ease conflict. Jesus took the role of peacemaker between us and God. ..

Ephesians 2:14-17 *For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.*

H. Those Who Are Persecuted For Righteousness Sake...ver 10, The Jews expected a conquering kingdom, and its citizens to be lords among the nations, but Christ pronounces a blessing on those who are persecuted, not for misdeeds, but for righteousness. These shall have the kingdom.

2 Timothy 3:12 *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.*

I. Those Reviled, Persecuted, And Spoken Evil Of For Jesus Sake...ver 11, This is a personal application of what has just preceded. Some of those who listened

were reviled by the Jews, and persecuted unto death. "For My sake" is an important phrase to remember. If you are suffering for your own misdeeds, don't say it is because you are a Christian to seem righteous to others.

1Peter 4:12-17 *Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. 14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. 16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf. 17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?.*

What Will Happen To These Children of God?

A. Theirs Is The Kingdom Of Heaven...ver 3, Such shall become members of the kingdom that Christ will establish. The Jews were rejected from this kingdom on account of their spiritual pride.

Job 33:24-30 *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. 25 His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth: 26 He shall pray unto God, and he will be favorable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. 27 He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; 28 He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. 29 Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, 30 To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*

Matthew 3:2 *And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

B. They Shall Be Comforted...ver 4, the comfort partly coming from faith in these promises.

Isaiah 66:2 *For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*

2 Corinthians 1:3-6. *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. 5 For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 6 And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.*

C. They Shall Inherit The Earth...ver 5, The land; Canaan as the type of all blessings. It is the heavenly land especially that is inherited. The special reference is to the Messiah's kingdom, the church, of which "the land" of Canaan was a type.

Psalms 37:11 *But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*

1 Corinthians 3:22 *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;*

D. They Shall Be Filled...ver 6, Those who diligently seek Him will find Him.

Matthew 6:33 *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

E. They Shall Obtain Mercy...ver 7, They will receive from the Lord what they have

shown to other men.

Matthew 25:34-40 *Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*

F. They Shall See God...ver 8, Not with the natural eye, but the spiritual...by faith. In the pure heart the Lord will dwell and his presence will be recognized.

John 14:23 *Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

G. They Shall Be Called Children Of God...ver 9, They will be known by God. The Lord calls His sheep...and they come to His voice.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. 18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

H. There's Is The Kingdom Of Heaven...ver 10, First by being in the church...the earthly embodiment of the kingdom; then at last in Heaven

2 Corinthians 5: 1-9 *For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: 3 If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. 4 For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. 5 Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. 6 Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: 7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) 8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. 9 Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.*

I. Great Is Your Reward In Heaven...ver 12, So persecuted they the prophets. Isaiah is said to have been sawed asunder; Jeremiah was thrown into a miry pit and threatened with death; Elijah was hunted by Ahab and Jezebel.

Hebrews 11: 32-40 *And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthah; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

Conclusion

We see from these first few verses of this greatest of sermons, that Jesus is

beginning to teach what is contrary to the common view. Letting go of these earthly desires to fight back when we are challenged and resisting our enemies, we are putting God in the role of our Defender and Protector. The remainder of this sermon of Jesus will be built upon the foundation principles laid here. We struggle as Christians to keep these Godly qualities from being laid aside by our worldly nature. All of the qualities Jesus mentioned here are contrary to the qualities of the powerful, the rich, and the famous people of the world.

We are usually taught by our parent's, our teacher's, and by our own observations of how people in this world “get ahead in life”, to adopt the opposite attributes to these taught here by our Lord.

Ephesians 6:4, tells Christians to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, but how many Christian parent's actually follow this command? Most raise their children to become successful wage earners and business and community leaders, instead of to be knowledgeable in the Word. The Church is lacking in strength today because it is openly taught that being a good Christian means being successful in the ways of the world.

We need to heed the truth taught by Jesus, not the lies of Satan that are popular in the Church today. If we truly look at what Jesus actually taught here, we would see that very little of it is followed by those who today are seen by others to be faithful leaders in the church. We will never grow if our foundation is not based on Christ's teaching but on the wisdom of the world.

***James 3:13-18** Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*