

Last month we talked about what true blessings are. This month I want to look at what are the core values or morals that Jesus taught His disciples. Every man has a value system or a set of values that guide his life. For some, their values or morals are ungodly. For others, they base their lives on Judeo-Christian values or morals. We are not saved by our value system. There are many good people who will not go to Heaven. The way a person can go to Heaven is by trusting in the Blood of Jesus for the remission of sins. Yet, Jesus taught His disciples a whole set of values in His teaching that we call "The Beatitudes". What are these core values or morals that Jesus taught? Let's take a quick look at each one and then I will allow the Holy Spirit to continue to teach you from there.

The first value that Jesus taught seems strange to people today. It is, "Blessed are the poor in spirit". In the western world we live in, being poor is never taught as a value. In fact, our western value system values success, self confidence, and popularity more than other areas of the world. Yet, Jesus taught that the poor in spirit are those who are blessed with the kingdom. Being poor in spirit has nothing to do with how rich you are or what your standing is in the community. Being poor in spirit is an attitude that says, "In myself I can do nothing." Jesus had this attitude when He said in John 5:30, "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me." Jesus reiterated this to His disciples in John 15:5 where He said, "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." A person who is poor in spirit has an understanding or value that says, "I need God."

The next value that Jesus gives us is also very contrary to what we have been taught. It is, "Blessed are they that mourn". The mourning that Jesus is talking about here isn't the mourning that comes from loss, but it is the mourning that accompanies true repentance. The Apostle Paul taught us in II Corinthians 7:8-12 that there is a sorrow that leads to repentance. Jesus is teaching His disciples to be sorry when they sin. Godly sorrow will lead to life and repentance. We live in a time where it is considered a weakness to be sorry when you've done something wrong. Leaders have been taught to never say you're sorry, but that is contrary to what Jesus teaches as a core value for the life of a believer. When you sin, be sorry. Then accept the forgiveness that comes from the Father because Jesus paid the price for that sin. Then you will be blessed by the comfort of God.

The next value Jesus taught is "Blessed are the meek." To understand this value we need to understand what meekness is. Meekness isn't weakness! In fact, it is a very strong value. It simply means to remain teachable and open to other people. We need each other to survive. That is what Jesus is teaching here. When a person becomes so self-confident that they think they can do anything by themselves, they lose the blessing of inheriting the earth. An inheritance has nothing to do with what you have done but has everything to do with who you are related to.

The next value states that we need to be hungry and thirsty for righteousness. What are you hungry for? Is it that righteousness would be on display in your life? If you are, then you have this promise. You will be filled! The word "filled" means to be satisfied or to gorge. What will you gorge yourself on? The righteousness that comes from being hungry and thirsty for God's righteousness! The principle reason people don't conquer sin in their lives is because they don't hunger for righteousness. Hunger and thirsting will drive a man to extreme limits. When you hunger and thirst for righteousness, you will go to the extreme to live righteously.

The fifth value is "Blessed are the merciful". The value of mercy is extremely important in our lives. Did you know that everyone has sinned? That means everyone needs mercy. We, as the people of God, should be merciful. We have all received mercy. So, instead of condemning a person, we should show mercy. Then God and others will continue to show you mercy.

The sixth value is "Blessed are the pure in heart". The heart of a man must be pure. That doesn't only mean in actions but also in motives. We can do the right thing with the wrong motives. When we do that, we don't fool God. He knows our thoughts and intentions. The

promise that Jesus connects to this value is that they shall see God. That means that God will reveal Himself to them. When we seek God with a pure heart then God reveals Himself to us.

The next value that Jesus gives is "Blessed are the peace makers". That didn't say the trouble makers. It says that those who make peace are blessed. The most important peacemaker is one who helps people make peace with God. Be a peacemaker in the world. Help people make peace with God first and then peace with others.

The last value is "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness". The "world" hates righteousness. The reason why is because righteousness reveals sin just as light reveals hidden things. The value that Jesus is teaching His disciples is let your light shine. Stand up for what you know is true. If you do, your reward in Heaven will be great!