

Upcoming Events

Revelation class: July 11 at 2:30
“Numbers in the Bible and in Revelation”

Business meeting, July 11 at 3:30 p.m.

Tuesday Meet Up Class
July 6 at 7:00 p.m.
At Panera Bread in La Quinta

Beatitudes in Revelation

The beatitudes in Matthew and those in Revelation are both intended for those who endure hardship but those in Revelation seem a bit more hopeful and triumphant even. Jesus was talking to Jews who did not yet understand the kingdom (the church), while John was writing to Christians who were in the kingdom and needed the encouragement to remain faithful. These beatitudes might all be summarized by the first one in Revelation 1:3 — read it, hear it, do it. This is also good advice for dealing with the New Testament as a whole. (John McCrady)

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The Preacher's Blog

A new section on our church website (under “Bible Study and Evangelism”). Brother Critchfield's articles...here's a recent sample. Check it out! Extra “Bible Thoughts” for the week!

The Beatitudes

In chapters 5-7 of gospel of Matthew we find what we call, “The Sermon on the Mount.” This was perhaps the first such sermon. Jesus had been teaching before this, but this seems to take on a different form from His previous talks. At the very front of the sermon, we find “The Beatitudes” as we often refer to this section. The word “beatitudes” simply means supreme blessedness. As the Sermon on the Mount commenced in Matthew 5:3, Jesus spoke of these great blessings:

- 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*
- 5 Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.*
- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*
- 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*
- 9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*
- 10 Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 11 Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.*

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
Jack Critchfield

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The Beatitudes

Excerpts from article by Kevin Cauley

Jesus did not speak these words for the purpose of making an already religious society feel better about themselves. Rather, He sought to solicit their attention to characteristics that made the Kingdom of Heaven different from their customary lifestyles. His mission, besides redeeming sinful man, was to usher in a new rule. He sought to teach man about the Kingdom of God and how one could enter it. The beatitudes serve as the foundation for a highly focused spiritual life. They are unique in a way that makes them relatively easy to remember yet powerful in their impact.

If one would be a child of God, the beatitudes call on them to mold themselves in an image not recognized by the world (1 John 2:15). That is, they are to be completely different from the norms and societal values taught by men and governments. One does not have to think too hard as to how these values differ from those that would have been around the people of Jesus' day. Nor are they traits found in most of society today. Forgiving someone a debt is a rarity in our society today. Purity of heart is certainly a far cry from what is on television, cell-phones and computers today. Perhaps all these things are more accessible today than it was 2,000 years ago, but it doesn't change the fact that men seek to put an emphasis on satisfying the flesh rather than the spirit.

Jesus commended the multitudes to begin by being humble. As such, we must recognize we are sinners, and we must mourn over the sins we so often commit. We are to deal gently with our neighbors all while starving for the food which profits our souls: God's word! Even when it can be difficult, we are to show mercy to one another just as our Lord has shown us His great mercy. We ought to be pure and holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16) and free from blemish. Even when we persecuted and ridiculed, we are to make peace with men (Romans 12:18).

I admit, these are not the easiest things to practice but they are worth it. They may not find favor with men, but they are most favorable with God. If these things are yours then you will indeed be a supremely blessed individual. May these values stand out in our lives as disciples of our Lord. Jack Critchfield

If we look at the Sermon on the Mount thematically, we see that Jesus is concerned about relationships—man's relationship with God, man's relationship with his fellow, and man's relationship with himself. The material in the first part of the Sermon on the Mount, commonly known as the beatitudes, concerns the last of these categories: man's relationship with himself. It is presented at the beginning of the sermon to emphasize the point that one cannot begin to deal with the other relationships until one has dealt with the inward man.

The word "beatitude" comes to us from Latin and means "blessed." It correlates with the Greek word "makarios" used at the beginning of each beatitude. Sometimes the word is translated "happy," but this is not the "happy" that is used to describe the common feeling of momentary delight upon eating an ice cream or one's favorite snack. Rather, the word refers to a deeper, abiding joy that one experiences as a result of making these attitudes one's own.

The beatitudes take a special form. A blessing is pronounced; the attitude is described; and a promised result follows. The repetition of this form throughout the beatitudes emphasizes the need for their ongoing practice in the life of the spiritual person. The beatitudes are not a "rinse once or twice if desired" solution, but require constant attention in application and maintenance. At any given moment, our orientation towards others should reflect these inward ideals.

The beatitudes are somewhat paradoxical; they seem contradictory at first glance. Nevertheless, as one contemplates the meaning of the statement, one realizes that such attitudes foster within the inward man a spirituality that cannot be contradicted. The result that one might expect to occur looking at the beatitudes from a physical/naturalistic perspective does not follow because one is not cultivating one's physical/natural self, but one's spiritual person.

Cultivating these inward attitudes best facilitates one's relationship with God, and one's fellow man, both of whom are ultimately spiritual beings. They enable us, ultimately, to practice the golden rule consistently (Matthew 7:12). It is in this final state, when one's relationships with one's fellow have been cultivated by spiritual truths, that one may find the joy the beatitudes promise to those seeking spirituality in their lives (Philippians 4:4).