

Real Blessings

Jesus started His teaching ministry by teaching what we call the beatitudes. The beatitudes are the core principles of the Christian faith. Over the past few months, I have grown increasingly concerned in my heart that many Christians don't have the right foundation when it comes to the attitudes or principles of life. The greatest reason that we aren't walking in the blessings of God is that we don't have what Jesus taught are the conditions of being blessed.

The beatitudes are in direct opposition to what the secular wisdom would teach. Just take a look at them. The core values that Jesus taught are humility, sorrow, meekness, hunger and thirsting, mercy, purity, peacemaking, and persecution. All of these go against what we've been taught. Yet, Jesus taught these principles or attitudes as the foundation of being blessed. In fact, many of the principles that have become popular in the church over the past ten years are in direct opposition to what Jesus taught. We followed the principles of bigger is better, stronger is greater, or driven by purpose is greater than being hungry to be filled by God.

. For the past couple of years, Audrey and I have been having rabbit problems in our yard. They are devouring my flowers. So, several months ago, I purchased a pellet gun with a scope on it. I have fired many rounds of bullets at those rabbits but my success rate wasn't very good. You know why? The scope wasn't sighted in or focused right. I firmly believe it is time for the body of Christ to get sighted in on what is important. What we are doing has been as efficient as firing a gun with sights that are off. You may hit the target, but your chances aren't very good. Jesus gave the beatitudes to us as a way to adjust our sites or focus.

The first thing that we need to understand is what it means to be blessed. In the U.S.A. there are presently over three million millionaires. Yet, this country is known abroad as a country of addictions. We take more drugs that altar our mental state than any other country in the world. We have more lawyers per person than any other country. Is wealth a sign of blessing?

Let's take a look at what Jesus said being blessed is. The first thing He said is to be blessed is having the kingdom of heaven. Many people get confused about the kingdom of heaven. Jesus didn't mean to confuse you with the terms kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God. Basically the kingdom of heaven is where heaven is the ruler or king. What a tremendous blessing to have Jesus as king! He is in charge! This is a blessing!

The next thing Jesus said is a blessing is being comforted by being freed from sin. Wow! What a blessing it is to know that our sins are forgiven. To know that the debt of our sins has been paid in full is a blessing. The third thing is that we inherit the earth by being meek. The earth is ours as long as we operate in meekness. We don't have to be overbearing, obnoxious, and self promoting to inherit the earth. We don't have to win the battle to get what is ours. All we need to do is walk in meekness! Wow! What a blessing! The next thing that Jesus uses to describe a blessing is being filled. The condition that Jesus is addressing is hungering and thirsting for righteousness. What a blessing it is to know that all the requirements for righteousness have been filled or satisfied by what Jesus did for us on the cross! When we hunger, He satisfies us. What a blessing! Then Jesus states that a blessing is seeing God. That word "see" means to have a revelation of God. What a blessing it is to know God! The next description of a blessing is to be recognized as a son of God. This is given to those who make peace. The last thing that Jesus said was a blessing brings us back to the beginning, to have the kingdom of heaven. To have Jesus as king and Lord is the greatest blessing of all.

I want us to notice something here. None of these blessing have anything to do with our physical condition. The things that Jesus taught as blessings are all conditions of our hearts. Do you know that your heart condition will ultimately affect your hearts? Some times we get that backward. We look at our outward condition and that affects our heart. If we look at the outside as our true condition, it will affect what we see on the inside. But if we mediate on the blessings that are ours as believers, those blessings will change our outward condition.

Next month we will take a look at some of the requirements to being really blessed.