

Upcoming Events

Daylight Saving Time

Next Sunday, November 7

“Turn clocks back one hour!”

Today's Memory Verse

*“He who believes and is baptized will be saved;
but he who does not believe will be condemned.”*

Mark 16:16

Meet Up Class

Monday, November 1 at 7:00 p.m.

28561 Sunnyslope St.

Desert Hot Springs CA 92241

November Birthdays

10 Daniel Brown

November Anniversaries

2 Shannon & Susan Hudson

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

By Jack Critchfield

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.”*

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 its 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 their 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, cellphones 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 ours then we will indeed be a supremely blessed individual. May these values stand out in our lives as disciples of our Lord.

Who Are the Blessed?

By Tim Dooley

Who are the blessed? The Christian will answer quickly, "All are blessed." And that is certainly true. Physically we are all blessed by the hand of God. Jesus said, "*He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and on the unjust*" (Matthew 5:45). The Psalmist penned by inspiration the beautiful truth that God, "*...covers the heavens with clouds, ...prepares rain for the earth, ...makes grass to grow on the mountains. He gives to the beast its food, and to the young ravens that cry*" (Psalm 147:7-9).

And although we acknowledge this verbally far too often we live a completely contradictory way. We live in depression, jealousy, envy, strife and anger, ungrateful, unthankful, and disrespectful.

Shame on us when we live fifty weeks a year as spoiled children and only stop to be thankful for all we do have for the seven to fourteen days surrounding the Thanksgiving holiday each year.

Who are the blessed? I firmly and unequivocally declare that the Bible, in the clearest of terms, says that only those who are obedient and faithful children of God are blessed spiritually. "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ*" (Ephesians 1:3). That's right! Only those who are in Christ can be blessed by God spiritually and to be in Christ the Bible again clearly states that we must hear the Word of God (Romans 10:17); we must believe that Jesus Christ is His only begotten Son (Mark 16:16); we must be willing to repent of our sins (Acts 17:30); We must be willing to confess our faith in Him (Matthew 10:32-33); and we must be buried with Him in baptism for the remission of our sin (Acts 2:38). At this point we are added to His body the church (Acts 2:47; Colossians 1:13) and find ourselves in Christ (Galatians 3:27).

But not everyone who complies with these inspired prerequisites will continue to find themselves blessed spiritually. Generally speaking the Palmist again wrote, "*Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD!*" (Psalm 119:1). We are well aware that Jesus spoke of the blessed as those who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are meek, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who are merciful, who are pure in heart, who are peacemakers, and who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. We see how spiritual blessings do not rest solely on adhering to the steps of salvations but are reserved for those who walk in the light (1 John 1:7) and love Him enough to keep His commandments (John 14:15).

There are two other groups that the Bible says are blessed. The first group we read about in Luke 12:37-38 where Jesus says, "*Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching. Assuredly, I say to you that he will gird himself and have them sit down to eat and will come and serve them. And if he should come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.*" Are we watching, waiting, thankful, every minute of every day? Are we ready? The second group is described for us in Revelation 14:13, "*Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, 'Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on'' 'Yes,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.'*" Oh, how I long to be blessed! Be faithful!