

**THE**  
**BEATITUDES**  
**OF**  
**CHRIST**

**BROTHER EARL R. BORDERS**

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## PREFACE

It is with great joy that I present to you this book which is entitled, *The Beatitudes of Christ and Their Outgrowth*. For a great while I have had a burden to see the people provided with materials that expound the precious Bible Truths, especially as they relate to how to obtain and then maintain a real experience of Salvation. It has always been my desire to see brethren ore capable than I step forth, see the need, and produce these writings. Unfortunately, this has not occurred, and the Lord has intensified my burden to publish these Truths in written form.

The contents of this book were originally aired as messages which were preached on our weekly radio broadcast. In an effort to place these Truths in the hands of the people, we have elected to forgo the editing process and provide them to you basically as they were originally transcribed. Due to the nature of teaching these Truths in the form of a weekly program, you will notice some review and repetition. Since we feel the need for printing these Truths is so paramount, we trust that you can overlook both the lack of editing as well as any repetition, and that you will be able to gain benefit from the content.

I would also like to thank Brother Lloyd T. (Tom) Fowler who has spent numerous hours transcribing these radio messages so that this work might be possible. Any errors which you may find are mine. For any good that may be accomplished, all the praise, honor, and glory should be ascribed to our Lord. So, for your edification and for the glory of God, I present to you, *The Beatitudes of Christ and Their Outgrowth*.

Yours in Christ,  
Brother Earl R. Borders  
Newark, Ohio, April 2000

## DISCLAIMER

Note: These transcribed messages are taken directly from the broadcast tapes, as nearly as possible, word for word. They are not edited, except for punctuation for easier reading purposes. Due to time restrictions, it is not possible to edit them and be able to offer them this quickly in booklet form.

I have used **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** for emphasis, as nearly as possible, as they are emphasized in the broadcast messages. Also, the words taken from the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin languages are in *CAPITAL ITALICS*. I have determined, as nearly as humanly possible, along with Brother Earl R. Borders, to ensure that they, and their meanings, are correct. Also, titles of books and articles are in *CAPITAL ITALICS*.

Each *PART* within each *CHAPTER* represents a separate broadcast message on that "parable." This also includes the chapter on the "Introduction to the Parables."

The Transcriber,  
Brother L. T. Fowler

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## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE BEATITUDES

*Matthew 5:1 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.*

In this passage of Scripture text, we see Jesus beginning that famed discourse, which is commonly known as "The Sermon on the Mount." Right at the commencement of this message, He utters those verses of Truth, which have come to be regarded as "The Beatitudes." Through the declaration of these Beatitudes, Christ laid forth some fundamental and foundational Truths of what comprises true Christianity, as well as the core of the experience of salvation. By the help of God, we want to begin a series of study concerning "The Beatitudes," starting with an Introduction to the Beatitudes.

As we begin to consider this thought of "The Beatitudes," many questions immediately arise, such questions as: What does this term "The Beatitudes" actually mean? Is it a Biblical term? What is the source of its origin? Many other questions might arise as we go throughout the course of our study, which we want address, by the help of God.

As we begin to consider the thought of this term, "The Beatitudes," the word *Beatitude*, as such, is not found in that manner in the English Bible. The word actually has its origin from the Latin word *Beatitudo*, which has a history of being used repeatedly throughout the Latin text. In The Vulgate Version of Romans 4:6-7, (where The King James Version says, "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man . . . whose sins are covered.") the actual Latin word *Beatitudo* is the word that is used for blessedness. In the Latin *Beatitudo* was used, not only as an abstract term denoting blessedness but also in the concrete sense of a particular declaration of blessedness coming from the lips of the Divine, or the lips of Jesus Christ.

There is a reason for this thinking. As each of these verses throughout these commonly known passages, known as "The Beatitudes" start with the word *blessed*. If you will read in Matthew 5:3, it says *blessed* in verses 4-11. Nine times over this particular word is employed. Each of these verses and each of these Beatitudes, as it were, start with the word "blessed." Or in the Latin the word is *Beati*, hence, "The Beatitudes." Now this word also conveys a truth to us. The word that The King James Version translates as "blessed" in each of these verses is the Greek word *makarios*, which is a very special Greek word. It is a word which the Greeks associated with the gods, and it portrays "God-like qualities."

What is the lesson before us? Many view this passage as merely an ideal. They believe this text sets forth great moral principles, great moral standards, or a good ideal to which men should aspire. But men will always be striving to reach it and shall never perfectly attain to it in this life. This is the common thinking of men, even religious advocates, as they view this text. But, in the light of the Scriptures,

and in light of Truth, nothing could be further from the truth—nothing could be more diametrically opposed to the actual semantics of this lesson text.

Notice as we begin to view this text of Scripture and survey these beatitudes, that in each verse in verses 3 through 10 where it says "blessed," it is followed by a word in italics. Notice it says in our English rendering, "Blessed are." But also take note that the word are is in italics. That means that it was not in the original text. Why is that? Well, when a word appears in italics it means that in the Greek or in the Hebrew there is no equivalent word. A word was added to attempt to bring out the meaning of the sentence. So in these Beatitudes, in reality, there is no verb. There is no word "are."

What is the significance of this? When Jesus spoke forth these words, He did not speak these Beatitudes in Greek. He spoke them in Aramaic, which was the kind of Hebrew that the people spoke in His day. The Aramaic and the Hebrew have a very common kind of expression which is, in fact, an exclamation which literally means, "O, the blessedness of!" That expression is very common in Hebrew writings. It was very common in the Old Testament. For instance, Psalm 1:1 begins in the actual Hebrew as "O, the blessedness of the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . ." This is the form in which Jesus spoke these Beatitudes. They are not simple statements, but they are exclamations. He was actually exclaiming, in essence, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit!" (Matthew 5:3); "O, the blessedness of they that mourn!" (Matthew 5:4); "O, the blessedness of the meek! (Matthew 3:5); and so forth throughout the Beatitudes as He uttered them forth.

Why is it vital that we understand this? Because, dear heart, the Beatitudes are **not** the highest hopes of what shall be. They are not glowing prophecies of some future supposed bliss. But they are exclamations and divine pronouncements of what is through Jesus Christ. They are pronouncements of the real experience that Jesus Christ came to bring, of what He can bring to a man as a present and enduring reality. It is a picture of the current reality that Jesus brought to mankind to lift man to a state of spiritual blessedness wherein he is enabled to have God-like qualities. So as we study these Truths called "The Beatitudes" we must ever keep before our minds that they are depicting spiritual realities.

Now, let us get the setting of our lesson text. Christ had just commenced His public ministry. Matthew 3:13 says, "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John." And John 1:29 says, ". . . John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Then John baptized Him. Matthew 3:16 says at the conclusion of that baptism, ". . . lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him . . . ." Certainly this was in fulfillment of prior prophecy that had been given, where Isaiah 61:11 says, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me . . . ." This anointing was taking place in fulfillment of divine prophecy. This was His anointing to begin His public ministry. Acts 10:38 declares, ". . . How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power . . . ."

Please note the wording of Matthew 3:16, where it says very plainly, ". . . lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of

God descending like a dove." Notice it does not say, as many erroneously suppose, that the Holy Ghost is a dove. It does not say that a dove lit or sat upon Him. It says, ". . . the Spirit of God descending *like* a dove," merely denoting the manner in which the Holy Spirit came down from on High.

That which occurred was His anointing, and the beginning of His public ministry. After this anointing, Luke 4:16-22 tells us: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias [*Esaias* is the Greek word for the Hebrew word *Isaiah*]. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written [reading from Isaiah 61:1-2]. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him. And he began to say unto them. This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all bare him witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceedeth out of his mouth."

What is the lesson here? this had been as Matthew 3:16 described as "his custom." He had been in that tabernacle many, many times. He had been in that synagogue, as it were, many times on many Sabbath days. He had been brought up in this locality. But something was different on this day. What was it? He said in Matthew 3:18, "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me." It was the anointing. Thus began His public ministry.

Our lesson text, "The Beatitudes," was the first recorded public discourse of our Lord. Let us look at what set the stage for it. In Luke's Gospel, there is an account which is a companion text to the one in Matthew. As a matter of fact, it is the only other Gospel account where "The Beatitudes" are listed. There it shows us what occurred right prior to Christ's uttering these words. Luke 6:17-20 says: "And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him: for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor." And then He commenced to give "The Beatitudes."

Notice the attributes in which they were seemingly the most interested. In Luke 6:19 it says, "And the whole multitude sought to touch him: [Why?] for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all." What is the picture? The multitudes were being distracted from His primary reason by the physical benefits. Certainly, He is concerned about man's physical well-being, and that is a part of the Gospel. But they were, as many are today, unbalanced in their approach to Christ. So, Christ had to set forth the spiritual realities. He had to bring the thinking back to the supreme purpose of His coming.

What was that supreme purpose? In Luke 19:10 He declared that it was



"to seek and to save that which was lost." He came, as He said in the Gospel of John 10:10, "that they might have life." He came to bring the lost to life. Now what avenue does He use to accomplish that? In John 6:63 He spoke and said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." So, He gave these words, the Beatitudes, not as some isolated unrelated proverbs, but rather, as the ingredients to save mankind. He came to save them that were lost and lead them to spiritual life.

Bear in mind, this was His first recorded public discourse. In this lesson He laid forth the truths to enable man to understand and to obtain salvation. This was the core purpose of His earthly Advent. Let us see who He was addressing here. In Matthew 4:25 the penman declared, "And there follow him great multitudes." Why? Revert back to Matthew 4:24, where it says, "he healed them." And in Matthew 5:1 it says, "And seeing the multitudes." What multitudes? Matthew 4:25 says, "great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan." Now we must remember, as we study the setting of our text here that the Bible was not written originally being broken into chapters and verses. This was not accomplished until in the proximity of A.D. 500, when scholars broke it down for the sake of easy reference.

So now, what did He do? In Matthew 5:1 we read that "he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth, and taught them." Who did He teach? Verse 1 says, "His disciples." This message, originally, was not preached to the masses. It was not for those who were only concerned with the flesh and with the benefits of the flesh and for the flesh without regard to their spiritual welfare. In this lesson, His audience was only the disciples. Look at Luke 6:20, which states, "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for your's is the kingdom of God." So, the audience was only His disciples.

This does not narrowly mean just the twelve as many commonly think. In Luke 6:13 the Apostle Luke penned and said, "he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." So there were many more disciples than the twelve that many times are supposed. In Luke 6:17 it says, "the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people." Now this tells us two things. Number one: that there was a great number of disciples and a company, not just twelve. In another place it tells that when Jesus spoke on one occasion that, "From that time many of his disciples went back" (John 6:68). So, the Scripture teaches us here (Luke 6:17).

Second of all, this verse tells us, that the Bible makes a clear distinction between disciples and a great multitude of people. Now, why is there an exclusion of the multitude from this teaching on this occasion? Well, the key is in the word disciple. The word disciple comes from the Latin word *discipulus* and it is the same root word that our English word discipline comes from. this Scripture portrays a Truth to us. This teaches us that a disciple" is one who is committed to keeping the doctrine or the discipline" of Jesus Christ. you are not only keeping the discipline in the sense of a mental assent, but by following Him, by your life, of the Truths which He set forth. That a disciple incorporates right into his life and living the very disciplines that

the Truth of His teachings set forth. In these Beatitudes He is setting for the discipline to obtain real salvation.

First of all, He must commit this and communicate these truths to those who are committed to following Him. He first had to reveal it to His ministry and to His people—those who had made a commitment and who were willing to follow Him. To those who were willing to take His sayings, His teachings, and not merely give an intellectual ascent to them, but willing to commit to the place where they would incorporate them right into their living. He had to have those who were willing to do that before He could take these truths forth to mankind. Because He chose a body of believers as the avenue and the conduit through which these truths were to be taken forth unto the unregenerate masses of mankind, He had to communicate this to His ministry and His people and have them embrace it so that they might convey it to the masses. Not only then, but in years to come.

Let us look at the significance of the words which the Sacred Writer employs in our lesson text. Here in Matthew 5:1 it tells us very plainly, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set . . . ." This phrase, "when he was set," indicates a truth to us. When a Jewish Rabbi was teaching officially, he sat to teach. Even in our day, we still speak of a Professor's Chair. When a Pope speaks, he speaks *Ex Cathedra*, which is Latin and means "from his seat." So the fact that Jesus "sat" to teach lets us know that this teaching was not merely a routine conversation. It was not something just spoken during a stroll, but rather these were deliberate teachings that were both central and official doctrine.

When Matthew 5:2 goes on to say, "And he opened his mouth . . . ." This also is not just merely another way of saying "He said." Proverbs 30:5 tells us, "Every word of God is pure . . . ." There is Divine design and Divine truth incorporated in every word and every phrase in the Sacred Scriptures. In the Greek, this phrase, "and he opened his mouth," is a solemn, grave, dignified, utterance. It also means an intimate teaching where one is really opening his heart and fully pouring out his mind. The very use of this phrase indicates that the content of these Beatitudes is no chanced piece of teaching. It is the grave and solemn utterance of central things which deal with the state of a man's soul and its welfare. It is the opening of the heart and mind of Christ to where they could see and understand His desire and His burden for the spiritual welfare and salvation of mankind.

As we go through the course of these Beatitudes, we will see that He is giving us a Divine revelation of the experience of salvation and how man may obtain it and then maintain it. I trust that we have an insight to the background of these Beatitudes.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE BEATITUDES: THE POOR IN SPIRIT

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

In this verse of Scripture text, we see recorded the first of nine very poignant and succinct Truths uttered by our Lord and commonly known as "the Beatitudes." In Chapter One we began a study of these very vital words pronounced by Christ. By the help of God, we want to progress on in our study and consider here in Matthew 5:3 where Jesus declared, "Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . ."

By way of review we found that Matthew, Chapter 5, contains the first recorded public discourse of Christ after the commencement of His public ministry. In Matthew 3:16, He was baptized. Not only was He baptized of water, but Acts 10:38 tells us, "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost."

After this He began His public ministry and great and marvelous works were wrought. Luke 6:19 declares, "And the whole multitude sought to touch him: [But we must ask ourselves why this occurred and what type of followers they were at this point.] for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all." Unfortunately this verse gives us an insight to what was actually transpiring among the masses. As many today, they had a very unbalanced view of Christ and of Christianity. They viewed Him as a benefactor for the body rather than a Savior for the soul. As many in religion today, they saw features for the flesh rather than a Divine deliverer. I repeat they viewed Him with a skewed view of what He really came to accomplish for mankind. They saw Him as a benefactor for the body rather than as a Savior for the soul. As many in religion today, they saw features for the flesh rather than a Divine deliverer.

So just as the need today is, the Word of God must be preached and set forth to drive away the confusion from men's minds. The Psalmist David declared in Psalm 119:130, "The entrance of thy word giveth light." So by the help of God's eternal Word, confusion in our day must be dispelled. So it was here at the very onset of Christ's ministry that men's minds were in confusion. They had a skewed view and an unbalanced view of Christ and His mission. So, in this text, He addresses this and brings a correct view of His purpose and His mission through the avenue of these Beatitudes.

In this text He addresses a singular group of people. Matthew 5:1-2 says: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth and taught them." Whom did He teach? In verse 1, the word "disciples" is the antecedent of the word "them" in verse 2.

Why was this so? It was to establish the truth that Christ will not work independently of His people or of His Body. But, it was to establish a point of truth that His desire and His means is to work through His people and His ministry so that He could later say, as He did in Matthew 28:19-20, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . .

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Although we know there were occasions in which He spoke to the masses, in this address at the very beginning of His public ministry He is instructing those who would later be able to instruct others after His departure.

These verses in Matthew 5:3-11 are called Beatitudes because of the Latin word *Beatitudo*. In the Latin this term was used in a sense of declaration of blessedness coming from the lips of Jesus Christ. Now as we begin to study these verses, we must notice the stark contrast between what had been done and what was being said in this text. The multitudes had been enthralled with what He could do for the outward man. Certainly Divine physical healing is a vital part of the Gospel of Christ. But in these lessons He deals with the predominant purpose for His Advent which He declared in Luke 19:10 when He said it was, "to seek and to save that which was lost." And to do as He declared in John 10:10 when He said, "I am come that they might have life." This was not physical life-they had that before He came. The life that He was speaking of was Spiritual life. So He gave these words, the Beatitudes, not as some ideal sayings or some unrelated proverbial teachings, but rather to portray the ingredients to bring salvation to mankind. Also, He came to bring them to a position of Spiritual life. Here in this text and in these lessons He is bringing us face to face with what "Blessed are the poor in spirit" means.

Let us begin to examine this. First of all, notice that each of the nine verses from Matthew 5:3-11 commence with the words in The King James Version as "Blessed are." But notice that in each verse the word "are" is in italics, which means that it did not appear in the original text. So in the real Beatitudes, (in these Beatitudes in the original language), there is no verb. There is no word "are." What does that convey to us? We know Jesus spoke this passage in the native tongue of Aramaic, a type of Hebrew. The Aramaic and Hebrew had a very common expression which was actually an exclamation which means, "O, the blessedness of." Now notice that each of these verses in Matthew 5:3-11, each of these nine Beatitudes, begin with this Divine exclamation. So, in our text He is actually saying, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit."

What is Jesus trying to convey to us through this exclamation? in our text He is actually saying, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit." Now, what is Jesus trying to convey to us through this exclamation? He is telling us a Spiritual truth and reality on which we need to gain insight. What is He actually trying to convey? Well, this world is constantly seeking for happiness. The masses that had been with Him for the moment had been happy. It is telling us that Jesus wants us to know that He came to bring mankind something more than fleeting or momentary happiness. He came to bring man to a state of blessedness, a state that man could continually enjoy regardless of external circumstances. You see, the English word "happiness" contains the root word hap. If you look in Webster's New World Dictionary, it tells us that hap means "chance, to occur by chance." In other words, happiness is purely governed by chance, by circumstances. If circumstances are good or favorable, one is happy.

The context surrounding our text was of a people who had enjoyed that

which was brought about by the momentary situation of Christ meeting their physical needs. He healed these people. But He, in His omniscient wisdom, knew that sometime they would again be sick. At some point in the future their health would again deteriorate and they would again be sick. Here He is trying to convey to the ministry and to His people, the truth that He came to bring something far more lasting to mankind than momentary or fleeting situational happiness. I repeat, happiness is purely governed by circumstances. If circumstances are favorable, then one is happy. But if situations become unfavorable, then happiness is gone. It is totally dictated by the circumstances.

The beauty of our text is that Jesus came to bring man to a state of blessedness, a state where his joy is derived from within. Regardless of what his external situations may be, it is a state where his joy is derived from the bliss of his spiritual state. This is why the Apostle Paul could pen those words in Philippians 4:11, ". . . for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." This state of blessedness is a spiritual quality that as Jesus said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth." the only peace that the world can give is the absence of trouble. But Jesus came to bring a spiritual attribute and a spiritual quality to where, as He declared in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The world's peace can only operate when there is absence of trouble.

This Divine attribute, this Divine quality, is a peace that can operate right in the midst of tribulation and trouble. Why? Because it is derived from a spiritual experience. A spiritual state does not have its basis in circumstances. In John 16:22 Jesus says, "Your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." Why? Because it is not rooted in the circumstances of this world, but rather, in the participation and enjoyment of Divine realities which men nor devils can touch. These are realities that mankind can only truly enjoy through the experience of salvation that Jesus came to bring to mankind.

Let us look at the first Beatitude that He has given us in Matthew 5:3 where He exclaims: "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit." What does this mean? Can it mean that if one is merely financially or temporally poor that he has an assurance of The Kingdom? Certainly not! Because there is no spiritual or saving merit in merely being literally poor.

What does Jesus actually mean and why does He begin with this particular statement? Well, we must remember that the burden of His message is to show the way, as Luke 19:10 says, to be able "to seek and to save that which was lost." Or, as He said in John 10:10, "that they might have life." He is portraying through these lessons the route to salvation and life.

What does the term "poor" in The King James Version actually mean (Matthew 5:3)? Well the Greek word here is the word *ptochos* and this word, as penned in the text by Matthew describes "an absolute and abject poverty." It is connected with the root *ptosso* which means, "to crouch or to cower." It describes the poverty which has beaten one to his knees.

Recall the Beatitudes were originally spoken in Aramaic. The Jews had

a special way of using this word that is incorporated in Matthew 5:3, as "poor." Among the Jews this word had a four-stage meaning.

1. They began by meaning, simply poor.
2. They went on to mean, poor, having no influence, power, help or prestige.
3. The Jews went on to mean, having no influence, therefore trodden down and oppressed by men.
4. The man who because he has no earthly resources available to him puts his whole trust in God.

What is the lesson here? The Psalmist used this same word in Psalm 34:6 when he penned, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him." Christ is showing us the very first prerequisite of salvation. What is it? To be poor. Or in other words, if we put the definitions together, to be "poor in spirit" means, that one must come to a full and complete realization that spiritually they are in total, absolute and abject poverty. In reality they have nothing to give or to offer to Jesus Christ. Spiritually, in the sight of a sin-avenging God, they have no power, no influence and no prestige. Sin and Satan have oppressed them and their only recourse is to let this recognition drive them to their knees and look to God who is rich in mercy and trust only to Him for their salvation.

In Psalm 40:17 David cried and said, "But I am poor [the exact same Hebrew word] and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer." This recognition that "I am poor" causes one to look beyond their means. Those who are not poor feel they have means. They feel that they have attributes. They feel that they have something that they can give; that they have something with which they can deal or barter. But that one who has the reality strike his soul that he is indeed impoverished, when it comes to spiritual qualities, and they realize that they have no means and no resources. when they realize that, and when they utterly come to a recognition of their absolute and abject poverty, it will drive them to their knees with nothing with which to barter or plead other than the mercy of God. This condition that "I am poor," I say, causes one to look beyond their means, their resources and to realize that for salvation they must look to an outside source. Here the Psalmist cried in Psalm 40:17, "thou art my help and my deliverer." So here we find that the Psalmist came to that realization when he said, "But I am poor" (Psalm 40:17). He is using this same Hebrew word. He realized that not only was he poor, but that he had no influence, no power, no help, no prestige, no influence and had been downtrodden and oppressed. he had no earthly resources, and his only hope and trust must be in God. He realized that he must look to an outside source for salvation. This is why he said in Psalm 34:6, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him."

To gain real salvation one must realize they have no means, no ability, no resources, and that for salvation they must look to an outside source. Psalm 40:17 says, "thou art my help and my deliverer." They must realize that if they are truly to gain an experience of salvation, they must have a deliverer, an outside source that delivers them out. When they spoke of Jesus in Matthew 1:21 they said, "thou

shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." That word save in the Greek is the word *sozo* and it has a dual application meaning, "to forgive and to deliver." a man's sins of the past must not only be forgiven and remitted by the blood of Jesus Christ, but also man must have a power that brings deliverance and breaks the very power of sin in his life to where he is delivered. That help must come from an outside source. Man has no power from within which can deliver him. He needs a deliverer, an outside source.

Jesus is teaching us in this passage, in so many words, He is saying, "O, the blessedness of the one who has come to the Divine realization of his own utter helplessness and absolute and abject poverty toward his own salvation and spiritual needs." I say this is the first thing that must occur before a man's salvation can ever be effected. In Luke 15:17, concerning the Prodigal Son, it says, "And when he came to himself . . . ." In other words, the sinner must come to an awakening, a realization that he is poor; spiritually poor, destitute, bankrupt, and that he is, as the Psalmist declared in Psalm 40:17, "needy." He needs outside aid, salvation and the deliverer, who is Jesus Christ. So as Jesus begins these lessons, He begins with the first recognition that a sinner must have before he can gain any help-the recognition of his great lack and need and that he does not have sufficiency in himself. What he needs is in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE BEATITUDES: THE POOR IN SPIRIT

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Here we have before us the Beatitude where Jesus declares, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," which is the first of a series of nine incorporated in Chapter 5 of Matthew's Gospel. We began to consider this Beatitude in Part One, and by the help of God we want to look into this text a little further. To properly understand this Scripture text, we must be reminded of the surrounding context and the setting of this particular text. Recorded here in Matthew, Chapter 5, is the first recorded public discourse of our Lord after the commencement of His public ministry. At this juncture He has been baptized of John, anointed of the Holy Ghost, tempted of the Devil, and amassed a following, from which He has chosen the twelve. Because of the works which were wrought by Him, the masses had an unbalanced view of Christ. They were caught up with the benefits for the body and were devoid of a real understanding of the saving experience that He came to bring. So, in this text, He is laying forth the ingredients to effect an experience of salvation.

He begins in Matthew 5:3 with these words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." In The King James Version, we again need to notice that the word "are" is in italics. It does not appear in the original Greek text. The word rendered in The King James Version as "blessed," was actually an exclamation in the original Aramaic, saying, "O, the blessedness of!" Here He is revealing that He came to bring something to mankind far deeper and far more valuable than temporary, momentary happiness. He came to make it possible for man to be elevated to a state in which to be able to enjoy an experience of blessedness, perpetually. In order for man to be a fit candidate for this experience called Salvation, there were some conditions that had to be met. These lessons, commonly called "The Beatitudes," set forth the components or the conditions necessary for real salvation.

Why does He begin here in Matthew 5:3 with this exclamation "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit?" Why does He begin with this particular Beatitude? Well, the word "poor" in the Greek means "absolute and abject poverty." It comes from the Greek root word which means, "to crouch or to cower." It describes a poverty which has beaten one to his knees.

Why begin with such a thought as this? Because this is the first realization to which the lost must come. We must ever be mindful that the primary purpose for Christ's First Advent, was according to Christ, in Luke 19:10, "to seek and to save that which was lost." Before anyone can ever get saved he must come to the startling awareness of being lost. This was one of the biggest battles that Christ faced with many, in His First Advent. A reason for that is that Judaism had made the masses feel that if they kept the Law, that they were righteous indeed. In Philippians 3:6, the Apostle Paul, speaking of his own experience



says, "Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." So here we find that there was a common thinking that the Law and its keeping brought a righteousness to mankind. When Christ came on the scene in His First Advent, Judaism had duped the minds of many and made them feel that if they adhered to the components of the Law that they were righteous indeed. That if they kept the external ceremonies, rights and rituals of Judaism that they were acceptable with Christ.

Sad to say, religion today has many of those same precepts and much of that same thinking incorporated in its teachings and practices in the very day and time in which you and I live. There are many who are under the false delusion that if they keep the rights and rituals of a religious organization and keep those externals that are held forth by that organization, or by religious tradition, that they are indeed righteous and a fit candidate for heaven. But such is not the truth. And so Jesus had to come on the scene and dispel such thinking as that.

I realize that many feel they are content in the position which they hold. They feel that they have made their peace with God. However, Jesus let us know that if our righteousness does not "exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees [or mere religious advocates], ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20). Real salvation brings a righteousness to the heart and life of mankind. So, as Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost, He had to first of all dispel some falsities and also teach some principles that are vitally needful for man to obtain an experience of salvation.

I repeat, before anyone can ever get saved, he must come to the startling awareness of his or her being lost. This was one of the biggest battles that Christ faced when He came on the scene of action. In Luke 18:9-13 it says: "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray, and one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Here we see a great contrast.

It went on to say in Luke 18:9, "certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous." What did they predicate that righteousness upon? All of the deeds that they had done: "I fast, I give tithes," and on we go with the deeds he did and the things that he did not do. These deeds were purely, merely externals. And he was basing his righteousness on religious performances or external observations. In other words when Luke 18:9 says, "certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous," what type of righteousness was he speaking of? They were self-righteous. It is obvious to see what filled this man's prayer. "I thank thee, I am not as other men, I fast, I give of what I possess." His prayer was full of himself, and he had self-righteousness. Jesus dealt with this type of thinking numerous times. In Matthew 5:20, Jesus spoke and said, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Now that causes a question to arise. What type of righteousness did they have? They had self-

righteousness!

The first thing Jesus wants man to see is the truth of the words of the prophet Isaiah. In Isaiah 64:6, he said, "But we are all as an unclean thing, all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Now, here the prophet portrays the condition of all who are in sin. In Isaiah 64:5, in the preceding verse it says, "for we have sinned." He is describing the condition of anyone in sin, not all mankind. There are those who have a real experience with Jesus Christ, but Isaiah is depicting the condition of anyone in sin and declares that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags."

Here he brings us an analogy with which the Hebrews were very familiar under the Law. (You can go back and read it in Numbers 5:1-3.) Under the Law, those who had leprosy were put away from the people. They were cut off and isolated because of their condition. Those who had running, putrefying sores used rags to wipe their running sores. So, when the prophet says, "filthy rags" he is referring to these rags that the lepers used to wipe their running, puss-filled, putrefying sores. Certainly it is a very repugnant and a very repulsive thought. The prophet is actually saying to man "that your self-righteousness is as those stinking, contaminated, putrefying, polluted, filthy rags!" He is saying, "you are like the leper and your sin is like the leprosy that has cut you off from God and made you an outcast. All of your religious moves and attributes are like unto the leper wiping his running sores and saying, 'I am clean.'" Jesus is bringing man to the most needful recognition that man must first and foremost come to a recognition of his spiritual poverty. The question we must address is "Why is man poor" (Matthew 5:3)? What causes man to be poor? To answer this we must go back to a man, or a child, in his original state. In Ecclesiastes 7:29, the wise man pens and says, "God has made man upright [The Hebrew word for "upright" is *yashar* which means "righteous." But what happened?]; but they have sought out many inventions." Yet man in his original state is *yashar*, which means "righteous." This was penned in approximately B.C. 977, many years subsequent to the fall of man. As children come into the world, they come in an upright position. In Ezekiel, Chapter 28, it teaches us the same truth. In approximately 588 B.C., the prophet declared, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezekiel 28:15).

Many in the realms of religion are of the persuasion that the reason that man goes into sin is because of what they term "Original Sin" that Adam sinned and hence all mankind is born with a sinful nature. However, both of these passages refute such thinking as this. The wise man in Ecclesiastes 7:29 and the Prophet in Ezekiel 28:15 were both penning many centuries after the fall of man. These Scriptures show that sin is brought about by choice. In Joshua 24:15, that great man heralded, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Then he told the masses of people, "choose you this day whom ye will serve."

Why is sinful man, as Matthew 5:3 denotes, "poor"? He is created "upright" according to Ecclesiastes 7:20 or "perfect" according to Ezekiel 28:15. But what occurs? When something occurs, we need to see what it actually is. This will drive away the confusion. When one comes to the age of accountability, Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have

gone astray [Why? What caused it? What was the root of it?]; we have turned every one to his own way." When we come to that age where we have the power of choice and we choose, as Isaiah 53:6 says, "his own way" that is the root of sin-selfishness! The Apostle Paul, writing to the young minister, Timothy, in 2 Timothy 3:1 said "perilous times shall come." He lifted the very first talks about "perilous times shall come," he lifted the very first earmark of sin in 2 Timothy 3:2 when he said, "For men shall be lovers of their own selves."

What happens when one chooses "his own way" (Isaiah 53:6)? Well, they actually become as Romans 7:14 declares, "sold under sin." When that occurs they become "the servants of sin" (Romans 6:20). What does sin do? It takes control of the life to where as the Apostle Paul said, describing his condition before conversion in Romans 7:15, 17: "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I [Why Paul?] . . . Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Sin controls the life of its possessor.

What does sin do? Luke 10:30 says, "which stripped him of his raiment." It strips away any righteousness which you may have had previously in your youth, in a state of innocence. Speaking of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15:13 tells us that he had "wasted his substance." The Psalmist tells us that it places one in "an horrible pit, [and] . . . miry clay" (Psalm 40:2). Sin strips, wastes, and submerges one into a pitiful bound state. One is a slave in servitude. Any good he had, he wasted. Christ wants those in sin to recognize that they have no righteousness to bring, but rather that they are spiritually bankrupt. They are in absolute, abject poverty.

Remember, our text in Matthew 5:3 says, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit [Why did He say that?] for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." This tells us that He is revealing what is necessary to gain a Kingdom experience. He is portraying to us the condition that man must be in to gain access to the Kingdom. Luke 16:16 says, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." In these lessons Jesus is showing us the ingredients necessary for man to press into the Kingdom.

Notice that this phrase, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," is only employed twice in the entirety of the Beatitudes-Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 3 and 10. The significance of that is at the onset of His message, and at the commencement of His ministry. He is conveying the burden of these Truths that He is setting forth is to help man get past looking at the benefits for the flesh. He wants to be able to help man to get to a point where he sees his abject poverty and need. Then He wants to help that man gain an experience of salvation that will induct him into the Kingdom.

Let us look a little further in this verse. In Matthew 5:3 Jesus said, "O the blessedness of the poor in spirit." Why did He say, "the poor in spirit?" Christ neither wants nor desires a mere mental assent or an intellectual awareness. We have those in the realms of religion advocating to "just merely make a decision." But, more is required than just merely making a decision or giving a mere intellectual assent. In Luke 15:18 the Prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my father." But, even though he made a decision, even though he had a mental awareness of his condition, he was still down in the hog pen. He was still in the muck and the mire until "he arose, and came to his father"

(Luke 15:20). Mere intellectual assent, merely making a decision, will not change man in his spirit. Christ does not want, nor does He desire a mere mental assent or an intellectual awareness. But rather Christ wants a divine revelation that strikes the innermost recesses of man's being and makes him keenly aware that without Divine help he is in a pitiful condition. He wants to make man keenly aware, with a Divine awareness, of his abject poverty. When the reality of this Divine revelation truly strikes a man's spirit, it will cause one to break down.

What type of a breakdown does He desire? Well, King David portrays it to us. When David truly saw his condition after Nathan the prophet had pointed his finger and said, "Thou art the man" (2 Samuel 12:7), David saw it. He received a revelation of his pitiful condition, his poverty. He cried in Psalm 51:3, "my sin is ever before me." Psalm 51:17 says, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." When one is bound in sin, has been stripped of his virtues and morality, having wasted his substance and have been left in an horrible pit, he is awaiting nothing but death and Hell. When the stark realization of that strikes their soul, when they become keenly aware of it, and become keenly aware that they are poor, and they are in utter, absolute, and abject poverty spiritually, when they realize that, in their spirit and in their heart; their spirit and heart will become broken.

Remember, as we view Matthew 5:3, this is just the beginning of the ingredients to make one an acceptable candidate for salvation. There is no salvation in verse 3 alone. There is no salvation accomplished yet. Psalm 51:17 speaks of "a broken spirit." This is the very first prerequisite. These verses, these lessons on the Beatitudes are a progression portraying the very facets necessary to achieve salvation. The Amplified Bible renders Psalm 51:17 as, "My sacrifice [the sacrifice acceptable] to God is a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart [broken down with sorrow for sin and humbly and thoroughly penitent]." Truly being, as Matthew 5:3 declares, "poor in spirit," or having been broken down with sorrow for sin, will prepare one for the next step. It will prepare one for the next Beatitude.

Once we obtain salvation we must ever keep that same recognition of poverty and our utter dependence upon Christ to retain that experience. Once one has truly seen that and broken down, then they are ready for the next step, "Blessed are they that mourn" (Matthew 5:4), which we will study in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE BEATITUDES: THEY THAT MOURN

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

Even though this is an abbreviated text, we have a great depth of truth laid forth before us. Here we have the second in a series of nine Beatitudes, which Jesus gave and are recorded in Matthew, Chapter 5. By the help of God, we want to consider this passage where Jesus exclaimed in Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are they that mourn."

As we begin to consider this passage of Scripture text, we must recognize that this verse is a portion of a much larger discourse. To obtain the Truth contained in any Scripture passage, we must not isolate or private it from the larger context or from other texts. The Apostle Peter penned in his writings in 2 Peter 1:20, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation," or as The Amplified Bible renders, "[Yet] first [you must] understand this, that no prophecy of Scripture is [a matter] of any personal or private or special interpretation (loosening, solving)." The Scriptures are designed to have a harmony or a scheme to them. To ensure that the harmony occurs, we must not private any Scripture from its surroundings. So it is with this text-it is part of a larger whole.

In this discourse, which is commonly called "The Sermon on the Mount," Christ is giving the first recorded public discourse after the commencement of His public ministry. In this address He is setting forth the ingredients necessary to accomplish the purpose for which He made His earthly Advent. Certainly, Christ's Advent accomplished many things. But, scripturally, what was the supreme purpose for His coming? In Luke 19:10, Jesus speaking here in very clear tones declares, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." In John 10:10 He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." So we can see by His own admission, that the express purpose of His First Advent was to seek and to save that which was lost and to bring spiritual life initially. And then His coming enabled mankind to continue to enjoy that life in an abundant manner, or "that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). So here we can see, Christ makes it crystal clear that the burden of His Advent was to save and to produce life; and to enable man to enable man to continue that life and have it abundantly throughout his years. The burden behind these lessons in Matthew 5:3-11, commonly call "The Beatitudes," is to portray the components necessary for man to obtain and maintain an experience of salvation. Through these verses He is showing us the route to salvation and life initially, and then how it might be sustained subsequently.

In the first Beatitude, He gives us the lesson of "Blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). We found that the first prerequisite for salvation and spiritual life is that man arrive at a very keen awareness of his absolute and abject spiritual poverty in the sight of God. This word rendered "poor" in Matthew 5:3 comes from the Greek root which

means, "to crouch or to cower." It describes a poverty which has beaten one to their knees. What will this do? When this revelation of how that he is indeed impoverished and of how he has wasted his substance and is in a bound condition truly strikes a man's spirit, he is in absolute and abject spiritual poverty. When man truly recognizes this, when that revelation truly strikes a man's spirit, it will cause him to have, as the Psalmist declared, "a broken spirit." The Psalmist penned in Psalm 51:17, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit," or The Amplified Bible renders it as, "[broken down with sorrow for sin and humbly and thoroughly penitent]."

In our lesson text, Jesus declares, Blessed are they that mourn" (Matthew 5:4). This verse would initially appear to be a paradox. Here we find the thought of "blessed" and "mourn" united. These qualities would appear to be exact opposites with no seeming relationship, but this is not so in this text. Jesus brings these two elements together, because there is a Truth portrayed here in these words and in this passage. Let us begin to examine this and see what Jesus was actually saying to us. Notice again in Matthew 5:4, The King James Version says, "Blessed are." But notice that the word "are" is in italics, meaning that it is not in the original translation or text. In the original Aramaic, which was the language in which these Beatitudes were spoken by Christ, this text was actually an exclamation. They had a phrase that was commonly used, "O, the blessedness of." In this particular passage in Matthew 5:4 it is, "O the blessedness of they that mourn."

Why is this? Why does He equate blessedness with, as Matthew 5:4 declares, "they that mourn"? These would seem to be opposites with no seeming relationship." So why does He unite these two seemingly foreign elements? This blessedness is not an earthly or human happiness, but rather, a spiritual state that Jesus came to enable man to be able to enjoy initially and perpetually. So in these verses, He is portraying a progression and the ingredients necessary to produce this blessed state.

He exclaims in Matthew 5:4, "O, the blessedness of they that mourn." Here he correlates this "blessedness" with "they that mourn," or with mourning. This blessedness is not an earthly or human happiness, but rather a spiritual state that Jesus came to enable man to be able to enjoy initially and perpetually. So in these verses, He is portraying a progression as well as the ingredients necessary to produce this blessed state.

Let us look more closely and examine the word "mourn." What does the word that is rendered in the King James Version English in Matthew 5:4, as "mourn," mean? The actual Greek word here is the word *pentheo*, which is a very strong word. This Greek word, *pentheo*, (that is translated "mourning") is the strongest word used for mourning in the Greek language. It is the word which is used for mourning the dead. It is used for the passionate lament for one who is loved in the Septuagint, which is the Greek Version of the Old Testament in use at the time of Christ's Advent. It is also the word which is used for Jacob's grief when he was told that his son Joseph was dead (Genesis 37:34). It is a type of grief which takes a hold on a person that it cannot be hid. It is a sorrow which brings unrestrainable tears to the eyes.

What type of mourning is this? What is being portrayed here before us so vividly by Jesus Christ? The wise man said in his writings in

Ecclesiastes 7:2, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: [Why? The remainder of the verse says,] for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." Now, how does the living lay it to heart? How does the living truly allow the impact of the house of mourning to have its full effect upon them when they are brought face to face with eternity?

In our text there is a portrayal of one who has come face-to-face with his eternal condition, with one who has come to the stark realization of "blessed are the poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). They have come to that Divine and stark realization of their utter, absolute and abject poverty in the sight of God. They have realized that a death has taken place. They have become keenly aware that they, in their soul and spiritual condition, are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). They have come to the awareness that they are dead. Although they are physically alive, in the sight of a sin-avenging God, they are facing a Christless eternity and they are "dead in trespasses and sins."

First Timothy 5:6 declares, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." This one has come to a point of realization that though they physically may be yet alive, that spiritually they are dead while they yet live. This mourning is produced by the awareness of their dead spiritual state and what caused it. It is that revelation that strikes the soul when one truly sees their condition as God sees their condition. Then they have that awareness strike the recesses and depths of their souls that the cause of this death, the cause of their spiritual state, is sin. In John's Gospel, Jesus let us know that if you die in your sins that you cannot go where He is (John 7:34). The startling realization of that strikes a person's soul and they realize that they are looking eternity in the face and are not fit candidates because of sin. They realize that they are dead in trespasses and sins and that the cause of this death is sin. In Romans 6:23, the Apostle Paul penned, "For the wages of sin is death." In Ezekiel 18:4 the Prophet declared, "the soul that sinneth it shall die." In James 1:15 the Lord's brother penned, "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." This mourning, which is the word used for the mourning of the dead, is the sorrow over the spiritual death that sin has caused.

The definition of the word "mourn" in Matthew 5:4 is the kind of grief which takes such a hold on a person and that it cannot be hid. In other words, it must take expression. It must vent itself in activity. It is a sorrow and a grief that moves one to action. What type of action is one moved to? When they have: 1) A keen awareness of their absolute and abject poverty to where their spirit has been broken, 2) to where the truth has struck the soul with such a fury that they realize that their sin has put them in a state of spiritual death. What will such grief and such a sorrow over their condition move them to?

The Apostle Paul was very clear in his writings. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 he declares, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." Apostle Paul declared, "ye sorrowed to repentance" (verse 9) and "godly sorrow worketh repentance" (verse 10). Notice, he did not say godly sorrow was repentance. Sorrow, even godly sorrow, in and of itself, is not enough. It does not constitute salvation. However,

"godly sorrow worketh repentance" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

In The Amplified Bible it is rendered this way, "For godly grief and the pain God is permitted to direct, produce a repentance that leads and contributes to salvation and deliverance from evil, and it never brings regret; but worldly grief (the hopeless sorrow that is characteristic of the pagan world) is deadly [breeding and ending in death]." Here in verse 10 this passage says, "godly sorrow worketh repentance. What is the picture? This sorrow, as our text calls it, "they that mourn," tells us that these have come to a Divine realization of what sin is, what sin has done, and what sin, when it is finished, will do concerning their eternal destiny. When this realization really strikes the soul of a man, realization of what he has done to God, what he has done to his life, and most of all what he has done to his own soul, has done to his life, and most of all, what he has done to his own soul will produce this sorrow. When this sorrow is truly godly, it will cause them or lead them to repentance.

What actually is "repentance?" We hear this word used in many senses today, and it is used by many preachers. The Apostle penned in 2 Corinthians 7:9, "ye sorrowed to repentance." A form of this word is used repeatedly throughout the New Testament. When John the Baptizer, the forerunner of Christ, came on the scene, he cried, "Repent ye: for the kingdom heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). When Christ commenced His earthly ministry He preached, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached, "Repent" (Acts 2:38). On Mars Hill in Athens, the Apostle Paul preached, "but now [God] commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). Through the Book of Revelation we see that Christ appeared to the congregations, telling them five times out of seven to repent! So we can see that this is a vital truth that is found throughout the New Testament Scriptures. Repentance is central to the teaching of Christianity.

But the question is: What does it mean to repent? Sad to say, many confuse it with sorrow. They think that if they just cry a few tears and have the feeling of the pressure being released, that is repentance. Others confuse it with confession and feel that if they just merely confess, that once they have done that, that is repentance. But, not so! The word repent is a verb. In the Greek, it is the word *metanoeo*, which has a dual meaning. *Meta* means "change." (The same type of word that is used in our English word metamorphosis.) *Noeo* means "to perceive." This comes from *nous*, which means "the mind, the seat of moral reflection." The word "repent" actually means "a change of one's direction, of one's moral direction." As the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 7:10, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."

Real repentance comes when the Divine realization of what sin has done to us and to God, strikes us to a place that we want to never do it again. We want to forever change directions and go in a completely opposite direction. This is why our lesson starts out with a paradox of "blessedness" and "mourning." They seem to be opposites, but they portray that through meeting the conditions and being moved to the place of real repentance, that changing our direction and repenting can enable us to enjoy that blessed estate. You look at it and certainly it is a change of direction and going a completely opposite direction. Is this what this verse implies? In Luke 6:21, He says, "Blessed are ye that



weep now: for ye shall laugh." What a contrast: they are totally opposite, portraying the work of repentance. The result is the complete opposite, you make a complete turn. Ezekiel 33:11 says, "turn ye, turn ye." That response portrays the work of repentance.

These Beatitudes are portraying a progression to us. They are depicting the elements which are essential to salvation. Salvation cannot be obtained without repentance. It cannot be achieved by supposed church membership, water baptism, card signing, handshaking, confirmation by a religious society, or catechism classes. Salvation comes only by repentance. It is a change of life and direction. Jesus said in Luke 13:5, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." There is no salvation without repentance. Second Corinthians 7:9-10 tells us that there is no repentance without godly sorrow. This is why Jesus cried, "O, the blessedness of they that mourn" (Matthew 5:4). He is portraying the ingredients, in this verse, necessary for salvation.

The question is, "How is it with you?" Have you mourned? Have you repented and had a change of direction and become that "new creature" in Jesus Christ? If not, you can and you need to!

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE BEATITUDES: THEY THAT MOURN

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:4 "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."*

In this passage of Scripture text, we see our Lord Jesus Christ in the midst of that famed discourse commonly known as "The Sermon on the Mount." He commences this address with what is regarded as, "The Beatitudes." Here in our lesson text we have before us the second, in a series of nine, of these Beatitudes. In Matthew 5:4 these words are penned and more readily exclaimed by our Lord when He declared, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." Although here we have an abbreviated text, it is one that is filled with precious Biblical truths. By the help of God, we want to look a little further here at Matthew 5:4 where Jesus declares, "Blessed are they that mourn."

To properly understand these lessons, we must recognize that Christ had just commenced His public ministry and had chosen the twelve Apostles. In our text, He is speaking to His disciples in the first public discourse that was recorded. In this initial address, after commencing His ministry and choosing the twelve, He is laying forth the experience that He came to bring to mankind. In Luke 19:10 Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. In the Gospel of John He declared, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The express purpose for which Christ made His First Advent into this time world was "to save that which was lost" that "they might have life." So through these lessons, He is portraying the way to salvation and life. He is revealing how that man might obtain it initially and then maintain it perpetually. His burden was how He might get spiritual life to man then how that man may maintain and perpetuate that life.

The very first prerequisite to salvation us found in verse 3, where He begins setting forth these teachings. In Matthew 5:3 He declares, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Why does He commence with this particular Beatitude? Because, in these lessons, He is not portraying temporal or temporary happiness, but rather, He declares, "Blessed." In the original Aramaic, the language in which these Beatitudes were originally spoken, it actually is an exclamation. He was screaming and saying, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit." Each of these Beatitudes is coming from the very heart of Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind. They are coming as a heart-felt exclamation, revealing the ingredients that are vitally necessary to lift man to that state and experience of blessedness that He ordained for man to enjoy. In these exclamations that Christ heralds, you can feel the heart-felt burden of Jesus Christ the Savior of all mankind. You can feel how His heart is so deeply and emotionally moved to want to convey these truths to man, in such a manner, to where man could embrace these truths and incorporate them into his living to where he can obtain that beautiful experience, that blessed state that Jesus Christ came to lift man to.

Why did He start here in Matthew 5:3 with, "Blessed are the poor in spirit?" Actually the Aramaic says, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit." Because the first thing that any lost person must recognize, is he must come to the realization of his utter, absolute and abject poverty, spiritually. When the stark and sobering realization of that strikes their soul, they will become "a broken spirit" (Psalm 51:17). When they truly become broken over their condition, they will "mourn" (Matthew 5:4). The Greek word here for "mourn" is the word *pentheo*, and it is the strongest word used for mourning in the Greek language. It is the word which is used for mourning for the dead. It is the kind of grief which takes such hold on a man that it cannot be hid. It is the kind of grief that requires expression, moving one to activity.

Jesus used this word intentionally, to portray to us that type of grief that comes, that type of mourning that comes with the utter realization that sin has indeed caused a spiritual death to take place in the life of that individual. When that occurs, it brings a mourning and a grief that will work a godly work. Jesus used this word because Romans 6:23 tells us, "For the wages of sin is death." It is necessary for the lost to realize that they are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). It is necessary that they have the realization that sin has slain their spiritual life. That stark realization striking the soul should cause one to truly be stricken with grief. In Ephesians 2:1 when he says, "dead in trespasses and sins" we must readily acknowledge that when sin enters into the life of any individual that death is the bi-product. He uses this word "mourn" because "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). And when one truly realizes that they are lost, that they are dead in trespasses and sins, it should cause a mourning over that condition. It should cause a mourning that cannot be hid, but leads one to action.

To what action should it lead one, if it is working in a proper manner? In 2 Corinthians 7:10 it says, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance." So here we find that this sorrow, this mourning, is to work or accomplish something. It worketh repentance. What will true repentance work? In 2 Corinthians 7:10 it goes on to declare, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation." Is this what our text teaches? Look at Matthew 5:4, "Blessed [ 'O, the blessedness of ' the Aramaic declares.] are they that mourn: [Why?] for they shall be comforted." Now, what does this portray to us? This thought of "mourning" and being "comforted" are opposites. It depicts repentance. It is a complete turn, a change of direction. What does true repentance lead to? Second Corinthians 7:10 says, that it leads "to salvation." Or, in the language of our text in Matthew 5:4 it says, "they shall be comforted." Are the meanings of both of these texts synonymous? Are they speaking of the one and self-same thing?

What does the thought in Matthew 5:4 of being "comforted" convey to us? Remember, Christ's burden in this lesson is "to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10) "that they might have life" (John 10:10). He is here to give life and to save the lost. Let us examine these. Luke penned in Luke 19:10 that His burden was to save. What does that mean? Religion construes it to be almost anything imaginable. Religion says it means to join the church, sign a card, shake a preacher's hand, be baptized, go to a class, or any number of things. But, according to the Bible, what

does it mean when it says, to be saved or "to save"? Well, the Greek word for the word "save" is *sozo* and it has a dual meaning. It means, "to forgive and to deliver."

Real salvation certainly has forgiveness and remission of sin as an element. Romans 3:25 talks about "a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." Certainly, when one has realized their poverty, become broken in spirit and mourned, or had godly sorrow that led to repentance, then the remission of sins took place. But, salvation goes further than that. It brings deliverance. Too many people in the realms of religion only want to deal with the deed and deal with forgiveness of the deed. Real salvation goes further than just forgiveness of the deed. Real salvation brings a deliverance and breaks the power of sin to where man is free, to where he never needs to commit those deeds again. Salvation goes further than mere remission.

According to Vine's Expository Dictionary, one definition of "save" is "God's power to deliver from the bondage of sin." Man is bound by sin and death, just as a corpse is bound by their grave clothes and must be delivered by an outside source. In our text, Jesus declared, "O, the blessedness of they that mourn: [Why?] for they shall be comforted."

What is this outside source that brings deliverance and brings this comfort to the heart of mankind? Look at Jesus' words, He will answer. In John 14:16 He says, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." Here He speaks of a "Comforter." Who is this? John 14:26 says, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost." What is He to do? First, He is the agent employed to bring Divine deliverance. In Matthew 12:28-29, Jesus speaking declares: "but if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man's [The Devil's] house, and spoil his goods, except he [Who is the antecedent of He? Verse 28, 'the Spirit of God.'] first bind the strong man?" Luke 11:24 tells us, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man." So, who is it that expels the "strong man" and causes this spirit to go out? It is the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost who expels the unclean spirit out of man and brings deliverance to the soul of mankind. What else does He do? In John 6:14,16 He is called "The Comforter." What does Christ tell us The Holy Spirit will do? Romans 8:10 says, "the Spirit is life." Second Corinthians 3:6 declares, "the Spirit giveth life."

There is much confusion in the religious realm about the Spirit. However, the Bible is expressly clear. In Ephesians 4:3-4 he tells us very plainly: "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit." So there is only one Spirit. There is not a Spirit of God, a Holy Ghost, and a Spirit of Christ. They are all synonymous, interchangeable terms. They are all just merely denoting the different facets of the one and self-same Spirit.

Christ came "that they might have life" (John 10:10). He came to make spiritual life available to mankind. When He came on the scene, mankind was under the sentence of death and under the curse of sin. Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, [How?] being made a curse for us: for it is written [Here He refers to

Deuteronomy 21:23.], cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." He paid the terrible exacting price and penalty of sin. Second Corinthians 5:21 declares, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." He traded our death for His life.

Where is this life? Where is His holiness and His righteousness found? It is found in the Holy Spirit. In Romans 8:4 the penman declares, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in [Not by, but in] us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Who fulfilled and enables man to live in that righteous manner? The Holy Spirit! John 16:7 tells us the reason Christ went away, "for if I go not away, the Comforter [Which the Scriptures teach us in John 14:26, is 'the Holy Ghost'] will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." After Christ assumed our death on Calvary's Tree, He sent the Holy Ghost on The Day of Pentecost so that when man meets Bible conditions he can assume the very life of Christ. Is this what our text is actually teaching? Recall, His burden is to show the route to salvation and life. He has now vividly described the necessary ingredients to effect real salvation. He is portrayed that the experience of salvation is not on the level of "the weak and beggarly elements" (Galatians 4:9), of this world. But rather, is a spiritual state of blessedness.

The word that The King James Version translators rendered in Matthew 5:3-4 as "Blessed" is the Greek word *marakios* and is a special Greek word. It is a word that the Greeks associated with the gods and it portrays God-like qualities. Through these first two lessons, He is revealing the attributes and ingredients needed to obtain salvation. He is telling us that to obtain this blessed, heavenly, God-like experience we must:

1. Have the realization strike our souls that we have sold ourselves under to sin (Romans 7:14).
2. We must come to the stark realization that we are spiritually bankrupt, we are in utter absolute and abject spiritual poverty, and we have "spent all" (Luke 15:14).
3. When the full impact of that realization strikes our soul, we will indeed have, as the Psalmist declared in Psalm 51:17, "a broken spirit." That spirit will produce a mourning or a godly sorrow. 2 Corinthians 7:10 declares, "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation."

This mourning or sorrow will lead to repentance. It will lead to a change of direction which leads to salvation or as our text declares here in Matthew 5:4, "for they shall be comforted." We could just as well say, without doing any disservice to the Scriptures, they shall receive the Comforter. Why? Because they have now met the proper Biblical conditions and they have found life. They have found that source of life, the Spirit of God. He has been allowed to come in and take up access and abode, in their heart and life. This is the life that Jesus came to bring to mankind. So it is here in Matthew 5:4, and particularly in this latter phrase, that salvation is actually obtained. Through these two verses, these two Beatitudes, He has been describing in explicit detail the route to salvation, and the route to obtaining life.

Someone may ask, "How can we be certain that salvation has occurred,

now, in this particular portion of the verse?" Because the next verse, in Matthew 5:5, declares, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Verse five talks about an inheritance and only the saints, only those who have experienced Him through the Holy Spirit to come in to take up His abode, truly enjoy this inheritance.

Someone may ask, "Do you think that taking heed to the admonition in Matthew 5:3-4 will produce salvation?" Well, listen to the words of the Psalmist when he declared in Psalm 119:9, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? [He poses a question then he gives us the Divine answer.] by taking heed thereto according to thy word." Psalm 19:7 says, "The law of the Lord [the Word of God] is perfect converting the soul." So here we see the two elements that comprise salvation: cleansing from sin and converting of the soul. These first two Beatitudes graphically portray what is needed to gain an experience of salvation.

The question may arise, "Why only two Beatitudes to depict how to obtain salvation and seven to portray how to maintain salvation?" Because it takes far more Gospel and far more instruction to stay saved and to maintain an experience than it does to obtain an experience or to get saved. The Bible talks about the simplicity of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). Salvation is a very simple matter, but once you are saved it takes instruction and teaching to make it from earth to glory. Also seven is a Biblical number of perfection or completeness and so He used it in that manner.

The question is, have you met the conditions of these verses? Do you have this blessed experience? If not, you can have it if you will meet Bible conditions.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE BEATITUDES: THE MEEK

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

In this passage of Scripture text we have before us the third, in a series of nine, of what is commonly known as "The Beatitudes." In this verse before us our Lord cries, as it is rendered in the original Aramaic language, "O, the blessedness of the meek." By the help of the Holy Spirit of God, this is what we want to consider: "O, the blessedness of the meek."

As we begin to examine this text, we must first of all recognize that it is a portion of a much larger discourse. What we regard in The King James Version of our Bible, Matthew, Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are actually all one discourse, commonly called "The Sermon on the Mount." This address was the first recorded public discourse after Christ commenced His public ministry. In these opening verses of this message, Christ immediately set forth the ingredients necessary to enable man to embrace that blessed experience which He came to bring to mankind.

He did not come, as many would declare, to establish another doctrinal creed nor to formulate a new religious order. The angelic cry in Luke 2:11 was, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Here, the Angelic Host portrayed the express purpose of Christ's mission and advent into this time world. He came to a lost humanity. He came as a Savior. He came, according to His own words, in the Gospel of Luke 19:10, "to seek and to save that which was lost." The very avenue through which He seeks out lost souls is through the preaching of the Gospel. It is through the foolishness of preaching (1 Corinthians 1:21) that Jesus Christ came to seek out those who are honest-hearted and those who have a desire to live in a right manner before God and make their peace with God. Then he became a fit candidate for Heaven by the route of Bible salvation. He came through the Gospel to see out those who are honest. In Luke 19:10 He declares that He came "to seek and to save that which was lost." His initial burden and purpose was to make an experience available to lift man from a fallen state and save him.

He begins by revealing the truths that are necessary for a man to be brought to an experience of real salvation. He begins our study in Matthew 5:3 with the words, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Or, again the original Aramaic says, "O, the blessedness," an exclamation from the very depth of His being. He says, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit: [Why?] for theirs is the kingdom of God." So in the first Beatitude recorded in Matthew 5:3, He begins to unravel what comprises a Kingdom experience. The very first prerequisite which He mentions is in Matthew 5:3 where He said, "Blessed are [Or 'O, the blessedness of'] the poor in spirit." He is teaching us that the very first thing necessary is that one must come to the stark realization that spiritually, before they have experienced the saving graces of Jesus

Christ in their lives, they are in total, absolute, and abject poverty. When the full realization of that strikes their hearts, then they will "mourn" (Matthew 5:4). I will produce, "godly sorrow [which] worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

We know that salvation has now occurred here in Matthew 5:4, because here the Divine penman records, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." The employment of this thought of being comforted portrays the experience that is brought to the heart of mankind by the Holy Spirit of God. Jesus tells us in the Gospel of I John 14:16, "And I will pray to the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter." So when the conditions of Matthew 5:3-4 are met, when man truly comes to that stark realization that he is indeed impoverished and poor in his spiritual being to where he is in total, absolute, and abject poverty to where that he mourns over that condition, he mourns over it to where godly sorrow is produced, and this leads to repentance and to salvation. When we clearly see that those conditions are met, then an experience of salvation takes place, because the Comforter moves into the heart and life. He brings a new experience of salvation and brings new life to that individual. So we can clearly see that when the conditions of Matthew 5:3-4 are met and that an experience of salvation takes place.

The question may arise, "Can we be certain of that?" Let us examine our lesson text here in Matthew 5:5 Jesus who declares, "O, the blessedness of the meek." First of all, let us identify who the meek actually are. Who is Jesus actually speaking of here when He employs this term in verse 5 as "the meek?" If we go to Matthew 11:29 Jesus said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Here Jesus declared, "I am meek."

In the prior portion of this verse in Matthew 11:29 He declared, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." This is a phrase that we commonly associate with Jesus. It is recorded in Matthew's Gospel and we feel that this is a phrase that was novel or coined by Jesus, but in reality this phrase was a common phrase among the Jews of that day. The phrase "take my yoke upon you" was a common Jewish phrase that meant, "to enter into submission to." It was a phrase that indicated discipleship and submission. In reality it means to enter into submission and learn of Me and what you see in Me, do and be. Here we find that Christ is setting forth a lesson to those who have entered into submission to Him, to those who are dedicated to being His disciples, if you please. He is saying, "Enter into submission and learn of Me, and what you see in Me, do and be."

Christ is certainly our example in all things. The Scriptures are replete with references to indicate this to us. In 1 Peter 2:21 the Apostle Peter penned, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." What were His steps? Jesus said in Matthew 11:29, "I am meek." Those are the steps that we, as disciples, are to follow. In John, Chapter 2, John reiterates the same truth. In 1 John 2:6 he pens, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." How did He walk? Matthew 11:29 says, "I am meek." Who are the meek that our lesson text speaks of? It is those who have had an experience of salvation and entered into submission to Christ as His disciples are walking as He walked. In short, the meek of Matthew 5:5 are the saints. Can we be emphatically certain of this? Well, recall



that Matthew 5:4 says, "they shall be comforted." We could just as well say, without doing any injustice to the Scripture, "They shall receive the Comforter."

What is meekness? Galatians 5:22-23 tells us, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." So here we find it is a part of "The Fruit of the Spirit." It is an attribute of the Holy Spirit. It comes when the Holy Spirit comes into the heart and life of that one who is gaining an experience of salvation. It comes when the Spirit, or the Comforter, comes. The "meek" that Matthew 5:5 speaks of are those who have the Spirit or the spiritual experience that Matthew 5:3-4 portrays. The meek are the saints of God.

What does this term that Matthew 5:5 employs as "meek" actually mean? Many times people think that meek means, "weak or spineless." However, Numbers 12:3 says, "(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)" Yet, he faced Pharaoh and caused him to back down. On another occasion he came down off the Mount and saw the golden calf, had it ground to powder, strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel to drink of it (Exodus 32:19-20). Certainly he was not weak.

What does it mean to be "meek?" The original Greek word in our text is the word *praus*. In the Greek usage it was used as a regular word for an animal that had been domesticated, or one that had been trained to obey the word of command. An animal that has learned to accept the rein. It is the word for an animal that has learned to accept control.

Now let us stop and consider this for a moment. An animal that has not yet been domesticated is wild. It can be vicious. They growl, snarl, and run in packs. They know no bounds, no law, and no authority. They follow their primal urges and instincts. Certainly this is a picture that well portrays man in an unregenerate state. However, after they find salvation everything changed. The animal who is domesticated now loves and obeys a master. They now obey the word of command. The master rewards them by feeding and providing shelter for them. They now have bounds and submit to authority. They follow the word of the master rather than their own urges and instincts.

The question may arise, "Is that what this lesson text portrays to us? Certainly so! Let us examine it a little further. The term "meek," or *praus*, indicates control. But what is man to control? What is the first thing that salvation and the Spirit of God will teach you and enable you to control? In our text Jesus cried, "O, the blessedness of the meek: [Why?] for they shall inherit the earth." We know that salvation has already occurred because the "meek" here have become heirs. Matthew 5:5 says, "they shall inherit." The fact that they are heirs indicates that they have received an inheritance. It indicates that they have indeed received salvation. Romans 8:16-17 teaches us that "the Spirit [That Comforter that Matthew 5:4 speaks of.] itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." So these "heirs" or the "meek" are the saints.

After salvation, what is it that man is to control? Matthew 5:5 says, "Blessed are the meek: [Why?] for they shall inherit the earth." What is He speaking of here? Many take this passage of Scripture text, isolate

it from its context, and run off and devise all sorts of fanciful theories and concoct all types of erroneous teachings. By the Bible, what is Jesus actually declaring? What does it actually mean? What is the earth that verse 5 speaks of here in this text?

Let us dispel some false teaching. First of all, it is not this literal terrestrial ball which we commonly refer to as the earth. Why is that? Because Jesus is dealing here in spiritual realities, in spiritual attributes that we can enjoy as saints of God now. What earth does salvation give you control over? Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 6:9-10 where He declares: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. [How?] Thy will be done, [Where?] in earth, as it is in heaven." Notice He did not say, on earth as men many times misquote it, but rather He said "in earth."

What is he talking about? He says in Matthew 6:10, "Thy kingdom come. [Here He is expressing the Divine Will that The Kingdom be established and it is only established one way.] Thy will be done." What is God's will? Second Peter 3:9 says He is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." In 1 Timothy 2:4 he declares, "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." That is His will! It is His will for mankind to be saved.

How is that accomplished? Matthew 6:10 says, "Thy will be done in earth." What is this "earth" that brings a Kingdom experience to the heart of mankind? In Jeremiah 22:29 the Prophet cries, "O, earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." We know that the literal earth cannot hear. This terrestrial ball, this terra firma, has no ability to hear even in a literal manner, much less to hear in a spiritual sense. So, we must discard the thought that he is speaking of this literal earth. So, what is he speaking of? He is speaking of man because man is the dust of the earth. Ecclesiastes 12:7 tells us, speaking of man, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was." The earth is man. Second Corinthians 4:7 declares, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." In 2 Corinthians 5:1 he declares, "For know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved." So this term, "the earth," in our text represents man.

What is the lesson here? Christ is portraying that the very first thing you learn in salvation is that your "earth," your "earthen vessel," or your body, must be controlled. You learn to let the Holy Spirit control your earth. I realize that there are many out in the realms of religion who say that man cannot control the flesh. They say that man cannot control the body. However, that is contrary to the sound teaching of God's eternal Word. The body is an instrument of the soul and the condition of the soul dictates the actions of the body. Christ is showing us here that when real salvation has occurred and the Spirit of God has entered into the heart of man and through the Spirit of God the body must be controlled and brought into subjection. He is showing us that the earth can be "inherited" and can be under the control of the heir of God, the recipient of salvation, or the child of God. The very first thing that we learn in salvation is that your "earthen vessel," or your "earth" must be controlled. We must learn to let the Holy Spirit control our earth.

Someone may question and ask, "Why is this necessary?" It is necessary because it was your earthly vessel that initially led you into sin. It

was when you came to an age of accountability and as Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; [Why?] we have turned every one to his own way." We allowed our humanity and flesh to rise up and choose the way of the flesh or the way of the dust of the earth. Then to choose our flesh led us into sin. It was our flesh which caused us to go into sin initially and unless our flesh is under submission, yielded to the Holy Spirit, and under His control, it will lead us into sin again. When the Holy Spirit enters into the heart and life at conversion, the first thing the Spirit will teach you is that you must do as Matthew 5:5 says, and "inherit the earth." One who has an inheritance has control. We must learn to control this body that has been entrusted to us. We are stewards and responsible to obey the Master. We each need to understand that we must bring this body into subjection to the Spirit of God and to the dictates of God's eternal Word.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE BEATITUDES: THE MEEK

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

Here in this verse of Scripture text we have the third in a series of nine, of what is commonly regarded as "The Beatitudes." By the help of the Holy Spirit of God, we want to look a little further into this verse where Jesus exclaims, in the original Aramaic rendering of this text, "O, the blessedness of the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

As we begin to examine this particular text, we must recognize that this verse is a part of a much larger context. In our lesson, Christ is in the midst of that famed discourse which we commonly regard as "The Sermon on the Mount." Here He laid forth the foundational truths concerning the experience He came to bring to mankind.

Christ declared in Luke 19:10 that His express purpose for His First Advent, was "to seek and to save that which was lost." And in John 10:10 He declared, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." So we can see from these Scriptures that His burden and His purpose in coming was to save mankind that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly, or perpetually and continually.

Christ began in Matthew 5:3 to portray the very first essential ingredient to bring about salvation (the original Aramaic says, "O, the blessedness of the poor in spirit"). This verse portrays a recognition or an awareness of his impoverished spiritual state when one is lost and the realization of this state will cause one to do as Matthew 5:4 declares, "mourn." This mourning "worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Its outgrowth will work "repentance to salvation."

How do we know that salvation has occurred? Matthew 5:4 tells us, "Blessed are they that mourn." The godly sorrow that worketh repentance, goes on to salvation. We know that salvation has been wrought and the Holy Spirit has come to be an Abiding Presence and Comforter in the heart and life of the believer. In our lesson text, the progression of the previous verses (verses 3 and 4) has led us from conviction to confession and then to salvation has already occurred. Our text teaches us here in Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek." These are those who have entered into submission to Christ and yielded their lives to His control. Once man has gained an experience of salvation and the Spirit of God has moved into his life, he is now under the control of the Spirit of God. What is the first thing he is taught to control? What is most likely to jeopardize this new life? In Matthew 5:5 Jesus exclaims, "O, the blessedness of the meek: [Why? What enables them to perpetuate that blessed state?] for they shall inherit the earth"

Let us examine it in the light of the context, as well as the scheme of the Scriptures and see what it really portrays to us. Matthew 5:5 says ". . . for they [Who? The 'meek' is the antecedent in the previous clause.] shall inherit the earth." These who are termed here, "the meek," are those who have entered into submission to Christ. Jesus taught us in

Matthew 11:29, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek. "We know that this phrase here, "Take my yoke upon you," which may seem novel to Christ, was in reality common Jewish phrase which means, "enter into submission to." Jesus is indicating that we have entered into submission and learned of Him, have become one of His disciples, and emulated His nature and His activities. As He is meek, so are we as His disciples because we have received the Comforter (Matthew 5:4).

What does salvation enable you and me to bring into submission and control? What is one of the biggest things that can jeopardize our salvation? The answer to both of these questions is: our bodies or our flesh. How is the term "earth" used through the Scriptures? In Jeremiah 22:29 the Prophet pens, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. We know that he was not speaking of the literal earth because it cannot hear. He was referring to people or to mankind. In 2 Corinthians 4:7 the Apostle Paul pens, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." In Ecclesiastes 12:7 the wise man tells us emphatically, "then shall the dust return to the earth as it was," speaking of man or the earthly portion of man, our bodies. So this "earth" our text speaks of is man or that part of man that came from the dust of the earth: our humanity, our bodies.

Look at what Jesus said real salvation would do. In our lesson text He said, "they shall inherit the earth." What does this mean? Consider the power one has who inherits. Number one, they have possession. It had been previously a possession in other hands. When we were in sin, Satan had possession of our bodies. In John 8:44 Jesus said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Why is that? The Apostle Paul gives us an insight in Romans 7:17 when he said, "Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." We were, as Romans 7:14 declares, "sold under sin" before we came in contact with Christ. Sin and Satan were our owners, or our masters, but thank God for a redeemer. The word redeemer literally means "to buy back." We were in bondage to sin and Satan and sold under sin with no way to secure our freedom or liberty from that bondage, but Jesus Christ stepped up and redeemed us or bought us back. He paid our ransom with His own blood that He shed.

Now think what our text means when Jesus says, "they shall inherit." One who inherits is an heir. Certainly we are heirs because in Romans 8:17 it says, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." An heir is one who:

1. Has possession
2. Has control
3. Has wealth or riches that they previously did not have.

So notice there are some components here for the privileges of being an heir.

Notice what we inherit here in our lesson text. Matthew 5:5 says, "they shall inherit the earth. We found that the "earth" speaks of the earthen portion of man, our bodies, or our flesh. We are given control and given possession of what once was controlled and possessed by the power of the enemy. It says "they shall inherit the earth." Those who have experienced conversion and have the Spirit of God in their heart and life now have possession. First Thessalonians 4:4 says, "That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour." They did not have this control previously, but those who have

experienced real regeneration now have possession, control, and a wealth they did not have previously.

What is it? In Matthew 5:4, where the actual experience takes place, it says, "O, the blessedness of they that mourn [The original Aramaic language]." Why? Because we know that godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation (2 Corinthians 7:10) and that salvation or life comes when the Holy Spirit of God moves in. It tells us in Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are they mourn: [Why?] for they shall be comforted," or in other words, they shall receive the Comforter or the Holy Ghost. What will He do? It says in Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek." He will teach them to enter submission to Christ. And the only way to do that is to "inherit the earth" or to control our bodies.

Is this what this text is really teaching? Let us look more closely. Matthew 5:4 declares, "they shall be comforted." This portrays the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost (John 14:26). Now what is the role of the Comforter? Many times this English word misleads us. We construe it to mean that He merely comforts, encourages, soothes, or sympathizes with us in our difficult places in life. However, the Greek word is *Parakletos* and the Latin word is *Fortis*. This word *Fortis* means, "fortifier, or to make brave." The Holy Spirit is not One who merely comforts and consoles, He is a fortifier. He strengthens and He empowers. He makes one brave and strong. Now, when this *Fortis* comes into a life, what does He do? In Luke 11:20-22 Jesus said: "But if I with the finger of God [Or Matthew 12:28 tells us 'the Spirit of God.'] cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils." He tells us, "But if I with the finger of God [Or Matthew's rendering, 'the spirit of God.'] cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. When a strong man [The Devil, verse 20] armed [He is armed with darkness and deceit. Colossians 1:13 talks about the kingdom of darkness.] keepeth his palace, [Which is the place where he abides and dwells, the sinner's heart and life.] his goods are in peace. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, [The finger of God or the Spirit of God, verse 20] and overcome him, [And the power of the Spirit is an overcoming power. Seven times over in the Revelation he says, 'hear what the Spirit saith.' And He talks about being an overcomer. And those who have the Spirit are overcomers.] he taketh from him all his armour [The darkness, deceit and lies with which he held us.] and divideth his spoils." [That spoil consists of those things he held captive and controlled]. He (The Holy Spirit) takes the control from Satan and gives it to us. Part of those spoils is our body. He loosens our body from being an instrument of Satan and in his control. Through the power of the forces of the Holy Spirit, He gives us power to control our bodies. In 1 Corinthians 9:27 the Apostle Paul says, "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."

How can this be achieved? In Romans 8:11 he says. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies [Notice the penman said mortal bodies, not the immortal bodies. Not the body that will be resurrected on that Great Day. He is speaking of a

spiritual work and what can be done to the mortal body.] by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

The same Spirit that resurrected Jesus, who was physically dead and in the tomb, gave Him life, and raised up His body is the same Spirit that resurrects us from a state of being dead in trespasses and sins. Ephesians 2:1 says, "And you hath he quickened, [Or made alive, resurrected.] who were dead in trespasses and sins." Your mortal body [not immortal body] is quickened or made alive by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. In other words, as long as His Spirit dwelleth in you, that Divine *Fortis* or fortifier enables you to keep that mortal body susceptible to spiritual things. To do as the Apostle Paul said in the Corinthian letter, "keep under my body" (1 Corinthians 9:27). The Comforter, the *Fortis* enables us to, as our lesson text says, "inherit [Or control and possess] the earth." He is the One who enables us to control our humanity and our bodies. He takes possession from Satan and entrusts it back to us under the guidance and administration of the Spirit of God.

It was the earth, our humanity that led us into sin initially. Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; [Why? What caused this? Was it something inherited? Was it some, supposedly, Adamic Nature? Was it the environmental climate? No! But, as it says,] we have turned every one to His own way." Our own humanity and fleshly desires raised up and we yielded to them and that carried us into sin. It was our earth, our humanity, that led us into sin initially and it will lead us in submission to Christ.

When we gain the initial experience of salvation, the Spirit of God realizes that it was our humanity and flesh that carried us into sin initially so unless we "inherit the earth" and are able to possess our vessel in the way that God ordained that we do, unless we are able to keep it under control and have it quickened by the Spirit that dwelleth in you, that humanity will rise up again and carry us off into sin. This inheriting, or controlling, this "earthen vessel" can only be achieved by those who have the Comforter, the *Parakletos*, the *Fortis*. It cannot be done by human strength. It cannot be done without the fortifier. We must receive the Comforter before inheriting the earth.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE BEATITUDES: THE MEEK

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

As we begin to consider this particular Beatitude, we must recognize that the word "Beatitude" has its origin in the Latin language. It comes from the word *Beatitudo*, meaning "a particular declaration of blessedness coming from the lips of Jesus Christ." The Greek word that our English renders "blessed," here in Matthew 5:3-11, is the Greek word *makarios* and is a very special Greek word that the Greeks associated with the gods and to them it portrayed God-like qualities. The burden of these lessons is to portray how that man may be lifted up to a state of spiritual blessedness by Jesus Christ.

Christ is not dealing with mere human happiness as many would think. For happiness comes from the root word "hap" which means "to occur by chance." Happiness is a product of circumstance. If the circumstances are favorable, if chance deals them favor, then by "hap" they are happy. If circumstances deal ill and are not favorable then one is what we call unhappy. Happiness is a product purely of circumstances and governed by the condition of the soul. It is something that emanates from the inside out rather than something that is effected from the outside in. Circumstances are those things which are without that effects people within. However, blessedness is a spiritual state that is governed by the condition of the soul and is within and emanates out through the life of the Saint of God.

Jesus said in John 10:10, "I come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." The Amplified Bible renders it in this manner, "I am come that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)." This reminds me of the words of the Psalmist, "my cup runneth over." This is the state of spiritual blessedness that Jesus Christ came to lift man to. A state where he might, after having gained an initial experience of salvation, be able to continually and perpetually enjoy this salvation. He then can enjoy it as a continual and constant state of being and that state of being, that welfare of the soul, would be such that it would emanate out and be that light to the world that He spoke of in Matthew 5:14. There would be such a radiance that came from within that it would go out to where men could see it "and glorify your Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

In our lesson text, He shows the route to life by giving us the ingredients necessary to effect salvation (verses 3-4). Then He goes on to portray the ingredients necessary for man to continue in this blessed experience and life, as The Amplified Bible declares, "(to the full, till it overflows)." Our lesson text in Matthew 5:5 portrays and depicts discipleship and how it is achieved. For only through discipleship can an experience of salvation be maintained. In this lesson text we see a vitally essential part to our maintaining, perpetually, this blessed estate that we have entered into.



Let us examine this passage. In the original Aramaic Language of this text (the Aramaic Language being the form of Hebrew used in Christ's First Advent) He exclaimed in Matthew 5:5, "O, the blessedness of the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Who are the "meek" He is addressing or speaking of here? Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:29, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." The phrase "take my yoke upon you" was a common Jewish phrase and meant "enter into submission to." The "meek" are those who have done as Jesus said, "learn of me" and have entered into submission to Christ. First John 4:17 says, "as He is, so are we in this world." Jesus declared in Matthew 11:29, "I am meek." Everyone who has entered into submission to Christ and truly have become His disciples are as He is, "meek." So the "meek" here in Matthew 5:5 are the saints or the disciples.

Jesus said in Matthew 11:29, "learn of me." How do true disciples learn of Jesus? Jesus tells us in John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things." What will He teach? Jesus said, "all things." But according to our text, let us localize it. First, as Matthew 5:5 declares, to be "meek." Or the Greek word is *praus*. This is the Greek word that is used for an animal which has learned to accept control and has been trained to obey the voice of command.

What is it that we must learn from the Holy Spirit, from the Teacher? What is it we must learn to control? What is it about us that can either enable this blessed experience to be able to be enjoyed to the fullest or jeopardize the very life and experience which we have? Our text tells us, "Blessed are the meek: [Who are these? Those who have learned, those who have entered into submission to Christ. Why are they blessed?] for they shall inherit the earth." This expression here, "the earth" refers to our humanity, the earthen portion of man, our flesh, our bodies. The Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:1, "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."

How do we inherit or control this "earth?" It comes right back to that Teacher, the Holy Spirit. Apostle Paul declared in Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Here he says, "There is therefore now." What is the difference in "now?" He tells us that we "are in Christ Jesus." That is the distinction.

In Romans 7:18, before his conversion he cried there, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." In Romans 7:24 the Apostle Paul lamented and said, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Here he referred to the "body" as "the body of this death." What he was actually saying was, that "the dominance and rule of the body has produced this state of spiritual death." In Romans 8:1 he begins and says, "There is therefore now no condemnation [Why?] to them which are in Christ Jesus, [How do we keep from entering back into condemnation? How can things be experienced as the Apostle portrayed in this verse?] who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

How do we walk after the Spirit, or in the Spirit? The Apostle penned in Galatians 5:16-17: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh [Why is this so vitally important?]."

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other." The Amplified Bible renders verse 17 in this manner: "For the desires of the flesh are opposed to the [Holy] Spirit, and the [desires of the] Spirit are opposed to the flesh (godless human nature); for these are antagonistic of each other [continually withstanding and in conflict with each other]."

The real struggle is between the flesh and the Spirit. It was our flesh, our humanity, that led us into sin initially. We turned to our own selfish, human, fleshly desires (Isaiah 53:6). In 1 John 2:16, John declares, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." So it was our flesh, our humanity, and yielding to its desires that led us into sin initially. Our flesh is the instrument that the enemy of souls uses to jeopardize our experience. The enemy tries to cause us to forfeit this life that salvation has brought to us and the only way to avoid that is to walk in the Spirit.

How do we do we "walk in the Spirit?" Look at the Apostle's words in Romans 8:13, where he penned, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." This is why the first thing that the Comforter, the *Parakletos*, the *Fortis*, teaches us after we get saved. It teaches us that we need to "inherit the earth," take possession of it, control the earth by the power of the Holy Spirit because "if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die" (Romans 8:13). We will lose that spiritual life that came into our being through salvation. Remember that Jesus came "that they might have life, [initially] and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Jesus is portraying how we might perpetuate this blessed state, and enjoy it to the fullest rather than see it jeopardized.

How do we do that? Romans 8:13 says, "For if you live after the flesh, ye shall die: [That is what we are trying to prevent. That is what we are attempting to avoid and he tells us how that we can avoid it.] but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The implication is that you not only have life initially, but that you continue to live and be able to continue to enjoy this blessed state. He gives us the true formula "to inherit [or control] the earth."

First, notice, that it involves neither our power nor our ability. He tells us that it is "through the Spirit," not through human mechanisms or means. He says in Romans 8:13, "but if ye through the Spirit." Zechariah 4:6 declares, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." This ability is, as Romans 8:13 portrays, "through the Spirit."

What will it enable us to do? Romans 8:13 says, "but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." What does it mean to "mortify the deeds of the body?" The Greek word for "mortify" is *thanatos* and literally means, "to put to death." It is the same Greek word that is employed in Matthew 10:21 when it says, "and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death [thanatos]." It is also used in Romans 7:4 when he said, "ye also are become dead [thanatos] to the law." The Amplified Bible renders Romans 8:13 as, "For if you live according to [the dictates of] the flesh, you will surely die. But if through the power of the [Holy] Spirit you are [habitually] putting to death (making extinct, deadening) the [evil]

deeds prompted by the body, you shall [really and genuinely] live forever."

The lesson is that in sin we were in servitude and slavery to our bodies and our passions. Once we are delivered through real salvation, the indwelling Spirit fortifies, empowers, and gives us the ability to reign over the body and to deny it as though it were dead. Just as we are dead to the Law, we do not regard it, we are not in submission to it, we are not in bondage to it, and we are not under the power of it. Therefore, we are not under the power of the body. We must still contend with it, and it is still the source through which temptation comes. However, Romans 8:13 says, "through the Spirit [we] do mortify [We do not kill the body itself.] the deeds of the body." Certainly the body is still a reality and we do not literally kill the body, but rather we mortify the deeds of the body. We bring the deeds into line with the things of God. We bring its deeds into submission to the Spirit rather than being subject to the flesh and what it might desire to do.

Romans 8:11 declares, "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [Which means, 'to make alive.'] your mortal bodies [Not your immortal body that you will receive on Resurrection Day, but rather the mortal body. The power of the Spirit, will make your earthly, mortal body alive to the things of God. Someone may ask, "How can that be?" By His Spirit] that dwelleth in you." When the Spirit of God is loosed in the life as He ought to be, when we really "inherit the earth," then this body will be mortified to worldly and ungodly deeds. It will be quickened to perform spiritual deeds. Where it used to cuss and curse, it will now bless. Where it used to once lie, it will now tell the truth. Where it once went to places that were debauched, places that were debased, places that were unhealthy and unholy, now that same body will do deeds that are right and good and wholesome. This is because it is that "Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11). It will be that *Fortis*, that Fortifier that will give an empowerment to be able to do as God would ordain that we do.

Regardless of what your religious persuasion or profession may be, if you cannot control your body, do not be deceived for you are neither saved, nor a child of God. Failure to control your body is an evidence of your lack of the Comforter because the first thing the Comforter teaches us, according to our lesson text in Matthew 5:5, is to "inherit [or control] the earth." When the Spirit of God is loosed in our life as He ought and we really "inherit the earth" this body will be mortified to worldly and ungodly deeds and be quickened to perform spiritual deeds. When we, as the Apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 9:27, "keep under my body" and keep it in the position where it belongs and then allow the Spirit and the things of God to be in our life then that spiritual state of blessedness will be a perpetual state. It will also prepare us for the next Beatitude; it will cause us to "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6).

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

For several Chapters we have been studying a series of lessons that are commonly entitled "The Beatitudes." Through these lessons here in Matthew 5:3-11, Jesus portrays the Biblical route for mankind to obtain an experience of salvation and then He vividly describes the ingredients necessary to maintain that experience.

In our lesson text we see the fourth in a series of nine of these Beatitudes. In this passage our Lord exclaims "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The original Aramaic Language rendering it as an exclamation of "O the blessedness of they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." As we consider this verse of Scripture, we need to recognize that these verses (commonly called "The Beatitudes") are not just some pious ideal. These verses are not just some unrelated proverbial sayings, nor are they just a rambling discourse of some disjointed pithy sayings by some ancient mouth of deity of what constitutes and continues that experience of blessedness that Jesus came to bring to mankind.

Each of these attributes are intertwined and interrelated in a most cohesive and vital manner. We must be mindful of the burden and the purpose behind these verses as well as the Divine prompting that caused these words to be uttered. The intent that produced these words was a deep burden to convey that which comprises an experience of salvation that Jesus came to bring to the hearts of mankind and then the ingredients necessary that man might perpetually enjoy that state of blessedness that he enters into through that experience.

This discourse is the first recorded public discourse of our Lord after the commencement of His earthly ministry. Uppermost on His heart and mind was the express purpose for His earthly advent. According to Luke 19:10, that purpose was "to seek and to save that which was lost." In John 10:10 Apostle John penned Jesus' words, "that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." So the burden of this message in Matthew, Chapter 5, is to set down the fundamental truths necessary "to save that which was lost" and then after they have life, show what is necessary to have it more abundantly or perpetually.

Jesus commences these lessons portraying the steps necessary to achieve a kingdom experience initially. In Matthew 5:5 He says, "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." He is setting down the vital steps that are necessary to receive a kingdom experience. The first ingredient is to be "poor in spirit" (verse 3), To come to the divine realization that in sin you are "in total, absolute and abject poverty." When the stark realization of that strikes your soul it will cause you to "mourn" (verse 4), or it will produce a "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). When that sorrow is truly godly, this is when real salvation occurs. When that occurs, Jesus declares in verse 4 that "they shall be

comforted," or they shall receive the Comforter, the Holy Ghost.

After one has really received an experience of salvation and the Comforter, what is the first thing that He teaches us? Matthew 5:5 tells us that He teaches us to control or "inherit the earth." He teaches us to "mortify [put to death.] the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13) and then allow the Spirit of God to "quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies" (Romans 8:11). In other words, to be dead to the things of sin and the world and alive to spiritual things.

The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 6:14, "the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." In other words, by the way I now live, the world considers me dead and I consider the world dead. Romans 6:11 describes it in this manner, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here we see the mortification of the flesh of being dead and we see the quickening power of the Spirit by being alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What is the picture being portrayed here? First, each of these Beatitudes are not disjointed proverbial sayings. They are not just some ideal being aired forth, but rather they are integral parts of a whole. We must see that there is a progression that is portrayed in these verses and that each portion is vital and interrelated and comprises a part of a whole. They are to portray how man can obtain and then maintain this blessed spiritual state that Christ ordained that we enjoy. All of these ingredients that He lays forth in Matthew 5:3-11, are vitally necessary to that state of blessedness; first to obtain that estate, and then vitally necessary to maintain that estate as well. Secondly, Matthew 5:5 portrays to us that if we will truly "inherit the earth," or control this body to where it would be mortified to worldly and ungodly deeds and quickened to perform spiritual deeds, that position of spirituality would prepare us to, "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6).

The first thing that Matthew 5:6 implies is that those who are truly doing as God ordained and mortifying the flesh to worldly deeds and quickening it to spiritual deeds, the natural by-product is a "hunger and a thirst after righteous." This verse also implies that those who are feeding the flesh cannot truly "hunger and thirst after righteousness." Why? Because they are opposites. The flesh can never be satisfied.

In the prophecy of Haggai 1:6 the Prophet declared "he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." Here he speaks of a bag with holes and certainly a bag with holes can never be filled, it can never be satisfied. The more you give it, the more it requires and so it is with the flesh. The flesh is never satisfied. No matter what you give it, it always craves for more. You can never satisfy the flesh or "the earth" (Matthew 5:5). That is why the first thing we must learn after we are saved is "to inherit [or control] the earth."

Conversely, our lesson text declares that "blessed are they which do and thirst after righteousness: [Why?] for they shall be filled." The Amplified Bible says, "for they shall be completely satisfied!" Here we see a very distinct contrast between something that cannot be satisfied and can ruin our experience (the flesh) and something that can be most fulfilling and make our experience "completely satisfied." How can our experience truly be completely satisfied? In Matthew 5:6, here Jesus

exclaims, "O the blessedness of they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."

What is Jesus portraying here? In Matthew 5:5 He taught us to "inherit" or control the earth. That which we feed becomes the strongest and craves for more. If we have entered into a real discipleship, we will deny our flesh (Luke 9:23). If we have followed the Spirit and denied self and have not fed the flesh but rather fed the spiritual part of man, that feeding will produce an even greater appetite. We will truly "hunger and thirst" as Matthew 5:6 describes. Sad to say, many are not hungering more for the things of God, because they have catered to the flesh and created too big of an appetite for their flesh.

What does this phrase "they which do hunger and thirst" actually mean? First, "do" is a present and continual tense. Not did (past tense) hunger or will hunger (future tense). Why is this important? Remember, Jesus came not only to initially give life, but rather "that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The Amplified Bible rendering says, "to the full." For something to be full, it requires constant maintenance. It must be kept full or it can become depleted or empty. If our experience is to stay full and be a present and continual experience and life, then there are some things that must be done in the present and done continually to maintain this experience of salvation. Here in our text Jesus is portraying an element that is absolutely essential to keeping out experience presently up to date and to continually be able to enjoy it. What is that element or that ingredient that is necessary? It is what Matthew 5:6 portrays as, "hunger and thirst."

Now, what do these words actually mean? What is it that Christ is attempting to convey to us here in the employment of these particular words? We must remember that these words were originally spoken in the Aramaic language and they were spoken to a Middle Eastern audience. Jesus in His teaching tended to draw local flavor into his lessons. When He was with fishermen, He spoke such by using terms such as, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19). When Jesus was at the treasury, He spoke of "a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites" (Luke 21:2). When He spoke to a lawyer, He said, "What is written in the law" (Luke 10:26)? Jesus brought local flavor into His teachings to help illuminate the Truth that He was trying to convey. He used the literal as a backdrop to portray spiritual realities. So it is in this lesson text.

When Jesus said to this first century Middle Eastern audience, "O the blessedness of they which do hunger and thirst," It immediately evoked an image to the mind of that particular audience. In that day a working man labored all day for a meager wage, for a penny. A common working man ate meat only once a week. In Ancient Palestine the day laborer was never truly far from the borderline of real hunger and perhaps actual starvation. It was even more so in the case of thirst. A man might be on a journey and a sandstorm might arise to where the swirling sand would fill his throat and nostrils until he was parched and nearly suffocated with the greatest dryness, resulting in the greatest and direst of thirst. So the hunger, of this text that Jesus is portraying, is the hunger of one who is truly starving for food.

In western society today we are somewhat removed from easy association to these words that Jesus uttered. However, in the first century, these words which He employed were all too real to those in Middle Eastern

society. In our modern western society few people ever truly know what hunger is nor do they know dire thirst. When we feel the least pang of hunger or thirst, we have so many things that are at our disposal to remedy it, that we are never moved to a position of utter hunger or dire thirst. Today, we have government agencies that insure people have adequate amounts of food and nourishment. In the first century, they were bereft of government agencies and public service in that day and starvation was actually a literal reality and possible threat to the average person who was not well endowed financially.

So it was with thirst. With the desert climate that they have, even the wealthiest of men did not have the means at their disposal to travel and carry water with him, as we do in our day. On a prolonged journey or in the event of a sandstorm, it would jeopardize the man's life. Jesus is portraying the hunger of one who is starving for food and the thirst as many a traveler who would die unless he was able to quench that thirst.

This Beatitude actually raises the question, do you desire it as much as a man, dying of thirst for water, truly wants water? How much do you really want more righteousness? Do you want it and crave it as a starving man wants food? Does it occupy your thinking and your desires as a starving man whose thoughts and energies are occupied with filling the void in his stomach? How intense is our desire? Just as a truly hungry or thirsty man realizes that if he wants life to continue, he must concentrate on filling his hunger or thirst, so must we recognize that it is just as vital for us to desire the things of God if we want our experience to continue. We must desire the things of righteousness as much as that starving man desires food.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

In this passage of Scripture text we see our Lord in the midst of His first recorded public message which is commonly known as "The Sermon on the Mount." He commences this discourse with what is come to be called "The Beatitudes." This particular passage in Matthew 5:6 is the fourth in a series of nine of these inspired sayings.

As we begin to review this series, we must be reminded that Christ has just initiated His public ministry and that this is the first recorded public message of that ministry. In this address He is speaking only to disciples. Our lesson text tells us in Matthew 5:1-2, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them." He is speaking only to disciples and is setting forth the fundamental and foundational Truths to accomplish the mission for which He made His advent into this time world.

Many opinions are espoused concerning the mission of Christ. There are those who are of the persuasion that Christ came to institute a new political order. There are others who believe He came merely to address the social needs of man or to bring some type of religious persuasion to the mind. Others would simply say that He came as a King to Israel and was refused and rejected by Israel as such. However, the words of Christ came resounding very clearly that none of these things were the mission for which He came into this time world. The mission for which he made His advent into this time world is expressly declared in His own words. In Luke 19:10, Christ declared that His mission and His purpose was, "to seek and to save that which was lost." The Apostle John quoted Christ in John 10:10 where He describes His burden as, "I am come that they might have life, and they might have it more abundantly."

Certainly, He was not speaking of physical life because those to whom He was addressing already were enjoying the benefits of physical life. The life He desired that they might have was a life that they had not as yet enjoyed—a spiritual life or eternal life. So it is with this burden in mind that He gives this discourse recorded in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 5. He is not trying to set up a new political unit. He is not trying to establish a new social order, but rather He came with the burden in mind "to seek and to save that which was lost" (John 19:10) and enable man "that they might have life, [then after they initially obtained this spiritual life] that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Through the Beatitudes, He portrays the route to obtain salvation and life and then goes on to depict the ingredients or spiritual qualities necessary to maintain the experience of salvation subsequent to obtaining it. In Matthew 5:6, He exclaims, "O the blessedness of they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." Again, we must note



that He begins with the thought of "Blessed." The Latin word here is *beati* which means "blessedness." It is a declaration of blessedness from the lips of Jesus Christ. The Greek word is *makarious* and was used to denote "of God-like quality." What is the lesson portrayed here? Jesus did not come to give man temporary and fleeting happiness. Jesus Christ did not come to bring man something that was governed by chance or by circumstance, but rather to lift mankind to a state of blessedness more God-like qualities. It enhances and perpetuates their blessed state. Also, that their joy is derived from Spiritual realities rather than the fleeting things of this life.

Let us look at the individual who has progressed to this point. As we go through Matthew, Chapter 5, these verses are indeed a progression. We start with sinful humanity. Every man, woman, and child came into this world in a state of innocency, in a state of purity. The wise man said in Ecclesiastes 7:29, "that God hath made man upright [The Hebrew word for 'upright' is *yasar*, which means righteous.]; but they sought out many inventions." Isaiah 53:6 plainly tells us, "All we like sheep have gone astray." Man is created in a state of purity, innocence, and uprightness, but when we come to an age of accountability we each "turn to our own way" and that leads to sin. Romans 3:23 declares, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Galatians 3:22 says, "But the scripture [speaking of the Old Testament scriptures] hath concluded all under sin." The Amplified Bible renders this verse as, "But the Scriptures [picture all mankind as sinners] shut up and imprisoned by sin."

When man truly realizes this and realizes that he is "sold under sin" (Romans 7:14), the awareness strikes him that he is "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). They are spiritually bankrupt and in utter poverty. When that recognition occurs, it produces a mourning (Matthew 5:4) or a "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). If that godly sorrow works properly, it will "worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Salvation occurs when when one truly has "mourned" and has had "godly sorrow" because it goes on to say in Matthew 5:4, "for they shall be comforted." They receive the Comforter, or the Holy Ghost.

After you obtain an experience of salvation, what is the first thing He will teach you to do in order to maintain it? Matthew 5:5 says, "they shall inherit [or control] the earth." In other words we learn to control the flesh. Once we learn to quit feeding the flesh and learn to "mortify the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13), then as you keep the flesh and humanity under it will allow an appetite for the spiritual realities to become greater. That which we feed develops the greatest appetite. If we properly "inherit the earth" as Matthew 5:5 tells us and keep the body and humanity in its place and quit feeding it, then the spiritual desires and appetites will become more pronounced.

Let us look at the words that Jesus employs in this text. In Matthew 5:6 He says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst." He is speaking of a hunger of one who is starving for food, one whose very life depends upon sating that hunger. The thirst is that of a desert traveler whose lips are parched and in dire thirst to where it must be quenched or death is imminent. What is the lesson that Jesus is attempting to convey to us? In essence He is saying, "Yes! You have found life. Yes! You are enjoying the blessings and benefits of

spiritual life. However, just like the natural man, there are some things that are vitally necessary if you want to continue that life which you have." Just as the natural man realizes that must eat and drink to maintain life, so must the spiritual man. Just as a starving man has singleness of thought and purpose and desires food more than anything, so must the spiritual man as well.

What is it that we are to hunger and thirst after? Our lesson text tells us in Matthew 5:6 to "hunger and thirst after righteousness." What does this word "righteousness" actually reveal to us? The Greek word here is *dikaiosune* and it is used to denot "an attribute of God." Romans 3:5 speaks of "the righteousness of God." In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Apostle Paul speaks of the fact "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." He is speaking of Christ so righteousness is one of God's attributes. We are to hunger and thirst to have more God-like qualities and attributes manifested in our lives.

How do obtain more God-like qualities and attributes? The Patriarch Job penned in Job 23:12, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." We are to hunger after and to eat the Word of God. The prophet cried in Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." The Apostle Peter instructs new converts in 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." The angel told the Revelator John, concerning the "little book" (the Word of God), in Revelation 10:9, "And the angel said unto me, Take it, and eat it up." That which we are to hunger for, that which feeds our soul, that which enables us to become more God-like, is the Word of God.

In 1 John 3:2, John pens, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear we shall be like him." How can this be? Second Corinthians 3:18 gives us an insight and says, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass [Or the Greek word is 'mirror,' which portrays the Word of God, according to James 1:23.] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." As we take in the Word, and as the Lord enlightens the eyes of our understanding, it changes us "from glory to glory." The Amplified Bible renders 2 Corinthians 3:18 a little more clearly and says, "And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continue to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another."

What is it that we thirst after? The food (the Word) would be very dry and hard to swallow, if there was not something there to help us to be able to take it in. In John 7:37 it says, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." What is it that we are to drink? What is it that can cool the thirst of man's soul? In John 7:38-39, He declares: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly [or his inward parts] shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.)" So, what is it that He is speaking of here that man is to drink? He is to drink of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God. It says in John 7:39, "This spake He of the Spirit." In 1Corinthians 12:13, the Apostle penned that we "have been all made to drink into one

Spirit." This portrays, very vividly to us that we are to thirst after and to drink the Holy Spirit of God. This verse here in 1 Corinthians 12:13, also teaches us something when it says, "drink into." It teaches us that in order to stay in we must continue to drink. There is no position that man can obtain where that he can refuse to continue to drink, or refuse to continue to progress in his experience. He tells us that we are to drink into. We must continually and perpetually drink of the Spirit of God.

What is the lesson of our text? Once we have experienced real salvation and truly put the flesh in its place and have "inherited the earth," we will have a very keen desire to feed and nurture our experience. We will hunger and thirst for spiritual things. We will have an all-consuming desire to be more like Christ. We will have a great desire to not want to forfeit or jeopardize the life that He brought to us. We will do all in our power, and with every effort possible, that which is necessary to feed and water that life and to nurture it so that we might grow and remain healthy and vibrant and have that experience (that blessed state) that He ordained us to have. He reveals to us that when we truly "inherit the earth" as we ought, we will have a keen desire to feed and nurture our experience. We will hunger and thirst for spiritual things and also to be more like Christ.

He reveals the avenue through which we can achieve this is through the Word and the Spirit. The Word is the food, that Divine sustenance, which we take in and the Spirit is the drink that makes the Word palatable and enables us to take it in. If we will do this, Matthew 5:6 says, "they shall be filled." The Amplified Bible says, "they shall be completely satisfied!" A satisfied experience comes from appropriating the Word and the Spirit their proper place in our lives.

Our text in Matthew 5:6 says, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst." To keep a vibrant up-to-date experience, this is something that we must continually and constantly do. It is something that we must ever be doing in our experience if we want to keep it in the position that God ordained that we keep it in. We must "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THEY THAT HUNGER AND THIRST

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

In this lesson text we see Christ in the midst of a lengthy discourse which is commonly referred to as "The Sermon on the Mount" and in this address He sets forth the tenets and fundamental principles upon which the New Testament economy is based. In these opening verses, Matthew 5:3-11, He sets forth in explicit detail, the ingredients necessary to obtain and then to maintain that experience upon which all true Christianity rests—the experience known as Salvation.

In the lesson text Jesus exclaims "O the blessedness of they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" (the original Aramaic language). By the help of God we want to look a little further into this Scripture text. In this passage we have progressed past the recognition of the lost state of man without Christ. Man has come to his awareness that in sin he is "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). The realization of the utter, absolute, and abject poverty has struck the soul of this one. Then because of that having struck his soul, it has caused him to "mourn" (Matthew 5:4). This mourning, or godly sorrow has led to "repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10) and "they shall be comforted." In John 14:26, Jesus tells us, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost." So, in reality, Christ was saying, "They shall receive the place in the heart and life of the believer."

Once the Spirit takes up His abode in the heart and life of the saint, the first thing He teaches us is to be "meek" (Matthew 5:5), meaning to enter into submission is Christ. To properly do this, we must "inherit [or control] the earth" (Matthew 5:5) or our earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7). This is referring to the earthly portion of man, our body or the flesh and its desires. Once the flesh is truly mortified and is in its proper place, then the spiritual portion of our being will have a greater "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). Sad to say, the reason there are not more hungering and thirsting for righteousness over our land is because too many, even supposed Christians, claim they have had an experience of salvation. Many of those who claim salvation, feed the flesh. They cater to the flesh and its desires to the negligence of the very precious things of God.

The Apostle John penned of this in his writings in 1 John 2:15-17 where he said: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." John contrasts the world with the will of the Father. This Scripture lets us know that the world and everything therein and the lusts thereof, are temporary. They will pass away, but "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (1 John 2:17). The

things of God, the spiritual realities, are truly the only lasting realities because they are eternal realities! Catering to the flesh will prevent one from obtaining an experience of salvation. If one has obtained an experience and begins to feed the flesh, it will starve that experience out to where it becomes lost.

There are many in our religious world today who claim that they have been "born again." They claim the name of Christ and profess Christianity. However, a real experience of salvation is not compatible with the things of this world. Either the Christianity, the experience, will kill the things of the world or the things of the world will kill out the things of God. There are many in the myriads of religions today who would advocate that one can be in the world, have the things of the world, and be worldly as it were, and still be a child of God. However, Jesus taught us we are to be in the world, but not of the world (John 17:14-16). John said in 1 John 2:15, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." They are diametrically opposed one to the other. Religious advocates may teach that you can continue to hold on to the things of this world and still be a child of God, but God's Word teaches the opposite of that. If you are in a religious organization that teaches contrary to the sound dictates of God's eternal Word, Revelation 18:4 heralds the message to your soul and proclaims to you, "Come out of her, my people." You must come to a place where you can hear the clear, plain, and unadulterated Word of God in its fullness.

Catering to the flesh will prevent one from obtaining an experience of salvation because one must give up this world to gain that experience. If one has obtained that experience and begins to feed the flesh, it will starve the experience out to where it is lost. There are a multiplicity of religious organizations out here that do not provide spiritual nourishment and spiritual food. Because of that, people continue to cater to and feed the flesh. An experience that perhaps started out real and genuine, ends up starving and dying.

In our lesson text, we are finding that the example held before us by Jesus is that the flesh is not being fed. We have learned to "inherit the earth" to where we truly "hunger and thirst after righteousness." The righteousness that Matthew 5:6 speaks of is a God-like quality. So one aspect of this text is to have an all-consuming desire to be more God-like. What does this portray? It portrays the two primary avenues that feed the soul or the spiritual man—the Word and the Spirit. In Jeremiah 15:16, the Prophet penned, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and the rejoicing of mine heart." Here we see the Word equated with eating. The food that God ordained for the soul of mankind is the Word. In 1 Corinthians 12:13, the Divine Penman says, we "have been all made to drink of one Spirit." The Spirit is clearly portrayed as the drink. As we take in the Word under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, it enables us to be "changed into the same image" (2 Corinthians 3:18). The Amplified Bible makes it a little clearer and says we "are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another."

As we become more spiritual and more God-like, what is one quality or attribute that will become more predominant and pronounced? Our text admonishes us that we are able to "hunger and thirst after

righteousness." We learned this is a quality or attribute of God. In Romans 4:22, speaking of the Patriarch Abraham, it says, "And therefore it was imputed [or The Amplified Bible says it 'was credited'] to him for righteousness." Romans 4:25 goes on and says, "But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." When man believes, God shares His righteousness with man through Jesus Christ. Second Corinthians 5:21 declares, "For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." So, one aspect of our hungering and thirsting after righteousness is to see this attribute enter into the lives of others through real salvation. The Apostle Paul penned in Galatians 4:19, "I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Those who are truly spiritual share with the God-head a burden for souls. The Apostle Peter penned these words in 2 Peter 3:9 where it says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." That is the burden of the God-head. When we enter into fellowship with God and with His Son, Jesus Christ (1 John 1:3), we share in common the same mind, the same Spirit, and the same burden, as God. Those who are truly spiritual share with the God-head a burden for souls. He is not willing that any should perish (2 Peter 3:9) and those who are of His truly Divine nature and share His mind and His Spirit do not desire that any should perish.

Jesus taught us that the saints are to be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). Certainly, salt does many things, but one thing it does is create a thirst. The saints are to create a thirst in the lost. To rightly accomplish this, the believer must first have a great hunger and thirst for souls. The believer must desire to see people get right with God.

The word righteousness has another meaning. The second meaning of it is rendered in the Amplified Bible where it portrays it clearly for us as, "Blessed and fortunate and happy spiritually prosperous (in that state in which the born-again child of God enjoys His favor and salvation) are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, uprightness and right standing with God)." If the lost, the world, is ever to "hunger and thirst" to be in right standing with God, the believer, the saints, must have that desire and appetite first.

Isaiah 66:8 declares, "for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." The natural process is that there must be travail, effort, and desire before there is any birth. So it is spiritually. The believer, the saint, must first desire to see people be saved. They must "hunger and thirst" for souls. Even as Rachel of old did when she cried in Genesis 30:1, "Give me children, or else I die." The Lord has always desired that His people mourn over sinful conditions and the souls of men.

In Ezekiel 9:4, the Prophet penned, "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof." Here we see in prophetic language, a portrayal of those who were truly carrying the burden. In Ezekiel 9:6, He said to "Slay utterly" those who did not carry the burden. It is a picture that those who do not really "hunger and thirst" for souls and truly carry a burden

will ultimately lose out and die.

The saints, as Jesus said, are to be the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13). We are to create a thirst in lost mankind and then to let them hear the clarion call of God that is recorded in Isaiah 55:1, where the Prophet penned, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." No matter what your station in life or your socioeconomic status is, he that hath no money, can come, buy, and eat.

What is it that a lost man is to take in and eat? Isaiah 55:2 says, "eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." What is it that is good? What is it that can make the lean, starving soul of man fat? Isaiah 55:3 goes on and says, "hear." Hear what? Isaiah 55:11 says, "my word that goeth forth out of my mouth." For an individual to get saved, they must eat or must take in the Word. Romans 10:16 tells us, that they must "believe the report" and then they must obey the Gospel.

Isaiah said in Isaiah 55:1 "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." What are these waters? In Revelation 22:17, the Revelator penned, "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." This water that we are admonished to take if we are truly athirst in our soul, produces life. Romans 8:10 says, "the Spirit is life." Taking this water is believing the report of the Gospel, the Word, and taking faith in it to where you are willing to yield yourself to God, in old-time Bible repentance. As you yield in old-time Bible repentance, you let the Spirit of God come into your heart and life and bring real salvation and real life.

This lesson text here in Matthew 5:6, is portraying two aspects before us. First, that when the saints have inherited the earth and learned how to control their earthen vessel, they are to keep it in subjection and submission to the will and the Spirit of God and quit feeding the flesh. There will then be a desire and an appetite in the spiritual portion of man. The saint will desire to be more God-like and when they have that great vehement desire, the natural by-product of that will be a hungering and thirsting for souls. They will have a real soul burden. They will not want to see anyone perish, but rather will want to see them brought to righteousness. They will hunger and thirst after righteousness to see them brought into right standing with God. When we really have a true hunger for souls, a hunger to see people really get saved, it will prepare us for the next ingredient, the next attribute, in the progression of our lesson text in Matthew 5:7 where it says, "Blessed are the merciful."

I want you to see that these lessons in Matthew, Chapter 5, are a progression depicting how to initially obtain an experience, how to maintain that experience, and even perpetuate it to others by hungering and thirsting to see righteousness in their lives. When one is truly carrying that burden and hungering and thirsting for souls as they ought, it will lead us right on to the next Beatitude in Matthew 5:7 which is, "Blessed are the merciful."

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE BEATITUDES: THE MERCIFUL

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

Before us in this passage of Scripture text, we find recorded the fifth in a series of nine, of what is commonly known as "The Beatitudes." By the help of God we want to examine these words of Jesus where He cries in the original language in which these Beatitudes were penned, the Aramaic, "O the blessedness of the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7).

As we begin to consider this text of Scripture, we must be reminded that our lesson text is part of a much larger context. In Matthew, Chapter 5, Christ has just commenced His public ministry. This discourse, recorded here in Matthew, Chapter 5, is the first recorded public message of this ministry. In it He lays forth the ingredients necessary to obtain the experience that He came to bring to mankind—that experience known as Salvation—and then He goes on to reveal what is necessary to maintain this experience after that it is initially obtained.

In the last Beatitude we studied that Jesus exclaimed in Matthew 5:6, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." This portrayed a Truth which has a dual application. First, that the saint who really has learned to, as Matthew 5:5 describes, "inherit the earth," are those ones who have learned to put the flesh in its place, not feed the flesh or its desires. When that is accomplished, they will truly have a keen spiritual appetite and they will, as Matthew 5:6 describes, "hunger and thirst after righteousness." So they have an all-consuming, intense desire to be more God-like. This is the very first thing that will occur when one truly is, as the Apostle Paul described in Galatians 2:20 when he said those famed words, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." So here we find that when one truly has learned how to rightly "inherit [or control] the earth," to truly put it in its place, and not feed the flesh and the fleshly appetites, to not cater to its desires, they will truly have a keen spiritual appetite.

Man has a physical appetite and a spiritual appetite. That which is fed the most is that which is the greatest and the keenest. So those who have truly put the flesh and its desires in its proper position will have a keen spiritual appetite. They will, as Jesus said in Matthew 5:6, "hunger and thirst after righteousness." This righteousness is a God-like quality, a Divine attribute. So they "which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" are they who have an all-consuming, intense desire to be more God-like. When one is truly, as John said in 1 John 1:3, in "fellowship . . . with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ," when one is truly in this position of Divine fellowship (This word which the English renders 'fellowship' is the Greek word *koinonia*



and means, 'to share in common with. '), and Peter said in 2 Peter 1:4, are "partakers of the divine nature," they will have His heart, His mind, and His burden. The supreme burden that the Lord has declared in 2 Peter 3:9 where it says, "The Lord . . . is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Those who are truly spiritual, truly God-like have a great desire and they truly "hunger and thirst" to see others get right with God. They desire to see others enjoy the blessed experience that they have received.

So this hungering and thirsting has a dual application. First of all, in the hearts and lives of the recipients of salvation themselves, that they might become more God-like. But then secondly, the natural extension of that is to want to see others become more God-like and be able to have that righteousness or be right with God. Which leads us to our lesson text here in Matthew 5:7, where Jesus exclaimed in the original language of the text, the Aramaic, "O the blessedness of the merciful."

What is He really portraying here? What is it that Jesus is portraying to us through this passage? Well, we must remember in these lessons, which we call "The Beatitudes," Christ is instituting a new economy. Second Corinthians 5:17 declares, "old things are passed away; behold, all things are new." Now many want to apply this verse in relationship to a personal experience. Certainly, there is an application that can be given in that manner. However, if you will back up and read Chapter 3 of Second Corinthians, you will find it was a reference to the old economy. It was a reference to the old Covenant, the Old Testament era, and the customs, practices and economy of the Jewish era. Christ came and the Apostle penned and said, "behold, all things are new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Christ came to institute a new era of time and a new economy.

What does this have to do with our lesson text? Well, this is the first publicly recorded discourse of our Lord. In this message He is setting forth the precepts of Truth upon which the Christian economy is to be built. As He exclaimed this word in our lesson text, "merciful," as He exclaimed these New Testament realities to the audience in His day in the first century, some of these Truths were foreign concepts to them. Mercy was one of those with which they were not familiar. Why is that? Because the old Law did not lend itself to mercy. Mercy was not a provision that was incorporated in the old Law. In Hebrews 10:28 the sacred writer declares, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." In John 8:5 the Scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus and said, "Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?" Mercy was an attribute that was foreign to the old Law. As such was foreign to those who were its adherents and advocates. It was not considered proper or Divine by many.

We must recall that although the audience of this address was "Disciples" (Matthew 5:1), these Disciples were of Jewish stock. They were Hebrews and they had been taught by the religious leaders of that day. Therefore, much of their thinking and many of their concepts had been influenced and received from the Jewish teachers and religious leaders of that day. Because of this, they saw no merit or allowance for mercy in the Law. Due to this, many became very self-righteous and judgmental. This is why Jesus said in Matthew 5:20, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, he shall in no case enter into the kingdom of

heaven."

What type of righteousness did they possess? The Scribes and Pharisees were at the zenith of religiosity of that day. They were at the pinnacle of success in the religious community. But here Jesus decries them and says that their righteousness was not adequate. Why? What type of righteousness did they have? They had self-righteousness. Look at the lesson Jesus gave us in the Gospel of Luke 18:9, as it declares, "And he spake this parable unto certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." Notice, it says, "trusted in themselves that they were righteous." Self-righteousness was the righteousness that many had in that era. But notice it says, "they despised others." And this should clearly have revealed to them that they were not truly and really righteous. When the Apostle John said in 1 John 4:20, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" However, the audience of that day did not have the benefit at that juncture, of John's teachings. They did not have the light and understanding that we enjoy in our day. They had been duped by the religious teaching and common thinking of that first century and of those in that day.

So Jesus, in our lesson text, first had to bring to His listeners of that day the thought that mercy was a divine and desirable quality. This is why He cried here in our lesson text, in Matthew 5:7, "O the blessedness of the merciful," (The Aramaic text). He declares that being "merciful" is a blessed state of being. He first is associating being merciful with blessedness. Regarding this "blessedness," the Greek word here for the English word blessed, is the word *makarios* and depicts "a God-like quality." So, first and foremost, He is revealing that mercy is God-like. To many of the Hebrews of that day, which was a time of Hebrew apostasy, this was a novel thought. Their concept of God came from the teachings of the elders and was not one of mercy. Christ came to institute a New Covenant. With that New Covenant, He came to give a revelation of God's true nature, which to many in that era was a new concept of God. In Hebrews 8:10 the writer declares, "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel." In Hebrews 8:12 He says, "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Christ came on the scene during a time of Israelite apostasy. Between Malachi, the last writing Old Testament Prophet, and the advent of John the Baptist in the New Testament, man had not heard from God for the space of 434 years. During that time, the tradition of the Elders usurped the position of the inspired Word of God. Traditions, customs, and opinions were predominant in the teachings of Judaism. That which was incorporated in the Talmud, the tradition of the Elders, far overshadowed the Torah, which had been given by God. The teachings of Judaism of that day were really nothing more than conditions and teachings of men. In Matthew 15:6 Jesus said, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

I might digress and say, even in today's society there has been such an apostasy, such a defection from Truth over the years of time, where entire religious organizations, even those that are supposed Christian organizations, do not teach the Truth. They do not teach the Scriptures,

but rather they have substituted their traditions, their customs, and their concepts for the truths of God's Eternal Word. Jesus told them in Matthew's Gospel that when you profess to be God's people and do not take God's Word, you deserve the rebuke of being called, as He did to those in Matthew 15:7, "Ye hypocrites." We need to understand that God desires that we take the counsel of His Word and allow His Word to give us an insight to His nature. Then walk in that rather than in what men may hold before us.

In our lesson text Christ is instituting a new economy. He is equating "mercy" with God-likeness. He is revealing that the New Covenant, which He came to bring, is a Covenant of Mercy. In Isaiah 55:3, the Prophet pens, speaking of this Messianic Era, "I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Christ came to sit in "his [David's] throne" (Acts 2:30), the throne of mercy. Christ came to make mercy available to all mankind. In Luke 1:72 it declares, "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers." He came to make mercy available to all and to enable the way of becoming a part of the People of God open to all. In 1 Peter 2:10 the Apostle Peter verifies this when he says, "Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

So, in our lesson text, Christ is equating "mercy" with "blessedness," and He is making His audience startingly aware that it is a "God-like quality." Then He goes on and equates it with the immutable moral law of "sowing and reaping." Notice, He says in our lesson text in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful: [There is the act.] for they shall obtain mercy: [There is the response]." Throughout the Scriptures, there is an unchangeable, immutable, moral law. We see it clearly penned in the Apostle Paul's writings. In Galatians 6:7 he declares, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." And certainly, this is a most familiar text. But this principle, this Truth, is an age-old Truth and is written throughout the Scriptures. Back in the Book of Beginnings in Genesis 9:6, God stepped up onto the stage of action and declared, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." That is the immutable law of "sowing and reaping."

In the Book of Esther 9:25, when Haman had devised a gallows upon which Mordecai was supposedly to be hung, it says, "his wicked device, which he devised against the Jews should return upon his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows." Again, a fulfillment of that immutable and timeless moral law. In Psalm 7:15-16 David declares: "He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealings shall come down upon his own pate."

What is the lesson? Jesus is teaching us to not assume a self-righteous attitude. Rather, we as a people of God, as a depository which holds God's Spirit within us, should be willing to manifest this God-like quality to others. Why is that so vitally essential? Well, not only just for the benefit of those who are the recipients of it, but also because that in our journey which is not yet completed we shall need God-like qualities manifested to us. That is why He said in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." We shall reap as we sow.

He wants us also to recognize that we are in His stead in this time world. In the Gospel of John 9:5 Jesus said, "As long as I am in the

world, I am the light of the world." However, He is no longer in the world. He is back in Heaven. He has ascended to Heaven on high and is at the right hand of the Father. He declares in Matthew 5:14, "Ye [If you go back to Matthew 5:1, you find the antecedent are the Disciples, those who are committed to following the discipline of Christ.] are the light of the world." We are to reflect Him. As John said, "as he is so are we in this world" (1 John 4:27). We are to radiate His light, convey His will, and show forth His attributes to a lost and dying world.

He is merciful. Therefore, as His Disciples we are to be merciful. Second Corinthians 5:20 denotes us as "ambassadors for Christ." In this time world, we who are the believers, the saints, should not take a self-righteous, holier-than-thou attitude toward a lost and dying world. Rather, we should be those through whom God radiates out His love and concern. We are to be those who through our love and concern and by example lead mankind to the mercy of God. We are here in Christ's stead and those who are truly spiritual, those who truly have a great desire, those who truly "hunger and thirst" (Matthew 5:6), will have a keen desire to see others led to righteousness and will have a keen desire to see them led to the mercy of God.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE BEATITUDES: THE MERCIFUL

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

Here we see our Lord making a startling exclamation to His audience in the first century A.D. In the original Aramaic language Christ exclaims, "O the blessedness of the merciful" (Matthew 5:7). Here our Blessed Lord utters a shocking, yet profound Truth. By the help of God, we want to take a little further look into what was initially considered to be a peculiar Beatitude. As we examine this verse, we notice that it occupies a pivotal position in these Beatitudes. It is the fifth in a series of nine. This is significant as there are four that precede it and four that succeed it. This vividly portrays that this lesson is in the center, revealing to us that the doctrine of mercy is at the very center of Christ's teachings. This reveals that true Christianity centers around mercy.

To those in the first century, this was a startling and a peculiar concept. The old Law, the Old Testament economy, was designed to deal in justice, not in mercy. In Hebrews 10:28, the sacred writer tells us, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy." In our lesson text, Christ is revealing that a new economy is being instituted. The Old Testament, as Galatians 3:22 tells us, "hath concluded all under sin, and left man in a powerless condition, unable to change His spiritual position or his nature. When the Law was violated, as the Hebrew Writer declared in Hebrews 10:28, they "died without mercy."

However, Christ came to introduce to us what the Hebrew Writer termed "a new and living way" ( Hebrews 10:20). In this inaugural address of His public ministry, He reveals that central to this new way is an attribute called "mercy." In this first century of time in which He was speaking, mercy was not considered a Divine quality. So this text was a shock when He exclaimed, "O the blessedness of the merciful"(the original Aramaic language). It was a novel and unique concept. Here He equates being merciful with the state of blessedness. He brings together what, in the minds of those in the audience that He spoke to in the first century, seemed to be opposites. They seemed to be diametrically opposed one to the other. But here Christ equates being merciful with the state of blessedness that He came to bring to mankind. Also, the Greek word used for the word "blessed" in Matthew 5:7 is *makarios* and it means "a God-like quality." So, here in this text He reveals that being merciful is being God-like.

Now, the questions arise: What does this verse actually mean? What is the Truth that it He is attempting to convey to you and me? What does this passage actually mean when it says "the merciful" in Matthew 5:7? Who are they? What is this mercy? How does it work? What does it do?" These are some of the questions which loom to mind when we begin to consider this text.

Let us begin to examine this passage and consider the truths that are housed within it. In Matthew 5:7, Jesus declares, "Blessed are the

merciful." Now let us examine this text. Let us consider that, first of all, He says, "Blessed" or "O the blessedness" in the actual Aramaic. An exclamation from the very heart of the Divine pouring forth a burden to communicate to mankind, particularly to this audience as it was comprised there. He desired that they are able to enjoy this blessedness, this attribute that enables man to continue to enjoy that blessed state that He came to bring. So Christ declares, "O the blessedness of the merciful." Now, let us examine it. The Greek word here for "merciful" is the word *eleemon* but it is based on the Hebrew and Aramaic word which is *chesedh*. Now this word *chesedh* is an untranslatable word. There is no word in the English language to correlate with this particular word. It is a word which is unique. In its original text, it is a very descriptive word. It does not mean only to sympathize with the person in the conventional sense, but this Aramaic word *chesedh* tells us that this is a mercy that means "the ability to get right inside of the other person." To get inside in such a sense that we can see things with their eyes, think things with their mind and feel with their feelings. This word that we translate as "mercy" is actually sympathy in the literal sense of the word. Not sympathy in the conventional and common sense as we employ it today, but in its actual original and literal meaning. Sympathy is derived from two Greek words: *syn*, which means "together with," and *paschein*, which means "to experience or to suffer." So the literal rendition of the word sympathy means "experiencing things together with the other person," literally going through what they are going through.

What is the picture here? Why is this particular word employed? This verse depicts the very incarnation of Jesus Christ, which is a central theme and a central doctrine to true Christianity. Certainly this is exactly what Jesus Christ did in His First Advent. In John 1:1 the Divine penman declares, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The Amplified Bible renders it in this manner, "In the beginning [before all time] was the Word [Christ], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself." John 1:14 declares, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Back in the prophetic writings of that great Messianic prophet Isaiah, he penned in Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Here in this in this prophetic passage we see two very distinct things. He says, "unto us a son is given." Here we find recognition of the pre-existent eternal Christ. Sad to say, many cannot view Christ any further back than the incarnation. In the prophecy of Micah 5:2, it says, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; [A prophetic expression of Jesus Christ.] whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." So, Christ was a pre-existent eternal Christ. When the "Son is given," we see this pre-existent eternal Christ of God making His Advent into the earth.

How did He make His Advent into the earth?" This pre-existent eternal Christ moved into the flesh of a child and was born. Why did this occur? Why was incarnation necessary? To truly understand, to truly be able to have mercy, He had to get inside of man. Hebrews 10:5 declares, "a body hath thou prepared me." Why was this necessary? Someone may say, "So He could sacrifice that body." Certainly that was one aspect, but look a

little earlier in the Hebrew letter. In Hebrews 2:16-18 the penman writes: "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. [Why?] Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be merciful [Or The Amplified Bible renders it 'a merciful (sympathetic)'] and faithful high priest . . . For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." The Amplified Bible makes verse 18 a little clearer, "For because He Himself [in His humanity] has suffered in being tempted (tested and tried), He is able [immediately] to run to the cry of (assist, relieve) those who are being tempted and tested and tried [and who therefore being exposed to suffering]."

What is the lesson here? Christ is able to be, as The Amplified Bible renders it, "a merciful (sympathetic) and faithful High Priest" because He got inside of man's flesh and lived and walked as a man. He was "tempted (tested and tried)," as The Amplified Bible declares, as man is. He suffered as man does. He was in every aspect physically and mentally "made like unto his brethren" (Hebrews 2:17) so much so that Hebrews 4:15 says, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities." (One rendering says, "to have fellow feelings with our weakness.") The Englishman's Greek New Testament says "to sympathize with our infirmities." Remember that the word sympathize means literally "experiencing things together with the other person."

So when our text declares here in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful," what is it portraying? We must remember it is the fifth of nine Beatitudes. Four precede it and four succeed it. It is the very center. It is the center most teaching and as such represents the most central doctrine of all Christianity. All revolves around it. Without it in the center, without it as the hub, the other spokes are all useless. What is it? Matthew 5:7 here says, "Blessed are the merciful," Or the Aramaic says, "Blessed are the *chesedh*," those with the ability to get inside the other person.

First of all, this portrays our example, Jesus Christ. He did not come in His First Advent in the form of some supernatural being that was immune to all human feeling and frailties and emotions. But rather, Romans 8:3 says that He came "in the likeness of sinful flesh." Why? Why did He do such a thing? Because Romans 8:3 goes on and tells us that He came "for sin, and condemned sin in the flesh." For Christ to ever be able to change man, He first had to be able to relate to mankind. He got inside of mankind through the incarnation. He could think as man thought. He could see as man saw. He could feel as man could feel and because of that He knows how to apply the remedy to the needs of mankind's souls.

How does that relate to our lesson text? Our text says "blessed are the merciful: [But, notice it goes on to say,] for they shall obtain mercy." Here it clearly implies that the "merciful," as verse seven denotes them, is in the plural. He goes on to refer to them as "they," speaking of a group or body of people. What does this reveal to us? Christ is in this address speaking to an exclusive group of people. Matthew 5:1 tells us, He was addressing "his disciples." In this discourse He is setting down the tenets of the new economy of the New

Testament era of time. He was laying forth that which was to be perpetuated long after His departure and His ascension. In John 9:5 Jesus said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." But, yet in Matthew 5:14 Jesus says. "Ye [Who was He addressing? His disciples (Matthew 5:1).] are the light of the world." This teaches us that He was preparing them. He was laying the groundwork for the time when He would not be any longer "in the world" (John 9:5). He was laying forth the groundwork for the time when He would be gone and they and we would be here in His stead.

What is He teaching us? In Matthew 5:6, He talked about hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Having a vehement desire to see others embrace salvation and really, truly be saved. In this verse, He is letting us know that He was incarnated to get inside of mankind to be "a merciful (sympathetic) and faithful High Priest" (Hebrews 2:17 as denoted in The Amplified Bible), to know how man sees, to know how man thinks, and to know how man feels so that He could properly administer the remedy to mankind. Now He is teaching us as He did in John 13:15, "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." He is our example. Peter spoke of Christ in 1 Peter 2:21 as "leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." The Apostle John said in 1 John 4:17, "As he is, so are we in this world." Here we find repeated that He is to be our example and we are to follow His steps. He is now saying, "I was incarnated into the body of a man, into a body of flesh that I might see as they saw, think as they thought and feel as they felt. And by knowing how they thought, how they saw and how they felt I could truly know how to administer their needs. Now, I have gone away and you, the Church, the saints are now the light of the world. You are now here in My stead. And you must take on My attributes, and you must be God-like. And you, having been raised to that blessed experience of salvation yourself must now shine and take My place in this time world. And show the world through you, that you know how to be that one that can properly lead them to that remedy."

We are here in His stead. In His stead the saints, who now have "Christ . . . formed in you" (Galatians 4:19), are now to be Christ's Body. We are now to be Christ incarnate in this world. We are to identify with the lost, which we once were, to realize how they think, how they see, and how they feel. Then know how to extend this mercy to them by relating our experience, our testimony and letting them know how we thought, how we saw things, and how we felt. Then show them how we came in contact with Jesus Christ and how He brought a remedy to us, how He understood where we were. He understood how we felt and He understood our failures, our deficiencies, and our sins. Because He could understand, He could apply the remedy in a proper manner, and we are now here as His Body. We are here in His stead. Christ is incarnated in you and me as children of God and now we are to relate our experience, our testimony. He is incarnated in us and He desires for us to extend this mercy to them that they might enjoy the remedy as we enjoy it. We are to be here as His representatives. He is now incarnated in us as His people and we are His body. We are to be standing between Him and a lost and dying world. We are to show the lost and dying world what Christ has done for us. We are to relate to them that we might lead them to real salvation, that they might be elevated to this blessed experience that Jesus Christ came to bring to mankind.



So, when Jesus exclaimed in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful," He was speaking of the incarnation, not only initially of His own incarnation, but the incarnation of Christ into His people, showing forth the God-like attributes to a lost and a dying world that they might be raised to this state and experience of blessedness as well.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE BEATITUDES: THE MERCIFUL

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*

In this lesson before us, we have the most central Beatitude of all. This particular Beatitude is the fifth in a series of nine. And by being fifth, it occupies a unique position. It has four which precede it and four which succeed it. This lesson is exactly in the center of all the others. It portrays, by its position being in the center, that this teaching is central of all the teachings of Christianity. So, by the help of God, we want to look a little further into this cry which the Lord made when He exclaimed in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful," or in the actual Aramaic language it is, "O the blessedness of the merciful."

As we view this passage of Scripture text, we must recognize that the text is part of a larger context and as such it is part of a progression. In these lessons, commonly known as "The Beatitudes," He is portraying the route to life initially and then how that life may be sustained perpetually. When Christ, darkened these shores in His First Advent, He gave the burden of His heart and of His Advent in Luke 19:10, when He declared, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This was the primary burden of His first Advent. It was to come to bring salvation to a lost mankind. In John 10:10 He declared, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." His desire was to bring salvation to mankind that they might have life. That initially they might gain an experience whereby they could have eternal life. Not only to have it initially, but have it more abundantly, or to the full, and then to be able to sustain and enjoy it perpetually. So, in these lessons we are seeing a Divine progression set forth on how man might obtain this experience, maintain this experience, and even perpetuate it in the lives of others.

In these lessons, we see not just some disjointed proverbial sayings, but rather we see a progression that is integrally tied together. In Matthew 5:3, He describes conviction. In verse 4, He portrays conversion. In verse 5, He shows consecration. In verse 6, He portrays craving. In verse 7 we see He described incarnation. What do we mean when we use the word incarnation? Webster's New World Dictionary gives us insight and a definition of the word incarnate or incarnation. We find the words come from two different portions of two different Latin words. The word *in* of course means "in" and *caro* or *carnis* means "flesh." Literally, the word incarnation or *incarnis* means "in flesh." It is the endowment with a human body.

How do we get incarnation from this lesson text in Matthew 5:7? Jesus cried in the Aramaic language saying, "O the blessedness of the merciful." The word that is used here for merciful was the Aramaic word *chesedh*. This word literally means, "the ability to get inside of the other person." This is exactly what Jesus did in His incarnation. He came not in some supernatural form, but rather as "in the likeness of

sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3) so that He might "be a merciful and faithful high priest" (Hebrews 2:17). Christ came in the form of man that He might make man into the form or image of God. The Apostle Paul penned it in this manner, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

However, in order to relate to man in the truest sense, in order to deal with man in the clearest manner, He first had to become a man. He had to see with the eyes of man, think with his mind, and feel with his feelings. Hebrews 2:17 says, "It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren." The Greek word for behoved means, "a necessity." Why was it a necessity? He came into a world that was bound by sin. He came to a people who were enslaved and entrapped by their flesh. He came in the flesh to understand how they felt, what they faced, and yet show them that under the power of the Holy Spirit of God, the flesh could be controlled and that man can live as God ordained.

Let us look at our lesson text closely. Here in Matthew 5:7 Jesus said, "O the blessedness of the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Aramaic). Here He refers to the merciful as "they" in the plural. Why? Because in this text He is addressing a sole group of people. He tells us who they are, the Divine penman does, in Matthew 5:1-2 when he says: "and when he was set his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, [Who? The Disciples.] saying . . . ." So He was addressing an exclusive group of people. He, was addressing His disciples.

Why was Christ uttering such as He did in our lesson, "Blessed are the merciful"? He was portraying the position that the saints are to occupy in this world. We are here in His stead. This "body," simply referred to as "they" in our text, is the body of believers in this time world. The body is the Church. In Colossians 1:18 the Apostle Paul clearly says, "the body, the church." Yes, Christ was incarnated and He was mercy personified, but He ascended back to the Father and left "His Body" here in His stead. He said very clearly in John 9:5, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." However, He is no longer in this world. When He addressed these Disciples in Matthew 5:14, He said "Ye [Who? 'His Disciples' (Matthew 5:1).] are the light of the world." What does that tell us? He was preparing His people for a time when He would be gone, when He would be removed in a corporal manner, from this time world, but we, the disciples, the saints, the Church would be here in His stead. He is portraying the position that the saints are to occupy in this world. He was letting us know that He was going to ascend back to the Father, but He left His Body here in His stead. Now, through the Holy Spirit of God, He is incarnated or in the flesh in us. In Galatians 2:20, the Apostle Paul substantiates this thought when He said "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Here the Apostle Paul said, "But Christ liveth in me: And the life I now live in the flesh." So, this incarnation of Christ into His flesh was a picture of Christ in flesh incarnated in us, in the saints, in the Church.

Just as in the original incarnation, Isaiah 9:6 tells us "a son is given." Just as the pre-existent, eternal Christ was given and moved into a body, into a child that was born, so the Son is given to us in an

experience of salvation and moves into our bodies. Just as that Babe's body became the body of Christ by His presence there, so when He moves into our lives His presence is there and we become a part of the Body of Christ. First Corinthians 12:15-16 tells us that we become the foot, the hand, the ear, the eye. What is the lesson? The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:20, "God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." One rendering says "as one representing Christ." The Church, the saints represent Christ in the world. We are here in His stead. We are here in His place and if the world is to see Christ, they must see Him incarnated in the life of the saints. If they are to see mercy, they must first of all, see it from the saints. When the world looks at a child of God they should see Jesus Christ.

In Colossians 3:4 it says, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear." Immediately when men read that, their minds run right off to the Second Advent of Christ. But read the text closely. It says, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear." How does He appear? He appears through our life. He has now moved inside. He is now our life, incarnated through us. The Apostle John substantiated this truth as well when he penned in 1 John 4:2, "Every spirit that confesseth." Now stop and think. How does the spirit confess? It confesses by the way an individual lives. It manifests itself through actions. So here the Divine penman says, "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." It is not referring to His flesh. It did not say, "come in His flesh," but rather, "come in the flesh," the very flesh of the believer. It is not telling us that if they have the Spirit of God it will confess in the flesh. It will confess in their very flesh by the deeds done in that body and the actions performed. The incarnation takes place in our flesh, by the Holy Spirit of God moving in our flesh through the experience of salvation. So, if we, the saints, the true Church, are His Body, if we are here in His stead, in His place as His representatives, if we are "as he is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17), then we are the ones who are responsible to show mercy to men first.

Why is it such a blessing to be merciful? Because we are the conduit from Christ to lost mankind. That certainly is the most high and holy honor that man could ever perform—that of being a conduit from Christ to His creation or being a conduit from the Savior to a sinner. This is why it is such a blessedness to be able to be as His Body, as His representatives in a position where we are here as His conduits to bring a link and a connection from Christ to a Christ-less mankind. If men are to see mercy, they must see it first through the merciful. They must see it through those who have Christ Incarnate in their very lives.

We are to be the conduit from Christ to lost mankind. Why? Because we can truly understand how they think and how they feel because we were once there ourselves. Every saint who is enjoying the blessings of real salvation today, was at one time a sinner. Because they were once a sinner, they can understand how a sinner thinks, feels, and what a sinner sees. Now that Christ has moved into our flesh and incarnated Himself in us, we can be here in His stead. We can represent Christ to mankind because we know how they think and how they feel and yet we know the bliss that comes through real salvation. I say we can truly understand how they think, how they feel, because we were once there ourselves.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 the Apostle penned: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, no revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were [past tense] some of you: but ye are washed." We, as saints, can understand the lost because we were once lost ourselves. We can understand how a sinner, who is bound with the habits of life, feels. We can understand how one feels who is enslaved by their passions. We know how that the enemy causes the lost to think and to see things, but thank God, because the Lord has incarnated Himself in our lives, we can tell the lost of the great transformation that can take place in a heart and a life by letting Jesus Christ make His advent into that life. We, as those who were lost and who are now saints, are to be the ones to introduce the lost to mercy.

What does our text mean when it says, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy"? Remember, mercy is the Aramaic word, *chesedh* and it means "the ability to get inside of the other person. To think with their mind and feel with their feelings." Why did He say, "Blessed are the merciful: for they [the merciful] shall obtain mercy"? Christ is saying, "Do not get too high and mighty. Do not take a pharisaical, holier-than-thou attitude, not even toward the lost. Seek to relate to them [Why?] Seek to understand them to know how they think and feel. [Why?] Because there will be times through your Christian race that you will need me to relate to you, to understand how you think and how you feel."

Hebrews 2:17, speaking of Christ, says, "that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest." The Amplified Bible says, "in order that He might become a merciful (sympathetic) and faithful High Priest." There will be times when we will need Him to understand us. Hebrews 7:25 says, "seeing he ever liveth to make intercession." The Apostle Paul practiced the admonition well. He said in 1 Corinthians 9:22, "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some."

Christ, according to Hebrews 3:1, is the "High Priest of our profession." But we are, according to Revelation 5:10, "kings and priests." He is the High Priest, but we are priests and we stand in this time world in a responsible position between God and man. We, as His saints and His children, are to be His Body, His conduit to take mercy to lost mankind. Our attitude towards the lost is vitally important, not only for their welfare, but for ours as well.

In this lesson here in Matthew 5:7, we see that immutable law of sowing and reaping portrayed. When we fail to recognize the feelings of others, then we are in jeopardy of not recognizing or acknowledging our feelings when we are in the trying scenes of life. When we take a harsh stand towards those who have failed, those who have done despite to the Spirit of Grace even though they may be wrong, we must render unto them an attitude of mercy lest we jeopardize receiving mercy when we go through a difficult or low place in our experience. The law the Apostle Paul penned so clearly and explicitly in Galatians 6:7 when he declared, "whatsoever man soweth, that [that very thing] shall he also reap."

Here in this fifth and central-most Beatitude we see the central doctrine of Christianity—be merciful to others. Seek to understand and

to relate to their feelings. Do not feel repulsive to them or feel that they are beneath you. Why? First, because you can never help them with that attitude and second, you will reap what you sow.

We are certainly not speaking, nor was Jesus, of condoning wrongdoing. We must hate every evil way. We must hate every sin. However, while we hate sin, we must never allow it to affect our attitude towards the sinner. We need to understand that we need to show forth the Incarnated Christ in the very attitudes that we take. Because we will need Christ to understand and relate to us. Only by being "the merciful" (Matthew 5:7) and truly feeling for the lost, truly wanting to reach out with an understanding heart and show them what Christ has done through His incarnation in our lives, only by this can we be as the next Beatitude describes in Matthew 5:8, "the pure in heart."

The question is, are you a real disciple? Are you one of "the merciful?" For only by allowing the Incarnate Christ, through the Holy Spirit, to radiate out through our lives and be able to relate to those who are lost and lead them to the new and living way, without prejudice, without attitude, only by that can we be as the next Beatitude declares, "the pure in heart."

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PURE IN HEART

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."*

In this passage of Scripture text, we see our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in the midst of that famed discourse which we each familiarly known as "The Sermon on the Mount." In the opening verses of this address in Matthew 5:3-12, He utters some very profound truths that have come to be commonly called "The Beatitudes."

Our text in Matthew 5:8 is the sixth in a series of nine of these very succinct declarations of truth. By the help of the Holy Spirit of God, we want to consider this passage where Jesus exclaimed "Blessed are the pure in heart . . . ." Or as it was rendered in the original Aramaic language, "O the blessedness of the pure in heart . . . ."

As we begin to consider these divine words, we notice again that it commences as each of the last five Beatitudes, and even as all that succeed it as well, with the word "blessed." This reveals to us Christ's burden in setting forth these teachings. The Latin word for our English word "blessed" in Matthew 5:8, as in all these verses, is the word *beati*. This is a word which denotes "blessedness." The Latin word for "blessedness" is the word *beatitudo* and means "a declaration of blessedness from the lips of Jesus Christ." Hence the terminology "The Beatitudes."

In these lessons Christ is portraying to mankind how they may be lifted from sin and degradation and be brought to a position and an experience of blessedness. He is portraying how man might have more than momentary happiness or pleasure. In Hebrews 11:25 the sacred writer tells us, ". . . the pleasures of sin [are] for a season . . . ." This is telling us that they are not lasting, they are not permanent. Rather they are only "for a season." The Amplified Bible describes it well when it renders this passage as ". . . the fleeting enjoyment of a sinful life." Those who live only to gratify the flesh and fulfill fleshly pleasures are "dead while she liveth" (1 Timothy 5:6). Or The Amplified Bible renders it, "Whereas she who lives in pleasure and self-gratification [giving herself up to luxury and self-indulgence] is dead even while she [still] lives." Man in sin is in a dead state. Ephesians 2:1 says, ". . . dead in trespasses and sins . . . ."

Sin only has pleasure for a very limited space of time and that space of time is the sowing season. This is why the wise man in his writings penned in Ecclesiastes 12:1, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth [Why?], while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them . . . ." The Scripture teaches us in Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There is an immutable, unchangeable law of retribution that what a man sows, that shall he reap. Yes, there may be pleasure in sin initially in the sowing season, but in Ecclesiastes 12:1 the wise man said, ". . . while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have

no pleasure . . . ." There is a time in sin when there is no pleasure. Those are the evil days or the years of reaping. So sin has no pleasure in the season of reaping. Any enjoyment that men may derive from sin is short lived and temporary.

Man in sin is in a dead state, but Jesus cried in John 10:10, ". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Christ came to resurrect man spiritually and raise him to a state of spiritual blessedness. This is not a temporary state, but rather a constant and continual state or experience of blessedness. Through these lessons, He is portraying the route to life initially and then how that life might be sustained perpetually.

Let us consider our lesson text. Notice its placement. It is the sixth Beatitude. What is the significance of this? This verse in Matthew 5:8 declares "Blessed are the pure in heart . . . ." This verse speaks of the most paramount issue-purity. Why is it not the first Beatitude? Why does it not lead all the others? Because purity is the result of other actions. Purity does not exist in and of itself. It is a by-product of other attributes and ingredients. Other Scriptures validate this claim. Look at the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 24:3. The Psalmist poses a question, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" In other words, "Who is a fit candidate for the Church or who will the Lord induct as a member? Who, indeed is fitting? In Psalm 24:4 he goes on and gives us the answer to this inquiry. It says, "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart [Now look closely, there are actions and activities that constitute a pure heart. Look at the remainder of the verse and it qualifies and defines it.]; who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."

This passage reveals at least two truths to us. Number one, purity does not just arbitrarily occur. It is the result of actions taken and conditions being met. Secondly, Psalm 24:4 says, that one ". . . who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity [Portraying to us inward purity.], nor sworn deceitfully." This is portraying something that is outward. It reveals that purity consists of inward and outward components. In this day when men say that only the heart matters, the Psalmist in Psalm 24:4 equates purity with "a pure heart" for both inward and outward actions and qualities.

Let us do as Isaiah declared in Isaiah 28:13 when he says to lay ". . . precept upon precept, line upon line. . . ." The Apostle Peter substantiates the truth about purity as well. Let us lay this precept on the Psalmist's precept. In 1 Peter 1:22 the Apostle Peter penned, "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently . . . ." We see explicitly portrayed before us that purity comes ". . . in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . . ."

Purity has prerequisites, and so it is in our lesson text. Why does it follow these other Beatitudes? Why is it placed where it is? Because the fulfillment of these other attributes in the life is necessary to produce purity. Without incorporating the first five Beatitudes into our lives and experience, we cannot truly be pure. We are purified by or through our efforts and actions to obey these other Beatitudes. When they are revealed to us and we understand the truths contained within



these writings, then we are to "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7). When we walk and incorporate that light, that understanding, into our living, the by-product is purity.

Let us survey the previous lessons. Beginning in Matthew 5:3 it says, Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . ." This is one who has had the divine revelation strike their soul that they are spiritually bankrupt. They are in utter, absolute, and abject poverty. They realize that they are "sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). They have nothing with which to redeem themselves or buy back their freedom. When the stark realization of this strikes their souls, then Matthew 5:4 says, "Blessed are they that mourn . . . ." They will mourn as for one who is dead, for in reality they spiritually are such. This mourning, or the Apostle Paul terms it "godly sorrow" takes place. Second Corinthians 7:10 tells us that ". . . godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. . . ." When salvation comes, Matthew 5:4 says, ". . . they shall be comforted." Or in reality, they shall receive the Comforter. After they gain this experience of salvation and have received spiritual life, the very first thing that the Holy Ghost will teach you is to be "meek" (Matthew 5:5), which means to enter into submission to Christ. To truly be a disciple and inherit, or control, the "earth," or your "earthen vessel," you must put it in its proper place. Then you will have a greater desire for the things of God. You will "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). Once you become more spiritual yourself, the natural extension of that is you will "hunger and thirst" to see others saved as well. So much so that you will be "merciful" (Matthew 5:7). You will personally become an extension of God's mercy to the lost. You, as a sold-out spiritual saint of God, will be a conduit for God's mercy to flow through, When you have allowed the Spirit of God to work these attributes in your life, then you are "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8).

I trust that we can understand what Jesus is giving us is a progression and a portrayal of not only what initially brings salvation so that a man may obtain this blessed experience, but also an insight as to how it is maintained and even perpetuated to others. Jesus is telling us that when we have allowed the Spirit of God to work these attributes in our lives, then we are "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:9).

Is this what our text is portraying? Well, recall that the Psalmist, as well as the Apostle Peter, taught us that there were conditions prior to purity. This text vividly portrays that truth as well. Let us look closer at verse number eight. Here the divine penman, penning the words of Jesus, says, "Blessed are the pure in heart . . ." (Matthew 5:8). Let us examine this word "pure" a little closer. The Greek word for pure is *katharos* and originally it simply meant "clean." It could be used for referring to soiled clothes that have been washed clean. Certainly this depicts our experience initially. However, this definition is more exhaustive and exclusive. Also, this word *katharos* is regularly used for corn that has been winnowed and cleansed of all chaff. It is also used when speaking of an army that has been purged of discontented, cowardly, unwilling, and inefficient soldiers. (This is a force that is composed solely of first-class fighting men.) It very commonly appears with a Greek adjective *akeratos*. An *akeratos* can be used for milk that is unadulterated with water or as a metal that has no tinge of alloy. So, the basic meaning of *katharos*, or the word translated in the English as

"pure," is unmixed, unadulterated, and unalloyed.

What is the picture being drawn before us? These other attributes, or Beatitudes, have served to purify the saint of God. Originally there was chaff and dross in their life as a saint, but that has been purged out. The Greek word *katharos* is an adjective, but it has a kin word, *kathairo*, which is used in John 15:2 where Jesus said, ". . . every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it . . . ." *Kathairo* means "to purge or to prune." God's manner of producing purity is through purging or pruning. He has us lay aside things as we spiritually mature. Speaking of the Gospel Day in Malachi 3:2-3, the prophet says, "But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he [Speaking of Christ. It is a Messianic prophecy.] is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap [Here we can see that the prophet denotes Him as being 'like a refiner's fire.']: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as people, and purge them as gold and silver . . . ." The Lord will only accept one type of people, pure people! By giving us knowledge and understanding, He causes us to ". . . lay aside every weight . . ." (Hebrews 12:1). By revelation of truth to us through the Word and the Spirit, He enables us to take hold of truths, such as those incorporated in these Beatitudes, and be able to integrate them into our lives. By doing this we "lay aside every weight." We lay aside the things that are contrary to us and not only contrary to us but also to souls as well. We must ever have on our mind not only our own welfare, but we must have on our mind the welfare of the body of Christ, the Church, and its influence. Isaiah 62:1 says, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace . . . ." True saints who are indeed "pure in heart" consider Zion, which is a figurative expression representing the Church (Hebrews 12:22-23).

Those who are truly "pure in heart" give consideration to the impact that their actions and activities will have on the Church. Not only do they consider the Church, but they also consider others. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 8:13, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Here it portrays to us that one who is truly "pure in heart" does not desire, in any manner, to be a stumbling block to others. They do not desire to be offensive. The wise man said in Proverbs 18:19, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city . . . ."

These ones who are truly "pure in heart" are those who have had a revelation of precious truths. By taking hold of those precious truths, they have integrated them into their lives and laid aside those things that are not only contrary to them, but also the things that would work against the influence of truth or the true body of Christ. They do not want to be a stumbling block to precious souls. As they are performing these things that are edifying and beneficial to them and the souls of others, they truly are "the pure in heart."

This purity is a product that is produced by practicing these truths listed in the previous verses. Because of the purging and pruning that these other truths produced, the one who has incorporated these truths in their lives are truly "pure" (Matthew 5:8), or *katharos* (unmixed, unadulterated and unalloyed). In other words, they are prompted by

totally unmixed motives. They are under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and are doing as they do, without ulterior motives or designs.

In Part Two we will look a little further at this purity and we will see what these unmixed motives entail.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PURE IN HEART

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

We have been studying a series of lessons concerning what is commonly referred to as, "The Beatitudes." In these lessons Christ unveils the burden of His heart concerning the blessed experience that He came to bring to mankind. When the angel of the Lord spoke to Joseph in a dream, he declared, ". . . for he [Speaking of Christ.] shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). He is revealing to us the express purpose for His advent into this time world. It was to make salvation available to all mankind. Through these lessons, He shows the ingredients, or components, necessary to initially obtain salvation and then what is necessary to maintain that blessed experience of salvation.

In our text, we see the sixth, in a series of nine, truth being held forth before us. Jesus exclaims in Matthew 5:8, "Blessed are the pure in heart . . . ." This Beatitude initially appears to be out of sequence. By the help of God, we want to look a little further into this particular passage. As we view this text, the thought would arise "pure in heart." Why should purity not be at the head of the Beatitudes? Should it not lead all of these other truths? Is not purity of the most paramount importance? Yes, it is indeed of supreme importance. However, we must recognize that purity does not just occur. We must recognize that purity is a product of other activities and other actions.

The Apostle Peter penned in 1 Peter 1:22, "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently . . . ." The Apostle Peter speaks in similar tones as our Lord spoke in this particular Beatitude. The Apostle Peter speaks of a pure heart. He then gives us a keen insight to how that pure heart, or purity, is produced. He tells us several truths and this reveals many things to us. First, it reiterates the truth that purity does not just occur. It does not arbitrarily take place. It must be produced by other moves. It must be produced by having certain other ingredients prior to this end result. This lets us know that it must be produced by other moves and by meeting certain conditions. Secondly, he reveals, in explicit detail, what those conditions are.

Let us look at just a few of these conditions. He talks about obeying the truth. What is it that we are to obey? Not the doctrinal stance of some man-made organization. Not the words of some mere religious advocates. Not that which has been voted on by some democratic body and then prescribed to be followed by its adherents. Not being merely immersed into a baptismal pool. But rather we find here that the condition is obeying. What is it that we are to obey? Certainly not man. The Apostle Peter said in Acts 5:29, ". . . We ought to obey God rather than man." Here he talks about obeying the truth. So what is it that we are to obey? In Romans 10:16 it says, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel . . . ." So, the Apostle Paul teaches that it is the Gospel that

we are to obey.

Is truth indeed what we are to obey? Peter said "obeying the truth" (1 Peter 1:22). What is truth? Pilate posed that question in John 18:38 and Jesus gave the answer in John 17:17 when He declared, ". . . thy word is truth." So, we find that number one, the condition is that we must obey. Secondly, we find that it is very explicit what we must obey. We must obey the truth or the Word. Will this make one pure? Consider the words of the Psalmist. In Psalm 119:9 he says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." One rendering, speaking of the cleansing says "pure." The Amplified Bible renders it in this manner, "How shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed and keeping watch [on himself] according to Your word [conforming his life to it]." So, purity is the product of conforming your life to the Word of God as the Spirit of God gives you a revelation and understanding.

Peter talked about obeying the truth through the Spirit. You can only walk in what has been revealed and what you have understanding of through the Spirit of God. An understanding of such truths, as in our prior studies of the Beatitudes, will enable you and me to walk in purity. The purity in our lesson text is the result of conforming to and incorporating into our lives the truths of the previous verses. However, it also goes further than that.

In Matthew 5:8 Jesus exclaims in the original Aramaic (the language in which this text was spoken), "O the blessedness of the pure in heart . . . ." The Greek word that the English renders "pure" in Matthew is *katharos*. It is regularly used for corn that has been winnowed, or sifted, and cleansed of all chaff. It is also the word used for an army that has been purged of all discontented, cowardly, and inefficient soldiers. This army is a force composed solely of first class fighting men. The basic meaning of the word *kathros* is "unmixed, unadulterated, and unalloyed." What does this portray to us? It depicts the true disciple, the true saint of God. It depicts one whose motives are unmixed and their intentions are totally unadulterated. These saints stand in this time world as Christ's representatives and ambassadors.

Let us examine this purity. First, let us view our example in all things, Jesus Christ. In 1 Peter 2:21-22 the sacred writer pens, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow in his steps: [The question must arise, 'What were His steps?'] Who did no sin, neither was guile [The Amplified Bible says, 'deceit.'] found in his mouth . . . ." Here we find that Christ was unmixed. He was not duplicitous. He was pure. Christ was the epitome of purity and of selflessness. To truly be pure and unmixed, one must be selfless and have their will yielded totally to the will of God.

On that fateful night in the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed those very familiar words in Matthew 26:39, ". . . nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." The one who is truly pure and unmixed desires and does one thing—God's will. Jesus said in John 6:38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will but the will of him that sent me." This is the desire of everyone who is truly pure. Their purpose is single and unmixed.

Jesus said in Matthew 6:22, ". . . if therefore thine eye be single,

thy whole body shall be full of light." What did Jesus mean? Though in the natural we have two eyes, they must work in harmony and produce one image. They must see one thing. They cannot work independently of one another. When they have a single purpose, a single focus, they can see and go after one thing. So are we to be in the spiritual. Though we have the flesh to contend with and a human will, we must bring that will and humanity in our flesh into harmony with the Spirit of God and the divine will. To truly be pure as the Bible holds forth purity, we must have singleness of purpose to perform the divine will. To do this, to truly be a disciple, the human will must be conquered and brought into submission to the divine will.

Luke 9:23 says, "And he [Jesus] said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Here we see the very first prerequisite of discipleship is self-denial. The Amplified Bible makes it even more graphic and says, "And He said to all, If any person wills to come after Me, let him deny himself [disown himself, forget, lose sight of himself and his own interests refuse and give up himself] and take up his cross daily and follow Me [cleave steadfastly to Me, conform wholly to My example in living and, if need be, in dying also]." In this day of self-actualization, self-realization, self-fulfillment, and self-esteem, to many this seems to be an antiquated and archaic teaching. However, this is what constitutes Biblical purity.

One of the reasons we see confusion over our land today is because men, who profess to be men of God, are not selfless they are selfish. They are pursuing their own selfish interests, serving their own self-will, and following their own self-fulfilling agenda, which is diametrically opposed to the very Gospel of Jesus Christ. Biblical purity can only be fulfilled at the cost of self being slain. Self is a deadly foe to purity because it will try to mix and blend the divine will with the human will. This is fatal to your experience of salvation. This is why the wise man warned us ages ago to "lean not unto thine own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). Why did he pen that? He knew there was a natural inclination for you and me to lean to our own understanding. We cannot allow self to have expression and expect that the experience of our salvation, that blessedness Jesus wanted us to perpetually enjoy, would continue to remain intact. Self will slay salvation and salvation will slay self.

The deception of our day is many allow self to have free reign. They allow a deceptive spirit to work upon themselves and make them think they are doing God's work, when all along it is nothing more than a manifestation of self, prompted by Satan. I would like you to read an article that a dear man of God, who has now gone on to be with the Lord, gave me a number of years ago. Because I believe it says it so well, it is entitled:

#### SELF

"The last enemy destroyed in the believer is self. He dies hard. It will make any concession if allowed to live. Self will permit the believer to do anything, give anything, suffer anything, go anywhere, take any liberties, bear any crosses, afflict soul, body, to any degree, anything, if it can live. It will allow victory over pride, penuriousness and passion if not destroyed itself. It will permit any

number of rivals so long as it can be promised the first place. It will consent to live in a hovel, in a garret, in the slums, in faraway heathendom, if only its life be spared. It will endure any garb, any fare, any menial service rather than die. But this concession must not be granted. Self is too great a foe to the child of God. It is everywhere present. It is the fly that spoils the ointment, the fox that spoils the vine. It provokes God and man and its own possessor. It drives to insomnia, invalidism, and insanity. It produces disorder and disarrangement in the whole physical, mental, and spiritual constitution. It talks back, excuses and vindicates itself, and never apologizes. IT MUST DIE! 'Dying to self' is a poetic expression. It sounds romantic, heroic, chivalrous, supernatural, saint-like. It is beautiful to read about, edifying to think about, easy to talk about, entertaining to theorize about, refreshing to dream about, fascinating to write about, but it is hard to do. There is no abiding peace, power, or prosperity without it. We must die to good deeds and to bad deeds, to successes and to failures, to superiority and inferiority, to leading and following, to exaltation and to humiliation, to our life's work, to our friends, to our foes, to every manifestation of self and to self itself. Jesus said, 'The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified . . . Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; but he that loseth his life shall find it. He that will come after me, let him deny himself" (John 12:23-25; Matthew 10:39; Matthew 16:24). Jesus could not be glorified until after death, nor can He be glorified in His people glorified until after death, nor can He be glorified in His people till self dies, Self lifted up repels, Happy are those who can say with Paul from a real experience, 'I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life [which] I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me'" (Galatians 2:20).

Now, why does our lesson say in Matthew 5:8, "O the blessedness of the pure in heart . . .?" Because only those who are dead to self, truly a disciple, follow Christ with singleness of heart and purpose are able to maintain this blessed state that Jesus came to bring to mankind. But it goes even farther than that. Only those who are pure can be the true representatives and emissaries for God and truth. Look at the Apostle Paul's words in Acts 20:26-27, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. [How could he say this? Look at the next verse.] For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Why was He pure? Because this can only be done by a "selfless person." One who is "selfless" declares all the counsel even when it might not be to their personal advantage to do so.

We need to understand that the "pure in heart" will speak the truth when softer words would be easier and have less repercussions and consequences. The pure will do what is right even when it is to their disadvantage. The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:15, "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." The truly "selfless" disciple will do as Paul's words describe. In Galatians 4:16 the Apostle posed a question, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" Yet in

Acts 20:24 he says, "But none of these things move me . . . ." Here is the sterling example of the "pure in heart." They have no personal agenda. They are not looking to create a personal following or legacy. Rather they are totally yielded to Christ and His cause. They are truly "ambassadors for Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:20). They realize that they do not represent themselves. They cannot speak for themselves or convey what they feel, but rather they are representatives of another kingdom on foreign soil and can only speak and represent as that Monarch dictates. They have no personal agenda to push and their will is His will. These are the "pure in heart" that our lesson text in Matthew 5:8 speaks of. They are here as His representatives and in His stead.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PURE IN HEART

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."*

We have been studying concerning what is familiarly known as "The Beatitudes." Through the vehicle of these lessons, Christ unravels before us the very critical components that are necessary for man to both obtain and then maintain that blessed state of experience that He came to bring to mankind. In this particular lesson in Matthew 5:8 where Jesus speaks of "the pure in heart," we see the sixth in a series of nine of these Beatitudes. By the help of God, we want to look a little further and conclude our study of this particular Beatitude.

As we consider this lesson, the first question which looms to mind is, "Why this Beatitude is placed such as it is?" Jesus declares, "Blessed are the pure in heart . . . ." Or in the original Aramaic language in which these words were originally spoken, "O the Blessedness of the pure in heart . . . ." But as we begin to consider this Beatitude, does it not initially seem misplaced? Should it not rank at the head, at the very forefront of the listings of things that are necessary for mankind? Why is it placed such as it is?"

As with all Scripture, there is a Divine reason behind its placement. It is because purity does not exist in and of itself. Purity does not just merely occur, but rather purity is the result of moves being made. Purity is the result of measuring to other truths. Purity is a product of other actions therefore it is placed in the position it is in these lessons that we commonly refer to as "The Beatitudes" because purity is the outgrowth or the result of measuring and incorporating the truths of the previous lessons into our lives.

Consider the words of the Apostle Peter in his Epistle. In 1 Peter 1:22 the Apostle pens, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit . . . ." He reveals to us that purity is a result of obeying the truth through the Spirit. He reveals that purity does not exist in and of itself, but purity is a result, it is an effect, of a prior cause. It is in obeying the truth through the Spirit. In the case of our lesson text, purity is the result of incorporating the truths of the previous lessons that Jesus heralded forth into our lives.

In our lesson text the sacred writer, Matthew, uses the word which The King James Version translates in Matthew 5:8 as "pure." However, Matthew used the original Greek word *katharos* which means, "unmixed, unadulterated, and unalloyed." It depicts one who is unmixed. Their intentions and affections are pure. They do not have a mix of their will and the Divine will in their lives. They say, as the Apostle Paul when he spoke those words in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ . . . ." These, who are "pure," have not only incorporated the truths of all the previous verses, but they have all self slain. They are selfless. They truly are the ones who are His disciples and stand in His stead as His representatives in this time world.

In 2 Corinthians 5:20, the Apostle pens here, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." Here we find, the Apostle made it very clear that he was Christ's ambassador. He was here as His representative. He makes it clear that he was representing The Kingdom of God on foreign soil and spoke as the King spoke and as the King directed. The position that he held was not his position, but the position of the King. He is portraying that as one who is truly selfless, one who is crucified with Christ, who is here in Christ's stead, or place, and when he speaks it is Christ speaking through him.

Those who are truly "the pure in heart" do not represent themselves. They do not have a personal agenda. They are not trying to build a following for themselves, but rather they are committed disciples who are representing Christ and they only speak as He speaks. The Apostle Paul was one of these committed disciples who were "pure in heart." In 1 Thessalonians 2:4 he said, ". . . But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we only speak what was allowed." It is clear that he was not to speak of his own will, that he was not to put forth his own ideas or have his own personal agenda, but that he was to be crucified with Christ and that Christ now lived and reigned in his life. He was only able to hold forth the positions that God enabled him to hold. We see here an example of the Apostle Paul as one who was a committed disciple that was indeed "pure in heart." He only held the position that God would have him to hold.

Let us look a little further into our text for we see a very startling statement. Here in Matthew 5:8, in the Aramaic Jesus exclaimed, "O the blessedness of the pure in heart . . . ." Why? Why are they so "blessed?" What is there about being "pure in heart" that it is such a blessed experience? He goes on and declares it is the remainder of the verse in Matthew 5:8, ". . . for they [Who? The pure in heart.] shall see God."

Now, immediately, literal thinking runs right off to eternity or the Judgment Day and thinks that on that day this is when the pure will truly see God. However, this is not mentioned or alluded to anywhere in our text. Jesus is giving us a lesson portraying the experience that man has in the here and the now. the experience that He brought to this time world. He is not taking us beyond time or taking us to eternity or to the Judgment Day. This is not mentioned nor alluded to anywhere in this text.

This passage says "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." The wording here would tend to indicate that this is something exclusive. That it is something reserved only for this selfless group of people, "the pure in heart." We know that Proverbs 30:5 tells us that there is divine truth and divine significance behind every word incorporated in the sacred Scriptures. But yet, Revelation 1:7 says, "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him . . . ." So this text must have reference to something other than the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. It must be something totally different.

Look at the words of the Hebrew writer in Hebrews 12:14 where he declares, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord . . . ." What is he saying? On the Resurrection Day "every eye shall see him" (Revelation 1:7). But in our text He is speaking of something that is only seen by those who have purity and

holiness. In the Hebrew letter the Divine Penman says, ". . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord . . . ." Here the writer reveals to us the manner in which they see the Lord through that one who lives holy or pure.

Look at the preceding verse in Hebrews. Hebrews 12:13, ". . . And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." What is he saying? Saints, he is saying "walk straight." If you do not, the lame one who is struggling may get completely knocked out of the race. But, if you will walk straight, provide a good example, that lame one, that one who is struggling, can be healed. Hebrews 12:14 says, "Follow . . . holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord . . . ." Or The Amplified Bible renders it a little clearer when it says in Hebrews 12:14, ". . . pursue that consecration and holiness without which no one will [ever] see the Lord." So, what is it saying in Hebrews 12:14 when it says, "they shall see the Lord?" He is saying that they will see the Lord in you. If you are a saint of God and a true disciple and showing forth Christ through your life and living, they will see the Lord through your holiness and the holy life.

Is this what our text is saying? Look at Matthew 5:8. It says, "Blessed are the pure in heart [Why?]: for they shall see God." But the question is, "where is He?" If they are "pure in heart," He is in them. Second Corinthians 6:16 says, ". . . for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said I will dwell IN them, and walk IN them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." God is in His people. And His people are a pure, holy people.

In John, Chapter 14, we find Jesus' reply to Philip's question. In John 14:8 Philip said, ". . . Lord, shew us the Father . . . Jesus saith unto him . . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father . . . ." In John 10:30, He said, "I and my Father are one." The Hebrew writer said, speaking of Christ, in Hebrews 1:3 that He was ". . . the EXPRESS IMAGINE of his person . . . ." Or one rendering says ". . . an exact representation of His very being . . . ." So Christ is the "express image" and when one has seen Christ, he has seen the Father, or God.

Look at what the Apostle Paul says when he begins to describe the plan of salvation and the change that it makes in its recipients. In Romans 8:29 he declares, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate . . . ." And how men run off with that clause. But stop a moment and consider who did He foreknow? Isaiah 46:10, speaking of God, says that He is "declaring the end from the beginning . . . ." In Jeremiah 1:5 He said, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee." In Psalm 139:15 the Psalmist declared, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret . . . ." And Acts 10:34 tells us ". . . that God is no respecter of persons. . . ." So who did He foreknow? He knew the end from the beginning. He knew Jeremiah and David and in reality He knew all. For Psalm 147:5 declares, ". . . his understanding is infinite."

Now, go back to Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow [Who did He foreknow? ALL!], he also did predestinate [Who? ALL!] to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [The Son, Christ] might be the FIRSTBORN among many brethren." Here He tells us that many brethren are to be conformed to the image of His Son. Now, recall that Christ, according to Hebrews 1:3, is ". . . the express image of his [God's] person . . . ." One rendering says He is the ". . . flawless expression of the nature of

God . . . ." So if Christ is the "express image of His person" and we are "conformed to the image of His Son," then we, the many brethren, become the "express image of God." If indeed "Christ [is] in you" (Colossians 1:27), then the true disciple, the true saint, "the pure in heart," can say as Christ said in John 14:9, ". . . he that hath seen me hath seen the Father . . . ."

Is this what the Scriptures teach? Look at the Colossian Letter. In Colossians 3:10, the Apostle Paul penned, ". . . And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the IMAGE of him that created him . . . ." Who created him? Who is the Creator? Ephesians 3:9 says, ". . . who created all things by Jesus Christ." Christ is the Creator.

Notice, when the new man is put on it is "after the image of Him." What actually is that image? In Ephesians 4:24, speaking of the same experience, he says, ". . . And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created [How is it created? Colossians 3:10 says, '. . . after the image of him . . . .' But, notice, it defines that image.] in righteousness and true holiness." What is the lesson? The lesson is that one who is truly yielded, who has gained a real experience, and has become a new man (or as 2 Corinthians 5:17 declares, "a new creature" or the Greek renders it "a new creation"), who has had Christ move in through a "knowledge" of precious truths (Colossians 3:10), and then puts on those truths, they are "pure in heart" and they "see God."

How do they see God? They see Him in their purity. They see Him in their holiness. They see Him in their lives. As a real disciple who has died to self and been "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29), they are seeing God in their own lives. When we are conformed to His image, we find that His Son is ". . . the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3). By being "the pure in heart," being truly consecrated, committed, and selfless, we are conformed to His image and His image is the express purpose of God's image. We are in the image of God and we see God in our lives and we are in the image of God and we see God in our lives and in our holiness that we live out that comes from God. We are the world's only avenue to see God. The true saints, the true disciples, The true Church, is the world's only avenue to see God.

But before the world can ever see God the saint must see Him first. If we truly are His disciples, truly selfless to where all that is seen in our lives is God, then we are truly as Matthew 5:8 declares, ". . . the pure in heart. . . ." By living in this blessed state that Jesus talks about, or as John says in 1 John 4:17, ". . . as he is, so are we in this world," not only can we see God, but the lost and dying world may see Him as well. I say, the saints, the Church, is the only hope of the world. The Church and it alone stand as God's residents in this time world.

The world, and even false religion is in chaos and turmoil. And only "the pure in heart" hold the solution to the world's ills because they are pure, unmixed, unadulterated, unalloyed and have no personal agenda, wills, and desire except their Father's. They can be His representatives and His ambassadors. They can show the world, with all of its chaos and confusion, the solution and the route to real lasting durable peace. Only "the pure in heart" are candidates to be "the peacemakers."

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PEACEMAKERS

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

In this passage of the sacred Scriptures, we are introduced to the seventh in a series of nine of what is customarily referred to as "The Beatitudes." In this text Jesus set forth many very vital Truths concerning the role of the disciples in this time world. In this particular verse, our Lord heralds forth the cry in the original language of the text, the Aramaic language, in Matthew 5:9, "O the blessedness of the peacemaker."

As we begin to consider this text, we must recognize that this passage is not an isolated text, but it is part of a much larger context. This verse was spoken in continuity with the surrounding verses. It was spoken as part of a much larger discourse commonly known as, "The Sermon on the Mount." It is a supreme error to isolate any text from its context and expect to arrive at a proper exposition or understanding of the text.

The Apostle Peter laid forth a rule of expositions in his writings that is essential to properly understand the Scriptures. In 2 Peter 1:20 he declared, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." The Apostle Paul, in penning to the young minister Timothy, penned that famed verse in 2 Timothy 2:15 that the Word of God needs to be rightly divided. And if it is to be rightly divided, there are rules to follow. There is a harmony of the Scriptures that must be considered when viewing any particular passage or text. The Scriptures are in a complete scheme and are in harmony. There is harmony and a scheme to the Scriptures in their entirety and they are compatible, they mate up one with the other and validate each other. What is Truth in prophecy, is Truth in the Gospel and the Revelation. What is Truth in the Revelation is Truth in prophecy and in the Gospel.

To gain a proper understanding of any scriptural text, no Scripture can be isolated or private from other Scriptures. And certainly, the Lord does not favor anyone with "any private interpretation" (1 Peter 1:29). We are to do as Isaiah 28:13 admonishes and put "precept upon precept, line upon line" in order to gain a real understanding of Truth and to make certain that the Truth that we are seeing is indeed that. Also, that it is in harmony with the scheme of Scripture. We need to keep before our mind that for every saying in the Scriptures which may initially seem obscure or dark, there is another passage that when mated up with it will shed light upon it. In the prophecy of Isaiah 34:16, the prophet said to "Seek ye out the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them."

So it is with our lesson text. These verses which constitute "The Beatitudes" are not some mere pithy sayings or disjointed, unrelated, proverbial adages. They are not merely some pious platitudes or ideals

issued by a starry-eyed, unrealistic Divine. But, rather, they are a cohesive, concise description of what constitutes the experience of salvation and the discipleship that perpetuates it.

This address, "The Sermon on the Mount" is the first recorded discourse of our Lord's public ministry. As such He is setting forth the experience, which He came to bring to mankind, in very explicit detail. In Matthew 1:21, when the angel of the Lord came to Joseph in the dream he said, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." Here the angel reveals the express purpose for which Christ made His First Advent into this time world. He came to save mankind. Jesus reiterates this when He declared in Luke 19:10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." So Christ's ultimate burden was to save that which was lost. It was to bring mankind an experience of salvation.

This experience that He came to bring devolves from this word "save," which is *sozo* in the original Greek. This word is dual faceted. It not only means forgiveness, but also deliverance. Jesus came not only to deal with man's sins of the past and to forgive him of the sin of the past, but also to bring an experience whereby man can be freed from the very power of sin so that "sin shall have [no more] dominion over you" (Romans 6:14). He came to bring deliverance from sin's power. In John 3:8 it says He came to "destroy the works of the devil." Certainly, the center-most piece of the enemy's work is sin. He came to bring deliverance and He came to save mankind. Christ's ultimate burden was to "save that which was lost," to bring mankind an experience that we call salvation. In the words recorded by the Apostle John, Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). So in these lessons He unveils the components necessary to gain this spiritual life or the experience of salvation, initially, and then He goes on to portray discipleship which allows this experience to be perpetuated, not only through their lives, but through the lives of others as well.

Let us begin to examine our lesson text. Jesus heralds, in the original language of the text, the Aramaic language, "O the blessedness of the peacemakers . . . ." First of all, we must note that Jesus is speaking on a spiritual level. He does not employ such terms as "happy" or "good feelings" have they who are peacemakers. He is not speaking in such fleeting tones as "fun" or "pleasure" or "happiness." But rather, He speaks of "blessedness," a spiritual state that is elevated above the fleeting, momentary pleasures of this time world. He speaks of a blessed experience that is beyond the level of the circumstances of this old world. He speaks of a blessed experience that is beyond the level of the circumstances of this old world. One that is based in the performance of the divine will regardless of how that will or the performance of it is viewed by those about us. This thought of "blessedness" will take on more significance as we study concerning what He denotes here in Matthew 5:9 as "the peacemakers." In reality, to truly be a "peacemaker" can provide circumstances that can make one unhappy in the flesh. It can produce situations that are very unpleasant to our humanity.

Notice, particularly, how Jesus words this text. We know that Proverbs 30:5 tells us, "Every word of God is pure." There is divine design, intent, and significance behind every single word incorporated in the

sacred Scriptures. Matthew 5:9 says, "Blessed are the peacemakers." He did not say, "the peace-lovers." There is a substantial distinction between the two. Some want to supposedly "keep the peace" at any cost, but in reality, they are compromising or risking the loss of the very thing they say they are attempting to keep. This is why the Apostle James penned, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable" (James 3:17). It is no mistake or coincidence that in these Beatitudes "the pure in heart" appears in Matthew 5:8 before He speaks of "the peacemakers" in Matthew 5:9.

Why? What does this portray to us? It teaches us in very clear tones that purity must never be sacrificed for supposed peace. Peace at the price of purity is not peace at all, but rather deception and defeat. Supposed peace without first having purity is always a prescription for disaster. There can be no true Biblical peace when purity is to be compromised to achieve it.

Let us look at our text closely. In The King James rendering of Matthew 5:9, Jesus declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers . . . ." Let us consider this term that Jesus employed. In the English it is rendered "peacemakers." It is a compound word, peace and maker. The Greek word for peace is *eirene* and the Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*. It is not a passive word. When the thought of peace arises to the mind, many today think in terms of passivity and passiveness. However, in its original context it was not a passive word. In today's society the religious climate is such that the common thinking is peace at any price, do not contest anything, and do not be confrontational. In other words, compromise principles and issues to get along. This is not Biblical peace. As a matter of fact, this is not peace at all. This is appeasement. There is a great difference between Biblical peace and political appeasement. Webster's New World Dictionary gives us this definition of appeasement, "the policy of giving in to the demands of a hostile or dangerous power in an attempt to prevent trouble." Appeasement is not peace. Every student of history is familiar with the English Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, going to Hitler's Germany and signing a "peace accord" only to later find that while they were honoring the terms of the agreement Hitler and his powers were building weapons with which to attack Great Britain. Appeasement is not peace.

In the Hebrew, peace never describes a negative state and it never means only the absence of trouble. In the Hebrew, this word *shalom*, or peace, always means "everything which makes for a man's highest good." Jesus was speaking of those who labor to make things so that it works for man's highest good.

Christ is styled as "The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6). Yet the same prophet penned that He was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). Christ Himself said in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Here we plainly see that the peace which Jesus was speaking of was not the absence of trouble. For in John's Gospel He plainly acknowledged that we would have tribulation. Isaiah described Him as both The Prince of Peace and a Man of Sorrows. The way we view that initially would seem to be that these would be incompatible terms until we realize that peace, *eirene*, or *shalom* means "everything which makes for a man's highest

good." Then we begin to understand that for Christ to accomplish the work which makes for a man's highest good, to implement the experience that makes possible the lifting of man from the state of sin and degradation to a position of salvation, required sorrows and sufferings on His behalf. True peace is not passive nor are its adherents passivists.

Look at the second portion of this compound word peacemakers. Here is a word which denotes strong action. One scholar says this: "The peace which the Bible calls blessed does not come from the evasion of issues. It comes from facing them, dealing with them and conquering them. What this Beatitude demands is not the passive acceptance of things because we are afraid of the trouble of doing anything about them, but active facing of things and the making of peace even when the way to peace is through struggle."

To be a peacemaker means to take something unfavorable and turn it to man's highest good. This is what Jesus Christ came to do. This is why He is referred to as "The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6); but conversely as "a man of sorrows" (Isaiah 53:3). Why? Because real peace is achieving what makes for man's highest good And man's highest good is an experience of salvation that frees him from sin and its power and makes him a "new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17) in Christ Jesus. In order to achieve this, He had to become "a man of sorrows" and pay the price, the ransom price, for mankind's sin.

It was a very active role that He took. To be a "peacemaker" means "to take something unfavorable and turn it to man's highest good." To do that in the spiritual realm means to contest the prince of darkness and the powers of darkness, regardless of how deceptively they may be arrayed or how palatable their doctrines and stances may seem. In 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 the Apostle Paul gives us the startling revelation and tells us: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness." Here he tells us that the powers of darkness have taken on very deceptive roles. They enshroud themselves with garbs of righteousness, with the appearance of holiness. They appear to be ministerial and loving Christ and the Truth, but in reality they are the powers of the enemy working against the welfare of man's soul.

Although we are to be peacemakers, 2 Corinthians 10:4 speaks of "the weapons of our warfare." Ephesians 6:12 says "we wrestle." Also Romans 14:19 declares, "Let us therefore follow after those things which make for peace." Divine peace must be made, not by appeasement to wrong, but rather by conquest or confronting that which is against man's highest good and having conflict with it and conquest over it. In Romans 12:21 he describes it this way when he penned "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

In our text, those who first "are the pure in heart" are enjoined to want to see man attain the highest good which God has made possible through salvation. To do that, they are to contest things which are contrary to this goal and this purpose in man's life. They are to contest things as they are for the cause of how they should be and be able to follow after things which make for peace. Peace is not appeasement. It is not silence and agreement, but rather it is confrontational, conflicting, and it is conquering. Not in a carnal



sense, but the "weapons . . . are . . . mighty through God" (2 Corinthians 10:4). They are weapons and go "forth conquering and to conquer" (Revelation 6:2) in order to make peace.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PEACEMAKERS

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Children of God.*

As we begin to view this passage of our Lord's famed discourse, we must recognize that this is the first public message of Christ after the commencement of His ministry. As such, He is portraying in explicit detail the components that are incorporated in the experience of salvation that He came to bring to mankind. These verses, commencing with verse 3 through verse 11, are actually a progression depicting the components of real salvation. First, when an individual realizes that they are indeed "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) and "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Romans 7:14 declares they are "sold under sin" and have nothing to buy themselves back with. They come to the stark realization that they "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). This depicts that spiritually they are in total, absolute, and abject poverty. When they truly realize that, when it truly strikes their soul as a divine realization, then they "mourn" (Matthew 5:4), or they have "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). When this sorrow truly works as it ought, then "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Sad to say, many in our world today have "sorrow" but it is only worldly sorrow because it does not lead to real repentance or a change of direction or a change of life.

To distinguish whether the sorrow is worldly or godly, we must look at the intent behind the sorrow. Godly sorrow recognizes the sinner has done God wrong. They have offended and violated divine principles that have put them in a position of strong disfavor and displeasure with God to where He "is angry with the wicked every day" (Psalm 7:11). That one who has worldly sorrow is sorry for the situation his sin has placed him in, sorry for the repercussions to which it has led, sorry for its consequences, but not sorry enough that he would never wish to do the deed. That is worldly sorrow. Every criminal who has been caught has a degree of worldly sorrow. But Matthew 5:4 is speaking of "they that mourn" and this leads to "godly sorrow which worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10).

We find that salvation takes place in Matthew 5:4 because it goes on to say "they shall be comforted." Or in other words they now have received the Comforter which John 14:26 tells us "is the Holy Ghost." After we initially receive an experience of salvation and the Holy Spirit moves into our heart, what is the first thing that He teaches us? He teaches that "blessed are the meek" (Matthew 5:5). This is a phrase that depicts entering into submission to Christ in the sense of true discipleship. Then He reveals the first thing that the Spirit of God will teach you after getting saved is "to inherit [or control] the earth" (Matthew 5:5), which will enable you to truly be a disciple. Then when the flesh is properly put in its place we can feed the appetite that the Lord desires we feed. We can "hunger and thirst after

righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). We can truly develop our spirituality which will cause a craving to see others saved and cause us to be "the merciful" (Matthew 5:7). In reality, this is a picture that we as the saints, His Body, are the incarnation of Christ in this time world. When we are His incarnated body, we are "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8). All self is slain and God can be seen in the life of the saints. Now as His representative in this world, as being here in His stead, we are to be "the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9).

Let us examine this thought a little closer. First, this thought of peace shows that in its operation the saint is a reflection of God. Throughout the Scriptures the Lord is referred to as "the God of peace." In Romans 15:33 the Apostle Paul penned, "Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." In 2 Corinthians 13:11 he declared, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 the Apostle Paul pens, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." So these as well as many other Scriptures clearly substantiate the Truth that God is "the God of peace."

You will notice that He mentions several other divine attributes in conjunction with peace. In 2 Corinthians 13:11 he said, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." Here he equates the God of peace with being perfect. We live in a time world when religious advocates declare that man cannot live perfect. They say sinless perfection is an ideal and is never achievable in this time world. However, when a man has the real peace of God living and radiating out of his life he can also have spiritual perfection. He speaks of being "of good comfort." Here he is letting us know that there is a comfort that comes with having an experience where man no longer has sin in his heart and life but how power and victory. Also he teaches us to "be of one mind." He is teaching that unity is not only a possibility, but it is a divine necessity that men have when they are truly allowing "the God of peace" to live and work through their lives in the manner that God ordained. So we find here that God is styled as "the God of peace." And the prophet Isaiah refers to Christ in Isaiah 9:6 as "The Prince of Peace."

Let us stop and examine this peace. When Jesus employed this term, He was speaking in the first century A.D. to those of Jewish stock. The entirety of His audience at this juncture was of Hebrew lineage and familiar with Hebrew customs and manners of speaking. To rightfully understand the truth behind the meaning of this word, we must look its usage in its original setting. The word "peacemakers" in Matthew 5:9 "peacemakers" is a compound word. The word peace is the Greek word *eirene* or the Hebrew word *shalom*, which was used by the Jewish Rabbis to portray the highest task that they considered that a man could perform and that is to establish right relationship between man and man.

Here we begin to gain an insight to what Jesus was speaking of when He said "Blessed are the peacemakers." When He speaks of a "peacemaker," He is speaking of one who is performing an active role. He is speaking of one who is first "pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8), one who is truly selfless, has no personal agenda and no will except the Father's will, one who under Divine prompting sees wrong and wrong relationships and

works to make them right. The "peacemaker" is not one who is silent to supposedly keep the peace. He is not one who compromises nor winks at wrong to preserve an imagined unity or harmony, but rather the "peacemaker" is one who acknowledges wrong and confronts it when it is embraced and accepted. A true "peacemaker" is one who desires true Biblical unity that is first based upon purity. The true "peacemaker" is one who desires this Biblical unity but recognizes that it must come as a result of purity, not at the expense of it.

False prophets have cried for centuries, as Jeremiah penned in his writings in Jeremiah 6:14, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace." True peace has no affinity with evil. In 2 Kings, Chapter 9, when Israel was in the midst of apostasy and under the rule of evil kings, the Lord raised up a man by the hand of Jehu. When the King Joram heard that Jehu was coming, he sent two messengers. In 2 Kings 9:18-19 the two messengers both ask the same question, "Is it peace?" Finally the king came himself and in 2 Kings 9:22 asked, "Is it peace?" What did these words actually imply? What did Joram mean when he asked "is it peace?" What he meant was "are you satisfied with things? You are not here to disturb them are you? We can get along as long as you will let things be."

To him and to many yet today, peace means leaving alone and accepting them as they are. Do not say anything about wrong or wrong doing. Do not bring up controversial issues or something with which someone may disagree. This is not peace, but rather it is appeasement. Look at the man of God, Jehu, and look at his reply. In 2 Kings 9:22 he declared, "And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?" Notice Jehu did not dodge the issue. He did not dance around and look for a palatable way or a polite way to bring up a distasteful subject. He did not sham over it as though there was peace. He immediately replied with a forceful answer, "What peace?" He acknowledged that there was no peace and brought it right out into the open. Why? Remember this word in the Hebrew means everything that makes for a man's highest good. The Rabbis taught a right relationship between man and man. Being caught up in heathendom and false religion and trying to pass it off to Israel, the people of God, is not man's highest good. One cannot produce something right with something wrong.

Notice how the Lord brought peace out of this. In 2 Kings 9:24 it says, "And Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart." God's means to bring peace was to deal with the issue. God used a man and an arrow. In Psalm 64:7 the Psalmist said, "But God shall shoot at them with an arrow." If He is to shoot with an arrow, He must have a man. God does not just work in a Divine manner alone, but He has chosen instrumentality. He has chosen a ministry. God will find a man who will stand in the gap and make up the hedge. That is how God shoots with an arrow. In Zechariah 9:14 the Prophet declared, "And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as lightning." In this passage, the Prophet equates His arrow with that which gives bright and dazzling light- lightning.

What is it in the spiritual sense that brings light? In Psalm 119:130 the Psalmist declares, "The entrance of thy words giveth light." What is

it with which the Lord shoots at man? What is it with which He aims at man's heart? According to Hebrews 4:12 it "is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." It is the Word of God. So, when Jehu took his full strength and used a bow and shot an arrow that "went out at his heart," this arrow smote his heart. Today, God confronts wrong and uses it to make peace by having a man who is not afraid to put his full strength and his full self behind the Word of God and aim for the hearts of men with the Word of God.

What is the lesson? What is it that the "peacemakers" in our text use to make peace? What does He use to pierce the hearts of wrong doers, to show man his wrong, and allow it to be used to his highest good? When men are at odds and not in right relationship, what does the blessed individual use to discern between the two and as an instrument to rectify it and bring true peace? It is the arrow or the Word of God. We must not be afraid to take the sword of the Spirit, the arrow of God, into a sin-benighted world. When we see things that are working against their salvation, when we see the enemy rear his ugly head and work through issues and situations that cause men to not be in right relationship one with the other, we must take the arrow and aim for the heart to attempt to get the Word to the heart of the matter so that they can see themselves and see the help that God has for them after that revelation of their condition strikes their soul.

The "peacemaker" is not a passivist, but rather a divine activist. They operate under Divine prompting and Divine propulsion. They are active. When the Spirit speaks and gives utterance, they are not fearful to speak what "thus saith the Lord" (Zechariah 1:3). The "peacemaker" is one who operates as "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8). They operate with the purest motives and intentions and are the ones who are compelled by Divine prompting to make peace. To make peace, they must confront and conquer the wrong. They realize that the route to true Biblical peace is not to attempt co-existence, but rather to conquer all that opposes full compliance with Biblical principles and precepts. Certainly, the true "peacemaker" does not use carnal weapons. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Corinthians 10:4). They are spiritual weapons that God ordained we employ to "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:12).

This text not only deals with the individual level, but with the collective level as well. A "peacemaker" not only deals with individuals who are wrong and need help, but also with issues, systems, and organizations that try to pass wrong off as right to the people of God. Overcoming error with truth is how you truly make peace. Peace cannot be made by ignoring wrong, by winking at it and hoping that it will change by itself. The only way that wrong can be overcome is to be confronted, conflicted, and conquered by the power that God has vested in His people and that is the arrow, or the Word of God.

A "peacemaker" truly realizes that the route to peace is not always what is pleasant to the flesh. It is not always easy to go through with in our humanity. It is of Divine necessity. As the Apostle Paul said, "necessity is laid upon me" (1 Corinthians 9:16). It is a response to Divine necessity that brings the real saint of God to make peace.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PEACEMAKERS

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

In this passage of Scripture text, we see our Lord in the opening portion of that famed discourse "The Sermon on the Mount." In these introductory verses He does much more than merely introduce us to the context of His famed message. He also sets forth the components of the experience that He came to bring to mankind- the experience that we commonly call salvation. Christ, in His first advent, came to nail "the hand writing of ordinances that was against us" to the cross (Colossians 2:14). He came to institute a new economy, a new era that was to be governed by new precepts, a reign which the Hebrew writer denoted as "a new and living way" ( Hebrews 10:20). In our lesson text, we see the seventh of these very descriptive attributes that portray the ingredients necessary to initially effect an experience of salvation. Then the characteristics of the divine nature that the believer must incorporate into his life in order to be a disciple and see this experience maintained, as well as perpetuated, in the lives of others.

The Lord cried in Matthew 5:9, in the original Aramaic language, "O the blessedness of the peacemaker: for they shall be called the children of God." As we begin to examine this text, we first of all notice that Jesus speaks in a manner contrary to common religious thinking. Notice the words that He employs. He declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers," not the peace-lovers. There is a drastic difference between these two words. Some are so supposedly peace-lovers that they are totally pacifists. They would not take issue with anyone or anything if it would cause any disruption or disturbance whatsoever. They would not take issue with anyone or anything if they felt it would disrupt the status quo, if they felt there was a possibility that someone's feelings may be hurt. This is not Biblical peace but appeasement. Look at the very speaker and author of these words, our Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah 9:6 styles Him as "the Prince of Peace" and the Apostle Peter penned, speaking of Christ, "Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:21).

Those who truly adhere to this teaching of Jesus, who are indeed "peacemakers," do not operate of their own accord. They do not speak in their own way or at their own initiative, but rather those who were filled with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost spake "as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:4). Those who are truly "peacemakers" are not some sort of rabble-rousers merely looking for an opportunity to operate in a carnal fashion, but rather they are those who fight the good fight of faith under the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit of God.

How did Jesus, the very Prince of Peace, deal with wrong, especially in the religious realm? In the Gospel of John 2:13-17 we begin to gain an insight. It says: "And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went

up to Jerusalem. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changer's money and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence, make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." We see how our Lord and Savior, the very "Prince of Peace" who is our example and whose steps we should follow, handled wrong and brought peace and made peace with those that had been wrong. This text is not a portrayal of a fit of temper or a seizure of uncontrollable rage, but rather it was a deliberate act. John 2:15 said, "And when he had made a scourge of small cords." To plait this scourge, to make this scourge of small cords, took time and deliberation to make. This was not a fit, but rather a deliberate act. What was the purpose of this act? Romans 14:19 declares, "Let us therefore follow after the things that make for peace." Many times before one will sue for peace, there must be confrontation, conflict, and conquest. This same Jesus cleansed the temple a second time in Matthew 21:12-13. He also pronounced seven very strong woes in Matthew, Chapter 23.

There are those who would rather not disturb the status quo than to work for what is truly for man's highest good. There are times when the best thing to do for a man's good is to tell him in the strongest, clearest manner possible that he is wrong. The Apostle Paul made peace with the Apostle Peter in this manner. In Galatians 2:11 he declares, "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Sad to say, today many will not confront one to the face but would rather go around behind their back and tell others of the wrong that they see. That is not the Biblical route to making peace. Back-biting and gossiping never can make for peace. Right can never come from wrong.

So, the man of God, Paul, did as a man would do and "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." It was for Peter's good as well as the right relationship between man and man which the Jewish Rabbis used as the true meaning of this word "peace." That peace needed to be made over this behavior that Peter participated in. Peter was carried away and because of that the relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles was hindered. So it was for Peter's good, as well as right relationship between man and man, that peace had to be made over his behavior. The true "peacemaker" that Matthew 5:9 speaks of is not a pacifist, but rather a divine activist. It is not one who acts or moves in the flesh, not one who is argumentative or contentious in a carnal manner, but rather one who is emblazoned and emboldened by the power and Spirit of God and moves under the prompting of that Divine Holy Spirit.

A peace that comes by conquest deals in larger realms than just the individual. Look at our text again. It says, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Notice first of all that Jesus is speaking in terms of being "blessed," or the Aramaic language says "O the blessedness of the peacemakers." Why? Because in order to do those things necessary to maintain that blessed experience that He has entrusted to us many times is contrary to what produces human happiness. The saints deal with eternal principles and values, which many times places them in an uncomfortable position for

the flesh. It certainly did Steven, the first Christian martyr, in Acts, Chapter 7.

In the latter phrase of our text He speaks of "the children of God." Notice also that He speaks in the plural. Many times, through these Beatitudes, He has spoken in the plural and spoke of "they." However, this text is distinct as He identifies them as "THE CHILDREN OF GOD." What is the significance of this? Not that they had been born again, for He speaks of the kingdom experience in Matthew 5:3. They are born again and receive the Comforter in Matthew 5:4. What is the significance of their being termed "the children of God" and what constitutes and comprises the family of God? The Apostle Paul speaks of the family in Ephesians 3:14-15 where he pens, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." The Apostle speaks of "the whole family." What is "the whole family" made up of? Galatians 4:26 says, "But Jerusalem which is above [That heavenly Jerusalem that Hebrews 12:22 speaks of, letting us know that it is speaking of the Church.] is free, which is the mother of us all." The family consists of all who are born, the children. So, "the children of God" is "the whole family." Notice what the Apostle Paul says about the family. In Ephesians 3:14-15 he says: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. [Who is that? God!] Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Who? God. Who is it named after? Ephesians 3:14 says, "The Father." Who is the Father? God. So who is the "family" named for? God! So it is the family of God.

When our lesson text speaks of "the children of God," it is speaking of the family of God or the Church of God. We know this because when we read it in its context, in Ephesians, Chapter 3, we just revert back to Ephesians 3:10 where it tells us, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church . . . ." Today, many in the realms of religion are in confusion, but "God is not the author of confusion" (1 Corinthians 14:33). Many scriptures substantiate that this is the Biblical name of the Church, the collective entity. In Acts 20:28 Apostle Paul said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Every Bible student knows that He only shed His blood one time. And since it was the purchase price of the Church, He could only purchase one Church. In Acts he denotes what the Church is—the Church of God! It is not brick and mortar. It is not just a building. It is not a name over a door, but it is a people who live and walk in accordance with God's eternal Word. They follow the precepts as they are set forth, such as we are studying, and incorporates them into their lives. The collective entity is the Church of God.

What is the lesson of our text? When Jesus says in Matthew 5:9, "they shall be called the children of God." He is referring to them as the collective unit, as a body, and could just as well have said, "And they shall be called the Church of God." What significance is there in that? We can accomplish collectively what we can never accomplish individually. For peace to ever be made, for the kingdom of peace to prevail, evil and wrong and error must be accosted and assaulted. The true Church must deal in larger realms than just individuals. They must



voice the Biblical stance on the issues of the day. They must expose religious systems that have a veneer of piety but "are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness" (Matthew 23:27). Someone may question and ask, "Why must these matters be faced?" Because it is these devices that the enemy has propagated that keeps man from his highest good, which is real salvation, and keeps him from a right relationship which only exists in the true Church.

The Jewish Rabbis used the Hebrew word *shalom* to portray the highest task a man could perform and that is to establish right relationship between man and man. This reveals the role of the Church in this time world. Jesus said in our lesson text "Blessed are the peacemakers." He lets us know that we are to be the "peacemakers." We are to be the ones who are "the children of God." He goes on and says, "Blessed are the peacemakers: [in the plural] for they shall be called the children of God," or the Church of God. The Church as a whole, as a body in society, is to confront, challenge, and engage in conflict by the weapons of our warfare—the Word and the Spirit—every tenet, norm of society that stands against man's highest good, which is salvation of his soul. All of that works against a right relationship for man seeing a vision of the true Church where all men are ordained to dwell together in harmony and in unity. The Church is to be that portion of society that contests society when it is wrong, not to dwell together in harmony and in unity. Not only does the true Church contest wrong in the secular realm, but also in the religious realm. We live in a day when an ecumenical spirit is loose to where many feel if it is religion it is good. Leave it alone. To each his own. However, a true "peacemaker" will contest such thinking as that and such thinking as is contrary to man's highest good—salvation. We live in a day where they cried, "only let us be called by thy name, to take away reproach" (Isaiah 4:1). Even the Church of God name does not take away a wrong move or a wrong deed. The name is not what takes away the reproach.

A true "peacemaker" is one who desires and strives for unity and harmony yet realizes that the only true term of unity is unconditional surrender to the will and Word of God. Those in opposition to Biblical truth must be confronted, conflicted, and conquered to where they are willing to accept the terms of God's eternal Word and sue Him for peace. The only true route for peace is on Biblical terms. The only true, workable, lasting peace is on God's terms. By modern standard, the true children of God, the Church of God, take positions which seem radical or extreme. That is because the truth is not negotiable and cannot be compromised. The Church stands in a place that is "steadfast, [and] unmoveable" (1 Corinthians 15:58). Since we are taught that we must stand by God's Word, the only one who can make for peace is to confront, conflict and conquer wrong unconditionally and walk in accordance with His will and His Word. Sin and Satan "hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (2 Corinthians 4:4) to where they cannot discern that the motive of the Church is for man's highest good. The Church becomes a ripe candidate for the next Beatitude in Matthew 5:10, which portrays, "Blessed are they which are persecuted." By making peace, the Church places herself in a position which exposes her to persecution.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PERSECUTED

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

As we look into this portion of Scripture text, we see Christ uttering words which are incomprehensible to the world. In this text He equates "blessedness" with being "persecuted." To the natural mind these are two totally opposite components that would seem to be irreconcilable. Yet here Christ unites, and even equates being "persecuted" with a "blessed spiritual state. By the help of God, this is what we want to consider.

As we begin to consider this text and view this portion of the famed discourse which commences with these Beatitudes, we must ever be mindful that Christ is portraying the various components of that blessed experience which He came to bring to mankind. The experience that we know as Salvation is what He came to bring. And throughout the entirety of these verses (verses 3-11), He employs the term "blessed." He commences each one of these lessons with this term "blessed" and He is depicting an experience that is far greater than that, on the mere level of human happiness. Rather He is revealing an experience that has its basis in spiritual realities and that can operate and be enjoyed right in the face of adversity or opposition. In this world's view they can only be happy when the situation or the circumstances are favorable. But when the situation and circumstances are unfavorable, they are unhappy. And so is, the level upon which this time world and its inhabitants operate. They operate on that beggarly level of human happiness. But here, Jesus is dealing in a totally different realm, a higher realm. This is a realm that deals in spiritual realities that are not fazed by circumstances and situations of this time world.

Sad to say, much of what is regarded as Christendom is totally governed by circumstances. They are totally governed by situations. And whether they be favorable or unfavorable governs whether they are happy or unhappy. But Jesus came to bring an experience to mankind that is far deeper than the superficial façade that modern religion offers to mankind. He came to bring a heavenly experience, that is founded upon spiritual realities and that go far deeper than the human. It goes to a level to where that there is a blessedness even when circumstances are unfavorable or unkind.

When we begin to examine this Matthew 5:10, Jesus exclaims in the original language of this text, the Aramaic, "O the blessedness of they which are persecuted." Here Jesus speaks of a "blessedness" and blessedness can only come from a divine source. The employment of the term "blessed" or "blessedness" in the Aramaic language intimates that the source is beyond the human realm, that it is indeed a divine source. A divine attribute and state of being that can emanate only from a spiritual and divine source.

You see, the thinking of this world and even much of the religious realm is that one can only be blessed, satisfied, content, or at peace

when there is an absence of turmoil, trouble, opposition or adversity. But Jesus' words in this text fly right in the face of this type of thinking. This is not a Truth that is isolated to this particular text. Look at Jesus' words in the Gospel of John 16:33 when He spoke and said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The only peace this world understands is the absence of trouble. But here Jesus lets us know that peace and tribulation are both existent, but in the heart of the saint there is an overcoming power that still enables him to have victory regardless of surrounding circumstances. The Amplified Bible makes it even more explicit, and renders it in this manner: "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration: but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you]."

So in our lesson text Christ sets before us a paradox. He tells us that there is a "blessedness" in being "persecuted." If we would read Matthew 5:10 in The Amplified Bible it renders it in this form, "Blessed and happy and enviably fortunate and spiritually prosperous (the state in which the born-again child of God enjoys and finds satisfaction in God's favor and salvation, regardless of his outward conditions) are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake . . . ." So here we see that Christ sets before us a paradox. He declares there is a blessing in persecution that can come from no other avenue. It is exclusive to persecution.

Let us examine this text closely and see just what is occurring and to whom and why. Jesus says, "Blessed are they . . . ." Notice that He commences with the plural "Blessed are they." Who is the "they" to which He is referring in this text? Well, notice in the preceding verse in the latter phrase of Matthew 5:9, He spoke of "the children of God." This phrase also is in the plural. And when we begin to consider the thought of "children" as He depicts the "children" in the plural. It did not say that "they shall be called the child of God." But rather it says here in Matthew 5:9, "they [a plurality] shall be called the children of God."

The wise man taught us in Proverbs 30:5 that "Every word of God is pure." There is divine design and importance behind every word that is incorporated into the sacred Scriptures. These words "the children of God" refers to what comprises the family. A family is composed of children. This thought of children not only portrays the Truth that each of these had a spiritual birth or had been born again, but also of what occurs beyond that when each one gains their experience that Christ came to bring. Initially they are born. Jesus, came "that they might have life" (John 20:20). How do you initially get life? You get life when you are born. This is why Jesus said, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7). Or the Greek says, "ye must be born from above," denoting a heavenly or spiritual birth. Now, what does that do? It makes us a child. Once we are born, we become a child, in the singular.

But when the child is brought home where all the other children are, there is a family and the family is together. So when all "the children of God" are together, it is an indication of and speaking of the family of God. Now, what is the family of God according to the Scriptures? In

Ephesians 3:14-15 the Apostle Paul penned and declared, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ [Who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? God!], Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Who is it named for? It is named for God. It is the family of God. Now in this particular text here in Ephesians 3:15 when he is speaking of "the whole family" or the family of God, what has he been speaking of here in this text? In Ephesians 3:10 preceding these verses, He speaks of "the church." In Ephesians 3:21 succeeding this text he speaks of "the church." And so he is referring to the Church when he speaks of the family. What is the Biblical name of what Ephesians 3:15 denotes as "the whole family" or the Church? Well, the Apostle Paul said it was named after the Father, God! So what is the Biblical name? Matthew 5:9 speaks of "the children of God" in the collective sense it is speaking of the family of God or the Church of God.

Now, how does that relate to our lesson text in Matthew 5:9 when the Church collectively assumes the role of being the "peacemaker," which literally means looking out for man's highest good. This means nothing more than a portrayal of an experience of salvation that man needs to obtain. Also this word "peacemaker" means laboring for men to have right relationship, which can only be achieved by receiving a vision of the true Church and leaving the realms of spiritual Babylon and coming home to Zion where truth abounds.

The Church fills the role of a "peacemaker" which enables man to obtain an experience of salvation which is for man's highest good. Then, through a vision of the Church and unity and harmony amongst brethren and a oneness of believers, men are able to enjoy right relationships. When the true Church works to accomplish these goals, to stand for good and for right, then of necessity they must oppose evil and wrong not only in the lives of the individuals involved but also in the society and the organizations that foster evil and wrong, not only in the life of the individual, but in society as a whole that perpetuates it and the organizations that foster it and hold men captive to them. When this is done then it produces persecution, which leads us to our text. Whenever the Church truly stands to Her feet and fulfills the role that God ordained that She fill in society, of necessity it causes opposition and persecution to arise. Do not forget that these Beatitudes are progressive and interrelated.

Now, let us consider our text more closely where Jesus cried, "O the blessedness of they which are persecuted . . ." (the original Aramaic language). We have found what the "blessedness" is that He came to bring. We have discovered who are "they" are that the text is speaking of-it is the Church. What does this term mean when He says "persecuted?" It means, those who are harassed, hunted, and spoiled. The term is properly used of wild beasts pursued by hunters of an enemy or malefactor in flight.

How can Jesus equate "blessedness" with being harassed, hunted, and spoiled? Look at the brethren in the morning-time Church. In Acts, Chapter 4, after they had been exposed to great opposition and persecution they prayed. Acts 4:33 says, ". . . and great grace was upon them all." Great adversity produces great grace. The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:9, the Lord speaking through him and his penning of the occasion he said, ". . . My grace is sufficient for thee . . . ."

What actually is grace? Many religious leaders will tell us that it is an excuse and an exemption for repeated failures. But here the Apostle gives a clear Biblical definition of what grace actually is. In 2 Corinthians 12:9 it says, ". . . My grace is sufficient for thee [What is it?]: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities [Or the Greek says 'weaknesses.'], that the power of Christ may rest upon me." What is grace? It is not a supposed divine license for loose living and continued sinning and failure. But rather Christ said it is "my strength." It is called "the power of Christ." So, why is being "persecuted" a blessed thing? Because it allows grace, Christ's strength, or the power of Christ to work in our lives in a great manner.

Look at the first Christian martyr, Steven. Look at him as he is before the council and certainly being harassed. Acts 6:15 says, "And all that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Why was his countenance so? Why was he not unnerved or upset? Because of grace! The grace of God can make the most unseemly circumstances be divine opportunities. Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in Acts 26:29, "And Paul said, I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Here was a man that had the grace of God in his soul that could show it in a way that no other opportunity could show. And he said, "I would to God that you were just as I am." Here is a man that the situation would dictate should be in gloom, fearful of his future, apprehensive, and certainly conciliatory to his judges. But yet in Acts 26:2 he begins his address by saying, ". . . I think myself happy, king Agrippa . . . ." Paul used his episodes of persecution and trial as an opportunity to show that he, indeed, had something greater than the world. Something that the world needed, the grace of God and an experience that produced that grace. The grace of God was evident and manifested in his life. And his failure to be moved in the least by his persecutors or by circumstances was a persuasive argument in word and deed that he had a reality that other men did not have. His attitude and his behavior was so persuasive that in Acts 26:28 it says, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

In our lesson text Jesus is telling us that persecution is part and parcel with the experience that real salvation brings. In 2 Timothy the Apostle Paul, a man experienced with many persecutions over a lengthy period of time, penned to a young minister, Timothy, who was approximately eighteen years old at this juncture. In 2 Timothy 3:12 Paul said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." Here he removed all doubts that it was optional. He let us know that it came with the experience. It was part and parcel that they "shall suffer persecution." Persecution is no strange thing to a real child of God.

And in this text in Matthew 5:10, Christ reveals that a work is wrought in persecution, a work that can be accomplished in no other manner. There is a witness and an example that is shown through persecution that can be shown in no other way. The Hebrew writer said in Hebrews 10:33, ". . . ye were made a gazingstock [How?] both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." Persecution places the Church in a unique

position to show forth to both religion and the world that this blessed experience is far greater than anything that this old world has to offer and that they are in dire need of the experience that the saints and the Church have.

This is why that Jesus equated "persecution" or "being persecuted" with "blessedness." It provides the forum for the Church to shine that no other way can afford. It provides that avenue through which the Church can shine resplendent and show Herself as unique in this world with an experience that all mankind needs.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PERSECUTED

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

We have been studying a series of lessons which is drawn from Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 5, where Jesus set forth those teachings commonly known as the Beatitudes. In our lesson text we find the eighth in a series of nine of these Beatitudes. And by the help of the Holy Spirit, we want to look a little further into this particular text and see just exactly what Jesus is portraying before us.

In this particular passage we find Christ uttering words that to many seem very strange words indeed. When we look at many of the preceding Beatitudes we can readily see it is very visibly apparent the merit of some of the spiritual qualities that He holds forth. We can readily see the merit of such spiritual qualities as Matthew 5:5 denotes as being "meek," or as Matthew 5:7 portrays as being "merciful," or as Matthew 5:8 describes as the "pure in heart, or being "peacemakers" in Matthew 5:9. Certainly we can quickly agree that such qualities would indeed cause ones to be as each verse begins "blessed." But when we come to our text here in Matthew 5:10 and Jesus cries, "Blessed are they which are persecuted . . ." what a shocking and startling statement that initially appears to be. Many, are amazed even dumbfounded to learn that there could be any blessings in persecutions. Sad to say, many will do all in their power, even to the expense of compromise and forfeiting their experience of salvation, to avoid being "persecuted." But in this verse Jesus, is illuminating our minds and enlightening us to truths that are initially not perceived by us as people. Here in this verse Jesus equates being "persecuted" with being "blessed." What a paradox this seems to be to many people. But in this lesson Christ reveals to us, in very explicit terms, that there is a positive power to persecution. That there is indeed a very positive impact and a positive aspect that comes through the avenue of persecution.

When we view persecution, all that we see through human thinking and human vision is a negative, detrimental aspect to be avoided at all cost. But, Jesus here is equating "blessedness" with being "persecuted." So, certainly it merits our study and to look into the depth of it and see what our Lord and Master is attempting to convey to us. We must remember that the wise man, Solomon, penned in Ecclesiastes 1:9, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun" As long as there has been evil loosed in this world, it has been there to contest good and has indeed contested it.

In the preceding Beatitude Jesus declared, "Blessed are the peacemakers . . ." (Matthew 5:9). In reality, being a "peacemaker" means that we are those who are looking for man's highest good which is only found in an experience of salvation. According to Jewish teachings, it is also laboring for men to have right relationships and be in unity and

harmony. This can only be found in one institution on the face of the globe and that is the true Biblical Church. In the Church's role and responsibility to stand for good and for right, of necessity we must decry and stand against evil and wrong. When that occurs, hence comes persecution. But as Solomon penned in Ecclesiastes 1:9, ". . . there is no new thing under the sun." Persecution is age-old. Persecution began in the very dawn of humanity.

In Genesis, Chapter 4, back in the book of beginnings, we see recorded the very first account of persecution. Certainly, that persecution was religious in nature and it was indeed religious persecution. In Genesis, Chapter 4, we are introduced to two men-Cain and Abel. Both went through the mechanics of worship. But Genesis 4:5 says, ". . . But unto Cain and to his offering he [God] had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." Genesis 4:8 says, "And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Here we find the first case in history of religious persecution and it even culminated in murder.

I want you to notice what prompted it. It was nothing more than a case of jealousy. Because Cain did not have an offering that was respected by God and Abel his brother did, it caused jealousy to arise in the heart of Cain. And, because of that he vented out his jealousy and frustration and anger in the form of persecution that was murder in this case.

First, this reveals to us one of the positive aspects of persecution. Someone may ask, "What? How can anything be positive in this diabolical deed?" It was positive in the sense that persecution brings the problem of the persecutor public. Persecution proves as evidence for all to see who has the real problem. So, there is a revelation that comes with persecution. There is a positive aspect because there are many who have things covered. They have things so well hidden that they have deceived themselves to their own condition and are not truly aware of the state that they are in. However, when prompted they act out their anger and their persecution bringing their problem to light.

Remember Herod who issued a command. In Matthew 2:16 it says that he issued a decree that "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under" be slain. This is why Matthew 2:3 says, "When Herod the king had heard these things he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him." Why was Jerusalem troubled? When Herod was troubled, Jerusalem had good reason to be troubled because Herod had a serious problem-he was power happy, he was a power monger. He was such a power monger that he was nearly paranoid of any who appeared in his mind to threaten his power. When he perceived that anyone was a threat, he took immediate action. He killed his own three sons. He had killed forty-two members of the Jewish Sanhedrin. He had executed the high priest and his brother and he was a man who had ten wives and was known and called the "fire-eater."

You see that persecution brings the problem of the persecutor public. Does this have a positive aspect? Certainly! It brings evil into the open so that it drops its garb of piety and is revealed for what it is. In Acts 23:2 it says, "And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth." What did this do? It brought evil out into the open. Here was a man who represented the zenith of



Jewish religiosity, supposedly the height of spirituality in that day at the zenith of the accepted organized religion of that day. However, Jesus said they were "whited sepulchres . . . full of dead men's bones" (Matthew 23:27). When men looked on, all they saw was the whitedness. They did not see the deadness and the condition within. But persecution brings evil into the open and here it did with the high priest.

Secondly, God in His faithfulness reveals the condition of the persecutor to himself. God was even faithful to reveal his condition to a man named Judas. He was so faithful that Judas cried after his shameful betrayal "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matthew 27:4). So here we see that persecution allows that one who is the persecutor to see themselves as they are. It reveals their condition to them. God in His faithfulness uses it as an avenue for Divine revelation.

Certainly the words of the prophet Jeremiah in Lamentations 3:23 rings true when he cried, ". . . great is thy faithfulness." God has a purpose in everything that He does or allows. There is a purpose to persecution. First, it makes the problem of the persecutor public and by doing this it brings evil out into the open and removes its deception and shows it to all for what it is. Second, God uses it to reveal to the persecutor the shape that they really are in.

The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 1:13, ". . . I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it . . . ." And it was this persecution that brought him face-to-face with Jesus Christ and with his own condition. The very way that Jesus initially approached Paul in Acts 9:4-6 was: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest . . . And He trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" In many cases persecution can be the route for revelation.

What other positive power is there to persecution? The power of persuasion and proof. Let us look to the Hebrew writer and look to the one who was denoted in Hebrews 12:2 as "the author and finisher of our faith," Jesus Christ. In Mark 15:39 when the centurion saw how Christ acted in His hour of most extreme persecution, "he said Truly this man was the Son of God." Persecution shows the true character not only of the persecutor, but also of the persecuted. It brings out for public display the nature and spirit of the persecuted. Look at the words of Pilate in Luke 23:4, ". . . I find no fault in this man." In Matthew 27:24, he said, ". . . I am innocent of the blood of this just person . . . ." What caused this persuasion? It was what he saw in how Jesus reacted through all of the persecution that had been imposed upon Him. He saw an inward tranquility and peace that proved to him that Jesus was, indeed faultless and indeed a King. Look what Pilate had inscribed in John 19:19. He had the words inscribed, "JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS." And when the Jews, contested him in that inscription, it says "Pilate answered [very firmly] What I have written I have written" (John 19:22). Pilate had been persuaded. He had seen in Christ, by His reaction to His persecution, something he had never seen before. There is a power in persecution. The power of persuasion is in persecution. During the Dark Ages and times of great persecution many who were observing them stepped right out and embraced the truth and stepped right up to the same persecution.

When we think of persecution in our humanity, it always has initially

a negative connotation. But God in His own means is using this to work a positive work. Just as in the words of Joseph after he had been sold in slavery by his brothers, lied upon by Potiphar's wife, and was sent to prison he told those same brothers, in Genesis 50:20, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good . . . ." Even as the Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 13:8, "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." God has a design in all that occurs and there is always a positive aspect even to persecution. In Acts 8:1 it declares ". . . And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad." It would initially seem to have been a negative event. But look at Acts 8:4 which says, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." It fell out to the furtherance of the Gospel.

In our lesson text in Matthew 5:10, Jesus equates being "persecuted" with "blessedness." Why? Because there are many positive aspects to it. Though initially and in our human thinking it would appear to be negative in the Divine scheme it has a positive impact and a positive aspect. Persecution can do a work, and work a work that can be achieved in no other manner. We view things many times with an earth-dimmed vision. We look at matters from how that it affects the flesh. But in John 4:24, the Scripture teaches us, "God is a Spirit." In Ephesians 2:2 the Apostle Paul refers to the Devil as a "spirit." Therefore, we are in a spiritual warfare. That which we are trying to convey to mankind and to convince the world of is within, in the form of a spirit. If we are going to be able to convince the world and false religion that "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4), then the Lord must allow the pressure to be put on us to where "the hidden man of the heart" (1 Peter 3:4) is revealed. He allowed this to happen to the patriarch Job. When you go back and look in the annals of the Old Testament, He brought Job to the forefront and He allowed this to happen. Job 1:8 says, ". . . and the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job . . . ?"

Many times the Lord wants to make the Truth and the Church highly visible for men to see. He desires to make us "a gazingstock" (Hebrews 10:33). But to get Truth, spiritual qualities, the grace of God, and the Spirit of God out to where men may see them requires persecution. For instance, when a sponge is squeezed, only what is in will come out. So it is with the Church. Because God in His infinite wisdom knows what is within the Church, knows that the Church possesses His mind, His Spirit, and His grace, He allows the pressure to be put on so that it can get out to the place where men may see it. It can be used as an evangelistic force to show what the saints have and what the world is in dire need of. We must ever remember the promise of Romans 8:28 where it declares, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." We must ever take faith in this passage and many others which substantiate the same Truth and know that God in His omniscient wisdom is working all things well, all things to our good and to His glory.

Our text says "Blessed are they which are persecuted." Jesus here lets us know in a very emphatic manner that there is a blessedness and a divine work that is wrought through persecution. A work that can be worked in no other manner and that it can indeed be a blessing to the

saints, be a benefit to the world, and a glory to God. We must recognize that Jesus is holding before us what may initially seem startling, but what in reality is a blessing that can come through the avenue of persecution. It can be a blessing to the saints, to the world looking on, and even unto God Himself.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PERSECUTED

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Before us are the words uttered by our Lord, as part of a much larger discourse known as "The Sermon on the Mount." Christ commences this famed address with nine lessons that portray the attributes or components of the experience of salvation that He came to bring to mankind. These nine interrelated lessons are all part of a progression and are known commonly as "The Beatitudes." This word "Beatitude" has its origin in the Latin from the word *beatitudo* and means, "a particular declaration of blessedness coming from the lips of Jesus Christ."

Each of these lessons or Beatitudes begin with the English word "blessed." If you survey verses 3-11, you will note that each one of these nine Beatitudes commences with the word that is rendered in our English as "blessed." Teaching us that each of these components or attributes are an integral part of enjoying that blessed experience or that blessed state that Jesus came to bring to mankind. Christ came in His First Advent to enable man who was "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) to have an experience whereby "they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). He came that men who were dead might have spiritual life.

In the religious realms, there are many false conceptions as to the purpose for which Christ made His Advent into this time world. Some assume that He came to institute a new religious society. Others to implement a new political order. Some would say that He was just a mere teacher that brought proverbial sayings to lift man to a plain of higher thinking and greater ideals. However, He came as a Savior to mankind. Matthew 1:21 says in explicit tones, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: [Which literally means Jehovah Salvation, the Salvation of Jehovah. Why did He come and be named as such?] for he shall save [the Greek word is *sozo* which means forgive and deliver] his people from their sins." To deal with man who was "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1).

In 1 John 3:8, it tells us, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose [What? For sin.] the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." What is the works of the devil? It is sin. And Jesus came to destroy sin in the hearts and lives of mankind. I realize we live in a time when men profess that they are saved, that they are children of God, but yet sin remains. Sin is incompatible with the life of Jesus Christ within. He came to destroy the works of the devil which is sin. So He came that men who were dead might have spiritual life. This is the express purpose for which He made His Advent into this time world.

This life that He came to bring is like physical life in the sense that it is to be constant and continual and a state of being. Spiritual life is eternal life. In the Gospel of John 5:25 He declares, "Verily,

verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, declares, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is [in the present tense], when the dead [Who? The 'dead in trespasses and sins' (Ephesians 2:1).] shall hear the voice of the Son of God: [What is the voice? It is the Word or the Gospel.] and they that hear [That is how we know that it is here and now, not at the second Advent. In that day there will be no choice. But in this passage in John 5:25 there is a choice. On that resurrection day every man will hear. John 5:28 says, 'for the hour is coming [future tense], in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.' On that day there is no power of choice. In that day of the general resurrection, all who are in the grave shall hear his voice. But John 5:25 is speaking of a spiritual resurrection, of spiritual life. It says, 'and they that hear' indicating the power of choice.] shall live." So spiritual life is listening properly and responding properly to the Word of God. First John 5:11 says, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." Spiritual life is eternal life and it is vested in Jesus Christ. When He makes His Advent into our lives through salvation and the personality of the Holy Spirit and takes us above the level of this old world. Then we have spiritual life. We have this blessed life and we take on a new state of being, a blessed state and it is to be a continual state. Through the avenue of these Beatitudes He instructs us how to initially obtain this experience and then how that it may be maintained.

In our lesson today we see the eighth in a series of nine of these attributes. Christ in this lesson utters what seems to many a very strange thing. He seems to utter strange inconceivable words. Words which seem a paradox. Here in Matthew 5:10 He exclaims, "Blessed are they which are persecuted." This phrase would initially seem to be consisting of opposites, of contrasts. The word "blessed" and "persecuted" would at first blush seem to be incompatible words, but they are not. Proverbs 30:5 says, "Every word of God is pure." There is divine design and purpose behind every word that is recorded in the sacred Scriptures. In this lesson Jesus purposely equates being "blessed" with being "persecuted." This reveals a truth to us. This teaches us that there is a blessing to persecution that can come through no other avenue and no other way. It teaches us that there are positive aspects to persecution.

So let us look a little further into this text. We found in Matthew 5:10 that this "blessed" experience, or the words in the Aramaic language, "O the blessedness of," portrays several truths to us. First, this ingredient is part and parcel of the blessed state of being that Jesus came to bring. Second, there is a blessing that can only come through the avenue of persecution. Third, there is a positive power or aspect to persecution. Fourth, we found out who that "they which are persecuted" are the "peacemakers" (Matthew 5:10), the children of God (Matthew 5:9), the Church.

Now let us examine and see why they are persecuted. What prompts persecution? Our text is very explicit and gives us a great insight to this matter. In Matthew 5:10 it declares, ". . . they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." What does this mean? The word translated "righteousness" in this text is the same Greek word that we were introduced to in Matthew 5:6 when He said, "Blessed are they which

do hunger and thirst after righteousness." It is the Greek word *dikaiosune* and it is used to denote an attribute of God. Romans 3:5 employs it and speaks of "the righteousness of God." 2 Peter 1:1 speaks of "the righteousness of God" and employs the same term. Many other Scriptures teach this truth as well, that righteousness is an attribute of God. Now let us look a little closer at this word *dikaiosune*. It is from another Greek word, *dikaio*, which means "equitable in character or act." To break it down further the root is *dike* which means "right as self-evident, the principle, a decision or its execution." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* says the meaning is "right action."

What is the lesson here? This text is portraying the Church. This is a portrayal of a people who "inherit [or control] the earth" (Matthew 5:5) by putting the flesh in its place and have become God-like. They have been moved to a position to where "they . . . hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6) to where they have such a desire that they are God-like and righteous. But look at this word "righteousness" closely. The word not only portrays an attribute of God, but also delves deeper and reveals some aspect of that attribute. It means "equitable in character or act." What does the word equitable mean? Equity or being equitable itself is an adjective and the corresponding noun is equity. *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us that defining equitable in character or act is to have a fair impartial character. It is one who believes and practices equity or equality. To act in a manner that is morally and in character. One who is committed in every situation to right action.

How do the saints, the Church, achieve this? In 2 Corinthians the Apostle Paul gives us an insight and reveals it to us. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For he [the antecedent is God (2 Corinthians 5:20)] hath made him [the antecedent is Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20)] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The same Greek word used here for righteousness as in Matthew 5:10 and Matthew 5:6. Through Christ moving into our hearts through the personality of the Holy Spirit, we now have God abiding in our lives. In John 14:23 it says, "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," Through the Holy Spirit, God the Father and God the Son dwell within us. When they dwell in our hearts, we have their attributes in our lives. And one of these attributes is "the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

When are we manifesting this attribute in our lives? When we take on the nature of Christ, that attribute comes into our hearts and lives as an attribute of God or Christ through the personality of the Holy Spirit. It takes on its manifestation in the life and deeds and acts of the believer. When we let the Spirit dwell in our hearts we have this attribute and we manifest this attribute through our lives and our action. What occurs many times when we are manifesting this attribute of righteousness in our lives? Matthew 5:10 says we are "persecuted." Why? Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 6:2, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge this world?" What does this mean? If righteousness means right actions, equitable, fair and impartial, equal in character and act, then merely by their presence and their manner of conduct they

immediately put judgment and condemnation on wrong. The Apostle develops this truth further in Romans 12:17 when he said, "Recompense to no man evil for evil." Romans 12:21 says, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," So here we can plainly see that in this world there is a force called evil and clearly there are men who are men that are wrong and do wrong. The weapons that the Church employs to overcome evil is to overcome evil with good or overcome wrong with right. But the presence of right automatically brings conviction and condemnation on wrong. Jesus said in John 3:19, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light [Why?], because their deeds were evil."

Now, what type of reaction did Jesus say that there would be to right or good? To right or life Jesus said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light" (John 3:20). Those who are in darkness, those who are evil, those whose deeds are evil, respond with hate when they are exposed. When right or life comes on the scene, they are condemned or convicted. John 8:8-9 says: "And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground [speaking of when they brought the woman that was caught in the act of adultery]. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last." What convicted them? "Their own conscience" (John 8:9). What produced it? What stirs conscience? The presence of right and the words of one right and God-like.

Look at the martyr Steven. His presence alone was disconcerting to the opposition. His appearance, the presence that he had about him, stirred them to a point. In Acts 6:15 it says, "And all that sat in the council [speaking of the Jewish sanhedrin], looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." What happened? His presence alone was disturbing. It goes on and tells us in Acts 7:2, "And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken." Then he began his message and the power of right was so condemning to them that he could see that they were not taking the message. In Acts 7:51 he declared, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Resisting right and truth is resisting the Holy Ghost and God. When they refused right, Acts 7:54 says, "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. Acts 7:59 says, "and stoned him." What leads to being "persecuted?" Righteousness (Matthew 5:10) or being and doing right.

Since this time world began, there has been wrong. There has been wrong ever since sin entered in upon the very dawn of creation. Since this world is wrong and out of order with God, when it meets good and right there is an automatic clash. Just as when a cold air mass meets a warm air mass the result is a thunderstorm. It is a fixed law. So it is spiritually. When good and evil meet, when right and wrong meet, when darkness and light meet, there is a reaction. Just as in the laws of physics where there is cause and effect, there are laws of God which are just as fixed and settled and as immutable and just as true. The very presence of right stirs wrong. The very presence of light causes darkness to recoil. The very presence of good causes evil to be stirred and want to work. Many times it takes the form of persecution.

But Jesus said in Matthew 5:10, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." There is a blessing in being persecuted. It allows the grace of God to work in a greater way. It also serves to show

evil for what it is. Without evil to be able to show itself for as vile and repugnant and repulsive as it is, right and truth would not seem as great and glorious as it really is.

In this lesson Jesus was letting us know that for righteousness' sake, we as the people of God will have to endure some things, but through Him we can have this blessed state. We can have this blessed experience and be a witness to a lost and dying world of the realities that there are in Jesus Christ. We need to think it no strange thing when persecution comes the way of the child of God because it is a natural reaction of when right and wrong, light and darkness meet. The natural by-product is persecution. It is a blessed event because it shows wrong for what it is and truth for what it is and it shows the grace of God in the life of the saints and can be an evangelistic force to those who are looking on.



## CHAPTER NINE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE PERSECUTED

#### PART FOUR

*Matthew 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

As we view these lessons we must recognize that Christ has just made His Advent into this time world. A world that was filled with spiritual darkness. In Matthew 4:16 it says, "The people which sat in darkness." The world was certainly a dark place when Christ came on the scene in His first Advent. Between the last Old Testament prophet Malachi and John the Baptist, the voice crying in the wilderness for forerunner of our Lord, were four hundred and thirty-four years that Daniel prophesied of in the seventy weeks prophecy (Daniel 9:25) when man did not hear from God. As a consequence of not hearing from God for four hundred and thirty-four years, man's mind was in a very darkened state. Religion had plummeted to where it was a mere performance of religious acts. It was mere religiosity rather than any reality in the depth of man's being. When Christ came on the scene in His initial Advent He came to a mankind that was engrossed in darkness.

In this lesson text, Christ is giving His first publicly recorded discourse since commencing His earthly ministry. In this virtually inauguration address of a new administration, Christ set forth the tenants of the New Testament economy which He came to institute. He lays forth the very fundamental principles upon which the new covenant, the New Testament, that He came to usher in would be based.

In the Old Testament era, "sin hath reigned unto death" (Romans 5:21). However, when Jesus Christ came on the scene, He instituted "a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:10). Christ came to do as Romans 8:2 declares when the Apostle said, "made me free from the law of sin and death." He came to enable man to operate under "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:2).

However, to institute this life and see this life be sustained, there are some conditions that must be met. Not only must these conditions be met initially, but they must be met continually. Just as earthly life. When an earthly life is initially brought forth, there are conditions, there are things that must occur before this life is ever produced. Once that one is literally born, there are other conditions that then must be met and adhered to for that life to continue and be sustained. So it is in the spiritual realm. Before the spiritual life is ever produced there are conditions that must be met, but the conditions do not cease commencing. In order for spiritual life to be sustained, even though one may initially have a born-again experience, there are truths that must be adhered to, principles that must be incorporated into the life, and things must be done to perpetuate and continue that spiritual life.

Too many in the realms of religion, even what professes to be Christianity, ones look at salvation as something that you do once. It moves you make once and then never again are there conditions to be met or adhered to. Nothing could be further from Biblical truth. Jesus

clearly said in John 8:31, "If ye continue [Life has a big if. There are conditions to life.] in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." There are conditions to continue Christianity. In 1 John 1:7 the Apostle John declares, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another," Our continued fellowship "with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3) is wholly contingent and predicated upon our walking in the light. Walking is a move. It is a progression and we must keep moving, keep pace with, and keep progressing with truth and light in order to truly stay in divine fellowship.

In these lessons, Christ is inaugurating a new era was laying forth the truths that would enable man to be a partaker of the "new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20). He portrays in these lessons how to receive it initially and then the attributes necessary to incorporate into our lives to retain it continually. As we view our lesson text, we must recognize that this is part of a progression. Christ starts with where all men are initially when they come to an age of accountability and that is lost. He portrays what is necessary for them to obtain a kingdom experience. He commences with the first Beatitude in Matthew 5:3 by saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Here He reveals that the first step necessary to gain that heavenly experience of the kingdom in this life is that first one must come to the sobering reality that they are spiritually poor or in poverty. They must come to that divine recognition that they spiritually are in abject and absolute poverty.

When the stark realization of this strikes their soul they will "mourn" (Matthew 5:4) or they will have "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). The Apostle Paul says that when this "godly sorrow" is properly working, it "worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). We know that salvation occurs because Jesus said, "they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). John 14:26 tells us that "the Comforter . . . is the Holy Ghost.

Notice that there are only two Beatitudes that lead us to salvation. Seven (which is the Biblical number of perfection) Beatitudes teach us about discipleship and maintaining our experience. Why is that? Because in reality it takes very little Gospel to get saved, but quite a lot of Gospel to stay saved or to maintain that experience. After one has obtained an experience of salvation, what is the first thing that the Spirit of God teaches us? It teaches us the Beatitude in Matthew 5:5 to be "meek" and enter into submission to Christ to become a disciple. That is the first thing that He leads us to.

What is the first thing necessary for the Spirit of God to teach us that we might truly be able to be a disciple? It tells us in Matthew 5:5 to "inherit [or control] the earth." Our earthen vessel is the flesh. When we learn that, when we learn to "mortify the deeds of the body" (Romans 8:13) and learn to "keep under my body" (1 Corinthians 9:27), when we are denying its cravings and its hungerings, then we can "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). So we are seeing a progression throughout this text. When we learn to truly keep under our bodies, then we can truly turn our attention to "hunger and thirst" for the most needful thing-spiritual things. Then we can have an all-consuming desire to be more like God, more God-like. When this happens, we will have a great soul burden as God does and truly be "the

merciful" (Matthew 5:7). We will be an extension of God's mercy in this time world.

When we have truly put these attributes on, we are "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8). Not only we, but those about us "shall see God." They see God through the lives of the saints. A people who are truly a selfless people are the Church. They are the only qualified people to truly be "peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9). However, to truly "follow after the things which make for peace" (Matthew 5:9), many times the saints, the Church, must take an unpopular stance. For instance, being against controversial issues such as abortion or homosexuality. When the Church rises to Her feet and stands against these things in our society that violate Biblical principles, it leads us to our lesson text in Matthew 5:10. It produces being "persecuted."

I trust that we can see that these lessons are not isolated, disjointed, proverbial sayings. But rather they are all very interwoven, interrelated parts of a whole. Jesus came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Through these lessons He reveals what this salvation consists of.

Now let us look a little further into this lesson text. In this lesson, Jesus equates being "blessed" with being "persecuted." This seems to be a strange affinity. However, notice the latter phrase of our lesson text. He said in Matthew 5:10, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Now notice that this is the exact same phrase that we were introduced to in the very first Beatitude in Matthew 5:3 where He says, "Blessed are the pure in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

What does that reveal to us? Let us look at what this phrase is actually conveying. When we read the phrase, "the kingdom of heaven," in Matthew 5:10, immediately people's minds run right off to the heavenly or eternal realm. However, this is not the intention of Jesus' words in this text. The eternal realm is not mentioned in Matthew 5:10. He speaks of Heaven in Matthew 5:12 where He says, "For great is your reward in heaven." But this is not what He is speaking of when He employs this phrase in our text. We see it employed in a different sense in different wording in other places in the Scriptures. We need to understand that "the kingdom of heaven" is synonymous and interchangeable with the words the Kingdom of God.

Luke 6:20 says, "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God." He is speaking of the same occasion. So "the kingdom of heaven" and "the kingdom of God" are interchangeable terms. In Matthew 4:17 he declared, "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." However, in Mark 1:15 He renders the same account as, "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." There is only one kingdom. They are one and the selfsame entity. Matthew 4:23 speaks of "the gospel of the kingdom." If there were two kingdoms it would necessitate two Gospels. But Galatians 1:7 tells us only "the gospel of Christ." All else is perverted gospels.

What does this phrase really mean? When Jesus says "the kingdom of heaven" or other Gospel writers denote it as "the kingdom of God," what are they speaking of? Put the two terms together. It is a Kingdom of God on earth that men may enjoy here and now but it is of heavenly origin

and nature.

This thought of a kingdom is dual faceted. It portrays two realities—an individual collective reality. Romans 14:17 says, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink." In other words, it is not literal or temporal. As Jesus said in John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world, if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight." He goes on to say in Romans 14:17, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink."

I want you to notice some truths. It is not "meat and drink," not literal and temporal. He also says, "The kingdom of God is . . . ." He employs the present tense. Not a future tense as dispensational teachers would espouse. Not as Millenarians would advocate of a future coming kingdom. Rather it is right in the midst of the first century. Jesus employs the present tense because it was a present reality. Jesus said in Luke 16:16, "The Law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." You cannot get into something that does not exist yet. It would not matter how hard you pressed. If it did not exist, you could not find access. However, the Scriptures intimated that there is an ability to press into it. Therefore, it must have been a present reality with access and entrance there when these words were spoken in the very first century. We need to understand that He is speaking of it as a present reality.

When the thought of the kingdom is brought up, it portrays an experience. The kingdom experience is an experience where the heart and life is yielded unto the King. That King comes and moves into the heart and sets up a throne to where that He might reign through that individual. This kingdom experience incorporates the same virtues as we see held forth in these Beatitudes. We see righteousness, peace, and joy all according to the Roman letter. Do we see that in these Beatitudes? Yes! In Matthew 5:6 He speaks of righteousness. In Matthew 5:9 He speaks of peace and in Matthew 5:12 He speaks of joy. So it portrays the experience that Christ came to bring mankind. In Revelation 15:3, Christ is spoken of as the "King of saints." Through salvation, He comes through the personality of the Holy Ghost and is enthroned upon the heart and in the heart of the saint.

Now there is also a second aspect, a duality to this thought of a kingdom as well. A kingdom is not only is one where the sovereign reigns, but it is also comprised of many subjects under the rule of one sovereign or king. In Matthew 5:10, "the kingdom of heaven" has a collective aspect and according to Hebrews 12:22-28, it also represents the collective unit of the saints—the Church.

What is the lesson? We find this phrase at the first of the Beatitudes as well as towards the last. That tells us that all of the truths and attributes in between are all necessary for a kingdom experience to work as Christ ordained that it work. They are necessary if you are to maintain a successful experience. It also portrays to us that you may start out with an individual personal experience. However, if you "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7) as it is held forth in these Beatitudes, you may start out as "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). If you will incorporate these truths in your life and walk in them you will not always stay an individual. You can be a part of the body of Christ in this time world.

First Corinthians 12:18 says, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." This lesson text tells us that not only can we be an individual with a kingdom experience, but we can be brought together with other individuals of like experience and be set together in the body of Christ and be the Church of God, that city set on a hill that men may see.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:11 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.*

As we begin to view this text, there are several truths which we must recognize along with numerous distinguishing aspects of this particular Beatitude. When many religious advocates and teachers view this text, they see no distinguishing characteristics or aspects to this particular Beatitude. Many religious advocates and teachers make no distinction between these verses and the previous verse, verse 10. In Matthew 5:10 we found that Jesus said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So many religious leaders, when viewing these texts, see no distinction between the Beatitude in Matthew 5:10 where it says, "they which are persecuted" and Matthew 5:11, since it incorporates the same thought of persecution. Matthew 5:10 declares, ". . . they which are persecuted." Matthew 5:11 says, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you . . . ." Matthew 5:12 declares, ". . . for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Many assume that since the word in verse 10 and verse 11 is employed in both of these texts that they are all speaking of the one and selfsame thing. Hence they only see Matthew 5:11-12 as an extension of Matthew 5:10 and not as a separate Beatitude at all.

However, if we closely examine this text we will see that there are some very distinguishing characteristics in this ninth and final Beatitude that distinguishes it very clearly from the previous Beatitude incorporated in Matthew 5:10. When we begin to examine this under close scrutiny we will see that there are very distinguishing items within this passage that set it apart as separate and distinct from the prior Beatitude.

First of all, let us notice as with the prior and previous eight Beatitudes, it commences with the word "blessed," or in the original language of the Aramaic in which it was given initially it says, "O the blessedness of." As we begin to review that thought, what significance does this take on in this particular verse? Notice that this term is nowhere else employed in these twelve verses other than to introduce and to initiate a Beatitude. So it serves as a validation that Matthew 5:11 indeed commences a new and separate Beatitude from the prior one in Matthew 5:10. Christ is not being redundant or expanding upon the prior passage, but rather He is instituting and initiating a different and distinct Beatitude.

We must recall the words of the wise man in Proverbs 30:5 where he declared, "Every word of God is pure . . . ." This is teaching us that there is divine design and significance behind every word of God. Also, as we view this text we see some terms that Jesus employs that makes this passage clearly distinguishable from the previous verse. Look

closely verses 11 and 12 and let us view some of these very clear distinctions.

Look at Matthew 5:11 where Jesus speaks of, ". . . when men shall revile you." This phrase and term "revile" is unique to this particular Beatitude. He goes on to say, ". . . shall say all manner of evil against you falsely . . . ." This phrase also is totally distinctive to this particular Beatitude. As we go on to view and survey Matthew 5:12, He declares, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven . . . ." Here is the first time that Christ has taken us beyond the realm of time, through the course of the Beatitudes, into the eternal realm or a realm beyond time. How fitting that there in the last Beatitude, which portray our experience, He takes us to the end of our experience of which the ultimate end is heaven.

So I trust that we can see his is indeed a distinct and separate Beatitude which is conveying very separate and distinct truths to us. These are truths that were not incorporated in the previous Beatitude in Matthew 5:10. Luke, the writer of the Gospel account, pens this Beatitude as well. Perhaps his rendering shows these distinctions in even a clearer and a more succinct manner. Let us review the way that Luke recorded it in Luke 6:22-23: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." Here I think we can clearly see that this ninth and final Beatitude is indeed separate and distinct from the previous one and has an identity of its own. It is rich with spiritual truths that Jesus desires to convey to us and has utilized the avenue of this particular and final Beatitude to be a vehicle to convey these truths to you and me.

Let us begin to examine this text and see what the lesson is that Jesus is desiring to communicate to us. Notice this verse begins differently from all of the preceding verses. Here in Matthew 5:11 He commences by saying, "Blessed are ye . . . ." All the previous verses were either "Blessed are the . . . ." (verses 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9) or "Blessed are they . . . ." (verses 4, 6, and 10). However, in this particular passage it is very clearly distinct. Why is there this noted distinction? What does this reveal to us? What truth is being portrayed by the employment in this passage of this particular and singular word that The King James Version renders as "ye?" What does He mean when He says in Matthew 5:11, "ye" or you? He is bringing it down to an individual sense or an individual level because these lessons are a progression. The person who has followed to this point and has measured to all of the truths incorporated in the previous verses becomes one who is "ye." You are indeed blessed because the "ye" in Matthew 5:11 represents part of Matthew 5:3, "the poor in spirit [that is where you began]." "Ye" are part of Matthew 5:4, "they that mourn." "Ye" are part of Matthew 5:5 where it says, "the meek" as well as a part of the "they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" as Matthew 5:6 declares.

So it is with each Beatitude. The saint who would get to this place in Matthew 5:11-12, is one who has incorporated all of the previous truths and Beatitudes into your heart and life. So when Jesus said, "ye" or you, He is bringing it right down to an individual level, into an

individual sense and letting us know that this is the fulfillment of the progression of the previous verses. The person who has followed to this point and measured to all the truths incorporated in the previous verses is indeed a blessed individual. Ye are blessed or "Blessed are ye" because the "ye," or you, who have incorporated these truths into your life are part of each of the preceding verses that the Scripture portrays. The saint who would get to this place here in Matthew 5:11-12, where it speaks of they are being "reviled" and "persecuted" and spoken against, had they not incorporated all of these previous truths into their lives, they would not be experiencing these things that Jesus spoke of in our lesson text.

Let us begin go look into the body of this text and see what it reveals to us. In Matthew 5:11 Jesus cried, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you . . . ." What does this mean? What does this term revile actually mean? The actual Greek word here is *oneidizo* and it means to reproach or to upbraid. It is the same word that is used in Matthew 11:20 when it declared, "Then began he to upbraid . . . ." This is the same word as in Matthew 27:44 where it says, ". . . cast the same in his teeth." It is the same Greek word that is used in Luke 6:22 where The King James Version renders it, ". . . shall reproach you." What does this word reproach here actually mean? What does it convey to us? Some other renderings give us an insight. The Twentieth Century New Testament says, "to taunt you." Moffitt's rendering says, "denounce you." Goodspeed renders it as, "abuse you." The New Testament In Basic English says, "give you a bad name." In Matthew 27:44, where The King James Version says, "cast the same in his teeth," The Amplified Bible says, "also abused and reproached and made sport of Him in the same way." I think we can begin to see how this term was employed. It was speaking of being reproached, meaning "to be called by evil and contemptuous names."

The Scripture says in 1 Peter 2:21, ". . . Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example . . . ." What was that example? What was part of that suffering? Romans 15:3 says, "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written [quoting Psalm 69:9], the reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me." So Christ was greatly reproached while He sojourned in this time world.

Was He called and associated with evil and contemptuous names? The Gospel of John 8:48 declares, "Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?" Here is a clear case of abuse or of giving one a bad name. Recall that when Jesus said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you," that this word revile in the Greek means "to reproach or to upbraid." It is used to denounce. It is used to abuse. It is used to give one a bad name. It is used to make sport of one by giving them names that were evil and contemptuous. So here we see that Jesus plainly suffered that type of abuse. When they said He had a devil, it was a clear case of abuse and of giving a bad name. With the Samaritan, it was a clear case of abuse and of giving a bad name. The Samaritan that was spoken of there was a despised, mixed breed of people that came about as a result of the intermarriages back in the days of Nehemiah and Sanballat. In John 4:9 it says, ". . . the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." Certainly we all know how offensive it would be to be called a devil. In John 10:20 it says, "And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is



mad." The Amplified Bible renders it, "And many of them said, He has a demon and He is mad [insane, he raves, he rambles]." What a supreme insult to hurl at the very Lord of Glory. In Matthew 12:24, Matthew records them declaring, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils." Beelzebub was a name given to the prince of devils and literally meant the lord of garbage. It was an expression of extreme contempt.

Jesus was giving us a very clear lesson. What is the lesson that Jesus is attempting to convey to us through employing this word revile rendered in our lesson text? In our text in Matthew 5:11, He employs this word revile and then He lets us know through other writers in other places in the Scriptures of some of the reviling that Jesus had to endure. He is trying to convey to us the same truth that He said in Matthew 10:24, "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord." The Apostle Peter put it in these words in 1 Peter 4:1, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind." Certainly, if our very Lord was insulted by being called mad or insane and by saying that He raves and rambles and that He was afflicted with Beelzebub the prince of devils, it is no strange thing if we as His people are reviled or reproached.

However, Jesus Christ, our example, gives us an insight to how this should be approached and how we should handle it when men do revile us. In 1 Peter 2:23 it says, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not." Christ did not have a retaliatory attitude or spirit and we are instructed to follow His example. The Apostle was one who lived the example of Christ in his sufferings. In 1 Corinthians 4:12-13 he says, ". . . being reviled, we bless, being persecuted, we suffer it: Being the off scouring of all things unto this day." Why is the reaction that a saint has so important and vital that it be in accordance with this particular teaching and spirit? Because it is through these avenues that we reveal "the hidden man of the heart" (1 Peter 3:4). The Lord ordained to use these avenues to make "a gazingstock" (Hebrews 10:33).

This is one of the reasons that the Lord allows reviling to come. It shows the world that the people of God have a different nature. They have a different spirit. They have something within that enables them to have the power to act right even in the worst scenarios and scenes of life. This is why the Apostle Paul said, ". . . being reviled, we bless; [The world expects that when one is reviled that they revile back. However, the saint does not revile. The saint blesses.] being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat" (1 Corinthians 4:12-13).

We can see here that the reaction and response of the saints is drastically and diametrically different than that which the world would give. It is through these avenues that God uses the saints to reveal the hidden man of the heart to get the Lord of Glory out into plain view. God uses them to show that there is an experience that man may have that changes his nature, actions, and reactions. The reactions of the saints to the abuses are a God-ordained avenue to be an evangelistic force to this world. That is one reason He said here in our lesson text "Blessed are ye" because it is indeed a blessed individual who can incorporate these truths and graces into their lives in such a manner that when the world hurls reviling at them, when the world reproaches them, taunts

them, abuses them, speaks evil of them, gives them a bad name that they can turn and show the grace and power of God in their lives. They can show that they have a divine nature that is different and distinct from this world to where they can reveal the evangelistic force to the world.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:11 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.*

As we view this passage of Scripture text, we must recognize that this passage is indeed a separate and distinct Beatitude in its own right. Many religious advocates see Matthew 5:11-12 as merely an extension of the previous Beatitude in Matthew 5:10. However, as we begin to consider this we note that there are several factors that establish this text as a separate and distinct Beatitude. Let us begin to consider these.

First, notice that Matthew 5:11 commences with the employment of the word "Blessed." The only other places where this word is used in this context of Matthew 5:1-12 is to introduce and initiate a new Beatitude. It is used in Matthew 5:3-11. And the only place that it is employed is at the commencement or the introduction of a new Beatitude. So the employment of this word "Blessed" here commencing Matthew 5:11 serves as a validation of the fact that this verse begins a new and separate Beatitude.

Conversely, we know that Matthew 5:12 does not constitute a Beatitude, in and of itself, because it does not begin with the word "Blessed" as the previous verses do. And so that stands as a witness to the fact that it is apportion of the Matthew 5:11 Beatitude where He says, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." So here we see this employment of this term "Blessed" at the commencement of Matthew 5:11 serves as a validation of the fact that this verse begins a new, separate and distinct Beatitude from the previous Beatitude in Matthew 5:10.

Also there are several distinguishing factors in this passage that are not incorporated in the previous verse. In Matthew 5:10, Jesus speaks and declares, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So here in Matthew 5:10 we see that He speaks solely of being "persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So here in Matthew 5:10 we see that He speaks solely of being "persecuted for righteousness' sake. He speaks only of this one thing in verse number ten. However in Matthew 11, He expands our insight to some of the mistreatment that we, as saints of God, may face and need to endure, and then it widens the perspective out to speak of, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Here in this verse, He broadens and expands the horizon of mistreatment to give us greater understanding and greater clarity. In this expansion, is a clear establishment of a separate identity for this particular Beatitude.

Now in this ninth and final Beatitude we see that there are some

unique features that cause it to stand alone and be identified as a separate Beatitude. First, this is the only one of these lessons that says, as it does here in Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are ye." All the preceding verses say, "Blessed are the" which He says in Matthew 5:3, 5:5, 5:7, 5:8-9. Then it says, "Blessed are they" as recorded in Matthew 5:4-6 and 5:10. So we see again a unique quality to this particular Beatitude and to this particular passage. Second, we see that this is the only Beatitude that consists of two verses. All the others consist of one verse, but this Beatitude consists of two verses, which are Matthew 5:11-12. Third, this being the final Beatitude, it takes us to the very end of our experience. It is the only one of these lessons that speaks of eternity, or as Matthew 5:12 describes it, "great is your reward in heaven." So I trust that we can clearly see that in addition to this passage being separate and distinct as a Beatitude, it is indeed a very special one as well.

As we begin to look into this passage, Jesus begins with a somewhat startling and curious statement. He cried herein Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are ye when men revile you." Now, several things spring to mind as we view this phrase. Why would He equate being "blessed" with being reviled? What did He mean and what was He trying to convey when He employed the term "revile?" This is not a word that we see in common usage today. So we need to give consideration to how this word was employed in the original language. What does it actually mean when He talks about "revile?"

The actual Greek word, the language in which this text was written, was *oneidizo* which means, "to reproach or to upbraid." It is the same word that is used in Matthew 11:20 when it records, "Then began he to upbraid." It is also a word that The Amplified Bible says, "abused and reproached and made sport of Him in the same way," It is the same Greek word that is used in the Gospel of Luke 6:22 where it says, "shall reproach you." Now, what does this word "reproach" actually mean? Several renderings give us an insight as to what this word actually means. *The Twentieth Century New Testament* says, "taunt you." Moffitt's rendering says, "denounce you." Goodspeed's translation said, "abuse you." And *The New Testament in Basic English* says, "give you a bad name." So I trust we can begin to see what being reviled actually entails biblically.

So why did Jesus say here in our lesson text, in Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you?" How can being so abused, so misused, so being made sport of, censured, reproached, or given a bad name-how can that indeed be a blessing? Well, look at the words of the Hebrew writer. In Hebrews 10:32-33 he pens these words: "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used."

What is the Hebrew writer attempting to convey to us in this passage? First, he is addressing a singular group of people, those who he refers to in Hebrews 10:32 as those that "were illuminated." He says, "But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated." So he is referring to a singular group of people, those who "were illuminated" or *The Amplified Bible* renders it as "spiritually

enlightened." In 1 Thessalonians 5:5 the Apostle Paul said, ". . . the children of light . . . ."

Now it is vital that we understand this as it gives us a keen insight as to why there is trouble. It reveals to us that what Hebrews 10:32 calls "a great fight of afflictions" or *The Amplified Bible* renders it as "a great and painful struggle" is due solely to the fact that Hebrews 10:32 says, "ye were illuminated." This clearly lets us know that if you are a child of God, one of the children of light, one of those that have been "illuminated," that it is not you or me that they dislike. It is not you or me that they are after. But it is the light that they want to extinguish, it is the light that they hate.

Why do they rise up so against the light? Well, look at Jesus' words in John 3:19-20: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light [why?], because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." So we can clearly see, that there is what the sacred penman termed here in Hebrews 10:32 as "a great fight of afflictions" due to the light, or you and me being "illuminated."

Now look a little further into this Hebrew text. Here in Hebrews 10:33 he declares, "Partly, whilst ye were made a gazingstock [How?] both by reproaches and afflictions, "Or *The Amplified Bible* clarifies it and says, "Sometimes being yourselves a gazingstock, publicly exposed to insults and abuse and distress, and sometimes claiming fellowship and making common cause with others who were so treated." Why does the Lord allow these insults or abuses to take place? Why does he not use His supernatural ability to shield His people from these things? Why does He not prevent it from happening? Because it is a vital part of the divine plan. It is His way to show that there is a distinction between light and darkness. He uses these avenues to make His people "a gazingstock" (Hebrews 10:33).

Now, what does the word "gazingstock" actually mean? Well, certainly, one upon which you would gaze is one which you would view. It is one that you would see. It is one that you would look upon. The actual Greek word is *theatrizo* from the root word *theatron* or a theater. This tells us that the saints, the church, is God's theater. He allows her to be placed in a position where all eyes are turned on her, to where all are focused in on her and are viewing her and watching her. This portrays to us that through the avenue of what Hebrews 10:33 calls, "reproaches and afflictions," or one rendering says, "in consequence of the taunts and insults heaped upon you." Another says, "by angry words and cruel acts." Through these avenues, through these abuses, the Lord places us right in the public eye. So that when they see what is taking place, and see the reaction, they see a divine rather than a human reaction that can arouse curiosity and strike conviction in the lives of those observing.

This brings us full circle right back around to the very first Beatitude in Matthew 5:3 where Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." But if the lost are ever to see that they are spiritually poor, in total, absolute, and abject poverty, then someone must show them that. And one way is by the reaction of the true saint of God when they are being mistreated, insulted, abused and having unfit action taken against them. So when the true saint of God acts in a godly manner, this

is the manner in which God intended that the world be able to look on and view the saints and see them as God's theater and see the grace of God and power of God working in their lives.

Look at the account of Paul and Silas in Acts, Chapter 16. They were reviled, reproached, and falsely accused. Look at Acts 16:10-21 where it says: "And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men being Jews, [Notice it says, 'being Jews.' Here was an insult; this was intended to be slanderous in a gentile community. This was in reality an ethnic slur occurring.] do exceedingly trouble our city, [Here was an out-and-out false accusation. And the charge was,] They teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans." Again, denouncing them, giving them a bad name and misrepresenting their teachings. But what happened? They went on to be persecuted.

In Acts 16:22-23 it says: ". . . rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison." But it was how they reacted when all eyes were turned on them, when they were a "gazingstock," that God used as a convincing factor and convinced the unbeliever. In Acts 16:25 it says, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

What occurred next? God, sent an earthquake and opened all the doors. But the prisoners, rather than fleeing to freedom, where did they go? Not out to freedom, not out to escape. But Acts 16:28 says that when Paul saw or supposed that the jailer was going to thrust himself through, or going to commit suicide, for losing those that were charged to his care, he said, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." What did he mean when he said, "all here?" the reason the jailer supposed all had fled was because he did not see any of the prisoners. He supposed they had escaped. But, in reality, they were all in Paul and Silas' cell because when they had been made a "gazingstock," rather than react in a worldly, ungodly manner, they saw the grace of God. They saw the peace of God. They saw the power of God. And through seeing and viewing these things when men became God's theater, it struck their heart, it struck a chord, and aroused something deep within.

So, they came into the cell where Paul and Silas were. And those who have light, those who are the illuminated, yet today attract honest hearts. What else happened? The jailer cried in Acts 16:30, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And in Acts 16:34 it tells us that he was "believing in God with all his house."

What is the lesson to us? It never would have happened if Paul and Silas had not been reviled, as our text says, ". . . when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Matthew 5:12 says, "Rejoice," and that is what they were doing at the midnight hour. They were not lamenting. They were not weeping and sorrowing, but they were rejoicing because they had an experience that gave them peace and grace. And when those that were bereft of that saw how they reacted under being reviled, under being persecuted, after being falsely accused and whipped and beaten and thrust into prison, when they reacted in a godly manner and rejoiced, it served as an evangelistic force.

Someone may ask, "Why should you react in that manner?" Because this is a God ordained avenue. Being reviled, being persecuted, having evil

spoken against you, false charges, this is a God ordained avenue that God has seen fit to allow the saints to be placed in so that the saints, the church, can be in the public eye. It has enabled the church, the saints, to become a "gazingstock," or God's theater. So that when those who are honest look on, they will see in the action and the reaction of the saints something far different than they see in the world. And that when they see that we are "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world" (2 Peter 1:4) and by our actions and reactions of being reproached they perceive that they have not escaped, and the realization strikes them that they are indeed, as Matthew 5:3 says, "poor in spirit" it will serve as an evangelistic force. This individual who is reviled is as Matthew 5:11 says, "Blessed" because it enables them to do as Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light so shine before men." They are "blessed" because their light and their witness is truly being effective. It is an effective witness for Christ and for Truth.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:11 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.*

As we begin to view this Scriptural passage, we see that it is unique in many aspects. We want to view some of the unique qualities that are incorporated within this particular text. As we begin to survey this text and consider those unique qualities we will note that there are several. First of all, it is the only Beatitude that commences with the words here incorporated in Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are ye." Every other Beatitude says, "Blessed are the," or "Blessed are they," and so this is a unique Beatitude. It is the only Beatitude that speaks in multiple aspects. All the others deal pretty much in a singularity by saying as Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," or as Matthew 5:4 says, "Blessed are they that mourn;" and as Matthew 5:5 says, "Blessed are the meek." And so forth.

All other Beatitudes are spoken in the singular, but this Beatitude deals in multiple Truths. Here in Matthew 5:11 Jesus speaks of: "revile you," "persecute you," and "say all manner of evil against you falsely." So, there are many aspects to this particular Beatitude. Three particular aspects of Truth are brought before us just in Matthew 5:11. Then, in Matthew 5:12 Jesus speaks of: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad." So this particular lesson is exceptionally unique. Being the ninth and final of these lessons, it alone takes us to the end of our faith and says in Matthew 5:12, "For great is your reward in heaven." It is the only one that brings Heaven and eternity into view.

We must ever be mindful that through the avenue of these lessons, Christ is portraying our experience from its appropriate beginning when He said in Matthew 5:3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." He takes it from its appropriate beginning of when we were under conviction and realized our spiritual poverty, and how that we were totally absolute and abjectly in spiritual poverty until we came to where we saw it in such a startling manner that we realized that we were poor and it caused us to take action. These Beatitudes takes us from conviction through conversion, to consecration, and right on through to the consummation of our experience and its successful and victorious conclusion in Matthew 5:12 where He says "in heaven."

Christ, in His first Advent, came just as He declared in John 10:10 where it says, ". . . that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Through the vehicle of these lessons, called the Beatitudes, He reveals to us the attributes and components necessary for this spiritual life to be obtained and then for it to be maintained. Just as physical life is not commenced or sustained without certain conditions being met, so it is spiritually. Spiritual life does not just



occur and it does not just appear in some unknown mystical manner; there are conditions that must be met that produces life and conditions that also must be adhered to, to maintain and perpetuate this life as well. Through these lessons, He is giving us explicit instructions and insight as to what constitutes this blessed experience, which He came to bring to mankind, which we call Salvation. Jonah said in his writings in Jonah 2:9, "Salvation is of the Lord." It is of a Divine nature and for us to live it out we must, as the Apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 1:4, "be partakers of the divine nature."

Now, let us begin to examine our text here. In Matthew 5:11 Jesus begins again with the word "blessed," again reiterating the truth that Christ is dealing in a Divine realm and considering Divine realities rather than the low level of mere human happiness. He is not dealing on an emotional level, He is not speaking in the vein of how one may feel, but rather He is lifting these lessons to a plateau of spiritual realities and speaking in a Divine realm of Divine realities that are within the experience that is Divine as well, which we call Salvation.

He goes on to say in Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile [to reproach or upbraid] you, and persecute you." Now, why does He bring this thought up? He spoke in Matthew 5:10 of "they which are persecuted," so why does He bring that up again? If He was merely being repetitious He would have said the same thing in Matthew 5:11 as He did in Matthew 5:10, but there are very evident distinctions. So the question is: why did He bring it up? Is He merely being repetitious or is there a distinction? Well, Proverbs 30:5 tells us, "Every word of God is pure." This means that there was divine truth portrayed behind the employment of every word that is incorporated in the sacred Scriptures.

What is the lesson? Here we find that it tells us very plainly in the previous verse, where He mentioned in Matthew 5:10, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake." So here we find that the previous verse is talking about "they which are persecuted" (verse 10), so when we begin to study the distinction between the words in Matthew 5:10-11, we see that verse 10 was very narrow. Matthew 5:10 says, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake," but Matthew 5:11 is much more expansive and declares, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." The persecution mentioned in Matthew 5:10 refers to all outward acts of violence which the hands can do and this passage in Matthew 5:11 deals in a much broader realm and deals in all that the tongue can affect. It comprises all calumny, slander, and defamation which the tongue can achieve.

Look at the surrounding context in Matthew 5:11 when He said, "Men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely." Surrounding this phrase in Matthew 5:11 when He says "persecute you" are allusions to verbal abuse. Preceding the portion of our passage that says "persecute you" are the words "men shall revile" which we found meant "reproach, to insult, or to give a bad name;" and so it is speaking of that which the tongue can induce. Also succeeding it, it says "men shall say all manner of evil against you." So, surrounding this phrase "persecute you" in Matthew 5:11 are allusions to verbal abuse: they precede it and succeed it in this passage.

Is this what the text refers to when it speaks in Matthew 5:11 and says "persecute you?" Notice how He uniquely associates the persecution

in this passage: He unites this passage, or links this passage, in Matthew 5:11 with the phrase in the latter portion of Matthew 5:12 where it says "for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Here He gives us an understanding of how the term "persecute you" (Matthew 5:11) is used in this text because He links it to the persecution of the prophets in Matthew 5:12.

Let us examine a little of how the prophets were persecuted. Certainly there was physical abuse and even martyrdom, but persecution is far more inclusive than merely the physical aspects. Many times, when we think of persecution, we think only of martyrdom where that which was physical is inflicted upon those as in days gone by. But, I repeat, that real persecution is much more inclusive than that and here Jesus gives us an insight and an indication to how He employed this term by turning our minds towards the prophets.

Now let us consider the prophets that Jesus brought to mind in verse 12. How were they "persecuted" as Matthew 5:12 says? Was it always death? Was it always physical? Certainly not! Let us list some scriptural instances and consider them. Let us consider the famous "weeping prophet," Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 18:18, where it is recorded says, "Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah: for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words." Notice, there was a smiting here and the intent was to hurt and to wound, but the wounding and the smiting was not physical as in the sense of from the hand or physical abuse. According to this text the smiting was to come "from the tongue." Some other renderings of this passage give us an even broader scope of these words. One rendering says, "Come, let us make use of his words for an attack on him. And let us give attention with care to what he says." Certainly, this is not a novel thing. This is not a new way to take and use one's own words and twist and misrepresent them in order to use it to give one a bad name and make them appear to say things that they did not say.

This was done to our Lord and Savior as well. In Luke 11:53-54 it says: "And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and Pharisees began to urge him vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things; Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him." One of the charges they made was by taking the words that He said, a teaching which He laid forth, and misapplying it and misrepresenting His words. In Mark 14:58, when the witnesses came before the court they said, "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands." But, notice that these were not the words of Jesus. Jesus said in John 2:19, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Now, notice first, He did not say it as they represented it. In Mark 14:58 they said that He said "I will destroy this temple." First, He did not say that. He did not say that He would "destroy" it. He said to them in John 2:19, "Destroy this temple." He did not say He would. They misrepresented His words and took His words and twisted them to use them against Him. Second of all John 2:21 says, "But he spake of the temple of his body." He was not speaking of that literal edifice. What does this teach us? This teaches us that when we try to use "his words"

(Jerimiah 10:10), or that when they try to do that they usually do not take them all nor do they properly represent or apply them; they almost, without exception, foster a misrepresentation. Another rendering says, "Come on, let us hit at him with his own tongue. Let us listen carefully to every word he says."

Biblically, this is a form of persecution. It is actually a form of slander and it is indeed persecution when you are to smite one with words. Whether they are your words, or a misrepresentation of their words, it is indeed persecution and is actually a form of slander. What is slander? It comes from the Latin word *scandalum* which is the word from which our English word *scandal* is derived, and slander is the seed from which scandal is sown. *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines scandal as "the utterance or speaking of a false statement, or statements harmful to another's character or reputation." To slander one by misrepresenting their words or statements, to twist and turn what was said to make the intent and motive appear different from what it was is all slanderous and is a form of persecution,

In other places Jeremiah's position was misrepresented. They charged him in Jeremiah 37:13 saying, "Thou fallest away to the Chaldeans." *The Amplified Bible* says, "You are deserting to the Chaldeans." Other prophets were maligned, slandered, and falsely accused. First Kings 18:17 tells us that the great pProphet Elijah was charged by King Ahab when he said, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Look at what was said concerning the Prophet Amos in his writings. In Amos 7:10 it says, "Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words."

Right back to words again! Whenever the enemy wants to work against the work of God or the man of God, he works through words. He does not take up swords, staves, knives, guns, or pistols, but he starts twisting, turning, and misrepresenting words. The Apostle John spoke of this in 3 John 1:9, speaking of the one he denoted as "Diotrephes," that he was "prating against us with malicious words" (3 John 1:10). *The Amplified Bible* makes it clearer when it renders it saying, "So when I arrive, I will call attention to what he is doing, his boiling over and casting malicious reflections upon us with insinuating language."

You see, persecution can take many forms and when one is doing as Jesus said in Matthew 25:40, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." When one is persecuting through this slanderous, misrepresenting form, they are not just persecuting a saint or a believer but they are persecuting Christ Himself. The Apostle Paul penned to the Galatians and said, "I persecuted the church of God" (Galatians 1:13), but when he met Jesus on the Damascus road, Jesus said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutes thou me" (Acts 9:4)? All persecution of one for truth is a personal affront and an assault on Jesus Christ personally.

Let us lift another illustration of what Jesus denoted in our text, in Matthew 5:12, as persecution of the prophets. Look at what the Lord told Ezekiel in Ezekiel 33:30-33: "Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls of and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth

from the Lord. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their hearts goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not. And when this cometh to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet hath been among them."

Notice some key phrases here: "the children of thy people still are talking against thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses" (Ezekiel 33:30) or one translation says, "Your people are gossiping about you by the walls." In this day of liberalism and freedom of speech people may not regard it as such, but gossip is persecution. No, it does not injure one physically. No, it may not kill one physically, but it may kill their influence or kill their effectiveness. The sacred writer penned in Jeremiah 18:18 and said, "Let us smite him with the tongue." Though it may not smite the body, it is still a smite and hence still a persecution. This is why that in our text Jesus linked the persecution of Matthew 5:11 with Matthew 5:12, and also with the prophets to give us an insight as to what type of persecution He was speaking of in this passage. This is the type of persecution that wounds and injures the inner man and Jesus was letting us know that the saints who would endure this would be "blessed" (Matthew 5:11). He was letting us know that there is a blessedness that comes through this avenue that comes in no other way. We will look a little further into that and how it works in the Christian life.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART FOUR

*Matthew 5:11 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.*

As we begin to consider this text we see that it holds forth great insight to the many aspects of what truly constitutes persecution. In the previous Beatitude recorded, Jesus introduces us to "they which are persecuted for righteousness sake" (Matthew 5:10), and the word "persecuted" refers to all outward acts of violence which the hand can do, but in our lesson text of Matthew 5:11, Jesus is revealing an aspect of persecution which many do not regard as such. He brings a new dimension to the word "persecute" in Matthew 5:11 and this word deals with all that the tongue can affect; it comprehends all calumny, slander, and defamation which the tongue can achieve. We see that in Jesus' employment of this word that He is bringing a totally different aspect to the thought of what constitutes persecution. He is bringing to the forefront an aspect that is not commonly regarded by the perpetrator as really being persecution. But, in Matthew 5:10, He introduced us to the outward forms of persecution-or physical forms-that the hands can do, and in Matthew 5:11, He deals with the converse avenue of persecution and deals with that which the tongue can affect.

We can see that this word is dealing in the verbal form because we see how that Jesus spoke throughout verse 11 and made it very clear to us. Surrounding the word "persecute" in this text are terms that Jesus used to substantiate that this is the realm in which He was dealing. In Matthew 5:11 He precedes the word "persecute" with the words "when men shall revile [reproach or upbraid] you." Then note the phrase which succeeds or follows the word "persecute" in Matthew 5:11 where it says, "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Each of these illustrations, or phrases, that Jesus employs portrays verbal abuse, or as the enemies of Jeremiah the Prophet said "come and let us smite him with the tongue" (Jeremiah 18:18). This is what Jesus was speaking of when He said "for so [or in like manner] persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Matthew 5:12).

In this lesson text we are seeing a type and manner of persecution, and I repeat that few really regard as being persecution, but yet the Bible clearly holds it forth as being such. Many are of the opinion that for it to be persecution it must be literal or physical, but this text clearly rises in the face of such thinking as that and explicitly teaches us otherwise.

We have examined the phrase "when men shall revile you, and persecute you" (Matthew 5:11) in prior study, and now we want to examine the words of Jesus when He said: "And shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matthew 5:11). First, I want us to notice the conjunction that Jesus used in this text. Notice His wording. He said in

Matthew 5:11, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." What is the significance of these conjunctions? What does this word "and" portray to us? It reveals to us that merely because one may have endured one aspect of this suffering does not exempt them to the other avenues as well. The implication is that the true Saint of God, one who is really a Child of God, will be confronted with each of these.

Let us examine our text and see just what this phrase portrays to us. Jesus said in Matthew 5:11, "And shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." This phrase begins with the word "and" which again is reiterating that this trial may be in addition to the others which you may have suffered. But just because you have suffered being "reviled" (which we found means "to be reproached or upbraided"), or because you have been persecuted will not exempt you from being in a position where "all manner of evil" may be said against you. So again, this word "and" lets us know that we may experience these multiple arenas of persecution. This phrase also says "shall say." Again, this is a verbal form of persecution, not a physical form. It is not that which lays lashes to the back or beheads one, but rather it lays lashes with the tongue, as it were.

Now, look right at the heart of the text in Matthew 5:11, "all manner of evil against you falsely." *The Expanded Greek* says, "Say every pernicious thing against you, speaking deliberate falsehood, on account of me," Another rendering says, "And keep on telling lies about you." This is the most deceitful form of persecution. Why is that? Because the persecutor represents that they are speaking the truth. It is the persecutor, the perpetrator of this offence, who represents themselves as a bearer of truth, and this is a very deceitful form of persecution. They say that they are speaking the truth, when in reality they are doing as the Apostle Paul penned in 1 Timothy 4:2 when he speaks describing this and says, "Speaking lies in hypocrisy." Hypocrisy can only be working and operable when one is making a profession contrary to what they are. The word "hypocrisy" actually denotes one who is filling the role of a play actor, one that is acting other than what he is in reality, so it is speaking of one who is a professor of religion.

When we begin to consider the thought of persecution, usually those who foster persecution in the greatest way and the greatest manner are those who are advocates of some religious persuasion or stance, and they represent that they are speaking truths when all along they are "speaking lies in hypocrisy" as Paul said in 1 Timothy 4:2. When Jesus said "shall say all manner of evil against you" (Matthew 5:11), what was He really speaking of in reality? When He said they "shall say all manner of evil against you," He was speaking of the realm of false accusations, and this has been an avenue that the enemy of souls has utilized for ages. The wise man penned in his writings that "there is no new thing under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9), so this is no new realm. This has been utilized for ages.

In Revelation 12:10, speaking of the system of Roman paganism which opposed the church in the morning time of the Gospel Day, the Revelator said, "The accuser of our brethren is cast down." This has been an avenue that the enemy has repeatedly employed. Let us lift a few Scriptures that portray this. When Hannah was burdened and praying for

a son, Eli said in 1 Samuel 1:14, "How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thine wine from thee." Here we see Hanna was clearly falsely accused. When Sanballat sent a letter to Nehemiah in Nehemiah 6:7, which reads, "And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah, and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words." Again, this was clearly a case of false accusations.

Look at the accusations leveled against the patriarch Job. In Job 22:5-7 it declares: "Is not thy wickedness great? and thine iniquities infinite? For thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing. Thou hast not given water to the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry." Yet, God having it inspired to be penned said that Job was "perfect and upright" (Job 1:1), and Job 1:22 says, "In all this Job sinned not." So, the accusations were cruel and slanderous and false!

Let us come up to the New Testament. Our Lord and Savior, our example in all things, was falsely accused as well. In Matthew 27:12 it says, "And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing." Luke 6:7 declares, "And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day; that they might find an accusation against him." The apostles were falsely accused as well. Acts 16:20-21 says: "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans." Here we see that there are many accounts and the Scriptures are replete with many more accounts of where that the righteous were maligned and where that persecution and false accusations were hurled against the true people of God.

Notice in these examples of this slander and false accusations there are some common denominators concerning each of these accounts. First and foremost in every instance, without exception, the perpetrator of the false accusation was in a dire spiritual condition. The one who perpetrated the offence—that made the accusation—in each account was in serious spiritual trouble. Eli, in the first account that we read, was to shortly die and be removed from high office, and his family as well, due to his failure to control and restrain his sons. Sanballat was an avowed enemy of the cause of God. Job's comforters in the end had to repent and have Job pray for them, and certainly those who opposed Christ and the church were in a sad spiritual condition. So, the one who falsely accuses is in a very sad spiritual state. Next, notice that almost without exception, accusations came when the object of the accusations was already in a trying and troubling time. They came as an added blow in an already difficult time.

Let us look a little deeper at false accusations. It is not merely speaking an untruth or lying against the person, but one rendering of our text in Matthew 5:11 says, "And say all kinds of slanderous things against you." The word "slander" comes from the Latin word *scandalum* and this is the word from which our English "scandal" is derived. Slander is the seed from which scandal is sown. *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us, concerning the word slander, that it is "the utterance or spreading of a false statement or statements harmful to another's character or reputation." In reality, false accusation is a form of slander.

Look at the charges in the previous examples. Notice how they not only made a false or untrue statement, notice how they not only spoke an untruth, but notice how their intent and the seed that was sown injected the thought to malign character. Hannah, in 1 Samuel 1:14, was accused of being drunken. Certainly drunkenness is a heinous sin, and it is a repugnant and vile sin in any person. It is a vile sin of society when you find it lodging in the life of a man, but here it was in a woman which makes it even more of a terrible crime. And then to compound it, to accuse her of being drunk in the holy place, in the temple, was indeed the height of insult and slander. She was accused of being drunken, and so it was indeed a slanderous accusation. Nehemiah was accused of treason. His very loyalty and patriotism was being brought into question, having aspersions cast against it. In Nehemiah 6:7 Sanballat said, "There is a king in Judah." He was accusing Nehemiah of treasonable actions. Job was accused of greed and avarice, selfishness, and lack of human compassion.

We could go on through the examples. Slander is regarded in the Scriptures as a very serious sin. In Psalm, Chapter 31, the Psalmist revealed that he was exposed to it. And most every truly spiritual leader is exposed to this terrible abuse. Look at David's words in Psalm 31:13 where he said, "For I have heard the slander of many: fear was on every side: while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life." But what was the Lord's response to all this? What was His response to this slander? Psalm 101:5 says, "Whoso privily [and bear in mind it does not even have to be public knowledge to stir the wrath and judgment of God] slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer." Here he reveals the penalty as well as what produces it. One who slanders, according to the Psalmist, "hath a high look and a proud heart." Or *The Amplified Bible* says, "He who has a haughty look and a proud and arrogant heart I cannot and will not tolerate" (Psalm 101:5). Proverbs 10:18 very pointedly declares, "He that uttereth a slander, is a fool."

So, in our text when Jesus said, "Shall say all manner of evil against you" (Matthew 5:11), He was speaking of false accusations. And false accusations that were not only just untrue words but they were slanderous in nature that maligned Christian character. But notice one key word in this text. In Matthew 5:11 He said, "Shall say all manner of evil against you falsely." Peter said in 1 Peter 3:16, "Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ." We must live in such a manner to make certain that all charges are false.

In 1 Peter 4:12-16 the apostle penned: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 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. 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. 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. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf." I want you to notice several phrases here quickly.



Peter elaborates on this. In 1 Peter 4:15 he says, "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody." Here he cautions us to make certain that we do not bring the suffering or the repercussions on ourselves as a result of our own actions. Then, he tells us that if we have not done that to "rejoice" (1 Peter 4:13). Why? Well, there are numerous reasons. It draws distinct lines of demarcation between the church and the world and between the church and false religion. It also shows the distinct differences in the character and nature of the saints as compared to those who are perpetrating the offence. The Apostle Peter reveals to us that there is "glory and "joy" (verse 13) and many other spiritual realities He desires to reveal through our persecution. This is why Jesus commenced our lesson with "blessed are ye" (Matthew 5:11), and He admonishes us to "rejoice" (Matthew 5:12). We will look more at this rejoicing.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART FIVE

*Matthew 5:11 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 glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

As we consider this text, it begins with what initially would seem to be a strange equation. In Matthew 5:11, commencing this passage Jesus said, "Blessed [the original language Aramaic in which this text was spoken says 'O the blessedness of,' and then Jesus goes on to say] are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Initially, this would appear to be a very strange equation, to equate "blessedness" or being "blessed" with being "reviled," "persecuted," or "slandered," but there are indeed great blessings in these occurrences. How? How can that possibly be? Because as the Hebrew writer reveals that these avenues make us "a gazing stock" (Hebrews 10:33), or the Greek word is *theatrizo* from the root word *theatron* from which our English word "theater" comes.

So these avenues serve to make the saints of God "God's theater" in this world. It shows the definite distinction between the true church and the world and between the true church and the realms of spiritual Babylon or false religion. This manifestation of the saints under these times and under these abuses and misuses stands as a distinction, and stands to allow the church to be in a position that she alone can occupy—a position of manifesting the power and grace of God in their lives to where that the world can see the distinction between the reality and the many counterfeits around it.

In this passage of Matthew 5:11, when Jesus speaks of "revile you," and "persecute you," the word "persecute," as employed in this text, deals with all that the tongue can affect. It takes in all calumny, slander, and defamation which the tongue can achieve. Each of the abuses which Christ speaks of in this text are verbal abuses. Matthew 5:11 says to "revile you" which means to reproach or upbraid. The words in Matthew 5:11, "persecute you," are clarified in Matthew 5:12 when Jesus says, "So persecuted they the prophets which were before you." In this context, how was He referring to the prophets and their persecutions? Jeremiah 18:18 reveals it to us when it declares, "Come, and let us smite him with the tongue."

Our text in Matthew 5:11 goes on to say "and shall say [each of these avenues were verbal abuses] all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Or one rendering of this says, "And shall say all kinds of slanderous things against you." So in this text, Jesus was actually referring, in this last portion, to slander. However, notice in the face of all of this, Matthew 5:12 says, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad." My, what a shocking statement this would seem to be. In Matthew 5:12 it says, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad," over being misused, abused, and slandered. What seemingly strange words.

Now, we know that Proverbs 30:5 tells us, "Every word of God is pure." This tells us that there is divine design and truth portrayed in every word that is incorporated in the sacred Scriptures. So, what truth lies concealed in this text? Let us examine it by the help of God. Matthew 5:12 begins with the word "rejoice." This is a verb and it is an action verb; it is a call to action. The original Greek word is *chairō* and it means joyfully or rejoice. It is a verb which must have a corresponding noun. In other words, it must have grounds or occasions to occur.

Look at some of the Scriptures where it is employed. In Luke 1:14 it says, "Many shall rejoice at his birth." In Luke 10:20 it says, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you: but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." What is the common factor that unites these passages? Not mere emotion, but rather a knowledge. They were to rejoice because of the knowledge that they had.

In Luke 1:14 where it says "and many shall rejoice at his birth;" it is speaking of John the Baptist, the one who was the forerunner of Jesus Christ, and the one who would come as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye way of the Lord" (Matthew 3:3), so that the Messiah's coming would be known as being imminent. That knowledge was to produce a joy. Jesus said in Luke 10:20, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." It is based in knowledge. Let us survey some other Scriptures that substantiate this as well.

In John 4:36 it says, "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." What caused the rejoicing? That knowledge! That knowledge of what they were to receive. Acts 5:41 tells us, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." This rejoicing, again, came from having a knowledge.

To many, when you bring up the thought as Jesus did of rejoice (Matthew 5:11), they feel that it is emotionalism or unrestrained activity. However, in this particular word, it is dealing with an internal spiritual attribute that comes from a knowledge of the divine being worked in your life. Certainly, when this is a reality there is emotional expression to it. That is covered in the next phrase of the text.

This word "rejoice" (Matthew 5:12) is dealing with an internal attribute. How do we know? Because in other texts, this word *chairō* is rendered as joy. In Luke 19:6 it says, "And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully." It is the same Greek word. In 2 Corinthians 7:13 it says, "Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed [the same Greek word] we for the joy of Titus." First Thessalonians 3:9 says, ". . . wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God."

What is the lesson? In each case, the joy was produced by a knowledge. Second, it was not just a human emotion, but rather a manifestation of the Divine working through the believer. You see, joy is Divine. Galatians 5:22 declares, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy . . . ." You will never see two men on bar stools and one lean over to the other and say, "I am so full of joy because of the condition my soul is

in and I am so glad to be here." The world knows nothing of this attribute called joy."Joy is Divine. This is why, in the face of all that men can do, that Jesus said "rejoice" (Matthew 5:12).

Why? Well, number one, because your rejoicing is based in knowledge. What knowledge particularly? Our text tells us "for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12). This is a knowledge that one who is truly saved and has endured those abuses that Matthew 5:11 speaks of, can rejoice in. Why? Two reasons: (1) you still have a reward, you are still victorious, and man has not been able to take it from you. That is cause to have joy and that is a knowledge that should inspire rejoicing. That knowledge that although men and devils may work against you physically or verbally. If they work against you physically (Matthew 5:10) or against you verbally (Matthew 5:11), they cannot get to your soul. Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-20: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Secondly, the thought "great is your reward" (Matthew 5:12) is encouraging because notice that no matter how hurtful, how difficult that things may be today, it reveals to us that it shall not always be such, that there is a better time and a better world; there is "heaven" (Matthew 5:12), and also the knowledge that we are in Divine company. Matthew 5:15 says, "For so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." We can do as verse 12 enjoins and "rejoice" that we are counted worthy to be in such company.

What is the predominant reason that we should rejoice? How can we do such a thing in the face of such abuse? We must remember that the ability to rejoice (which is a verb in Matthew 5:12) comes from having joy which is Divine and from a Divine source. It comes through the agency of the Holy Ghost. In Galatians 5:22, the Apostle Paul penned and declared, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy . . . ." *The Amplified Bible* says, "But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy . . . ."

Where does this joy that the Holy Ghost brings you have its source? Look at the words of Jesus in John 15:11 where Jesus speaking to His disciples said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." *The Amplified Bible* makes it just a little clearer and says, "I have told you these things, that My joy and delight may be in you, and that your joy and gladness may be of full measure and complete and overflowing." What is the lesson? Those who are truly regenerated, truly born again, and those who have truly obeyed the previous Beatitudes have a Divine experience working in their lives; and even in the worst scenes of life they can show forth the Divine.

This experience that Christ came to bring mankind is not rooted in mere religious performances. It is not rooted in following some rites or rituals of some religious organization, not through mere external mechanics of some ecclesiastical society, but it springs from an internal reality that comes by having met Biblical conditions. And then when those conditions are met, it produces an experience of Salvation

where that the Divine, through the personality of the Holy Spirit of God, moves into the heart and life. This brings a reality and brings Divine attributes whereby one has a change of nature and has become a partaker of His Divine nature and they are able to live and walk, as Paul said, "in newness of life" (Romans 6:4), and that new life is a new spiritual life. It is a life in the Spirit where the Spirit and His attributes are exhibited through the life of the true Saint of God.

The Lord allows us to be put in circumstances that make us a theater before the world that they may see that the saints have something that they do not have. Notice the Apostle Peter's words are very similar to Jesus' words in our text. In 1 Peter 4:13 he declares, "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." Here again is a charge to rejoice. But he goes further and speaks of: "when his glory shall be revealed." Now, immediately when we hear that phrase our minds run right to the eternal realm,

However, how is His glory revealed? In Colossians 3:3-4 the Apostle Paul said: "For ye are dead [speaking of being dead to sin and dead to the world], and your life is hid with Christ in God. [Listen closely] When Christ, who is our life shall appear [He appears through our life] then shall ye also appear with him in glory." How does the glory appear? Through our lives! We live in such a manner that when we reveal "the hidden man of the heart" (1 Peter 3:4), the reaction of the saint of God in the midst of extremity and adversity allows that hidden man to be brought right out to allow Christ, who is our life, to appear. And when He appears by our manifestation of Him in our lives by the way we act and react, then that is how that we appear with Him in glory. His glory appears out through our lives and our living in such a manner that His glory comes out through exhibition that men can see, not us, but truly see Christ in us.

The reaction of the saint of God in the midst of extremity and adversity is extremely important. As Jesus said in Matthew 5:11, "When men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Through that avenue, God is allowing the stage to be set for you to be God's theater and to be reacting in a Divine manner. Letting Divine attributes shine forth shows forth the glory of God and convinces the perpetrator of their need of God and Christ in their own lives.

So here we see that this is why we should rejoice and be glad, because His glory is revealed through the life of the Saint of God. When the world sees joy and sees the Divine working, when the human ought to be stirred up, when they ought to see those coming against them but rather they see someone manifesting love and the Spirit, it serves as an evangelistic force. The Apostle Paul put it in the Roman Letter. In Romans 12:14-15 he said: "Bless them which persecute you; bless and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." Then he goes on in Romans 12:19-21 and says: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." This is how we have His glory to appear through our lives, when we show forth Christ and Divine

attributes in the trying scenes of life. This is the manner in which the glory of Christ appears to a lost and dying world.

Notice that this joy is not just a theory and it is not just an emotion; it is knowledge. When these trials come, you may not feel joyful or feel like rejoicing. You may be tempted to act or react in a wrong manner. This is why James said in his Epistle in James 1:2, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." Or the Greek says "trials." Why? James 1:3 said it "worketh." The knowledge of what is working should cause us to rejoice.

To the flesh, to our humanity as saints of God, certainly the times of trial, abuse, and persecution are not enjoyable, but the joy comes from what we have and what God is working. Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." And just as Jesus reacted in a right manner, because He could see the end results, we must take faith in what the Lord is trying to work and do as our text enjoins to "rejoice" (Matthew 5:12). Although we may despise the situation, but because we can see what it is working and what God's plan is, we should rejoice because this is how God gets the experience out to where men may see it.

So, I want you to see that this rejoicing that He was speaking of here is a joy. It is a Divine attribute that He desires that we show forth and that His glory may appear to all.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART SIX

*Matthew 5:11 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.*

This Beatitude consists of two parts: Matthew 5:11, the first portion, is where Jesus details the abuse or verbal forms of persecution to which the saints will be subjected; and Matthew 5:12, the second part, is telling us and portraying to us the response that should be manifested by the saints in the face of this mistreatment. And, by the help of the Lord, we want to look a little further into Matthew 5:12 and study concerning the saints' response to the mistreatment spoken of in Matthew 5:11.

As we begin to view our lesson text in Matthew 5:11, it commences with the words, "Blessed are ye, [Which when placed in the context in which He spoke these words seems very strange words indeed. To put this in modern terms, He was in reality saying, 'You are a blessed individual.'] when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." When we look at the words "blessed are ye" in conjunction with what Jesus spoke of, in the remainder of this verse, it seems to be a paradox. It indeed seems to be a lesson in contrasts. We do not commonly think of ourselves as "blessed" when these things occur: when we are reviled, when we are persecuted, and when men say *ALL* manner of evil against us falsely. We do not commonly regard or consider ourselves as being blessed. And so when these things occur, we must look deeper than just the action, deeper than just the occurrence, and realize that Jesus taught us in very explicit terms that when these things occur we are blessed individuals.

How can that be? What is the blessedness that is correlated with this type of mistreatment? Well, stop and consider. A true saint's greatest desire is to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ. In Hebrews 10:33 it says that we are "a gazing stock." Or the Greek word there is *theatrizo*, which comes from the root word *theatron* from which our English word "theater" comes. And the truth that is being revealed to us here is that through these avenues we become God's theater. What we have within is brought out through this mistreatment for public display. And this is only one reason why that we are as Matthew 5:11 denoted "blessed." Because when we are as Matthew 5:11 denoted, "Blessed." Because when we can get our experience out on public display, get it from the realm of being merely an internal experience to an external exhibit, then that is when the saint of God truly becomes an effective witness for Jesus Christ.

Now, notice in Matthew what Jesus admonishes the saints to do. Here in Matthew 5:12 He commences this verse by saying "rejoice," or the

actual Greek word is *chairō*, and it is an action verb. And as such it moves one to action. It cannot be employed passively. And so it must not only call one to action but it must also have a corresponding noun. It cannot stand alone. The word *chairō* is a joy that comes from a knowledge.

In this text, Jesus goes on and gives us an insight to what that blessed knowledge is. In Matthew 5:12 He says, "For great is your reward in heaven." What does this tell us? This tells us several things. It portrays several Truths to us: (1) That your experience is based in where man cannot touch. It is based in Heaven; (2) That you still have your experience regardless of how you may feel because you still have a reward; (3) It gives us an understanding that great sufferings yield great rewards. It is the knowledge of these Truths, as well as many others that produces a joy; and (4) perhaps the most encouraging is that this life and the treatment here is not all that there is. At the end, there is a reality and a place that is called Heaven.

It is the knowledge of these spiritual realities that causes the joy to be aroused. The word "rejoice" (Matthew 5:12) is translated "joy" in other passages. This joy is not an emotion or a feeling but a Divine attribute. This joy comes from a Divine source. Galatians 5:22 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy." *The Amplified Bible* renders it, "But the fruit of the [Holy] Spirit [the work which His presence within accomplishes] is love, joy." Joy is Divine. The Holy Spirit brings it when He comes to abide in our heart. Joy is an inner reality that has as its basis, the knowledge of our spiritual state. But joy, when we begin to consider this Divine attribute, is purely within.

So, how can it serve as an outreach, as an evangelistic force? How can it enable one to become a witness? How can we get it on the stage when we become "a gazing stock" (Hebrews 10:33), or God's theater? How can we get this joy exhibited where that men may see? Well, look at the next phrase in our lesson text. In Matthew 5:12 it says, "Rejoice, and [a conjunction.] be exceeding glad." What does this mean when He talks about "be exceeding glad?" The Greek word for the word "glad" is from the verb *agalliasis* which is derived from two Greek words which mean to leap exceedingly, or to leap for joy. It is the joy of the climber who has reached the summit and who leaps for joy that the mountain pass is conquered. Is that the meaning of this word? Look at Luke's account of this Beatitude in the Gospel of Luke 6:23 where he penned, "Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy." What is the picture before us? The word "rejoice" expresses joy as such: the internal reality. But the second word "glad" (or as Luke renders it "leap for joy") portrays its effect in stirring the emotions.

Think with me. Joy in the heart alone would be hidden and ineffective as a witness or outreach. This joy must find expression to be brought out where men may see it and it be effective. This is why Jesus said "rejoice, and [which is a conjunction] be exceeding glad" (Matthew 5:12), because this manifestation by being "glad" works in conjunction with the eternal, internal joy or reality. The reality is within, but if it stayed within, it would not be an evangelistic force. And in order for it to be exhibited and to come out, it must come out by that which is affected in the emotions.

The reality is that if it is within, it will come out. Jesus said "out



of the abundance of the heart [the internal portion of man; the seat of man's affection] the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34), letting us have clear understanding that what is within will find expression and manifestation outwardly. In Matthew 15:18 Jesus said, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth [the external exhibition] come forth from the heart [the internal reality]." What is within will find expression. It will come out. So it is with joy. The only way for it to be known or shown is by expression. Emotional expression is biblical when based in knowledge or a reality.

Many today discount anything that makes any emotional expression, but the Scriptures are replete with emotional expressions by those who have an internal reality. The Scriptures give us repeated accounts of leaping and shouting when there was first a knowledge that produced it. I say emotional expression is indeed biblical when based in knowledge or a reality. In 2 Samuel, Chapter 6, we see an Old Testament account that expresses this very vividly. Second Samuel 6:16 declares, "And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD." What was occurring here? The Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines (1 Samuel 4:22) in approximately 1141 B.C. The Ark, after being with the Philistines at Abinadab's house and Obededom's house, finally "came into the city of David" (2 Samuel 6:16) in approximately 1042 B.C. For almost one hundred years it had been gone and now the Ark was back, the presence of God was back, the tablets of the law were back, Aaron's rod was back, and the golden pot that had the manna was back. Hebrews 9:4 let us know that all these came with the Ark and tell us all of this. They were back after almost one hundred years and the knowledge of this created deep seated joy. And this joy found expression in David in his "leaping and dancing" (2 Samuel 6:16).

Some may say, "Well, I am not emotional." Dear heart, we are all emotional creatures. The Psalmist declared in Psalm 33:15, "He fashioneth their hearts alike." We are all composed alike and we are all emotional creatures. It is just that the object of interest and affection may be different and vary by individual. Rejoicing, and emotional expression of it, has been an earmark of God's people in all ages. Back in the Book of Ezra, Chapter 3, we see a very vivid account. Ezra 3:10-13 declares: "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off."

It says here in Ezra 3:12 that "many shouted aloud for joy." This was an audible shout. This was joy being expressed and put out for public

display. Ezra 3:13 says, "For the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off." Internal realities will find external expression. Everyone's expression may not be the same. Portrayed here in this text we see a diversity of demonstration. In Ezra 3:13 it says, "So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people." There may be different expressions of joy, but where it truly is, there will be expression.

Again, notice this joy was founded in a knowledge. Not only was it founded in a knowledge, but in a knowledge that the will of God had been performed. Ezra 3:11 said, "And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, [Why? What was it based on?] because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid." First, we must know the will of God and then move in accordance with it, as in David's day and Ezra's day. And then know that we are in obedience and compliance and that will produce internal joy that will find outward expression.

We are admonished to show expression outwardly if we know we are right inwardly. Look at the words of the Psalmist. In Psalm 32:11 he declares, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." Psalm 35:27 says, "Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause." The Bible enjoins us to exercise physical expression. Psalm 47:1 says, "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph." I realize that in today's religious world of wild fire and false Pentecostalism that many are fearful and hesitant of this type of expression. But those who have the voice of triumph, that have the victory, are the only ones who are really entitled to leap and shout and praise God. Certainly over the land there is much false religion and spiritual counterfeits. But they counterfeit twenty dollar bills also, but that does not keep us from spending the real ones.

The Prophet Zechariah penned of our day and said in Zechariah 4:7, "And he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings." Where there is the Head and the Stone-Jesus Christ-and reality in one's heart, there will be an expression. Look at the first recorded miracle in the New Testament after the Day of Pentecost. It is speaking of the lame man in Acts 3:8 and says, "And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." Why did he do this? Acts 3:10 says, "And they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him," He knew what had happened and it produced joy. It found expression in "leaping and praising God" (Acts 3:8). How does this relate to our text? Look at what it did in Acts 3:9, "And all the people saw him walking and praising God." You see, it gets the reality and the truth out where men can see it.

What else does it do? Men not only see it, but it has an effect. "They were filled with wonder and amazement" (Acts 3:10). That effect, when working as God intended, seizes their interest. In Acts 3:11 it says, "All the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." When we react in a supernatural manner it incites curiosity and prepares the heart for the Gospel. Look what happened next. Acts 3:12 says, "And when Peter saw it," and it goes on to tell us that he began to preach and souls were saved.

Is this the lesson of our text? Certainly so! Jesus taught us in

Matthew 5:12 and said, "Rejoice, [But that is within, that is for our benefit, but He did not stop there. Because, had He stopped with our merely having internal joy at the Divine realities that we were privileged to know, it would not benefit any others. It would not be of any evangelistic good.] and [a conjunction; there is something that must work in conjunction with that internal joy that we have] be exceeding glad." Or Luke rendered it as "leap for joy" (Luke 6:23). In other words, allow outward expression to be added to it. Why? So that we can get the reality out to where men may see it. In Acts 16:25 it says, "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them." Their outward expression of joy in the face of persecution caused such a stir that God sent an earthquake. And what started out with a prayer and praise service of two ended up being a great revival and the establishment of the congregation at Philippi.

No wonder that Jesus started this Beatitude in Matthew 5:11 with "Blessed are ye . . . ." If we will let God work through us as He desires in the time of trial and persecution, it can fall out to the furtherance of the gospel. Little did Paul and Silas think that merely singing praises and outwardly expressing their joy would be used of God in such a miraculous manner to start a revival and end up in a congregation being established but it did so, and that is why the Apostle said that it has "fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Philippians 1:12). It worked that way in Paul's life, and when he saw Stephen react as he did under persecution, it worked that way in his personal life. We can see that it will work that way yet today if we will do as God would have us do when we face these abuses and misuses that men would try to heap upon us. That is why Jesus said "blessed are ye" (Matthew 5:11) because it allows the saints to be at the very height of effectiveness by getting their joy out to where it can serve as an evangelistic force where men may see it.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVILED

#### PART SEVEN

*Matthew 5:11 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 Matthew 5:11, Jesus gave us a paradox which would seem to be a strange equation. He said, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." Here are words that upon first perusal would seem to be a paradox, would seem to be a lesson in contrasts, in opposites; an utterly strange equation indeed. Jesus commences this verse in Matthew 5:11 with the word "blessed," or *The Amplified Bible* renders it in this manner: "Blessed (happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous with life, joy, and satisfaction in God's favor and Salvation, regardless of your outward condition) are you [He employs a very strong spiritual word and equates it with] when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil things against you falsely on my account." He equates being "blessed" (Matthew 5:11) with activities which would not initially appear to have any redeeming qualities.

Why does He draw such an equation? Because this is one avenue the Lord has chosen to enable the saints to be both visible and effective. Through salvation, we have what the Apostle Peter penned in his writings as "the hidden man of the heart" (1 Peter 3:4), but He is indeed just that. He is within the heart and because He is within man's being, one who has been regenerated, He is hidden from obvious view. And so the Lord desires that He be put on in such a way that men may see Him manifested through our lives. He desires that the saints of God—the true people of God—to be as the Hebrew writer penned "a gazing stock" (Hebrews 10:33). The Greek word for the word "gazing stock" is the word *theatrizo*, letting us know that we are "God's theater" in this time world, and that it is God's design and intent that the saints of God be put on display in such a manner that men can see revealed (through their lives and the manner in which they conduct themselves) that "hidden man of the heart" (1 Peter 3:4). He has ordained that the hidden man not remain hidden, but be brought to the surface by the actions, activities, and reactions of the saints of God.

In our lesson, we want to draw our focus into Matthew 5:12. In this verse Jesus portrays how we expose the "hidden man of the heart" (1 Peter 3:4). How? First of all, "rejoice" (Matthew 5:12)! Have that inner knowledge of why we are being reviled, persecuted, and slandered. Remember, it is not us they are after, but rather what we have got. With that deep-seeded knowledge, we can truly have joy and rejoice within. To serve as a witness, we must "be exceeding glad" (Matthew 5:12) or "leap for joy" (Luke 6:23). The word "glad" in Matthew 5:12 portrays the effect of joy in stirring the emotions. It is the external expression of the internal reality. And through this expression is one avenue through

which we reveal Christ and the hidden man comes to the surface, and we reveal Christ and His nature to mankind.

Let us look a little further in our text where Jesus gives us an insight to a truth that many times is obscured or overlooked. Notice another reason, another knowledge why we, as saints, should "rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12). Jesus does something which He does very rarely. He takes us past time into the eternal realm. He speaks of "Heaven" and when He brings up the thought of Heaven several vital truths are portrayed to us. First and foremost there is indeed a realm beyond time, that this world is not all there is. This space cut out, that we call time, is only just that—a time. However, there is another realm beyond the realm of time and that is an eternal realm. In Ecclesiastes 12:7 the wise man penned, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Here we find that man is at least a duality and that there is a portion of man that returns unto God; goes back into the eternal realm, a realm beyond time and a realm that follows physical death when man goes back to the earth. Ecclesiastes 12:5 says, "Because man goeth to his long home." Or *The Amplified Bible* renders it, "Because man goes to his everlasting home." All of mankind has a destiny and rendezvous appointed with the eternal realm.

There is a realm beyond time. This thing that we call time is just a slice that has been cut from eternity. Before time, there was eternity, and after time there will be eternity. In Psalm 90:2 the Psalmist penned the words "from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." What was the Psalmist declaring? From everlasting past to everlasting future, if we may employ such a term as "thou art God." Time is just a mere slice that has been cut out from the midst of never-ending eternity. Every one of us is heading towards that eternal realm just as fast as the wheels of time will take us.

Eternity is composed of two fates, two destinies. In Matthew 25:46 Jesus said, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." There are two distinct, separate fates and the condition of your soul determines what your fate will be. In our lesson text, Jesus speaks of heaven (Matthew 5:12) and this teaches us another very vital truth—Heaven is at the end of a godly life. He never mentioned Heaven until He came to the end of these lessons. This portrays to us that one must first adhere to the teachings of Christ, the truth of His Word, and incorporate them into their living before they will ever be a candidate for or see heaven (Matthew 5:12). Heaven is at the end of a holy life.

Let us look a little closer for there are even more truths that are portrayed in the employment of these words in this text. Notice Jesus' words when He said "for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12). Here Jesus gives us an insight into a truth that many times is overlooked. Notice, He said "great is your reward" (Matthew 5:12). In this text, He has been speaking of persecution. In Matthew 5:11 Jesus said "When men shall revile [reproach or upbraid] you, and persecute you [dealing with all that the tongue can affect], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely." Or one rendering says, "And shall say all kinds of slanderous things against you."

In this lesson, we have all manner of verbal assaults against the

saints. In Matthew 5:10, when Jesus spoke of persecution, He depicted the physical aspect of persecution. What is the lesson? He is revealing to us that great suffering begets great reward. Not only does it tell us this but it also reveals that in the eternal realm there are degrees of reward. When He said "great is your reward" (Matthew 5:12) it lets us know that not everyone's will be as great.

This may be a startling thought to some, but the Scriptures are replete with references letting us know that there will be degrees of reward. This is one reason that man is not finally judged as soon as he dies. Why? Look at the words of the Revelator in Revelation 14:13 where it says, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." After one dies, their works, their influence, their witness, and their teachings keep right on working. Consider the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul has been dead for over nineteen centuries, but we still read his words and are edified, encouraged, instructed, and blessed. Every time we gain benefits from the works of Paul it adds up one more bit to his reward. So, the more one does—be it good or ill—they will be recompensed in proportion to the deeds or the actions. The Bible speaks of "a just recompense of reward" (Hebrews 2:2) or *The Amplified Bible* says, "Received an appropriate (just and adequate) penalty."

Judgment on that fateful day will not be based on the state of man's soul, for that has already be determined. When one is saved or lost, regardless of their state, when their eyes close in the finality of death, the state of their soul already governs the place of their destiny. Judgment will be based on "the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). First Peter 1:17 says, "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work." Romans 2:5-6 says: "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds." And since men's works and deeds are different and vary, then the degree of rewards are different and vary as well.

Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 6:20 where He said, "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." He is telling us that we play a vital part in how great our reward will be. The more through life we lay up, the more we shall receive. God has a moral law that emanates from His moral nature and it is just as true in the eternal realm as in the realm of time. That moral law is recorded in Galatians 6:7 where the Apostle writes, "For whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." The Apostle Paul said in 2 Corinthians 9:6, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." These are moral principles that are true in the eternal realm as well as in the realm of time. The degree of our reward is totally based on what we do or what we endure.

Certainly, deeds or works will not save one and will not make you a fit candidate for Heaven, but after you are saved you will work and the degree of reward is based on your deeds. A man may be lost, but the more he does, the more he treasures up as judgment and punishment against him. Someone may say, "Oh, I thought that if you were saved you were

saved and if you were lost, you were lost and that was all there is to it?" NO! Every day that someone lives in sin and does another sin and commits another deed, they are laying up more judgment and punishment for themselves.

The question may arise: "Are you sure there are degrees of reward, be it good or ill?" Well, let us allow the Scriptures to speak. Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 23:14 where He said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation." Here we can clearly see that there was a degree of punishment or damnation. In the Gospel of Matthew 11:22 Jesus said, "But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Day of Judgment, than for you." And you read the surrounding context and He speaks of various localities and differentials in judgment and penalty.

In the Gospel of Luke 12:47-48 Jesus said: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Here we see very explicitly that there are degrees of punishment. And you will notice the measure by which a man is measured is by the degree of understanding that he has, opportunities that have been afforded to him, and light that he has received. And based upon that, he will be judged and measured according to the deeds done in his body. Other Scriptures speak of "sorer punishment" (Hebrews 10:29) and David's said "delivered my soul from the lowest hell" (Psalm 86:13)? I say the Scriptures are replete that in the eternal realm there are degrees of reward.

In our lesson text of Matthew 5:12, Jesus is uncapping the eternal realm and letting us know that if we will truly be faithful and put on these attributes that He has described in the previous verses, that through these attributes we may be caused to endure abuse that the world and religion may heap upon us. If we will do as the Scripture says and "endure hardness as a good soldier" (2 Timothy 2:3), that in the end "great is your [personal] reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:12). In this verse He shows the faithfulness of God to a faithful saint. He also shows the glorious triumph of a sainted life. When one is enduring hardship, when one is going through the extremity of trial or persecution, be it outward or inward, physical or verbal, the enemy of souls is ever there to cause questions to arise in one's mind. But Jesus is letting us know that He will be faithful and that at the end of a sainted life there is a glorious place, a place that is called Heaven.

Those who are saints need to draw courage and inspiration from this passage. If you are in extremity or trial now, the message is things shall not always be as they are. As you are going through these things remember the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:17 when he said, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," or *The Amplified Bible* says, "For our light, momentary affliction (this slight distress of the passing hour) is for us an everlasting weight of glory [beyond all measure and transcendent glory and blessedness never to cease!]"

No wonder Jesus heralds in our text "for great is your reward in

heaven" (Matthew 5:12). I say that Jesus was giving us an insight to life beyond time and the question we must ask is: "Are you ready to face it? What have you been treasuring up? Have you been treasuring up for Heaven or treasuring up for Hell? What will you face on the Judgment Day?" If you are a saint it can be a great day. It can be that day of "transcendent glory and blessedness never to cease" (2 Corinthians 4:17 in the AMPC). So I ask you, is this the day that you have been working for? It can be a great day if you are a saint; the day you have been living and working for. However, if not, you need to repent so that it can be. This is what He was teaching in this phrase "great is your reward in Heaven" (Matthew 5:12). I say what an encouraging and inspirational thought!



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE REVIEW

*Matthew 5:1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:*

*2 And he opened up 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.*

We have been studying a series of lessons from Matthew, Chapter 5, concerning what is commonly known as The Beatitudes. Before we go into the next portion of our study, "The Outgrowth of the Beatitudes," we want to have a review of The Beatitudes. As we view this Scripture passage, we find that Christ has just called the apostles and commenced His public ministry. Matthew 4:19 declares, "And he saith unto them, Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." Matthew 4:23 says, "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom."

This address in Matthew, Chapter 5, is the first recorded public discourse of our Lord. He has just commenced His ministry, a ministry that is holding forth as "a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20). We must ever be mindful of the purpose for which He graced these time shores. In Luke 19:10 Jesus declared, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." In John 10:10 He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." So Christ's supreme burden is to see man get saved and have an experience of Salvation that gives life initially and then He wants man to have it more abundantly, or continually or perpetually.

So, with this burden uppermost in His mind, He commences this address which might well be considered the inaugural address of a new administration. In the form of these Beatitudes, He sets forth the foundational truths upon which New Testament Christianity was to be established. He came to institute that "new and living way." And so He is laying forth those foundational, fundamental truths upon which man may obtain that experience that brings the life He came to bring to mankind.

Now, these teachings are commonly called The Beatitudes. The word "beatitude" is not found in the English Bible. The word has its origin in the Latin from the word *Beatitudo*. In the Latin, *Beatitudo* was used to describe a particular declaration of "blessedness" coming from the lips of Jesus Christ, and there is a reason for this thought of the Latin *Beatitudo* being associated with these verses. Because each of these verses, each of these lessons begin with an utterance from the voice of Jesus Christ and gives forth the word "blessed" to commence it. Verses three through eleven each commence with this word "blessed," or in the Latin *Beati*, hence the "Beatitudes."

The Greek word for "blessed" is the word *Makarios* and is a word the Greeks associated with the gods. It portrays God-like qualities. This teaches us that if we will take the Word of truth that came from the lips of Jesus Christ in these passages and put them on that we will be blessed and have God-like qualities working in our lives.

As we view these verses, recall that Christ is showing the route to initially obtain life, and then the route to maintain this life after it is received. These Beatitudes are not as some supposed, mere proverbial sayings, not some disjointed utterances of some pious platitudes, but rather they are progressive. They are connected, cohesive parts of a whole. They portray one experience-salvation-and all that it entails.

Let us survey these verses. Jesus, in these lessons, gives us a total of nine Beatitudes, two of which lead to salvation, and seven (the Biblical number of perfection) to show us the components necessary to maintain an experience. Now, why do only two lead mankind to salvation, but then seven to maintain salvation? Because, in reality, it takes very little Gospel to enable a person to be saved, but a whole lot of Gospel indeed to keep that person's experience fresh, up-to-date, and intact.

Now, let us survey these verses and see the progression that Jesus gives us. He begins in Matthew 5:3 and says, "Blessed are [or the original Aramaic language, the language in which these texts were originally spoken, 'O the blessedness of'] the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Here, in the very first Beatitude, He gives us the understanding that what He is revealing is the route to a Kingdom experience. He starts at the very beginning of that experience with conviction. He speaks of "the poor in spirit," those who recognize their condition. That one who is "poor in spirit" has had that recognition that strikes the soul of the lost to where, as the Psalmist David cried in Psalm 40:17, "But I am poor and needy." This is recognition where they realize that they are spiritually in great need or, as the Psalmist said in Psalm 40:17, "Thou art my help and my deliverer." This recognition that strikes the soul acknowledges the great spiritual need and the necessity of outside aid and a deliverer. And, not only that, but "the utter, abject and absolute poverty" to be able to pay ransom's price themselves.

When we came to the age of accountability, we came to a realization that, "All we like sheep have gone astray; [Why?] we have turned every one to his own way" (Isaiah 53:6). When we did that, we became "sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). While in sin, we did as the Prodigal did when he "wasted his substance" (Luke 15:13). Then we did as the Prodigal did when he "came to himself" (Luke 15:17); and when we did that, we realized that we had "spent all" (Luke 15:14). If we were ever to be

redeemed, which means to be bought back, we would need a redeemer, an outside source, to buy us back. When we came to ourselves, we were made shockingly aware of our pitiful state in sin and were also made startingly aware that we were "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3).

When the sobering realization of that truly struck our soul, it caused us to "mourn" (Matthew 5:4), which means "to grieve and sorrow as over one who is dead." When we truly recognized our condition, when we were in sin and realized our poverty, it caused us to "mourn" (Matthew 5:4). In reality the sinner is "dead in trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1). This mourning is, as the Apostle Paul described it when he said, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). We know that "godly sorrow" or "mourning" leads to salvation. Jesus said in Matthew 5:4, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted;" or they shall receive the Comforter, "which is the Holy Ghost" (John 14:26).

So, in Matthew 5:4 is where salvation actually takes place. Then what? Receiving salvation is not the end. No! It is repeatedly likened in the Scriptures to a birth or to a beginning. This life has now just begun and now we need to take care of it so that it will continue. Next, Jesus said in Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek." This term indicates discipleship. When we were saved, initially, it was not to go to Heaven or else He would have taken us, but we were saved to be disciples and follow Him in discipleship. This phrase "blessed are the meek" (Matthew 5:5) indicates discipleship. Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 11:29 where He said, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek . . . ." This phrase "take my yoke upon you" was a Jewish phrase which means "enter into submission to." This depicts discipleship, entering into submission to, and being a follower of Jesus Christ.

Once you have an experience of Salvation, have entered into submission to Christ and have truly become a disciple, what is the first thing that the Comforter, that you received, the Holy Ghost, will teach you? In Matthew 5:5 it says, "Blessed are the meek [the disciples]: for they shall inherit the earth." This "earth" He is speaking of is our humanity, our flesh, our earthen vessel. The Bible speaks of our "earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7) and "our earthly house" (2 Corinthians 5:1) so this "earth" refers to our bodies.

The first thing any new convert must learn is to control their bodies. Jesus said "inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5), or as the Apostle Paul penned in the letter to the Romans and said I "mortify" (Romans 8:13). One who inherits has control, domain, and oversight of that property. To retain our victory, we must control our "earth", or as the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27, "But I keep under my body." When we truly keep the body in its place, and do not feed it and its desires, then we will "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). In these verses, we are seeing a progression. In Matthew 5:3, we saw conviction. In Matthew 5:4, we saw conversion. In Matthew 5:5, we saw consecration. So we are seeing a progression right through these lesson texts.

Jesus tells us that when we truly keep our body in its place, and do not feed its desires and appetites, then we will "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). We will desire to feed on the spiritual things which come from the Word and the Spirit. Jeremiah 15:16 declares, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." We can see here that the

Word is what we eat and what we hunger after. The Apostle Paul penned that "we have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13). So, that which we hunger for and that which we eat is the Word of God; and that which we drink is the Spirit of God.

The words used in this text for "hunger and thirst" (Matthew 5:6) are strong words; words which speak of a man's starving for food and a thirst of one who has journeyed through a desert storm. It portrays the most intense, keen, vehement desires. A desire such as the Apostle Paul spoke of when he said "what vehement desire" (2 Corinthians 7:11). Job said in Job 23:12, "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food." When one has "vehement desire" such as that, they will truly be spiritual, and when one is truly spiritual they will be as "the merciful" (Matthew 5:7); they have become a conduit for God's mercy. Those who are truly spiritual have a burden for souls and think of the welfare of souls. They do not have a personal agenda, no, not when souls are involved. People who have been feeding on the Word and the Spirit are spiritual. They do not make moves to build something for themselves or to prove that they are right, but rather consider the impact that their moves will have on souls or on the community. Those who are truly spiritual are "the merciful" (Matthew 5:7).

The word "merciful" in Hebrew is *cheched* which means "those with the ability to get inside the other person." This first portrays the incarnation of Christ because the Bible tells us that He came "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8:3), but now we, the church, are here in His stead. The saints who now have "Christ . . . formed in you" (Galatians 4:19) are now Christ's Body. We are now Christ incarnate in this world because we can identify with the lost, for we were once lost. We know how they think, we know how they feel, and now we can be a conduit of God's mercy to them and truly show them this "new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20), and show them the way that God ordained for man to live in this sin benighted world.

When we truly exhibit these attitudes and attributes we are as "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8). Purity does not exist in and of itself. This is why it is placed in this lesson such as it is. Purity is a product. Purity does not exist in and of itself. There are prerequisites that must be met. It is a product. Purity does not exist in and of itself. There are prerequisites that must be met. It is a product. First Peter 1:22 states, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." Here, we can see that purity has prerequisites, and so it is in these Beatitudes. This purity that Jesus speaks of is the result of incorporating these other truths in our lives,

When we truly become selfless and "pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8), as this Scripture portrays, we are a candidate to be one of "the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9). This word in the original means "everything which makes for a man's highest good." And "man's highest good" is to receive an experience of Salvation where that he can be at peace with God and then have the very peace of God. To have peace, you must do as the Apostle Paul said in Romans 14:19, which states, "Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace." Peace must be made.

Peace is not appeasement. To make peace, many times, the saints must

take an unpopular stand. We must hold an unpopular position. We must stand against things that are wrong in society. We must take stands against things that the Bible denounces such as abortion, homosexuality, and lesbianism. Such stances make the true saints an unpopular lot. And because of that, when we stand against things that are wrong, against things that the thinking of society sees no wrong in, I say, the stand we take must be stands that go against what is wrong, against the thinking of society, and many times even religious society.

Then, when we are truly one of "the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9), it may invite us to be "they which are persecuted" (Matthew 5:10). The word "persecuted" (Matthew 5:10) refers to all outward acts of violence which the hand can do. Truly being a "peacemaker" and working for "man's highest good" will subject you to this type of abuse. Not only this, but Jesus said in Matthew 5:22, "When men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." The word "persecute" (Matthew 5:11) refers to what the tongue can affect and speaks of verbal abuse such as calumny and slander.

Can we see that each of these Beatitudes are connected and interwoven? They are not just some disjointed, pithy sayings by some removed starry-eyed divine, but they are the words of our Savior who came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). Through these lessons, He is portraying the components of what makes up Salvation initially and what perpetuates it continually. I say, these words are connected and interwoven. They are interrelated and parts of a whole.

Through these lessons, Jesus was taking us through a progression and vividly portraying the components and attributes that make up our Christian experience, or this life, that He came to bring mankind. But notice, His message did not stop with these Beatitudes. He goes on to reveal the outgrowth of these Beatitudes and what we will truly be if we incorporate them in our lives. He goes on to say that "ye are the salt" (Matthew 5:14), and "ye are the light" (Matthew 5:14). Who was He addressing? The ones that He had spoken the Beatitudes unto. By taking these lessons and incorporating these attributes into our lives there is an outgrowth, and we can truly be the salt and the light.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE SALT

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

In Matthew, Chapter 5, Jesus gives us a great insight into the experience of salvation that He came to bring to mankind. This chapter commences with nine very detailed, explicit teachings, commonly entitled as The Beatitudes. Through the employment of these Beatitudes, as vehicles, He portrays the truths of what is required initially to obtain an experience of salvation, and then goes on to reveal the attributes necessary in order to maintain that experience.

In our lesson text, Jesus is still in the midst of that famed discourse. And He reveals to us that when the saints put on these divine attributes, which He has described, that there is indeed an outgrowth of these Beatitudes. So, by the help of God, we want to continue our study and look at the outgrowth of the Beatitudes. We want to focus our attention on Matthew 5:13 where Jesus exclaimed, "Ye are the salt of the earth." As we begin to examine this text, the first truth that we need to recognize is that Jesus did not just stand up in front of a crowd and arbitrarily exclaim: "Ye are the salt of the earth." No! This did not occur. This was not a saying that was just uttered without some forethought or without some preceding commandments and conditions being laid forth.

I recognize that those in the realms of religion would certainly take this text, as they do on many occasions, and lift it from its setting and cause it to espouse myriads of teachings and thoughts. However, we must be reminded as we view this text, that this was not an isolated statement and was not spoken to just any people anywhere. These words were not just arbitrarily spoken without any premise. We must remember that these words were in the midst of a much larger discourse.

When Jesus said "ye are the salt" (Matthew 5:13), He was addressing a very exclusive group of people. Consider who He was *NOT* addressing. He was not speaking to the world. He was not speaking to the ones out reveling in sin and living a sinful life because the Apostle John said "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). So, He was not speaking to those that were embroiled in the depths of depravity. He was not speaking to those that were degenerate and to those who were engulfed with the things of this time world and in wickedness. No! He was *NOT* addressing those ones. It was not the Pharisees and Sadducees or the reputed religious leaders of the day that He was addressing. In Matthew 23:13 Jesus exclaimed, "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." He was not addressing those at the zenith of the organized religion of His day, the reputed religious leaders, neither was He addressing the religious masses or followers of that era.

Who was the audience to whom these words were uttered? Early in our lesson text in Matthew, Chapter 5, it clearly indicates to whom Jesus was speaking. In Matthew 5:1-2 it declares: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them." Who is the antecedent of them? "His disciples" (verse 1). He was addressing an exclusive group of people; He was addressing His disciples. Luke substantiates this truth in Luke 6:20 when he penned, "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed be ye poor." This address was to the disciples, to an exclusive group of people.

Why is this important? Because, Christ wants us to know that not everyone is "the salt" (Matthew 5:13). There are prerequisites and requirements that must be met before one can be considered to be "the salt of the earth." Notice, He did not utter these words first; He gave the Beatitudes first. And when He said "ye" (Matthew 5:13), He was not speaking of the world, nor was He addressing the revered religious leaders of the day or the religious masses, but He was addressing "his disciples" (Matthew 5:1).

When we begin to consider this exclusive group of people to whom He was speaking, in this particular text it raises a question. When we begin to consider that He was addressing "his disciples" (Matthew 5:1), it causes the questions to be raised: What actually is a disciple? Is a disciple merely an adherent to some supposed school of theological thought? Is a disciple who is steeped in sanctimonious religious activity and piety? What actually constitutes, biblically, a disciple? The word disciple comes from the Latin word *discipulus* which is the same Latin word that our English word "discipline" comes from. It literally means: one who is committed to following the discipline of Jesus Christ. Now, what is His discipline? *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us that discipline is: acceptance of, or submission to authority and control.

How does that coincide with what is being taught in this text? We must notice that Jesus did not say "ye are the salt" (Matthew 5:13) first and foremost. But, prior to this, He gave us nine very explicit and detailed instructions known as Beatitudes. When one has accepted and submitted to the authority and control that comes with the teachings and the attributes that we commonly call The Beatitudes, that is one who is coming in submission to the authority and to the discipline of Jesus Christ, or of the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Now, what truths does He desire that we, as disciples, submit to in order to be "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13)? I repeat, He spoke these words at the conclusion of giving the Beatitudes, so it is readily apparent that the discipline He desires that we adhere to, in order to be His disciples, are the truths of the previous verses. The truths of this chapter are not disjointed and isolated, but rather they are interrelated, connected, and parts of a whole. When Jesus says in our text "ye [or you] are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13), in reality, He is saying when we view it contextually in relation to the prior verses in Matthew 5:13 when He says "ye." Who? He is saying "ye" who have been "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3); "ye" who "mourn" (Matthew 5:4); "ye" that "are the meek" (Matthew 5:5); "ye" "which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6); "ye" who "are the merciful"

(Matthew 5:7); "ye" who "are the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8); "ye" who "are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9); "ye" who are "they which are persecuted" (Matthew 5:10); and "ye" who "men shall revile" (Matthew 5:11). Incorporating these truths into your life and being committed to following this discipline of Jesus Christ, is what prepares you to truly be a part of what He denoted as "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13).

So, we can see that for one to truly be this "salt" as Jesus spoke of, takes much more than just the practice of religion, or a mere religious profession, or mere mental assent to some religious persuasion, or to some theological position. It takes one who is, as the Apostle Peter describes, "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4). These attributes, which Jesus described in these Beatitudes, are all components and attributes of the Divine nature and of God's means of showing His Divinity, through His people, to a sin-benighted world.

Notice in this text, Jesus said in Matthew 5:13, "Ye [the disciples, Matthew 5:1] are [present tense] the salt." When we meet the Biblical conditions of these prior verses, and have these attributes incorporated into our lives, that automatically makes us "the salt" (Matthew 5:13). Jesus let us know that when these conditions are met, that "ye are" (Matthew 5:13): not maybe, not could be, not might be or going to be, but rather are, in the present tense. This is one very major reason that these other attributes, or Beatitudes, are so important. Yes! They are very important for the obtaining and maintenance of your own experience. But, also, they are vital for the saints and the church to be in the position God ordained so that they can be what He desires them to be in this time world.

Now, what did He say the saints would be? Notice the metaphor that He employed in our text where He declared, "Ye are the salt of the earth." What does this mean? Why did He utilize this particular metaphor or analogy? We must recognize that Jesus was speaking these words in an ancient world in the first century. And against this setting, Jesus spoke words which were readily understandable to that audience, in that day. In the ancient world, salt was highly valued. The Greeks called salt divine or theion. In a Latin phrase, the Romans said, "There is nothing more useful than sun and salt." It was considered divine. Why? It was just as the sun. It was an item that man could not produce; it was of Divine creation.

In this, we see portrayed a picture of what God came to do for mankind. When we begin to give consideration to salt, we see that only God can make salt in its truest sense and real form. But salt in its initial form is in a deep, dark place in the depths of the earth. It can be in the depths of the earth or in the sea, but in either case, it is in a deep, dark place. This is a portrait of how that man in sin is in a deep, dark place. In Psalm 40:2 David declared, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay." Sin has man in a "horrible pit;" in a deep, dark place. *The Amplified Bible* renders it in this manner: "He drew me up out of a horrible pit [a pit of tumult and of destruction], out of the miry clay (froth and slime)."

Sin is just as salt in a sense that it is in the earth, and it is in a deep, dark place. Salt, in the literal sense, is held in the depth and in the darkness and in sin, man is held in depth and in darkness. In the Bible, it is called "the power of darkness" (Colossians 1:13). Sin holds



one, just like salt is initially held down and bound in the depth and recesses of the earth, in darkness; and just as salt must be secured and mined out of the earth, so it is with man. Just as the salt had to be searched for and mined by an outside source, so that is to one that is in sin; they must be extracted and lifted out by an outside source. In Psalm 40:1-2 David said: "I waited patiently for the LORD; and he [The Lord] inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He [The Lord] brought me up also out . . . ." Just as the literal salt cannot mine itself, extract and remove itself, neither can man. Man requires an outside source to remove him from being held by and being bound by the "earth." Man's earth-the body-without Salvation is referred to as "the body of sin" (Romans 6:6), and as "the body of this death" (Romans 7:24).

Man, when he comes to an age of accountability, is "without strength" (Romans 5:6); and when choice came Isaiah 53:6 tells us, "All we like sheep have gone astray; [why?] we have turned every one to his own way." When we did that, we became "sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). When that happened, just as the salt, we were imbedded and held in darkness and held in bondage, and we became stuck and became as one in the miry clay; the more we tried to extract ourselves, the deeper we went. We were mired with the clay and the things of this old world, and the more we tried to loose, or extract ourselves, the more bound we became. But, thank God, just as there are those who know that the salt is there and mine it. And they mined the earth to extract the salt, so Christ speaks out to the honest-hearted, His sheep, and brings them out. In Ezekiel 34:12, the prophet-speaking of Christ-said, "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them . . . ." Christ seeks out the truly honest-hearted.

In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus portrayed Himself as the good Samaritan, and He "came where he was" (Luke 10:33). Thank God, through using this analogy Christ is portraying the experience of salvation. He is showing man, who is bound, who is in the depth of the earth and held by its power and is part of it; and is put in such a position to where they cannot extract or free themselves to be what God intended them to be, or to be used in a manner that God intended them to be used. But, thank God, there is an outside source-Jesus Christ-who came to free man. He came to mine man out of the depth of sin, to take him up out of the earth, to loose him, to cleanse him, and to set him free, to where he can be what God ordained him to be and do what God ordained him to do.

Christ, through using this analogy and telling the disciples "ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) is saying in essence: "You are the examples to the world of the message and of the Truth. You were in darkness and bound by the earth. You were helpless and could not extract yourself, and when you were in that helpless condition, I extracted you, I loosed you, and I freed you from the earth and now you are out in the Light. Now you are in a position to where you are out and have been cleansed from all the earth and all the darkness, and now you are in a position to where you can be looked at because you are in the Light. You are white; you are dazzling, brilliant crystals shining forth in the midst of a darkened world."

Think of this salt. Once it is extracted from the earth, from darkness, it is lifted up, also out, and cleaned up. Its natural color is white. Once the earth is all removed, it is white. It is a white

brilliantly shining crystal when the light strikes it. This whiteness denotes purity, and this is the reason Jesus said that the saints were "the salt" (Matthew 5:13). After embracing the truths of these Beatitudes and putting them on, they are a perfect example of the message. The true saints portray what real salvation and discipleship is and what it does. They portray how real salvation, through Jesus Christ, comes to seek man out. He knows man is there. Just as the salt is in the depth of the earth, He knows that it is there, He knows that it needs to be removed from that position, He knows that it has great potential, and He becomes the One who extracts it and gets it out and lifts it up and cleans it up. He cleans man up, frees him from the earth, loosens him from darkness, lifts him up to the position where he can be used for the purpose which God created him, and He enables him to be a bright and shining example in a sin-benighted world.

It is no wonder Jesus said, "Ye" [these ones who have incorporated the Beatitudes into their lives and living] are the salt" (Matthew 5:13). You are the example of the message, you are a witness to the world, and you are the one who can show forth this plan of salvation and what it is ordained to do to a sin benighted world. Because you were in darkness, you were in the depth and you have been lifted out and lifted up and cleaned up, and are white and dazzling and shining forth light in the midst of a benighted world.

This is the reason that Jesus told these disciples, this exclusive body of people, that "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14), because by only having met these conditions and paying the price and obtaining the prize, could they truly be in that position where Jesus declared "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13).

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE SALT

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

Here in this text we see our Lord in the midst of that famed discourse which we know as The Sermon on the Mount. This address is the first public address which our Lord delivered, after the commencement of His public ministry, that was recorded. In this discourse, He is setting forth the Truths upon which the New Testament economy, which He came to establish, is based. Through the avenue of these opening verses, which we commonly call The Beatitudes, He has set forth, in very concise detail, the components necessary to obtain an experience of salvation, as well as the attributes necessary to maintain this blessed experience.

In our lesson text, we see the outgrowth of the Beatitudes where Jesus exclaimed "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). So, by the help of the Spirit of God, we want to look a little further at this analogy that Jesus employs and see the truths that He is conveying to us through the usage of this particular analogy or metaphor. As we view this passage of Scripture text, notice that this text is very exclusive. Jesus said in Matthew 5:13, "Ye are the salt . . . .". He was addressing a singular group of people. Who was He addressing? Well, who was the audience of this particular discourse? Back up to Matthew 5:1-2 where Matthew penned and said: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them." Who was the antecedent of this word "them?" It was "his disciples" (Matthew 5:1). So, He was teaching an exclusive group of people. He was addressing what Matthew 5:1 declared as "his disciples." Luke, in his Gospel record, verifies this truth as well. In Luke 6:20 it says, "And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said."

Not just anyone qualifies to be this "salt" that Jesus spoke of in Matthew 5:13. These words were not the first words spoken by Jesus in this discourse. They are in direct succession to the nine Beatitudes recorded in Matthew 5:3-12. This tells us that to truly be what Jesus denoted as "salt" (Matthew 5:13), there are some conditions and prerequisites which must be met. This tells us when He said that "Ye [the disciples; Matthew 5:1] are the salt" (Matthew 5:13) that every other body, other than His true disciples, are excluded from this claim. He did not address the world. For the world, John penned in his Epistle, "lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). He was not addressing the revered religious leaders of that day because Jesus proclaimed "woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites" (Matthew 23:13); nor the religious leaders of that particular era, nor was it the religiously steeped masses of that day, but He was penning to an exclusive group of people, those denoted as "his disciples" (Matthew 5:1).

This word "disciple" comes from the Latin word *discipulus*, and it is

the same Latin word that our English word "discipline" comes from. It reveals to us that we must be committed to following the discipline of Jesus Christ. What discipline, particularly in this lesson text? In this text, it is evident that the discipline that He is speaking of is the nine preceding Beatitudes. We must incorporate them into our lives in order to truly be the "salt" that Matthew 5:13 speaks of.

Notice also that Jesus employed the present tense when He said "Ye are the salt" (Matthew 5:13). What does this tell us? It tells us that when we put these truths on, that some things are just the natural outgrowth or result. When we meet Bible conditions and put these truths on, that He spoke of in the previous verses (Matthew 5:3-12), there will be a natural by-product, and part of that by-product is "ye are [present tense] the salt" (Matthew 5:13).

Why did Jesus employ this analogy? And that is indeed what it is. Jesus was not speaking literally. Certainly, the disciples are not literally salt. He was speaking in an analogy. What is an analogy? *Webster's New World Dictionary* declares it as a similarity in some respects between things otherwise unlike; an explaining of something by comparing it point by point with something similar. This is what Jesus is doing in this lesson text.

Now, why did He bring up what He denoted as "salt" (Matthew 5:13)? Why did He bring up this particular analogy? Why use this particular item as a metaphor? Because it portrays the experience that we, the disciples, are to be witnesses of. Let us examine this word and see what it portrays to us. This word "salt" (Matthew 5:13) is the original Greek word *halas*, a form of *hals* or *halos*. *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us it is a white, crystalline substance with a characteristic taste. But this word *halas* or *halos*, in the Greek is also the root word for the word *halogen*. We live in a day where we have what are commonly called halogen lamps. So, here we see that there is an equation between the two—between salt (Matthew 5:13) and light (Matthew 5:14). So, we see that there is a reason that He employs this particular analogy.

Let us begin to consider here and we will see that this "salt" (Matthew 5:13) and "light" (Matthew 5:14) are connected. They portray the position that the saints are to occupy in this world. Jesus said, in that high priestly prayer (that truly is the Lord's Prayer) in John 17:15-16: "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Though we are not of the world, we are in the world, and He ordained that we be an evangelistic force for Him in this time world.

Let us consider the "salt" (Matthew 5:13) and how "salt" becomes "light" (Matthew 5:14). Salt is in the depths of the earth and it must be mined to be extracted. It also comes from the sea, but regardless of which case you are speaking of, it is in the depths and must be extracted. In either case, it cannot extract itself. When salt is within the earth, it is as men that is bound in sin. Within the earth, it is bound by its surroundings, and it is encased in the depths and darkness of the earth. This is a portrayal of man in sin, bound to earth, in the depths and darkness of sin. They are unable to extract themselves but need an outside source to free them—Jesus Christ—and that is what He came to do.

This portrays man's salvation. In Psalm 40:2 David penned, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit." But, once man is extracted from sin, the Bible tells us "and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Salvation takes man out of sin and sin out of man, and once man is cleansed, he is white. In Isaiah 1:18 the prophet declared, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Once Jesus Christ, through Salvation, extracts man from the depths and darkness of this old world and lifts him up and out, once His blood cleanses and a person becomes white, then they are a candidate to become the "salt" (Matthew 5:13).

Why did Jesus bring up the thought of salt? He brought up salt because it is essential to every aspect of man's life. Science tells us that most people need to eat about sixteen pounds of salt a year for health purposes. Salt is one of the most important materials in your chemical world. Salt is used to make sodium carbonate and also to make many other things such as sodium hydroxide. It is an ingredient that affects every aspect of man's life. We all know that a meal is not complete without salt.

Let us just look at the common, ordinary meal that one may partake of on a daily basis. Your drinking glass is made from sand and sodium carbonate. The water that you drink and wash the dishes in has been purified by sodium carbonate. The paper napkin was made with sodium hydroxide, which came from salt. If you have a tablecloth, it was probably mercerized with sodium hydroxide to give it sheen and durability. The soap you wash the dishes with was made with sodium hydroxide. The baking powder used to make the bread or the cake is made with sodium bicarbonate. Glass, paper, cloth, soap, and food are all a result of salt.

What is the lesson? When we are truly "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13), every aspect of our lives is affected by our experience of salvation. Not only is it to affect us, but also all those who are about us. Notice in the illustration of the meal, every aspect was affected by salt. First of all, every aspect of our lives is personally affected by salvation so drastically so that Romans 6:6 says, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." *The Amplified Bible* makes it even clearer and renders it, "We know that our old (unrenewed) self was nailed to the cross with Him in order that [our] body [which is the instrument] of sin might be made ineffective and inactive for evil, that we might no longer be the slaves of sin." Colossians 3:9-10 declares: "Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." What is that image? The Bible tells us "that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Ephesians 4:24). This takes us right back to purity, being white, again, as the salt truly is. Salt is a white crystalline substance.

So, we see that true salvation affects every aspect of our living. Jesus used "salt" to show that every aspect of man's living is affected by salvation, just as in our natural lives every aspect is affected by salt. Not only that, but it also makes us disciples. Jesus said in the

Gospel of Luke 14:26-27: "If any man come to me, and hate not [And many people misuse that phrase. The actual Greek word is miseo which means to love less; put in a secondary position. This verse is actually saying, "If any man come to Me and does not love less] his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

What is the lesson here? What is the picture that we are receiving? Why did Jesus use the analogy of "salt" (Matthew 5:13)? It depicts many truths. It came from the earth just as we did. It was bound by the earth, just as we were. It was not worth anything until it was extracted and freed, and we were not worth anything until we were extracted and freed. An outside force had to come where it was and free it. We had to have an outside force—Jesus Christ—come to where we were and free us. Once extracted, it had to be cleansed. Once freed and cleansed, it could shine. Once free, it could be used for the purpose for which it was created. Salt was created to be a blessing to man in every area of life. And the true disciple not only has the benefit himself of being a saved person and being a true disciple, but he is a blessing to all who come in contact with him.

This salvation is to affect every aspect of our lives, personally, and it is to cause an effect on the world wheresoever the saint may sojourn. It is the saint that shows forth this life and shows forth this "salt" in the midst of a dying world. The Apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:21, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Every aspect of life is enriched by Christ, just as every aspect of life physically is enriched by salt. The home is enriched by Christ, the marriage is enriched by Christ, and our citizenship is enriched by Christ. Every aspect of life, of a true disciple that is truly the salt, is enriched by Christ.

When the saints truly do as the Apostle Paul penned and "put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27), in every aspect of their living, that is how these white crystalline substances shine. That is how when these white crystalline substances, known as salt, are held in the light up from the earth, they become brilliant and dazzling. There is nothing brighter than the power of a truly transformed, changed, life. A life that has been brought up out of the depths of the earth, out of the miry clay, having been cleansed by Jesus Christ, transformed, and changed to what God ordained for them to be, there is nothing that shines any brighter or is more dazzlingly brilliant than that changed, transformed life when one is truly the salt of the earth.

This is not a life made over, but one that is made new, "a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17) or the Greek actually says "a new creation." Man is not just worked over, but he is created anew. A life that is committed to the discipline of Jesus Christ is one who is gladly willing to put on the Truths incorporated in these Beatitudes, and not only put them on, but they will "rejoice and be exceeding glad" (Matthew 5:12). This is not a drudgery. Truly being committed to the discipline of Jesus Christ is not a drudgery, nor is it a bondage, but it is glorious freedom for man to be what God created him for and ordained him to be.

Jesus chose "salt" (Matthew 5:13) because the Greeks called salt divine, and in these people that Jesus called salt, He was portraying

the power of the Divine—the power of a divine change, a divine life, and the ability to be a divine influence in a sin-darkened world. In the time in which these words were uttered, salt held a very special position in the minds of men. In that day, salt was connected with three special qualities. Number one: salt was connected with purity, and no doubt its glistening whiteness made the connection easy. The Romans said that salt was the purest of all things because it came from the purest of all things: the sun and the sea. Salt was the most primitive of all offerings to the heathen gods, and the Jewish sacrifices were offered with salt. It is a picture that the life of a true Child of God is to be a sacrificial life and one which is an example of purity.

Number two: in the ancient world salt was the commonest of all preservatives; it was used to keep things from going bad. Salt preserves from corruption. This portrays not only the work wrought in the life of the individual, but rather the force that the saints are in this time world. They are a preserving, restraining force from corruption. In Abraham's and Lot's day, in Genesis, Chapter 18, we find the Lord would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities of the plains, if enough righteous persons were found. So, the saints are a preservative, even to society. Number three: the most obvious quality of salt is that it gives flavor to things. Food without salt is insipid and bland. Christianity is to life what salt is to food; Christianity lends flavor to life.

These are the truths that a real disciple portrays to this sin-benighted world: 1) They show purity; 2) They are a preservative; and 3) They add flavor. We can see how Christ, in His wisdom, employed this particular analogy because it was so rich in characteristics that paralleled what real salvation and what real discipleship will do in a life, and what that life and the position of that life, or that individual, can do in the midst of society, or in a sin-benighted world.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE SALT

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

In our lesson text we see "The Outgrowth of the Beatitudes." By the help of God, we want to look a little further into where Jesus made the declaration and said, "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). As we examine this Scripture text, we see that Jesus was speaking to an exclusive group of people, and He very clearly said "ye" (Matthew 5:13). This exclamation was an exclusive exclamation. This was not reaching out to a broad base, but rather was speaking in a very exclusive sense.

This exclamation was not to the world because we know that John penned in his writings and declared "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). It was not addressing religious leaders of that day, because Jesus denounced them as hypocrites and said in Matthew 23:2-3: "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." And sad to say, that is what constitutes a hypocrite: one who makes a profession but does not do the things that he professes; one, as Jesus declared, "for they say, and do not" (Matthew 23:3). That is rank hypocrisy, and Jesus said not to follow their example.

Jesus was not in this text preaching to or teaching the masses of His day. The message in this text was to an exclusive group of people. Look at Matthew 5:1-2 where the penman records: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples [not the multitudes; He had distanced Himself from them when He went up into the mountain] came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them [the disciples]." This discourse was for an exclusive body of people, "his disciples" (Matthew 5:1).

What was the burden of these verses? Matthew 5:1 says, "And when he was set." Back in the prophetic writings, in Malachi 3:3, prophesying of the Advent of Christ, the Prophet penned, "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi [or the priesthood], and purge them as gold and silver." Who was he speaking of? He was speaking of the sons of Levi. Who are the New Testament sons of Levi for this was a messianic prophecy of the New Testament era? Who are the sons of Levi? Levi, the sons of Levi, was the old Levitical Priesthood. As such it serves as a type of the New Testament Priesthood.

In Revelation 1:5-6 the Revelator penned and said: "Unto to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us [the ones who have been washed from our sins] kings and priests unto God . . ." The disciples are the priests, and through the avenue of these Beatitudes we are purified and purged, and the outgrowth is in our lesson text where Jesus declared "ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). So, the "ye" of Matthew 5:13 are the disciples, those committed



to following the discipline of Jesus Christ and allowing His Truth to be incorporated into their lives, and living to such a place that they have been purged and purified and are now His examples and followers.

The employment of the present tense word "ye are" (Matthew 5:13) lets us know that as soon as we put on the truths of The Beatitudes it automatically produces something. Jesus used the analogy "ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) because salt of the earth, or salt that is in the earth, must be hunted out, mined, extracted, and lifted out as the Psalmist said "He brought me up also out" (Psalm 40:2). He employs this metaphor of "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) because it portrays our experience. We were once in the deep, dark, recesses of the earth, we were bound and held in sin, and it took an outside source to come and extract us from the depths, and to also lift us up and out. It portrays our experience.

We want to look a little further into this particular analogy that Jesus chose to utilize. Why salt? Why did He employ that particular figure? What does this particular figure convey to us? We have studied already the truths portrayed as to where it is: in the deep, dark, recesses of the earth, how it is extracted by an outside source, and that it is a white crystalline substance, but let us look a little closer at this. The Greeks called salt "divine." The Apostle Peter declared "ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world" (2 Peter 1:4).

How do we escape the corruption that is in the world? By being mined out of the dark, deep depths of this old world-as salt is-by an outside source. We have an outside source in Jesus Christ who came when we were bound, when we were in the depths of sin unable to extract ourselves, and in darkness. Jesus Christ came and extracted us, and as the Psalmist declared "He brought me up also out" (Psalm 40:2). We see that this is how we escape the corruption that is in the world: through Jesus Christ and the experience that He came to bring that enables us to not only be lifted out of sin, but also have sin taken out of us, and our nature changed to where we could become partakers of the divine nature.

The employment of the term "salt" portrays the power of the Divine, or the power of a divine change. Ephesians 2:1 says, "And you hath he quickened." Or this means being made alive. Colossians 1:13 says, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." It portrays the power of divine life. Romans 6:4 declares, "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." It also depicts the power of being a divine witness. In Acts 1:8 it is penned, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses."

What else was associated with "salt" (Matthew 5:13)? The Romans said that salt was the purest of all things. Salt denotes purity. And certainly this is easy to see with its being a white crystalline substance. When one looks upon a true disciple, one who has incorporated the truths of the Beatitudes into their life and living, the first feature that should be outstanding to them should be purity or holiness.

Isaiah prophesied of our day and said in Isaiah 62:12, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD." There is no one holy who has not been redeemed. But holiness, when we begin to give consideration to it, is not merely a negative force. Too many view

holiness merely as a negative, as merely the absence of sin, but the Bible speaks of "the spirit of holiness" (Romans 1:4). It is not just a negative aspect, or the absence of sin, but it has a positive aspect. The presence of the Spirit of Holiness, or the Holy Spirit, moves into the heart and life of the believer to empower that one to be able to retain the holiness that justification brings to their heart.

The prophets viewed our day and when Zechariah saw it, he penned in Zechariah 14:20, "In that day [a prophetic expression of the Gospel Day] shall there be upon the bells of the horses [those with Christ; Revelation 19:14], HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD." The prophet saw that one of the most predominant factors and realities of our day, the Christian Dispensation, was holiness.

Now, let us look at these "horses" that he speaks of in this lesson, in Zechariah, as well as in Revelation. In Revelation 19:14 it says, "And the armies . . . ." What armies? Why does he speak of armies? Revelation 19:11 says that we are at "war." What type of war? The Apostle Paul said in 1 Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith." The battle or the warfare is over the faith. That is why the Apostle Paul penned and warned in 1 Timothy 6:12, "Fight the good fight of faith." The battle, or the warfare, was over the faith. That is why the Apostle Paul also penned and warned that "some shall depart from the faith" (1 Timothy 4:1). The battle is over the faith. We are speaking, when we speak of the faith, as the Scriptures speak of it as "one faith" (Ephesians 4:4). We are talking about the very essence of Christianity or salvation, or speaking of the truth. Why does Revelation 19:14 say, "And the armies . . . upon white horses . . . .?" Why does it employ the figure of horses? Zechariah 10:3 says, "And hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle." The horse, in that day, and the time in which these Scriptures were penned, denoted battle or warfare; they were an article of warfare.

Now, notice what he said about these horses, In Revelation 19:14 it says, "And the armies which were . . . upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." What does "fine linen, white and clean" represent? Revelation 19:8 says, "And to her [the bride, the church] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." We are right back to purity and holiness again, letting us know that the battle is over purity and holiness that the faith brings to the hearts of mankind.

We can see this because in Revelation 16:15 Jesus said, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." The battle is over the garments, the fine linen, clean and white: the righteousness of saints. The move of the enemy of souls and his forces is to strip the Saints of God, the people of God, from righteousness and holiness. But, as the saints keep the faith, they retain that holiness. So, dear heart, we see it leads right back to the thought of purity and holiness.

There is power in purity. Hebrews 12:14 declares, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." This is not speaking of the Second Advent, for Revelation 1:7 says, "And every eye shall see him." This is not speaking of that day. *The Amplified Bible* renders Hebrews 12:14 in this manner, "Strive to live in peace with everybody and pursue that consecration and holiness without which

no one will [ever] see the Lord."

As this "salt" that Matthew 5:13 speaks of is mined out of the deep, dark earth, lifted up and also out by an outside source and cleansed, it is white and glistening and shows forth holiness to the world. Colossians 3:10 says, "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Who created him? Ephesians 3:9 tells us, "Who created all things by Jesus Christ." So, we are renewed after the image of Christ. What is that image? Ephesians 4:24 tells us when it says, "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." This is how the new man is created: when one becomes "a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17), or the Greek says "a new creation" in Christ Jesus.

This figure employed as "salt" depicts the experience of holiness that Christ came to bring to mankind. Luke 1:74-75 makes it expressly clear when it says: "That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Notice, this is not something for some utopian society in some golden age to come, or in some supposed millennial reign. But, this is something that is here and now for "all the days of our life" (Luke 1:75). Jesus, through salvation, made holiness a possibility here and now; not only a possibility, but it is a divine necessity. Holiness is not optional but mandatory. In 1 Peter 1:15-16 Peter penned: "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [or the Greek says 'conduct']; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." Holiness is a Bible requirement. However, when many consider holiness, they have a skewed view, because they do not properly understand how the Bible teaches the doctrine of sin.

In order to understand holiness, one must have a proper understanding of what Biblically constitutes sin. One cannot accidentally sin, ignorantly sin, or sin unbeknownst to themselves. Sin is a willful transgression. It requires an act of the will! In James, Chapter 4, it reveals to us that two components are vitally necessary before sin occurs. In James 4:17 James penned, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Now, this teaches us two things. He said, "Therefore to him that knoweth" (James 4:27). First of all, there must be a knowledge. The Apostle Paul, describing his experience before conversion, said in Romans 7:7, "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."

So, first of all, there must be a knowledge. Secondly, it goes on and says, "to do good and doeth it not" (James 4:17). In other words, there must first of all be a knowledge. Then once there is that knowledge, there must be a deliberate exercise of the will, contrary to the known Will of God, in order for sin to be charged. He said in James 4:17, "Therefore to him that knoweth [it requires a knowledge] to do good, and doeth it not, [After the knowledge, one must deliberately exercise a will contrary to the known Divine Will] to him it is sin."

Also, we must understand that temptation is not sin. James 1:14 declares, "But every man is tempted." Saved or unsaved, saint or sinner, male or female, bond or free, "every man is tempted" (James 1:14). Hebrews 4:15, speaking of Jesus Christ says, that He "was in all points tempted like as we are [temptation is universal], yet without sin."

Temptation alone is not sin; it is only when the will embraces, or acts upon, the desire or temptation that sin occurs. James 1:15 says, "Then when lust [or the Greek says 'inordinate desires'] hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin."

For a conception to take place, two things must come together: the temptation, or the desire, and the will must reach up and embrace that desire and act upon it in order for a conception of sin to take place. First John 3:8-9 tells us: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God [or born again; John 3:3] doth not commit sin; [How can he keep from it?] for his seed [The seed is the "word of God" (Luke 8:11)]. He must overstep the knowledge that he has, and now that he has the Spirit that he is born of, being "being born of the water" (John 3:5), or "the word" (Ephesians 5:26), and of the Spirit. The Spirit of holiness empowers that one to keep the Word or the understanding that he has, and that is why 1 John 3:9 says "the word."] remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Because of that birth, and the Spirit that brings it, the saint can live and walk in holiness. And as they continue to "walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7), they continue to be that white, brilliant, dazzling salt that shows mankind that holiness is possible, practical and powerful."

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE SALT

#### PART FOUR

*Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of man.*

By way of review, we find that this passage is very exclusive. It is not a universal text that takes in all mankind, but rather it is an exclusive text that refers to only one singular group of people. In this lesson, Jesus said "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). It makes it very emphatic and very exclusive when He denoted them as "Ye." Who was He addressing? To whom was He speaking in this famed discourse? Was He speaking to society as a whole? Was He speaking to those who were steeped in the religiosity of that day? Was He speaking to just the religious leaders that were revered in that era of time? No! He is not speaking to any of those, but He was speaking to an exclusive group of individuals.

Look back to the opening verses of this message, in Matthew 5:1-2, where Matthew pens and says: "And seeing the multitudes, he [speaking of Jesus] went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them." Who? What is the antecedent of the word "them?" "His disciples" (Matthew 5:1). So, He was addressing the ones denoted as "his disciples" (Matthew 5:1). These words in our text are only to disciples: those ones who have taken the Truths of the previous verses, The Beatitudes, and incorporated them into their lives and living.

Notice our text also employs the present tense, "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13); not "you will be" in some future era, but He employs the present tense. This tells us that when we put on the truths of the previous verses, that this outgrowth is automatic. Note that Jesus specified "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). Why? Salt also comes from the sea, but in this particular passage He denoted them as "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13) to portray our experience of Salvation. This salt was once of the earth. It was in a deep, dark place, and it was captivated by its surroundings. It was bound in place and could not perform in the manner to which it was intended.

This depicts man's sorry state in sin. In sin, mankind is in a deep, dark place, referred to as "an horrible pit" (Psalm 40:2). It is indeed deep and so it is with a pit; "the power of darkness" (Colossians 1:13). A life in sin is in a deep, dark place; just as the salt is held and captivated by its surroundings, so is one who is in sin. The Apostle Paul described it as we who "were in bondage under the elements of the world" (Galatians 4:3). Just as the manner in which it was intended to be used could not be so with the salt, when it is in the earth, so it is with a man who is in sin. Revelation 4:11 says, "For thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." We were created for God's pleasure, to bring pleasure to God, yet in sin, we cannot fulfill that role. The Prophet Hosea speaks of Israel when she

sinned, and said they were "as a vessel wherein is no pleasure" (Hosea 8:8).

Salt, as our text denotes it as "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13), must be mined. It must be extracted and cleansed by an outside source. This is the picture of the work which Jesus Christ came to do for a lost mankind. Psalm 40:2 says, "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay." It is through Jesus Christ, and Him only, that mankind is extracted and freed from sin. Psalm 119:9 says, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." Religion does not free and cleanse man, church membership does not free and cleanse man, education cannot free and cleanse man, catechism does not free and cleanse man, confirmation does not free and cleanse man, baptism does not free and cleanse man, but the Word, or as the Psalmist penned "taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psalm 119:9), will enable a man to be cleansed.

When we get into the counsel of God's eternal Word, where will it point one? Where will it direct one in order that they might obtain that cleansing for their never-dying soul? In the Gospel of John 5:39 Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." The Word points man to Jesus Christ, and He is the only source of real salvation. Acts 4:12 declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Why did Jesus employ the figure, in our lesson text, of "salt"? Well, we want to consider this. We are moving now from initial salvation to discipleship. The Greeks called salt "divine." In these people, the disciples, that Jesus called "salt" is portrayed the power of the Divine: the power of a divine change, a divine life, and the ability to be a divine influence in a sin-benighted world.

In the era that Jesus uttered these words, "salt" had a very special position in the minds of men; it was connected with special qualities. The Romans said salt was the purist of all things. Salt denoted purity. Salt is a white crystalline substance, and it portrays Truth to us. From it being white, it is easy to see how it represents purity or holiness, Daniel 12:10 says, "Many shall be purified, and made white." Revelation 19:8 says, "That she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." So, we can clearly see that white denotes purity and holiness.

Let us look a little farther. In Matthew 5:13 Jesus speaks of "salt." *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us that salt is a white crystalline substance. Now, let us examine this thought of it being crystalline. What does this convey to us? *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us, concerning crystalline, that it is consisting or made of crystals; like crystal, clear and transparent having the character or structure of a crystal. What then is a crystal? *Webster's New World Dictionary* gives us this definition of a crystal: a clear transparent quartz, a very clear brilliant glass. *Webster's New School and Office Dictionary* says: an inorganic body having a definite geometrical form; a glass of superior clearness, transparent and clear. What is the lesson? Not only does "salt" denote purity and holiness by its whiteness, but because it is a crystal, it is transparent and clear. This is teaching us that those who are pure and holy are an open book before others, living as living

witnesses and examples to be viewed without reservation by mankind. The Apostle Paul penned in 2 Corinthians 3:2, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men." The true disciple is transparent and clear; an open book "known and read of all men" (2 Corinthians 3:2). Romans 14:7 says, "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."

In the Revelation, when John saw a vision of the New Testament church in the Evening Time of the Gospel Day—which was a people—he said in Revelation 21:11, "Having the glory of God: and her light [the church's light] was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." The true disciples and true church are clear as crystal. Not only do they live "in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life" (Luke 1:75), but they are not afraid for their lives to be held forth as an example of Christ and Truth. In 1 Thessalonians 2:10 the Apostle Paul says, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." Philippians 4:9 says, "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."

One who is truly "salt," truly a disciple, truly pure and holy as God's Word intends and ordains, is not afraid for their life to be on display. They have nothing to hide; they are "clear as crystal" (Revelation 21:11). Their life may be clear and may be transparent that men may see all the way through, and not see any impurity or anything unlike God. They can cry, as Paul did, saying "for yourselves know how ye ought to follow us" (2 Thessalonians 3:7), "not because we have no power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us" (2 Thessalonians 3:9).

Let us look a little closer at this crystal. *Funk & Wagnall's Encyclopedia*, Volume VII, Page 185, tells us about a crystal and says "it is a homogeneous portion of matter that has a definite orderly atomic structure." Let us examine this. The word "homogeneous" according to *Webster's New World Dictionary* means "having similarity in structure because of common descent." Every saint, or child of God, has a common descent. We are each "born of God" (1 John 3:9); we have the same experience, the same Father, and the same Savior, so we have a common descent.

Next, it says that a "crystal" also "has a definite orderly atomic structure." God is a God of order. First Corinthians 14:40 says, "Let all things be done decently and in order." From the smallest, most minute molecular structure, to the most vast universes and galaxies, God is a God of order. And every saint, just as this crystal also has a definite orderly atomic structure. What is it? The Apostle Paul penned that we are "conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29); that is the order that saints are conformed to. So, in the crystal, we see a "common salvation" (Jude, verse 3). We see the new birth initially and then conformation to His image.

What else? *Funk & Wagnall's Encyclopedia*, Volume VII, Page 185, goes on to say: "An outward form bounded by smooth plane surfaces symmetrically arranged; these surfaces, or crystal faces, develop naturally during the growth of the crystal in response to directional forces from within the crystal." What an apt description of Christian

growth and maturity. It is indeed the forces within the crystal and within the heart and life of the child of God that truly shapes and forms the orderly exterior that men see that reflects the image of Jesus Christ. What an apt description of Christian maturity and growth! In 1 John 3:2 he says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him." The forces within the crystal shapes the surface, or what men see, and so Christ, within the heart of the saints, shapes the exterior and the life that men see.

What else about a "crystal" portrays truth to us? On page 186, of *Funk & Wagnall's Encyclopedia*, Volume VII it says: "When conditions are favorable, each chemical element and compound tends to crystalize in a definite and characteristic form, thus salt tends to form cubic crystals." What does "cubic crystals" mean? Well, throughout the Scriptures, we find that several very vital articles are cubes. To the Greek the perfect cube was the perfect shape. It was the same with the Jews. The Altar of Incense, and the High Priest's breast plate, were all in the form of a cube (you can read that in Exodus 27:1, Exodus 30:2, and Exodus 28:16). Several times this shape occurs in Ezekiel's vision of the New Jerusalem and the New Temple (you can read that in Ezekiel 41:21, Ezekiel 43:16, Ezekiel 45:2, and Ezekiel 48:20). Also, in Solomon's Temple, the Holy of Holies, was a perfect cube (1 Kings 6:20 verifies that), and in the Revelation "the City [the church]" (Revelation 21:16) is a perfect cube.

What is the lesson? What is He trying to teach us? In the ancient world the "cube" was the symbol of perfection. The cubic crystals were not only representative of purity and holiness, but also they were transparent and clear; one for all men to see, and to serve as a witness to the fact that it was, indeed, possible for a man to be spiritually perfect. *Funk & Wagnall's Encyclopedia* says: "Salt always crystalizes in the same class and system. Thirty-two classes are theoretically possible. Almost all common minerals fall into one of about twelve classes."

What does this teach us? Salt always crystalizes in the same class. What does this teach us? True discipleship has a common pattern for all. There is no variance in truth. Just as there are some fixed laws in nature that always produce the same result, such as the law of gravity, so are there fixed spiritual laws as well. In Luke 14:33, Jesus said, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." So, we find that there is a fixed law in the spiritual realm. Also, these "crystals" always fall into one of twelve classes. This is the same as when John saw the church, saying "and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (Revelation 12:1). Or, as Acts 2:42 says, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine." How many Apostles were there? Twelve!

We can see that this usage of the word "salt," which *Webster's New World Dictionary* says is "a white crystalline substance" portrays purity and holiness in the fact that it is white. It is also used as a good example of being a witness because of being crystalline, being a crystal, that is transparent and clear. It portrays a people who are living witnesses and an evangelistic outreach to the world, and that the saints and disciples are that perfect cube, that perfect example that



shows forth Christ and His reflection to the world by having been conformed to His image through the experience and the growth in Jesus Christ. They reflect the image of Him that is within and without.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE SALT

#### PART FIVE

*Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

As we again view this Scripture text we have our Lord, at the conclusion of the Beatitudes, speaking these profound words of truth that reveal to us that when these principles and truths of The Beatitudes are embraced and incorporated into the life that there is some natural outgrowth and by-products. Our text holds forth one of these outgrowths when Jesus said, in Matthew 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth."

Now we want to look a little further into these words of our Lord. In this lesson, Jesus is holding forth a great number of truths. We must ever be mindful that there are no writings that are just merely writings that can be dispensed with as unessential. Every writing is profound, and every word is significant. There are no books or writings that have ever been penned by men as profound and as significant as the Sacred Scriptures, where every word is pregnant with truth.

In Proverbs 30:5 the wise man penned, "Every word of God is pure," teaching us that there is divine design and divine truth portrayed in every word in the sacred Scriptures. There are no unessential words in the Bible. In 2 Timothy 3:16 the Apostle penned, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." God's Word is a mine of precious treasures of truths. Solomon penned in Proverbs 2:1, 4: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures."

How is silver sought? How does one search for silver? Job 28:1 tells us, "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it." *The Amplified Bible* renders it in this manner and makes it a little more clear: "Surely there is a mine for silver, and a place of gold where they refine it." The Word of God is a mine full of deep spiritual riches, but they must be searched for, they must be sought, and as Jesus taught us to "seek and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7). When we exert the effort, God will bless the effort and reveal precious truth to us.

As we again view this Scripture text, we see that it is at the conclusion of the nine Beatitudes that Jesus gave us in the proceeding verses, Matthew 5:3-12. In this verse, Matthew 5:13, He is letting us know that if the truths of The Beatitudes are put on and incorporated into the life of the believer that one of the natural by-products, or outgrowth, will be as Matthew 5:13 declares "ye are the salt of the earth." Here we find that He is speaking to an exclusive group of people. He said in Matthew 5:13 "ye" or in the modern "you." Who is this He is addressing? Matthew 5:1, where this address commences, with Matthew's introduction, tells us that it is "his disciples. These are the ones who Matthew 5:13 denotes as "the salt of the earth."

Jesus had a reason and a purpose behind every word that He spoke and every figure that He employed. Why did He use the metaphor in Matthew 5:13 of "salt"? Well, the reasons and truths that they convey to us are indeed numerous. Let us look at what He denotes in Matthew 5:13 as "salt." The Greeks called "salt" divine. The Romans said that "salt" was the purist of all things. "Salt" is "a white crystalline substance." A crystal is transparent and clear and "salt" is also cubic crystals.

What does this tell us? "Salt," being considered divine, portrays the power of the Divine in the life of a disciple. It depicts the power of a divine change. The taking of one, just as salt was, down in the deep, dark recesses of the earth, bound and held captive by its surroundings, and through salvation, by Jesus Christ, it is lifted up and also out; extracted from the dark and from the depths and cleansed that it might be used for the purpose for which it was originally intended. When cleansed, it is white, and because it is white, it denotes the purity that can come through a real change by real salvation. It depicts the power of a divine change, of a divine life, and the ability to be a "divine" witness and influence in a sinful world.

"Salt," being considered the purest of all things, denotes by its whiteness the life of purity and holiness of the Saints of God. Being a crystal, orderly and symmetrical and a cube that is transparent, reveals the witness and public example that the saint is to be, both to be observed and emulated. "Salt" was also the most primitive of all offerings to the heathen gods, and even the Jewish sacrifices were commanded to be offered with salt. This shows that the true disciple is one who lives a sacrificial life to God and to truth.

In Mark 8:34, Jesus declared, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Jesus knew that one could not truly incorporate the truths of the Beatitudes into their lives without being a true disciple, without first and foremost denying himself. Then, after self-denial, taking up his cross and following. Without "self" being "slain" first, one cannot live a life of sacrifice or submission. Sad to say, many are struggling in the realms of religion today, trying to live lives of sacrifice and submission. But, they are meeting with dismal disappointment and consistent failure simply because they do not rightly understand the Biblical formula that "self" must be "slain" first.

What else was salt famous for when Jesus spoke these words? Purity, but there were also two other things that salt was noted for in that era. In the ancient times, salt was the commonest of all preservatives. It kept things from going bad and held putrefaction at bay. In the days before modern refrigeration, salt was the common preservative for food. Many, no doubt, can recall the days of salt-cured ham. Salt preserves from corruption. What is the lesson? The saints, the disciples, are a preservative in this time world, and it has been such in every era of time.

Look at the account back in Genesis, Chapter 18, where we find that the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities of the plain had come up before God, and we see a terrible thing was about to occur. In Genesis 18:17 it says, "And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" In the following verses, we see the Lord reveals to faithful Abraham His intentions, and we see Abraham began to intercede and be a preserving force. In Genesis 18:20-26 we read: "And the LORD

said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD. And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein? That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes."

You can read right down through the duration of the chapter and finally in Genesis 18:32-33 it says: "And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake. And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place."

Here, we see vividly portrayed that Abraham was attempting to be a preservative; a restraining force from the judgment of God falling upon those vile cities. He finally stopped pleading, in Genesis 18:32, with ten souls. Why? Because there was Lot, his wife, his two daughters at home, as Genesis 19:16 tells us. Genesis 19:14 tells us, ". . . his sons-in-law [plural], which married his daughters [plural]." Abraham felt, knowing Lot's family, that there must have been at least ten, and so he stopped pleading and interceding there. However, the example here is that Abraham was an intercessor and he pleaded, and was a preservative for the lives of these ones. Notice, that even though there were not ten that the angel said in Genesis 19:22, "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither." Second Peter 2:8 calls him, speaking of Lot, "that righteous man." Here, we see that this righteous man was the restraining force, until he was removed from the city.

Consider Moses, in Exodus, Chapter 32, when the children of Israel turned to idolatry while Moses was in the mount. Look at God's words and wrath as He displayed it. In Exodus 32:10-14 it says: "Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. [Here we see the Lord was so stirred He was ready to destroy an entire people in one fell swoop, but notice Moses' words here] And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." Here, Moses preserved all of Israel.

What is the lesson to us? It is that the saints, the true people of

Christ, are "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). They are the earth's salt. They are the earth's preservative. They are that one that is a restraining and preservative force to stay the hand of God to prevent judgment from coming upon a people. Without the true saints being in the earth and praying and making intercession to God, there would be many more manifestations of His judgment. The Psalmist declared in Psalm 7:11, ". . . God is angry with the wicked every day." That which restrains Him is the saints and their prayers. In Habakkuk 3:1-2 it says: "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth. O LORD, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid . . . in wrath remember mercy."

As the presence of salt upon a dead meat acted as a preservative from decay and corruption, so the saints in a world dead in trespasses and sins act as a preservative, but it cannot do so indefinitely. The meat must change its form by being eaten and made a part of living, being ultimately consumed, or it will corrupt. So it is with this world, which Ephesians 2:1 says is "dead in trespasses and sins." It must gain a spiritual resurrection; it must be brought "to newness of life" (Romans 6:4) or it will ultimately be consumed of its own corruption. So, the true disciples are a preservative in this sin-cursed world.

The greatest and most obvious quality of salt is that salt lends flavor to things. Food without salt is insipid and bland. Christianity is to "life" what "salt" is to food. Christianity lends flavor to life. The sad tragedy is that because of poor examples of what professed Christianity should be, many have connected or associated it will precisely the opposite. Many have connected Christianity with that which takes the flavor out of life. How unfortunate and sad that it has been misrepresented as such. The famed jurist, Oliver Wendell Holmes, once said: "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers." What a sad statement and even more sad knowing how great a jurist this man became, how different The Kingdom of God might be today if he had been encouraged to turn his energy to the ministry. The real salt, or saint brings flavor wherever they are.

Jesus came to give us "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:7). In John 14:27 Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The only kind of peace the world knows is the absence of trouble, but through Jesus Christ there is a divine peace; peace that works right in the midst of whatever life may deal one. In the Gospel of John 16:33 Jesus said, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." This is a part of the flavor that salvation brings to a sour, bitter life.

Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace, In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." This is a part of the flavor that salvation brings to a sour, bitter life. Jesus said in John 15:11, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Christ wants our joy to be full. The Amplified Bible says, "I have told you these things, that My joy and delight may be in you, and that your joy and gladness may be of full measure and complete and overflowing."

The saints, the disciples, are here in this world so that men may

truly see them as "the salt" (Matthew 5:13), and discover the radiance of the true Biblical Christian faith. When this peace, joy, and other divine attributes are put on or incorporated into the life, the world will see that in a worried, stressful world, the saint is the only one who can remain serene and calm. In a world filled with depression, the true believer is the only one who remains full of the joy of life. The true saint has a sheer sparkle in their talk and in their walk. In trouble, they have in their eye yet-a-twinkle, a radiance in their face, a gleam upon their countenance, and a spring in their heel letting the world know that which is without cannot affect that which comes from within.

So we see that the true saint has a sheer sparkle in their talk, in their walk, a twinkle in their eye, and a radiance in their countenance. Why? Because they have His life, His hope, His joy, His peace, and it is all in their hearts and in their lives, and in a realm that situations and circumstances of this world cannot reach. Wherever He is, the true saint of God is "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). He is a diffuser of joy. Certainly, we can see the great hosts of truth that Jesus revealed by the employment of this term that He denoted in Matthew 5:13 as "the salt of the earth."

The effective and true saint is one who has incorporated the truths of these Beatitudes into their lives and living, and now they shine out right in the midst of the earth and they are the joy of the whole earth. They are able to radiate out that which is from within and show the world the reality that there is in Jesus Christ. By doing so, they are an evangelistic force telling others to come; "all ye that are athirst come" (Revelation 22:17), and telling them that there is a water of life that they may drink of and that they may have their nature changed and be able to enjoy the good things of God, as we are truly enjoying them as the "salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). What a fitting metaphor for Jesus to use and employ to depict this beautiful experience of salvation and the discipleship that follows.

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE SALT

#### PART SIX

*Matthew 5:13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.*

As we view this text of Scripture, we see our Lord has just completed the giving of the nine Beatitudes, which are recorded in Matthew 5:3-12, and He is now describing the outgrowth of the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:13-16. Here in our lesson text Jesus exclaims, "Ye are the salt of the earth." He is employing a figure that denotes: 1) Purity and holiness and is an evangelistic witness; 2) The preserving quality that the saints are in this world; and 3) The flavor that Salvation brings to life.

In this initial phrase of our text, Jesus heralds forth a positive statement. He utters words which portray the position that the disciples hold in this time world. However, in the remainder of this text Jesus brings a sober and somber warning. He utters words that makes us aware that even at this point in our experience, we can lose out if we are not cautious and on our guard. Let us look at these words of Jesus and continue our study of verse 13 concerning the "salt."

Look at the words of Jesus in this text. In Matthew 5:13 it says, "But if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Right in the midst of a ringing declaration comes a startling and sobering warning. What does this actually mean? Well, *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* records it in this manner: "If but the salt becomes tasteless . . . ." Or *The Amplified Bible* renders it in this manner: "But if the salt has lost its taste [its strength, its quality]." Here, we see a picture of salt whose intended purpose is to represent purity, provide preservation, and present flavor is changed to where it provides none of these. It is a picture of an exterior form remaining, but of the internal reality being gone. It portrays the danger of apostasy.

Initially, it appears the same. It continues to hold the same form, the same shape, the same color, and outwardly it still appears white. The Pharisees did that as well. In Matthew 23:27-28, Jesus said: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." Here, we see that the exterior may "appear righteous" (Matthew 23:28), but there is a vast difference in "appearing" righteous and truly "being" righteous. The Apostle Paul speaks of those "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:5).

What is the "power of godliness?" From whence is it derived? In Romans 1:4 the penman says, "And declared to be the Son of God [speaking of Christ] with power, according to the spirit of holiness." The power to

live holy, or the power of holiness and godliness, is the power within-"the spirit of holiness." If you lose that Spirit, Romans 8:9 says, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Though the outward forms may remain, our text says in Matthew 5:13, "the salt have lost his savour." All the truths and realities that a saint or disciple is to show forth is not there when the "salt" has lost the inner reality that makes it different. They may have the form, they may have the exterior, but all those truths and realities that a saint or disciple is to show forth is not showing forth when the "salt have lost its savour" (Matthew 5:13), or lost the inner reality that makes it unique and different.

Someone may question: "Are you certain this verse is speaking of apostasy?" Certainly so! Look at the wording that Jesus employed in Matthew 5:13 when He said, "It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Here, Jesus brings up an illustration that seems remote and seems novel and strange to us, yet it is one with which His first century Jewish audience was very familiar. One scholar says, "It is a well-known fact that the salt of this country, Palestine, when in contact with the ground or exposed to rain and sun does become insipid and useless. It is not only good for nothing itself, but it actually destroys all fertility wherever it is thrown, and this is the reason why it is cast into the street. It is carefully swept up and carried forth and thrown into the street. There is no place about the house, yard, or garden where it can be tolerated. No man will allow it to be thrown into his field and the only place for it is the street." It was used as we use gravel. We clearly see the role of an apostate. It retains its form, but has lost that inner vitality. Where it was ordained to provide and give, it now takes and drains. It will take a fertile field and make it barren.

Do apostates do that? Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 2:16-18 where he says: "But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some." Here were two, who were as our text denoted salt, but these were ones that Jesus was speaking of. No doubt He had in mind these types of people who had lost their savour, and if that is not recognized and removed, it will affect others. However, in Hymenaeus and Philetus we see that they were still revered among some in the supposed Christian community and they overthrew the faith of some. They had lost that quality that made them divine and made them different, yet they had not been exposed as of yet and removed and because of that, they were destroying other fields that were fertile.

This is the literal illustration that Jesus had in mind, but this literal illustration also had become a spiritual custom as well in the day in which Jesus was uttering these words. Among the Jews was a custom that if a Jew became an apostate and then returned to the faith before he was received back into the synagogue, he must in penitence lie across the door of the synagogue and invite people to trample upon him as they entered. In certain places, the church took on that custom in the first century and a Christian who had been ejected by discipline from the church was compelled, before he was received back, to lie at the door and invite people as they entered: "Trample upon me, who am the salt,



who has lost his savour." We can clearly see where Jesus garnered this illustration, and we can see that it represents apostasy.

Let us look at some who were "salt" and who lost their "savour" and see what happened. Let us look at the most famous apostate of all—a man by the name of Judas Iscariot whose name is synonymous with deceit and treachery, but it was not always so. In the Gospel of Matthew 10:1-5 it tells us: "And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them." We see that it says in Matthew 10:4, "And Judas Iscariot." He was one of the chosen twelve. Matthew 10:1 says, "He gave them [which was inclusive of all twelve; it included Judas] power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease." Judas had "power against unclean spirits, to cast them out." Jesus told us later in Matthew 12:26, "And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"

Judas, as with all the apostles, was initially vested with power from Jesus Christ. He was not always, as some would suppose, one who was a devil or noted as a devil, or a betrayer. Initially, his heart was as clear as the others. He was as empowered as the other eleven and as entrusted as any one of the group. So here we see that Judas was initially vested with power from Jesus Christ. He was so trusted. According to John's writings, he "had the bag" (John 12:6), or he was the treasurer of the first congregation. However, something began to work on him. He never changed his profession or his performance. Outwardly, he still appeared as he had before; he still appeared as though he was "salt." He did not change his form or his outward appearance, but something happened within. He never changed his profession or his performance, but something within him changed.

John 12:6 tells us, "This he said [speaking of when the box was broken and the ointment was poured on Jesus' feet, rather than being sold to give money to the poor], not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." Here, we see Judas had a problem with greed and avarice. When Judas fully yielded to these desires, "satan entered into him" (John 13:27), letting us know very clearly Satan had not been there previously. Matthew 26:14-15 says: "Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver [which was the price of a servant or a slave (Exodus 21:32)]." What is the lesson? Greed, avarice, or covetousness for this world's goods can cause one who is "salt" to lose their savour or saltiness.

Jesus said in Luke 12:15, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Greed, or covetousness, can destroy an experience, and it will deceive you even after this occurs. Judas came to Jesus in the garden and said, "Hail, master; and kissed him" (Matthew 26:49). Hebrews

3:13 speaks of "the deceitfulness of sin." Sin is deceptive and will render one "thenceforth good for nothing" (Matthew 5:13), and yet make them think that nothing has changed. This deception worked on Samson of old. He said in Judges 16:20, "I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him." There are many, to use another scriptural analogy, who have made spiritual shipwreck. First Timothy 1:19-20 says: "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan." In 2 Timothy 4:10 it says, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

Many today have fallen prey to this same snare that Demas fell to, "having loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4:10). Worldliness in our society, even in the realms of what supposedly is Christianity, is becoming rampant and running unleashed among professors. That worldliness will destroy the experience just as it did in Judas and Demas, and it will cause you to become a "salt that has lost his savour. . . [that] is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matthew 5:13).

Many, sad to say, are falling prey to the same snare that Demas did of "having loved this present world" (2 Timothy 4:10). What benefit is the world, or the things of the world, to Judas or to Demas now? They traded something eternal for something very temporary. This world is not our "long home" (Ecclesiastes 12:15), and as Jesus told Martha, "One thing is needful" (Luke 10:42). In the eternal scheme, only one thing truly matters and that is keeping that inward quality that makes us "the salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13). There are many things that can take that inner reality and do to us what it did to Judas or to Demas. There are many things that war against an experience. To Judas it was greed; to Peter it was fear; to Demas it was the world; to Hymenaeus and Philetus it was false doctrine and getting their teaching out; to Diotrephes it was preeminence. Many other things will arise that will try to lead ones away.

What did Jesus say all these things would accomplish? Matthew 5:13, ". . . to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." Here He tells us the only acceptable place for anything that will work against our spirituality or anyone that would work against us. Where is that place? It is "under the foot of men." Jesus said in Luke 10:19, Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, [Luke 10:21 will tell you that those are spirits.] and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." The place for every opposing force is under our feet.

When it taught us in Matthew 5:13 and said very explicitly that "it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under the foot of men," He is portraying the position that everything that is against us or our experience or Truth is to take the place and position that it needs to be placed in is under the feet of the saints of God. The place for every opposing force is under our feet. The Apostle Paul said in Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet . . . ." Jesus is telling the saints, the disciples in Matthew 5:13, "Ye [who] are the salt of the earth." He is telling us to be on our guard. He is telling us that there is an enemy out to rob us of our experience and that inward reality that makes us

divine and different. He is out to rob us of that which makes us "salt." Do not let him do that. If there are those about that does allow it to happen, do not let their loss of savour ruin your fertility. Put what moved in, even them if necessary, under your feet and maintain your victory.

Jesus gives us a beautiful lesson of the place and position the saints occupy as an outgrowth of the Beatitudes, and it is a position that the enemy is assaulting. But if we stay above it and keep it under our feet, and keep up and out of the old earth, we can be that pure white crystalline substance; a substance that when the true light hits it, it can be brilliant and dazzling and be as the next outgrowth portrays in Matthew 5:14 when Jesus said, "Ye are the light of the world."

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE LIGHT

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

In this passage of Scripture text we are introduced to a new analogy that the Lord employs in this address which we know as "The Sermon on the Mount." In this text Jesus heralded forth the truth in a symbolic manner and cried, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). And by the help of God, this is what we want to begin to examine.

As we consider this portion of the sacred Scriptures, we must recognize that these words are not isolated sayings uttered without any surroundings or without prerequisites. These verses (Matthew 5:14-16) are spoken at the conclusion of The Beatitudes. In this first recorded message of Christ's public ministry, He commenced His discourse with the Beatitudes which are recorded in Matthew 5:3-12. And it was at the conclusion of the Beatitudes that He uttered "Ye are the salt of the earth" (verse 13); and "ye are the light of the world" (verse 14). Both of these analogies that Jesus employed and the Truths that they are designed to convey are "The Outgrowth of the Beatitudes."

To take the admonition of the Apostle Paul to be "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15), we must recognize that the Scriptures were written in continuity. They are not to be viewed as disjointed texts for preachers to perform homiletic gymnastics with or rambling discourses which have no basis in expositional truth, but rather for the Scriptures to be rightly divided they must be viewed in their context. Our lesson recorded in Matthew 5:14-16 comes at the conclusion of the Beatitudes. This again is letting us know that when we incorporate these truths into our living, there are some natural by-products or outgrowths.

It is not feasible for a person to consider themselves the "salt" or the "light" or to attempt to be the "salt" or the "light" when they have not met the previous prerequisites or conditions. When Jesus said, "Ye are [in the present tense] the salt" and "Ye are [in the present tense] the light," He was letting us know that this was a natural by-product or outgrowth; that one cannot merely just become "salt or "light" without some previous conditions or previous prerequisites being met.

So here we see that the wording Jesus employed here in both Matthew 5:13 and Matthew 5:14 is "Ye are" in the present tense. He lets us know that this is a natural outgrowth or by-product of incorporating previous truths into the life. Jesus employed the present tense "Ye are." He did not say, "Do this and you will be," or "If you want to be the 'light' do such and such." No! He made a divine pronouncement here in Matthew 5:14 and declared, "Ye are the light." This is letting us know that the

incorporation of the previous truths, the truths mentioned in Matthew 5:3-12, the Beatitudes, into our lives automatically produces life and makes us the "light." It is a natural by-product or outgrowth of the Beatitudes.

Notice, as with the previous outgrowth, "the salt" (recorded in Matthew 5:13), Christ is not speaking of everyone, but rather He is speaking to an exclusive group of individuals. Notice that Jesus said in our lesson text in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light." Here Jesus was not addressing the world. For He said, "Ye are the light of the world." We know this light is not the world, for the Apostle John clearly lets us know "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19).

This audience that He was addressing was certainly not the religious leaders of His day. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, in his message in Acts 7:51 said, speaking to those religious leaders of that day, ". . . ye do always resist the Holy Ghost . . . ." It was not the religiously inclined masses to whom He was speaking, for people who are merely religious are very fickle people. The same city that lauded Christ with palms and hosannas in Matthew 21:9 was the same one to say, "Let him be crucified" in Matthew 27:22. Religious people without real salvation are extremely fickle. No, it was none of those that Jesus was addressing, but it was a singular group of people.

In this text in Matthew 5:14, Jesus explicitly said, "Ye are the light." Who was this audience to whom He was speaking? Look at where this context actually begins. Back in Matthew 5:1-2 it says: "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, His disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them." Who? The disciples, not the multitudes. The mass multitudes are not the salt of the earth, nor are they the light of the world, but an exclusive group of individuals are both and that is His disciples. It was an exclusive group of people that He was addressing in this text. It is what Matthew 5:1 denotes as "his disciples." Why is that? Because only those who are committed to following the discipline of Jesus Christ and only those who are willing to incorporate the truths of the Beatitudes into their lives are truly this lot.

So, He was speaking to an exclusive group of people, and yet today only an exclusive group of people are as Matthew 5:14 denotes as "the light." It is not the unregenerate world, for they are in darkness. It is not the religious world, for they are in confusion and refuse the light. It is a people who Jesus said in John 3:21, "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light." It is a people that doeth truth. The sole factor that separates the true disciple, the true people of God, from all other people and all other groups is that the true disciple is dedicated wholeheartedly and unreservedly to doing the truth. Regardless of where truth may lead, regardless of the cost that truth may have, regardless of the price that they may have to pay, or the sufferings that they may have to endure, the true disciple is committed that they will do truth regardless of what it may lead them to or through.

Let us look a little further into this text. In Matthew 5:14 Jesus said, "Ye are the light." Why did He employ this particular analogy? Why is this symbolic expression used? We must remember that when Jesus originally spoke these words, His audience was comprised of those of Hebrew stock. They were totally of Jewish lineage and familiar with the

Jewish teachings and customs of that day. When Jesus spoke these words in our text, He was using an expression which was quite familiar to the Jews, who were His audience. They themselves spoke of Jerusalem as "a light to the Gentiles," and a famous rabbi was often called "a lamp" of Israel. The way in which the Jews used this expression will give us an insight into the way in which Jesus used it. Of one thing the Jews were very sure, no man kindled his own light. Jerusalem was indeed a light to the Gentiles, but "God lit Israel's lamp." The light with which the nation or man of God shone was a borrowed light. In this lesson, it is not the demand of Jesus that we could produce our own light, but rather shine with the reflection of His light.

In this passage, Christ pays the highest compliment to the child of God, because in this exclamation He declared "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). Jesus revealed that the saint is what Jesus Christ Himself was. In the Gospel of John 9:5, Jesus said, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." So when Jesus says in our lesson text "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14), He is saying to the disciples that they are what He is, and that they are here in His stead and as His representative. When we begin to consider this phrase, it reveals a multiplicity of truths unto us. In this lesson, Jesus said in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light." This poses several questions, such as: How did this occur? What is this light? Where did it come from? How did it get to us? Let us examine this thought concerning light.

Where did it originate? In the general epistle of 1 John 1:5, John penned, "God is light." So the ultimate source of light is God. But 1 Timothy 6:16 tells us that God is "dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." So, the ultimate source of light is "whom no man hath seen, nor can see." God had to make this light accessible to mankind. How did He accomplish this? In the Gospel of John 12:46 Jesus said, "I am come a light into the world." The express purpose for which Jesus came was to bring this divine Light down to mankind. This verse in John 12:46 went on to say, "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness."

When Christ came on the scene in His initial First Advent, mankind was indeed in deep darkness. Matthew 4:16 declares, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light." The world was enveloped in gross darkness when Christ came on the scene, and when He came John 1:9 tells us that He was "the true light, which lighteth every man that a cometh into the world." When Christ came on the scene in His First Advent, the world was enveloped and steeped in darkness, but He said "I am come a light" (John 12:46). And through the person of Jesus Christ, God brought the light from the eternal realm, from God the Father, down through Jesus Christ the Son, down into the realms of this time world.

The Apostle Paul penned, speaking of God who is Light, "no man hath seen [Him], nor can see" (1 Timothy 6:16), yet Jesus said in John 14:9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Hebrews 1:3 tells us that Jesus is "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." The Amplified Bible renders it: "The Son is the radiance and only expression of the glory of [our awesome] God [the Light-being, the brilliant light of the divine], and the exact representation and perfect imprint of His [Father's] essence." Christ is the "out-ricing of the

Divine." He brought the light of God down to mankind. What is this light that He brought down to mankind? The Apostle Paul called it "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:4). The light that Christ brought down to mankind was the Gospel. We must recognize that man without Christ and without the Gospel is in darkness, but Christ came to bring man light.

What actually is light? What does the Gospel really do? Well, look at the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 119:130 where he penned, "The entrance of thy words giveth light [What is he referring to when he speaks of giving light?]; it giveth understanding unto the simple." Light is understanding. The Gospel brings understanding to man. This is why God is light because the Psalmist said in Psalm 147:5, "His understanding is infinite" (Psalm 147:5). He is understanding in the fullest sense because He is Omniscient and He is all-knowing. God brought it down to mankind through Jesus Christ, the One who imparted to man the Gospel, and the Gospel brings understanding to man. Christ came to bring the Gospel, or understanding of the Divine, to mankind.

Jesus said in John 9:5, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." But in John 16:5, Jesus said, "But now I go my way to him that sent me." He left a people in His stead; a people to which He said in our lesson text, in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light." He did not say, "You are the way to the light," nor did He say, "Strive hard to be like the light," but rather He said, "Ye are the light." The Apostle Paul reiterated this same truth in Ephesians 5:8 when he penned, "For ye were [past tense] sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." Not in light, not have the light, but "now are ye light." Those who have embraced Christ and the Gospel and made it "the engrafted word" (James 1:21), have actually become "the light" (Matthew 5:14). They have actually become God's representative, God's image, in this time world. We are the ones who are vested with the very life of Jesus Christ. And we are the ones to show forth Light, to show forth truth, and to give understanding to a lost and dying world.

Concerning the Gospel and salvation, their minds are enshrouded in darkness. The Apostle Paul penned in 2 Corinthians 4:4 and said very explicitly there that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." "Their foolish heart was darkened" (Romans 1:21). It is because of that darkness that God wants the saints of God to be that light in the midst of darkness. He wants them to be able to radiate forth the very life of Jesus Christ that comes from God who is "the express image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3). He wants us to show forth light, to show forth truth, to give understanding to a lost and dying world concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the salvation that He came to bring to mankind.

Those who have incorporated the lessons and truths of the Beatitudes into their lives have by so doing lit something within that is ordained to shine out to mankind. When they view the true saint of God, just as Christ was "the express image of his person" (Matthew 1:3), the true believer, the true saint of God is "conformed to the image of his Son" (Romans 8:29). Christ was the express image of God's person, and when they see a true saint of God, they see God. And as such, we are light to the world and we need to be shining forth in a brilliant manner so that a sin-darkened world can truly see that light. We are the true saints of God, the light of the world.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE LIGHT

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

We want to draw our focus to where Jesus heralded forth the words, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). In this phrase, Christ reveals a great host of spiritual and Biblical truths. As we begin to view this text, some of these truths are very evident, while others are inferred in this text. First, we must recognize that this is not an isolated passage, but rather part of a much larger discourse. As such, we must realize that when Jesus cried "Ye are the salt" (Matthew 5:13) and "Ye are the light" (Matthew 5:14) that this did not just occur by divine pronouncement, but rather was the result of the truths that were spoken earlier. These verses in Matthew 5:13-16 are revealing to us the outgrowth of the incorporation of the truths of the previous verses into the lives of the saints of God.

One is merely deceiving themselves if they feel they are "the salt" (Matthew 5:13) or "the light" (Matthew 5:14), if they are not "poor in spirit" (Matthew 5:3). One must first of all be convicted of their spiritual poverty. They must come to an age of accountability and have an awareness of their great need of God and their spiritual poverty in being able to approach God, and so they must first be "poor in spirit." They must realize their absolute, abject and total poverty. They must be "poor" (Matthew 5:4), which must lead them to "mourn" or have "godly sorrow." When that occurs, they "be comforted" (Matthew 5:4), or they will receive the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost. Then, they are a fit candidate to become disciples that have control and power over their "earthen vessels" (Matthew 5:6). Then, because they are a true disciple to become "the meek [that] inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5), they become disciples that have control and power over their "earthen vessels." Then, because they are a true disciple, they will "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). When they truly do that and really become a spiritual person, then they will be "merciful" (Matthew 5:7), or they will be God's dispenser of mercy to others. Truly, as the result of these, they will be "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8), and then will be able to be "the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9), which will cause as "persecution" (Matthew 5:10) and also their being "reviled" (Matthew 5:11). Matthew 5:13-16 is the culmination of all these previous attributes being incorporated into the life of the child of God. When this is accomplished, then Jesus said, "Ye are the light" (Matthew 5:14).

When He employed this word "ye", He was speaking to an exclusive group of individuals. Who? Those who would take hold of the truths that He



spoke in these Beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12. Who is this exclusive group of individuals? Matthew 5:1 tells us it is "his disciples." This is who He was addressing, and these are the only ones even yet today who will take these truths and put them on. Jesus went on to say in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light." When we put the truth on and live it out, this is a natural by-product or outgrowth. When we take hold of Light and take it in, we become light. The Apostle Paul echoed this truth when he said "now are ye light" (Ephesians 5:8). So the true disciple is indeed "the light" (Matthew 5:14).

Jesus said in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world." What does this clause "of the world" tell us? It speaks volumes of Biblical and spiritual truths. But what does this reveal to us? Let us at least glean three truths that this text infers to you and me: (1) It reveals that the world is in darkness, that it has no light of its own; that of its own source there is no light; (2) It teaches us that it must receive light from an outside source; and (3) It portrays that the saints fill a divine role in this world. Let us examine these Truths, and we need to notice particularly the terms that Jesus employed. Proverbs 30:5 says, "Every word of God is pure." There is divine truth conveyed to us in every word incorporated in the sacred Scriptures.

Why did He use the words "light" and "world" (Matthew 5:14)? Because when we think of "light" and we think of the "world" it draws our mind back to the Genesis account. He was speaking to those of Hebrew lineage, and when He brought up the illustration of "light" and of the "world," it immediately drew their minds back to the Genesis account. In Genesis 1:1-4 the sacred writer pens: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness." We recognize that this was a literal occurrence at the dawn of creation, but the Apostle Paul said in the Roman letter in Romans 15:4, "For whatsoever things were written aforetime [referring to the Old Testament Scriptures] were written for our learning."

In this passage in Genesis, there are some lessons in type. Notice, Genesis 1:2 says, "And the earth was without form, and void." What is the lesson here? Before the Spirit of God comes on the scene, and before light comes, man's life is without form, and void. A life without Christ, without the Spirit of God within, is one with a very great void. There is an emptiness, a longing, and an aching void in every life that does not have the light or the Spirit of God. This is why the masses in this world are looking in every avenue possible to fill that longing. Many try to fill this void with drink, others with drugs, some with illicit sexual activity, and many other things trying to find something to satisfy that void. Just as the earth was created with this void, so every person that comes into this world comes with that void that only Christ and salvation can fill. Every soul has a craving, a hungering and thirsting, and a great desire that only God can fill.

The Psalmist David expressed his desire this way. In Psalm 42:1-2 he said: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." In Psalm 33:15 the Psalmist speaking of mankind said, "He fashioneth their hearts alike." Every person is created with that same void that only the

Spirit of God can fill. Genesis 1:2 says that it "was without form." All of this is describing the condition of the world before light, when it was in darkness, and so it is with man. Without God, man is without form. Or The Amplified Bible says, "The earth was without form and an empty waste." Without God, man is empty and life is a waste; it is without form. What is a form? It is a guide, it is a structure, and it is a boundary. Second Timothy 3:5 talks about "a form of godliness." Godliness provides form to life. And one who is without God, without true salvation, is aimless on the sea of life. They sail without light, without direction, and without course or purpose. These who are "without form and void" (Genesis 1:2) are in darkness.

Genesis 1:2 goes on to say, "And darkness was upon the face of the deep." Life is a deep, tempestuous, treacherous sea, and sailing in darkness can be deadly. You see, in our lesson text, when Jesus declared "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14), He was letting us know that the world had no light; it was in darkness. In John's Gospel, John declared in John 1:5, "And the light shineth in darkness." This verse depicts the reality that the world is in darkness.

What does it mean to be in darkness? Think of it naturally. No matter how intelligent you may be, how much mental prowess you may exercise, in true darkness there is no vision. You cannot see where you are, cannot see where you are going, or what lies between. Jesus said in John 11:10, "But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." Jesus said in John 12:35, "For he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." In 1 John 2:11 the penman declared, ". . . walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." We can clearly see that those that are in darkness do not truly know where they are or where they are headed and cannot stand. They stumble. This is why Jesus commissioned the disciples, the saints, in Mark 16:15, saying, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Why? Psalm 119:105 declares, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

What does this tell us? First it says "a lamp unto my feet." The Word, the Gospel, will show you clearly where you are and the condition that you are standing in right now. The reason the multitudes that are lost in sin cannot see any danger, cannot see any destruction that lies ahead, is simply because they are blinded; they are in darkness and know not what condition they are in. But when the light of the Gospel shines, it will show you clearly where you are and the condition that you are standing in. What else? It says "a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105). It lets us know where we are going. It shows us what path we are on, and where it will lead, if we continue to follow it.

The world is in darkness, and darkness blinds the spiritual senses, and darkness darkens the understanding. This causes the whole course of the world to be off course. The Psalmist tells us this in Psalm 82:5, "They know not, [What does that tell us? Darkness blinds the mind to a knowledge of spiritual truth.] neither will they understand; [Why?] they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth are out of course." Isaiah prophesied and spoke of people "that call evil good, and good evil" (Isaiah 5:20). Man in sin is in darkness and cannot perceive spiritual truths. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: [Why?] for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they

are spiritually discerned." This is why our text leads us to the next point: the world must receive light from an outside source.

When we again go back to the Genesis account, we see when the world was in darkness, it could not solve the problem itself. Genesis 1:2 tells us, "And the Spirit of God moved . . . ." And when the Spirit of God moved, Genesis 1:3 says, "And God said," or the Word of God came on the scene. When that happened, Genesis 1:3 says, "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." What is the picture here? Again we realize in the Genesis account that this was a literal happening, but what does it represent? The earth could not bring forth light to itself. It required an outside source. That outside source was the Spirit of God. Man, who is in darkness, cannot break that power by themselves or by human effort. It takes the Spirit of God. What does the Spirit do? What does He use? What does He bring to mankind? What occurred in Genesis? In Genesis 1:3, "And God said . . . ." He brought the Word on the scene. What mankind needs today to get out of darkness is the unadulterated Word of God heralded forth in its purity. How does God get this Word to a lost mankind? How many will hear it preached? How many will read it? It is sad to say, but very few will.

So, what is God's method of getting light and God to mankind? It brings us right to our lesson text in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world . . . ." Where the world may never read the Bible bound in leather, they will read the Bible bound in flesh. God has ordained that the Gospel be brought to the hordes of lost humanity by the people of God being that bright and shining light in the midst of darkness. How does God ordain that man and mankind in a sin-darkened world see truth and see God? First John 1:5 says, "God is light." And when Jesus tells His disciples "Ye are the light" (Matthew 5:14), in reality He is saying, "Ye are the God of the world."

I realize, initially, this may seem to be a startling statement, but in this text Jesus is telling us that the world is in total darkness. The lost have no light. If they are to receive light, which according to 1 John 1:5 is "God," then the Spirit of God must use an outside source to get it to them. What is that outside source? It is a people who have taken hold of the Word and incorporated it into their lives until God radiates out through their lives and they actually become the God that this world can see. The only God this lost world is going to see is the God in the life of a true Saint of God, or a true child of God, radiating forth light out through their life and through their living.

As the saints of God, are we really the God of this world? Look at the words of the Hebrew writer. In Hebrews 12:14 he penned, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." This verse is not speaking of the Advent. Many want to refer this text to the Second Advent when Jesus splits the clouds, but Revelation 1:7 tells us very expressly that "every eye shall see him" on that day. So, this reference must be to something other than that day of consummation. It is referring to how people see the Lord by the lives of the saints of God being lived in holiness. This is letting us know that if the world is going to see the Lord, they are going to see Him through the lives of the true saints of God.

How do men see the Lord? Through the holiness and light shown forth by the saint of God. In 2 Corinthians 3:18 the Apostle penned, "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass [or the Greek, 'a mirror']

the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image . . . ." The saints of God that put on the Word of God, as quickly as they see it, are changed into the image and are the image of Christ, or the Word. The saints fill a divine role in the plan of God. They are His image in this sin-darkened world. They are "the light" (Matthew 5:14) or the God of the world. They are the only God that people see. They see His nature, His Spirit, His will and His image, all shown forth in the saints. And as such, they serve as a beacon light on the sea of life to beckon mankind safely to the harbor of salvation, where they may safely enter in and be gathered in from the dark and enjoy the presence of the light forevermore.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE LIGHT

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

In our lesson text today, Jesus is revealing the culmination of fundamental spiritual qualities upon which the tenants of the New Testament Economy are based. In Matthew 5:3-12, He gives us nine very detailed articles of truth, and He teaches us that when these truths are properly put on and incorporated into the life of the child of God, there are some spiritual by-products or outgrowths as a result of that incorporation. One of those outgrowths is spoken of in our lesson text where Jesus said in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world." And by the help of God, we want to look a little further into this Scripture text.

Jesus declared in Matthew 5:14 words that are familiar to us yet today: "Ye are the light of the world." As we begin to consider this phrase, it is not just a simplistic clause, but this phrase conveys several truths to us. First, He lets us know that only an exclusive group of people are "the light." Who? He declares "ye." But who was He addressing? Matthew 5:1 clearly tells us it was "his disciples." He goes on to say, in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are," in the present tense. Not could be, not should be, not might be, not will be in some future point in time, but rather He declared emphatically and categorically "ye are" in the present tense; emphatically positive. This teaches us that when we measure to the truths of "The Beatitudes," when we truly incorporate those into our living, when we first of all do as Matthew 5:3 says and come to a point where we realize our abject spiritual poverty and are "poor in spirit."

Then, as Matthew 5:4 declares, we "mourn" or have "godly sorrow" over that poverty to where we can gain an experience where we are "comforted" or we receive the Comforter or the Holy Ghost. And then we can go on to be a disciple and be able to have control and possession of our "earthen vessel" (Matthew 5:5). When we deny this earthly vessel, we can truly see a "hungering and thirsting after righteousness" develop as Matthew 5:6 portrays. When that occurs, we are fit candidates to be dispensers of God's mercy, or be "merciful" (Matthew 5:7). Then we are truly the "pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8) and candidates to be "peacemakers." And that may cause "persecution" and our being "reviled" (Matthew 5:10-11).

By incorporating those truths into our lives, we can be assured that when we measure to the truths of the Beatitudes that the automatic by-product is "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). This tells us that the world is in darkness and has no light of its own. Its light must come from an outside source, a divine source—the saints of God. It

also reveals to us that the true disciples are light, not the way to the light. Not merely reflections of the light, but Jesus said "Ye are the light" (Matthew 5:14). The Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 5:8, verifying the same truth, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord."

Notice particularly the wording that the Apostle employed. He clearly said: "For ye were sometimes darkness." First, notice that He employs the past tense: "For ye were." There is no child of God who is darkness. Light and darkness are opposites; they are diametrically opposed. Where there is darkness, there is no light and where there is light, there is no darkness for it is dispelled by the light. Notice the Apostle said "For ye were sometimes darkness" (Ephesians 5:8); not in darkness, but darkness itself. When one comes to an age of accountability and chooses "his own way" (Isaiah 53:6), they not only go in darkness, but they actually become darkness and this is a very sad state to be in.

Our text says, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel" (Matthew 5:15). So the question arises, if men are darkness, how do they become light? Our text in Matthew speaks of lighting a candle. It says in Matthew 5:15, "Neither do men light a candle." So, how is this actually lit, or lighted? How does this lighting take place? In The King James Version Matthew 5:15 speaks of "light a candle." But in the original Greek language, it actually says "a lamp." *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* reads ". . . nor is a lamp lighted." This may seem to be a minute point, but the distinction between a candle that is left exposed and defenseless to the wind and elements and an oil-filled lamp, is substantial.

The lamp referred to in this passage was an oil-filled, or oil-fed, lamp. This lamp portrays the individual experience of salvation that we possess. Isaiah 62:1 states, "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The lamp in our text represents salvation. The oil that keeps a steady flame to the lamp and keeps the lamp light steady is the Holy Spirit. Oil is a symbol throughout the Scriptures of the Holy Spirit. In Isaiah 61:3 it speaks of "the oil of joy." Where does joy come from? Galatians 5:22 tells us, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy . . . ." Joy is a product of the Spirit of God, and the symbol of "oil" represents the Spirit.

Think of the distinctions between a candle and a lamp. A candle is very fragile and can be easily broken. Eventually, even in the best of circumstances, a candle will burn up and its light will go out. It cannot be a source of permanent light. A candle is susceptible to winds that blow and can be extinguished. This description portrays not those who have salvation, but rather those who have mere religion. Those who merely have religion are very fragile. They are not strong. They can be easily broken. They are not as Paul admonished to be "strong in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:10). Why? Because as a candle they stand independent of all else. They have no source from which to be fed divine strength.

Look a little more at the lesson a candle portrays. Ultimately, it will burn up and go out. This is the ultimate end of all religion. If it were true religion, or salvation, it would stay hooked into the source and not go out. Also, a candle is very susceptible to the winds that

blow. Ephesians 4:14 speaks of "every wind of doctrine." There are many howling winds of false doctrine and false religion blowing today, and if you do not truly have a lamp, have salvation, it will blow you around and eventually out.

Now, consider a lamp. A lamp is the real word that is used in the original Greek in our lesson text. A lamp is very dependent. Without oil, it has no light and cannot produce light. Our experience of salvation is a very dependent experience. First Corinthians 6:19 tells us, ". . . ye are not your own;" and Romans 14:8 tells us, "We are the Lord's." Are we dependent? Yes, very much so. Jesus said in John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing." And conversely He said in that famed verse in the Philippian account, "I can do all things [how] through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). We are extremely dependent. And in the Roman letter the Apostle Paul said, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9).

Just as a lamp, we are very dependent. A lamp is designed to never burn up or to be extinguished. It is to shed a perpetual and a permanent light. It is made of material that does not burn up, and as long as it stays connected to the oil, it can burn continually. Leviticus 24:2 states, "Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually." The lamps are not affected by exterior forces such as wind because its strength comes from the oil within. So it is with the child of God. They are not to be moved or affected by "every wind of doctrine" (Ephesians 4:14) Why? They are regulated by the oil within, the Holy Spirit. Jesus said in John 16:13, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth."

When our text refers in Matthew 5:15 to lighting a candle or the Greek says "a lamp lighted." The lamp is salvation. The oil that feeds it and keeps it burning is the Holy Ghost. But the question is: "How is it lit?" If man in sin is darkness, then how is it lit, or lighted? Well, the Apostle John gives us an insight in his writings. In the Gospel of John 1:9 he declared, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The King James Version rendering of John's words is just a little obscure, but *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* makes it a little clearer when it says, "The true light was that, which, coming into the world, enlightens every man" (John 1:9), or The Amplified Bible says, "There it was, the true Light [was then] coming into the world [the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light] that illumines every person" (John 1:9).

What does this tell us? It tells us that Christ is the one who lighteth every man. In order for an individual to get their lamp lit or get an experience of salvation, it must come through Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12 bears this out when it says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Salvation has an exclusive source. It is only found in Jesus Christ. It is not found in Mohammed, Hare Krishna, Buddha, Hinduism, Shintoism, or any other "ism," but is found in an exclusive source and that source is Jesus Christ.

Notice also, as Isaiah 45:21 declares, God is "a just God," or as the Apostle Peter perceived in Acts 10:34, ". . . God is no respecter of persons." How do we know that? In John's writings, he revealed that to

us very explicitly saying He "lighteth every man" (John 1:9), or the Greek says He "enlightens every man." Christ, in His faithfulness, gives every man light and opportunity. Titus 2:11 declares, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." All men, or all mankind, is presented with opportunity. In Lamentations 3:23 it tells us: "Great is thy faithfulness." God in His faithfulness brings every person into contact with an understanding of what they need to do. In His faithfulness He reveals to every man the route to eternal life. Jesus said in John 10:10, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

What route does Christ use to bring understanding concerning this life? In 2 Timothy 1:10, the Apostle Paul tells us that He "hath brought life and immortality to light [how?] through the gospel." Psalm 119:130 tells us, "The entrance of thy words giveth light." It is the saints bringing the Gospel to mankind that presents light and opportunity. Though many may not care to hear it, though some would not adhere to its call, it is still God's obligation to man to lighten and enlighten every man by bringing them into contact with the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ.

How does this lamp that Matthew 5:15 speaks about get lit? Jesus tells us very explicitly in John 12:36, "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." The Amplified Bible makes it even more clear: "While you have the Light, believe in the Light [have faith in it, hold to it, rely on it], that you may become sons of the Light and be filled with Light" (John 12:36). This portrays to us how the lamp of salvation is lit in a life. First, He said, "Ye have Light." The Lord presents every person with an opportunity. Everyone is presented with light or "understanding" (Psalm 119:130). Second, when one is presented with it, they must believe "in the Light," or as The Amplified Bible renders it "have faith in it."

Salvation comes solely through faith. Ephesians 2:8 states, "For by grace are ye saved through faith." Faith is an essential. You must believe the report. Isaiah said in Isaiah 53:1, "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?" Well, the first question answers the second one. The one, that the arm of the Lord is revealed to, will be the one who believes the report. Or, as Romans very clearly taught us, that "report" is the Gospel (Romans 10:16). So faith is an essential. You must believe the report.

What will this belief do? Read on in John 12:36 where it states: "That ye may be the children of light." When you believe the report, the Gospel, as Romans 10:16 tells us, it will bring about a spiritual birth. You will become a child, but no one ever became a child without a birth, and so this belief causes a spiritual birth. In 1 Peter 1:23 the Apostle Peter said, "Being born again [How?], not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible [How, Peter?], by the word of God." Then, we become the children of Light, or as The Amplified Bible says "become sons of the Light and be filled with the Light."

When that divine oil of the Holy Spirit moves in, your lamp is lit and you are not only a child of God or a child of the Light, but you are filled with Light. When your lamp is lit, you are not only filled with the Light, but when you are filled with the Light, you actually are light. And then, as our text tells us in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world." Then we are in a position to do as Matthew 5:16 says,



"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see [light is something you can see] your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." It is only when you have truly been lit-by believing the report, experiencing a birth and becoming a child of God and having been filled with the Light and actually become the light yourself that your works are good, and that your life glorifies your Father.

The life of a true saint of God points to the Father in all that is said and done. If this is not so, then you are not doing as Matthew 5:16 says, and your light is not so shining. The truth is that if you have really met Bible conditions, had your lamp lit, gained an experience, and had the Holy Ghost come into your life, you do not have to try to make it shine, or cut a shine. All you need to do is "let your light so shine"(Matthew 5:16). If you have met the Bible conditions, this light is a natural by-product. By coming in contact with the Gospel, believing the report, experiencing the birth, becoming a child of the light, being filled with the Light, and becoming "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14), this is the avenue through which a man's lamp is lit.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH—THE LIGHT

#### PART FOUR

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Jesus came to institute this "new and living way" that is spoken of in Hebrews 10:20. This "new and living way" is a New Testament economy that is totally diverse from the Old Testament Jewish economy, and in His inaugural message in His public ministry, He lays forth these foundational truths upon which the New Testament economy would be built and based. These Beatitudes, when incorporated into the life and living produce natural by-products, and these by-products, or outgrowths, are recorded in the succeeding verses in Matthew 5:13-16.

So in our lesson, we find that He has exclaimed that second outgrowth of the Beatitudes, and we want to examine this outgrowth a little further. In Matthew 5:14 Jesus declared, "Ye are the light of the world." In Matthew 5:15 He exclaimed, "Neither do men light a candle [or actually, the Greek rendering declares it as "a lamp"], and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick."

As we begin to consider this text, Jesus is addressing a very singular and exclusive group of individuals. Our text denotes them as "Ye." He declared, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). But when we begin to consider who the "ye" were that Jesus was addressing in Matthew 5:1 as well as in Luke 6:20, it is "His disciples." And this exclusive audience that He is addressing takes on more importance as we study and see what they are charged to do. Notice, that first and foremost, these individuals had experienced the regenerating power of Jesus Christ. They had, as Matthew 5:15 declares, the light of a candle lit. It says in Matthew 5:15, "Neither do men light a candle," or as *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* renders it "a Lamp lighted." The lamp, as it is rendered in the original Greek, portrays our individual experience of salvation. In Isaiah 62:1, the prophet speaks of "and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." The lamp portrays our individual experience of salvation.

This phrase "light a candle" (Matthew 5:15), or the Greek says "a lamp" depicts that these have come in contact with "the true Light, which lighteth" (John 1:9). It is through Jesus Christ that one gains this experience. So, the fact that this lamp has been lit, or as *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* recorded it "a lamp lighted" reveals that each of these had a personal experience with Jesus Christ. When they gained that experience, they had their "lamp lighted."

Once we gain a personal individual experience, once we are saved, that is not the end as many suppose. A birth is a beginning, not an ending. We are not to remain isolated and independent. Look what Jesus reveals to us in this passage. In Matthew 5:15, we see a stark contract in what

could happen and what should happen. In Matthew 5:15 Jesus declared, "Neither do men light a candle, [Or a better rendering, 'Neither do men have a lamp lighted.' Or actually when you read the Scripture in its original context, it is not men who lights this lamp.] and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick [Or again, the original Greek says 'a lampstand']". Here, we see direct opposites, a stark contrast.

Jesus was alluding to a custom with which this audience, comprised of middle-eastern Hebrews in the first century, was very familiar. When we read this passage and see Him speaking of its being under a bushel, or on a candlestick or lampstand, to us this is somewhat removed and somewhat obscure. But to the audience to which He was speaking in the first century it was a custom with which they were very familiar. In that day, the houses in Palestine were very dark with only one little circular window not more than eighteen inches across. The lamp was not easy to rekindle in the days before matches existed, and normally the lamp stood on the lampstand. But when people went out, they took the lamp from its stand and put an earthen bushel measure over it so that it might be able to burn without risk until they came back.

In our lesson text, in Matthew 5:15, in a spiritual sense Jesus was saying: "Do not do that!" Why? To really understand what this earthen bushel measure represents, we need first to understand what Christ desires that we do with our life. Look at Christ's words in our text where He said, "Neither do men light a candle [or have a lamp lit], and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick" (Matthew 5:15); or again, the Greek says a lampstand." What is the lesson here? What does this candlestick, or lampstand, represent?

Jesus appeared to the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos where he had been banished by the Roman Emperor Domitian. This was after they tried to boil him in oil, and the oil would not burn him, so they banished him to the rocky Isle of Patmos where John received the Revelation. When Jesus appeared to the Apostle on the Isle of Patmos, where did He reveal that He was? In Revelation 1:12-13 it says: "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks [or the Greek "lampstands"]; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks [or the Greek "lampstands"] one like unto the Son of man." We know that "the Son of man" is Jesus Christ because He identified Himself in as "I am Alpha and Omega" (Revelation 22:13), and then He went on and explicitly told us who He was when He said "I Jesus" (Revelation 22:16).

Notice where Jesus was when John received a vision of Him. In Revelation 1:13 it says, ". . . in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," or the Greek says "the lampstands." What is Christ in the midst of? In the Gospel of Matthew 18:20 Jesus said, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Christ is in the midst of His people. He is not in the midst of an inanimate object. These lampstands are a symbolic representation. Revelation 1:1 tells us that the Revelation is "signified," which means "revealed by signs." And *Webster's New World Dictionary* gives us the definition of a "sign" as "a symbol." What does this "candlestick" or "lampstand" that Revelation 1:13 speaks of represent? Well, Jesus tells us in Revelation 1:20 where it says, ". . . the seven candlesticks [or the Greek "lampstands"] which thou sawest are the seven churches." So,

in our lesson that Matthew 5:15 speaks of and refers to as "a candlestick," or the Greek says "a lampstand" actually represents the church.

Now, the question may arise: "Why does the Revelation refer to "seven churches" (Revelation 1:20)?" For the same reason it refers to the "seven Spirits of God" (Revelation 4:5). In Revelation 5:6 it speaks of "a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." To those who want to give a literal rendition to the Scriptures, this becomes exceedingly confusing because it speaks of seven churches, it speaks of seven Spirits, but yet the Scriptures are very explicit that there is only one church or one body, and only one Spirit. How do we divide this in order to be "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15)? We know that Colossians 1:18 tells us, speaking of Christ, "And he is the head of the body [the body, singular], the Church." We know that "the church" is referred to as "the body," and Ephesians 4:4 teaches us very emphatically that "there is one body." It goes on to say "and one Spirit." We find Biblically there is one body, or one church, and one Spirit of God."

Luke 1:69 reveals to us what the "horn" refers to when it says, "And hath raised up an horn [singular] of salvation . . . ." There is only one source of salvation. Acts 4:12 says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." If there is only one salvation, one Spirit of God, and one church, why does the Revelation refer to seven? Revelation 5:6 tells us that it is "sent forth into all the earth." This salvation and the Spirit of God has been "sent forth into all the earth."

At the time these words were penned, in the morning-time of this Gospel Day, or Christian Dispensation in A.D. 96, in order for it to go forth into all the earth, it meant the balance of human history. This Gospel Dispensation is comprised of seven very distinct time periods, and when it speaks of the "seven churches" (Revelation 1:20) or "the seven Spirits of God" (Revelation 4:5), it is merely the "one body" and "one Spirit" (Ephesians 4:4), operating in the seven distinct time periods that make up the Gospel Day or the remainder of human history. Isaiah 30:26 speaks "of seven days, in the day." The Gospel Day can be referred to as a day. Jesus said in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." In the Gospel Day, there are seven days or seven distinct time periods. When Jesus said "the seven candlesticks [or the Greek seven lampstands] . . . are the seven churches" (Revelation 1:20), in reality He was saying the "lampstand" symbolizes the church in each of the seven periods that comprise the Gospel Day.

When we come back to our lesson text, the "candlestick," or the Greek "lampstand" represents the church. Are we sure that is what it represents? Are we sure that is where Christ is? Revelation 1:13 says, "And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man." Look how John represented Him in Revelation 14:1 where he said, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion." John 1:29 tells us who the Lamb is, it declares, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus is the Lamb that John saw.

What about the figure of "mount Sion" (Revelation 14:1)? The Hebrew

writer tells us what it represents. In Hebrews 12:22-23 he pens and declares: "But ye are come [present tense; right when he penned this epistle in the proximity of 62 AD; there were people that had already come] unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly [What do all of these expressions denote? Of what are they figurative expressions?] and Church . . . ." They are various expressions to denote the various attributes and aspects of the church. Mount Zion is a figurative expression that represents the church. It says in Hebrews 12:22, ". . . ye are [present tense; right in the time this Epistle was written, somewhere between 62 A.D. and 69 A.D.] come unto mount Sion." What is it? It is "the church" (Hebrews 12:23). So again, in figurative expressions, we see Christ in the midst of The Church (Revelation 14:1).

What is the lesson of our text? Matthew 5:15 declares, "Neither do men light a candle [or the Greek 'a Lamp'], and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick." Or, the Greek says "a lampstand." What is the lesson? The lesson is that once your lamp is lit, once you have an individual experience of salvation, you are not to stay isolated and stay as an individual. You are to be put on a candlestick or a lampstand. You are to become part of a collective unit. A Hebrew "lampstand" did not contain merely one light, but many. What is the picture? When you and I gain an experience of salvation, we become a member of the body. First Corinthians 12:18 declares, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body." God's desire is that you go from an individual experience to being part of a collective body.

What does this passage teach this? Look at it closely. In Matthew 5:14 He says, "Ye [speaking to the individual, in the singular] are the light of the world. A city [speaking of the collective unit; a city is made up of many individuals coming and dwelling together] that is set on an hill [or the Greek word 'mountain'; this mountain that this city is on is Mount Zion, or it is a picture of the church of the living God] cannot be hid." We can plainly see that it must start as an individual experience but it does not stop there. Christ desires us all to bring all our individual experiences together to form a city with greater and more brilliant light than any one of them can shine individually. We are to make this light so outstanding to the world that it "cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:14).

This is why the enemy of souls works so against the people of God coming together in unity. This is where, what Jesus called, putting "it under a bushel" (Matthew 5:15) comes into focus. What is this? This bushel was an "earthen bushel." It was of the earth. It represents what Revelation 13:11 declared, as John said, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth." It represents earthly man-made religion which is designed to obscure the Light. Religious organizations and denominations separate God's people. Rather than bringing the Light together "that they may see" (Matthew 5:16), it segments the Light, dilutes its strength, and allows mankind to continue in darkness and confusion.

God's desire is for you to get your light to the "lampstand." Get together where the other lights are so that "your light so shine before men" (Matthew 5:16), and that your light may be added to the other lights and form a city that "cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:15). Much more

can be accomplished collectively than any of us can do individually. That is why the enemy fights it so, and fights so against unity and fights against the collective body. We need to be wise. If you have been lit, you need to come to the light; you need to come to the "lampstand." Come where the other lights are, where the others are, who have a like experience of real salvation, and come together with that collective body so that you can be part of that city; so we can be exalted, lifted up, and put in a position where we cannot be hid but shine forth in the midst of a sin-darkened world to a lost humanity.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE LIGHT

#### PART FIVE

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

As we again view this text, we want to draw our focus to Matthew 5:15 where Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house." As we view this text and draw our focus into this particular portion of our lesson, Jesus made what would initially seem to be a very curious statement. In Matthew 5:15 He said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick." When Jesus speaks of "light a candle," the Greek actually says "a lamp lighted" and this lamp portrays our experience of salvation. The initial experience that one receives, when they come in personal contact with Jesus Christ, humbles their heart in old time Bible repentance and they gain that experience the Bible speaks of as salvation. This lamp being lit portrays our salvation. Isaiah 62:1 verifies this when the prophet declared, "And the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." So, the lamp being lighted portrays our gaining an initial experience of salvation.

However, notice that as soon as the lamp is lit, the Lord makes a very curious statement when He says, "Neither do men light a candle [lamp], and put it under a bushel" (Matthew 5:15). Initially, this would seem to be a very curious and unusual statement. Why would Jesus make such a statement and what does it mean? Well, we must bear in mind that Christ was speaking in the first century A.D., and He was speaking and using illustrations that His first century, Middle-Eastern audience was familiar with. What was He referring to? In that day, in which Jesus spoke this lesson, it was a day prior to when matches existed and it was not easy to rekindle a lamp if it went out. Therefore, when the people of the household all went out, the custom was to take the lamp and put it under an earthen bushel measure, so that it might burn without risk until they came back. This was the literal custom.

What lesson does this portray to us? Matthew 5:15, in speaking of lighting a candle or a lamp, portrays a real experience of salvation; that the individual has had a personal experience with Jesus Christ. John 1:9 states, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man . . . ." What was this bushel? It was earthenware, fashioned somewhat like a bowl. It was large enough to contain about eight quarts. What does this tell us? First, it was earthenware; it was of the earth and man-made. When it was in use, it hid or obscured the light. It made the light useless and ineffective while under the "bushel." This light, while under the "bushel," was going through the form, performing as it

were, but it was just simply going through a form and not filling the purpose for which it was intended. What is this a picture of? We find this "bushel" was earthen, it was man-made, and it hid and obscured the light rendering the light useless and ineffective. What is this a picture of? What is one of the first foes that a new convert faces? Man-made religion!

Notice, in these words of Jesus, it is actually a warning to one who has just had his "Lamp lighted" (as the Greek says in Matthew 5:15); a warning that now that you have an experience, now that you have salvation, man-made religion will want to get you under its power. They will want to put you into a position where your light is rendered ineffective, where your light becomes obscured, and where your light is not serving the purpose for which God intended it. But rather, it is hidden under something earthen and man-made.

How do we know that this "bushel," this earthenware, represents religion? Well, we must consider what the term earth represents through the Scriptures. What does "earth" symbolize in the Scriptures? In Jeremiah 22:29 the Prophet cried, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the LORD." Who was the Prophet addressing? He was not speaking of this terrestrial earth, or terra firma, or this earthen ball which revolves in space. It has no capacity to hear, it does not have ears to hear, and in 2 Corinthians 5:1 the Apostle Paul says, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved." Paul not only tells us about this earthly house, but he goes on and tells us that this earthly house is our "mortality" (2 Corinthians 5:4), and he gives us an insight as to what this earthly house actually is when he says "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Corinthians 4:7). The figure of "earth" refers to man because Ecclesiastes 12:7 tells us, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was." Man came from the dust of the earth and shall return to the dust of the earth, and the figure of "earth" refers to man.

How does this "bushel" relate to man-made religion? This bushel was earthenware. "Earthen" represents man and a "ware" is something that is formed by man, or man-made. Do the Scriptures portray any religions or religious systems made by man? Certainly so! In the Book of Revelation, John was on the Isle of Patmos receiving a "vision" (Revelation 9:17), and he tells us that he saw something in Revelation 13:11 and he penned, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth." Here, we see that this beast was coming up out of the earth, or in other words, it came up out of the minds of men. This was not a divine move.

When we see the church being instituted in the Revelation, we see a totally different picture. It is giving us a portrayal of the church being instituted in and it says "coming down from God out of heaven" (Revelation 21:2). The true church is of divine origin, of Heavenly origin, and it came down from God. In this picture, we do not see a divine move, we do not see it coming down from God out of Heaven as the true Church did, but rather describes it as "coming up" (Revelation 13:11). This tells us that this was something that man was coming up with, something that man devised, and something that came up out of the minds of men. What was it? John styled it as a "beast" (Revelation 13:11).

Notice the nature of this beast. It "causeth . . . worship" (Revelation 13:12) and is one that "deceiveth" (Revelation 13:14). Its



nature was religious. It was actively engaged in the practice and promotion of religion. Why is it referred to as a "beast"? Jude gives us an insight in his Epistle. In Jude, verse 10, he declared, "But these speak evil [this lets us know that we are dealing in figurative speech or in symbolic language; for we all know that literal beasts do not speak] of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts." These beasts represent man in his natural, unregenerate state.

As a natural man, the Apostle Paul said "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:14), but it goes deeper than that. These are natural men, unregenerate people, but when the Apostle Peter spoke of them, he called them "natural brute beasts" (2 Peter 2:12), and "false prophets . . . [and] false teachers" (2 Peter 2:1). These were individuals that although they were natural men and unregenerate, who could not understand "the things of the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:14), and continued to practice, preach, and promote religion. This is why they are such a danger to one who is a new convert because they cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God. They only understand on the beastly, carnal, human level, and they wrest the Scriptures to teach things contrary to the sound teachings of God's eternal Word, and they go forth practicing religion and promoting religion to dupe and deceive the masses. This is why Jesus warned in Matthew 7:15, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Wolves are beasts.

Notice, the beast in Revelation 13:11 "had two horns like a lamb." It had a deceptive appearance just as Jesus spoke of in Matthew 7:15. What does this "beast" represent? Well, look at how it speaks or what it teaches. In Revelation 13:11 it says, "And he spake as a dragon." Every Bible student knows that the dragon is a symbolic representation of the Pagan Roman Empire because Rome, in its pagan form, right on their shields had an insignia of a dragon or a serpent, and it was their insignia and represented Pagan Rome.

How does this system, or beast, that came up out of the earth speak like a dragon? History tells us that Rome had a building known as The Pantheon. Rome was a commercial center and they had a building called The Pantheon, and on the outside was inscribed: "To Jupiter and to all the gods." Men came from all over the empire to do their commerce in Rome, and so they did not have to cut their business travels short, they made the Pantheon to hold all the various national and ethnic gods. Men could come in and choose the god of their choice, do their bit of worship, and go back out and do commerce.

What speaks like that dragon? Today, Protestantism or denominationalism cries: "Choose the church of your choice." Friend, that is speaking like the dragon, like the ancient pagans. This speech is not Biblical speech. It is not God's Word. This is the speech and teachings of sectarianism, or Protestantism, that speaks like the dragon. There is no choice because there must be more than one to have a choice. Look at Jesus in our text in Matthew 5:15 saying, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel [or in man-made religion], but on a candlestick [or on a lampstand]." There is no choice. There is only one "lampstand" or one true body of Christ.

What is the lesson? Jesus is warning anyone who has a real experience, anyone who has Light, to watch out. They want to pull you in and they

want to put you in a position where you cannot shine, where your light is of no value, where your light is hid, and obscured. In our day, we are seeing the custom fulfilled. The custom was that normally the lamp stood on the lampstand, but when the people went out, they took the lamp from its stand and put it under an earthen bushel measure. Today, as people leave where Light is, where the lampstand, or the true church is, they want to take others who may still have Light and take them from the lampstand so they will not shine either.

These sectarian spirits are no longer merely housed in the systems which bear sectarian names. Revelation 16:14 teaches that these spirits go forth unto the whole world. They are working in organizations which may have the Biblical name and teach Biblical doctrine, but the question is, what are they doing with the Light? Jesus said in Revelation 3:1, "I know . . . that thou hast a name that thou livest." In Isaiah 4:1 the prophet speaks of a people who say, "Only let us be called by thy name." There are many today who claim the right name, teach the right doctrines predominately, but what are they doing with the light?

This "bushel" was earthenware. What else does this tell us? Earth represents man and man is flesh. This earthenware not only represents religion, but also what false religion does. It makes an allowance and a provision for the flesh. The Apostle Paul said in Romans 13:14, "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." Here is an express command to "make not provision for the flesh." Yet today, the religious leaders over our land make room for homosexual preachers, same-sex marriages, and supposed gay communities and congregations. That is making provision for the flesh, and fulfilling the lusts thereof. The Scriptures say that when you put on the Lord Jesus Christ you will not do that. People who do such things do not have a real experience. Their lamp is not lit. They want to take and pull people whose lamps are lit into those systems so over a period of time their lamps can go out and they lose their experience. False religion makes allowance and provision for the flesh.

Others claim they have a name that they live. They claim they have the name of Christ, or of God, that they are His, and that they are His people. They also claim they are His church, but they make room for carnality, they make room for division, and they make room for slander. Is this being fleshly? Is this making room for the flesh? First Corinthians 3:3 says, "For whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal [or the Greek 'fleshly'], and walk as men?" All of these moves take the life that Christ gave and renders it useless. It places it in a position where it cannot shine, and when it remains separated from the oil supply, eventually the lamp will go out completely. The cry of the foolish virgins in Matthew 25:8 was, "Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out." What is this a picture of? It is a picture of a people who although they kept the exterior form, appeared to be virtuous, appeared to be virgins, in reality had lost their experience. Their salvation was gone out and they had completely lost their experience of salvation.

That is what religion is out to do today to any true child of God. It will put you in a position where any Light you have is rendered ineffective and useless. They will isolate you from the source of the oil, the Spirit of God, so that over a period of time your experience will starve out and you will lose out completely, and have an empty form

and no light. This is why the prophet cried in Jeremiah 51:6, "Flee out from the midst of Babylon, [Regardless of what it calls itself, regardless of what name it goes by, Babylon or false religion is not a name, but rather a condition.] and deliver every man his soul."

Christ does not want your light "under a bushel, but on a candlestick [or a lampstand]; and it giveth light" (Matthew 5:15). That is where God ordained for the light to shine forth from, from the lampstand, and that is where He wants every individual light to come to-to that collective unit, Body of Christ, or the lampstand.

## THIRTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE LIGHT

#### PART SIX

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."*

Before us, we see recorded the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In these verses, volumes of Truth are housed. Every word incorporated in this passage is pregnant with spiritual verity that we need to understand in the very day and time in which we live. The Scriptures were not given to confound man and to conceal understanding, but rather to give understanding. The Psalmist penned in Psalm 119:130, "The entrance of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple." The Lord declares that we have understanding, and that our eyes and ears be opened unto Truth. The Prophet Isaiah, speaking of our day, said in Isaiah 29:18, "And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness." The words of our text were given that we might have understanding and as Isaiah said "shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness."

The truths incorporated in this text were not designed to be obscure, but rather revealed to us. But according to the Gospel of Matthew 11:25, they are "hid . . . from the wise and prudent." The Amplified Bible renders it, ". . . You have hidden these things from the wise and clever and learned." The truth is, according to this verse in Matthew 11:25, "revealed . . . unto babes," those who have had a spiritual birth and been born again. Jesus tells in the Gospel of Luke 12:32, "Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If you are a child of God, He desires to give you an understanding pertaining to spiritual things, and pertaining to the Kingdom of God.

As we look into our lesson text, we see that Jesus has concluded The Beatitudes, which are recorded in Matthew 5:3-12. He has let us know that there are some natural outgrowths when the truths held forth in The Beatitudes are put on in the life and living. In Matthew 5:13-16, we see these outgrowths spoken of. In Matthew 5:13, Jesus said, "Ye are the salt of the earth." In our lesson text, He cried "Ye are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14).

We want to look a little more closely at this outgrowth concerning "light" because we are getting closer to the culmination of these outgrowths. Christ is revealing what He desires that our light do and where it should be so that it may do what He intended that it do. Notice, He commences our text speaking in the singular. He begins by saying in Matthew 5:14, "Ye [or you in the singular; as an individual] are the light of the world. [But notice that although He begins speaking

to individuals that He immediately changes and He says] A city [speaking of a collective unit] that is set on an hill . . . ." He immediately moves to speaking of a collective unit which gives us a totally different picture of the truth that Jesus was trying to convey in this lesson.

What actually is "an city?" The Greek word used here in Matthew 5:14 is *polis* and it refers to a town enclosed with a wall. What is the wall that surrounds and protects this "city" that Matthew 5:14 speaks of? The Prophet Isaiah penned in Isaiah 26:1, "In that day [which is a prophetic expression of this Christian Dispensation; Acts 2:16-17] shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; [Judah was the tribe of Christ. Revelation 5:5 declares that He is "The lion of the tribe of Judah. It declares "in that day," this day, the Christian Dispensation.] shall this song be sung in the land of Judah [in the tribe of Christ]; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls," or *The Greek-English Septuagint* declares "its wall." The wall is salvation. In Isaiah 60:18 the penman declared, ". . . thou shalt call thy walls salvation." Salvation is the "wall" that is about this "city" that protects it.

The Greek word *polis* also signifies "fullness" and according to *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* it "is used also of the Heavenly Jerusalem, the abode and community of the Redeemed." *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us, speaking of a city, that "it is a community of citizens." Do the Scriptures teach this? Look at the Apostle Paul's words in Ephesians 2:19 where he declared, "Now therefore ye [Or we must positively identify who he was addressing. Ephesians 1:1 when he commenced this epistle he penned, 'Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints . . . .'] are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God." He speaks of the "saints" (Ephesians 1:1), and the "saints" are "fellowcitizens" (Ephesians 2:19), but fellowcitizens of what? Ephesians 3:6 says to "be fellowheirs, and of the same body." What is the body? Colossians 1:18 says "the body, the church." The body is the church, and this "city" our lesson speaks of is the church. Are we certain? Can we be certain that this is so? Remember, this word that our text renders in the English as "city" (Matthew 5:14), in the Greek it is actually *polis* which means "a town enclosed with a wall."

Where do we see this in the Scriptures? Where do we see a city with a wall spoken of in the scriptural accounts? In the Revelation, John was receiving a vision (Chapters 21 and 22). Revelation 21:9-10, 12 tells us: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels . . . saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife . . . [he] shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem . . . And had a wall great and high." John sees a city with a wall, "the holy Jerusalem" (Revelation 21:10). What was John told he was going to see in Revelation 21:9? "The bride, the Lamb's wife." What does that tell us? It tells us that what John denoted as "that great city, the holy Jerusalem" (Revelation 21:10) is what Revelation 21:9 described as "the bride, the Lamb's wife." In other words, it represents the church.

What is this walled city that Revelation 21:10 speaks of? It is the Holy Jerusalem. Does this expression represent the church? Well, in Hebrews the apostle penning there to the Hebrew converts said in Hebrews 12:22-23: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city [here we

find the city spoken of again] of the living God, [Other figurative expression used?] the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly [What do all these expressions represent?] and church of the firstborn." So here, we find he speaks of "the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22) and tells us it represents "the church" (Hebrews 12:23). It is a figurative expression of the church.

Notice the word "church" is in the singular. Why? Because Jesus said that He would only build one. In Matthew 16:18 He said, "I will build my church." Acts 20:28 tells us what it is and how He built it, and the Apostle Paul speaks that Jesus did in fact build the church that He spoke of. In Acts 20:28 he declared, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, [That is the church He built.] which he hath purchased with his own blood." That is the manner in which Jesus purchased the true biblical church.

What is the lesson in our text? He is telling us that although we start out with an individual, personal experience, which is portrayed in the phrase "Ye are the light" (Matthew 5:14), and that it is His will that all the ones who are "light" come together with other "fellowcitizens" to the "city" or the community of citizens and be "fellowcitizens" with the "saints" in a collective body or unit. We see this vividly portrayed in the figures that He employs in Matthew 5:15. These are indeed figurative expressions or symbolic because we know men are not literally "salt" (Matthew 5:13), or men are not literally "light" (Matthew 5:14). These are symbolic expressions.

Let us look at Matthew 5:15. Here, the writer quotes Jesus as declaring: "Neither do men light a candle," or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* renders it a "lamp lighted." This portrays again the initial phase as Matthew 5:14 did of our initial experience of salvation. Ephesians 5:8 states, "For ye were sometimes darkness." Colossians 1:13 declares, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness." How were we delivered? How were we enlightened? John 1:9 speaks of "the true Light [or Jesus Christ] which lighteth." Christ is the One who delivers us from darkness and lights our lamp. The "lamp," which the Greek speaks of in Matthew 5:15, speaks of our experience of salvation. Isaiah 62:1 verifies that by telling us that "salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Many times, what is the first foe that a new convert faces? False religion. False religion works to try to pull them away and get them under their influence. We see that portrayed in the phrase where Jesus spoke of being "under a bushel" (Matthew 5:15). A "bushel" was a man-made earthenware. A picture of man-made religion. That man-made religion, teachings, and customs try to ensnare those who have just come in contact with Christ. Sad to say, but this is certainly so. Look at the blind man who was in darkness and was healed and saw light. John 9:13 says, "They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind." What did they attempt to do? They attempted to get him to renounce the very One who gave him light. In John 9:24 they told him, "Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner." That is just what false religion does today. it attempts to cause people who have a real experience to go back on Light, to renounce it, and go back into darkness and sin. This is why Jesus warned mankind not to take their

light, their experience, and "put it under a bushel" (Matthew 5:15), or under the power of false religion.

What does He want us to do with our lamp or our experience? Look at Matthew 5:15 a little further where it says, "Neither do men light a candle [or a lamp lighted; our initial experience], and put it under a bushel [do not put it under the power of false religion], but on a candlestick [or the Greek 'a lampstand'; why does the Lord want it bare?]; and it giveth light unto all . . . ." That is the very reason that the enemy of souls works feverishly to keep the lamp, or the individual saints, from coming together. Why? He does not want light to shine, he does not want anyone to gain understanding, he does not want light given, he wants to continue to hold men in darkness, and if they see light there is a chance that they will come to the light.

In Matthew 5:15, Jesus speaks of a "candlestick," or the original says "a lampstand." What is this lampstand? The picture in Matthew 5:15 is the same as in Matthew 5:14 which starts out with, "Ye [depicting an individual experience] are the light of the world. [It depicts an individual experience, then it goes to the collective unit.] A city that is set on an hill . . . ." Matthew 5:15 starts out the same way saying, "Neither do men light a candle [or the Greek 'a lamp lighted', or the individual experience of salvation; then He goes to the collective unit, bringing all the individual lamps together], but on a candlestick," or "a lampstand."

Does this "lampstand" (Matthew 5:15) hold several lamps? Look at the prophecy of Zechariah 4:2 where it says, ". . . behold a candlestick [or the Hebrew 'a lampstand'] all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon." We can clearly see that the lampstand was designed to represent the collective unit. The lamps, or the saints with their experiences of Salvation, all coming together. Is this what the lampstand that our text in Matthew 5:15 represents? Look where Jesus was when He revealed Himself to John in the Revelation and what He said it represented. John gets a vision of Christ, and sees Him "in the midst of the seven candlesticks [or the Greek 'lampstands'] one like unto the Son of man" (Revelation 1:13). What does Christ say this was symbolic of? Revelation 1:20 tells us "the seven candlesticks [or the Greek 'lampstands' which thou sawest are the seven churches." In other words, the church down throughout the seven periods that comprise the Christian Dispensation.

Now, why did He use this figure in this passage? In our lesson text, He used the term "a lampstand" (Matthew 5:15). Why did He use this particular figure to depict the church? Again, Christ was taking something with which a first century Hebrew would be very familiar. When they thought of a lampstand, in a spiritual sense, they thought of references in the Old Testament. They thought of the lampstand back in the Old Testament tabernacle. Some who were more studious may have even thought of Zechariah's prophecy. In either case, their minds were drawn to a literal lampstand, either in the tabernacle or Zechariah's vision. And those were used as a type to portray the various facets, or aspects, of the church and the operation of the church.

Jesus, in this lesson, as in most lessons, employed literal things with which those to whom He was addressing were very familiar. Our lesson text is no exception to that manner and mode of teaching. He was drawing their mind back to a Hebrew allusion, to a lampstand, with which

they were familiar as an article in the Old Testament tabernacle. In Zechariah, Chapter 4, the lampstand is not self-sustaining. But rather it received the golden oil from two sources that kept its light brilliant and bright.

As we study this figure that Jesus employs, we will see how He ordained for the saints to keep their experience fresh, not by themselves, not by isolation or division, but by being set in place in the body of Christ and receiving sustenance through the lampstand to keep their light burning. This is so that they might continue to shine forth in the midst of a sin-benighted world, to where that rather than being an isolated light here and an isolated light there, shedding little light in the midst of a thick darkness, that they could come together in an exalted position in Christ Jesus, and be able, by coming together as a collective force and a collective unit, to shine in a much greater and more brilliant manner by being together and being in that exalted position on the hill, or the actual Greek word means "mountain." They are exalted to where it could radiate out the light in the midst of a sin-benighted world. Jesus was using a figure with which they were very familiar and it is rich with spiritual lessons for you and me yet today.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH—THE LAMPSTAND

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

In this portion of the text, Jesus reveals that for the work of God to be accomplished, it takes more than an individual experience and more than an individual. He speaks of "a city" (Matthew 5:14) which is a collective unit. It is where many individuals come together and work together in harmony and unity for a common benefit and good. This "city" reveals the collective phase, or the collective unit, and portrays the church. It is portraying the church because the church is not an individual, but is a collective body made up of individuals laying aside their individual desires, habits, and particularities in order to accomplish a common good, and thus they work in unity and harmony for the common cause or purpose. So in this He is portraying the church.

Throughout the Scriptures, the church is referred to as a "city" and more particularly, either as "the heavenly Jerusalem" (Hebrews 12:22), or "Jerusalem which is above" (as the Apostle Paul styled it in Galatians 4:26), or "the holy Jerusalem" (as John speaks of Her in Revelation 21:10). Why do the Scriptures refer to the church in such a manner? The name "Jerusalem" in the actual literal meaning of the word means "city of peace." And this "new Jerusalem" that John saw "coming down from God out of heaven" (Revelation 21:2) is a place that depicts a heavenly origin, a divine origin, where holiness dwells, and where man may find peace and find the Prince of Peace and live in peace. This is why the church is referred to as Jerusalem, because Jerusalem is indeed the "city of peace." This is also why it is referred to as "new" (Revelation 21:2), as "heavenly" (Hebrews 12:22), or as "holy" (Revelation 21:10).

When Jesus said "A city set on an hill" (Matthew 5:14), the city is the New Jerusalem. The "hill" upon which it stands (and the Greek word is the word for "mountain"), this mountain, upon which Jerusalem stands, is Mount Zion. Christ is giving us a picture of the church in figurative expressions that portray various aspects of Her divinity, and reveals the various roles that She plays in this time world.

In Matthew 5:15 Christ again speaks in parallel truths. In the first phrase of this verse, He speaks again of the individual experience when He says, "Neither do men light a candle," or the Greek actually says "a Lamp lighted," but then He again goes from the individual experience to the collective unit when He speaks of "and put it on a candlestick;" or the Greek says "on a lampstand." Jesus employed a symbol that was immediately recognizable to His audience of Hebrews in the first century A.D. When the thought of a "candlestick" or "lampstand" was brought up

in a religious setting, such as it was here, their minds were immediately drawn to the Old Testament usage of the "lampstand."

In Zechariah, Chapter 4, we see the Old Testament Prophet Zechariah relating a vision that he received. In Zechariah 4:1 he began relating that account with the words, "And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep." In this verse, we see the reason that many do not see a vision of the true church today. Why is that? Because their eyes are closed. Religion and conditions have lulled them into a spiritual sleep. When one is asleep, their eyes are closed. They do not see reality when it is about them. Their senses are dulled and they do not perceive things as they really are. The Apostle Paul cried to the Ephesians in Ephesians 5:14 saying, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Just as the Apostle Paul was an "angel" or a messenger or a minister to awaken the Ephesians so that they could receive light, so God had an "angel" to awaken Zechariah and give him light and show him truth. The Lord, yet today, has angels, messengers, and ministers that He uses to awaken people to the truth so that they might see spiritual realities as they are.

What did Zechariah see? What he saw ties right in with our text, and with what came to a Hebrew's mind when they heard the words of this text in the first century. In Zechariah 4:2 it declares, "And said unto me [the angel speaking to the prophet], What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick [or the Hebrew 'lampstand'] all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof." Let us examine this. What did the prophet actually see? In Zechariah 4:2 he says, "a candlestick," or if you will read the original Hebrew it says "a lampstand;" the same thing Jesus spoke of in our lesson text.

In our lesson text, Christ was not very descriptive, or explanatory, concerning this "lampstand." He merely said in Matthew 5:15, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick," or "a lampstand." He was not terribly expansive and was not descriptive. However, we find that Zechariah and other passages give us very explicit details and sheds great light on this passage and on the words of Jesus. Let us begin to consider what the prophet received a vision of when he was awakened. In Zechariah 4:2 he said, ". . . behold [or stop; pause to consider a reality that needs to be considered] a candlestick [or the Hebrew 'a lampstand'] all of gold." When Zechariah saw this, he recognized immediately what he saw. Why? He was not in wonderment concerning the "lampstand" because it was something with which every Hebrew was familiar; it was a picture of the "lampstand" or the "menorah" in the Old Testament tabernacle, with which every Hebrew was familiar.

Notice, when the prophet received the vision, he said that it was a "candlestick [or lampstand] all of gold" (Zechariah 4:2). This draws our mind back to the Exodus account, in Exodus, Chapter 25, when the Lord was giving Moses the instructions for the articles for the Tabernacle. He was commanded in Exodus 25:31, which says, "And thou shalt make a candlestick [again, the Hebrew 'lampstand'] of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick [or 'lampstand'] be made." Here we see the command initially given to Moses on how to construct the lampstand for the Old Testament tabernacle.

We must recognize as we view this "lampstand" that it represents the New Testament church. In our lesson, Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:14 that all "ye" who are the light of the world, or in other words all "ye" who have an individual experience, are to take your light and put it on a "candlestick [or lampstand]" (Matthew 5:15). In other words, bring it together with the other lights and form a collective unit. This collective unit, or lampstand, represents the church. Jesus tells us this in Revelation 1:20, when He tells us that the "candlestick" or the "lampstand" represents the church. As we view this Old Testament "lampstand" in Exodus, Chapter 25, and the prophet's vision in Zechariah, Chapter 4, we are seeing, in type, a picture of the New Testament church. As we study the various instructions and components, we are seeing truths pertaining to the composition and operation of the New Testament church.

Let us look at the command that was given to Moses. In Exodus 25:31 it states, "And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold." The Lord was speaking to Moses, a type of Jesus Christ, and said, "Thou shalt make a candlestick." The command was given expressly to Moses, a type of Jesus Christ. When he was told "thou shalt make a candlestick," it is a type of the words of Jesus, where Jesus declared "I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). This was a role that only Jesus Christ could fill, and in the type, it was a role that only Moses could fill. This can only be done by the One who was given the divine call to be a Savior to the people. Moses, being a type of Christ, was a savior to the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage. And Jesus Christ is our Savior, to save mankind from the bondage of sin.

Notice, he went on to say in Exodus 25:31 "make a candlestick [or lampstand] of pure gold." What does this portray? This reveals that the true church consists of nothing but purity and holiness. It tells us that everyone in the church, the true biblical church, is pure. Is this what the "pure gold" portrays? Look at the words of Job. In Job 23:10 the patriarch penned, "When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." The gold was a person; it was Job. In Zechariah 13:9 it says, "And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: [Who is this?] they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God." Who is gold a figure a symbol? The people of God. When Exodus 25:31 speaks of "pure gold" it represents a pure people telling us that this "lampstand," the church, is made up of pure people.

The Prophet Isaiah caught a glimpse of the New Testament Dispensation, and he prophesied in Isaiah, Chapter 35, and revealed that this way is the way of holiness. He penned in Isaiah 35:8-9: "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there." This tells us there is a highway and it is indeed high. It is a highway, and it is above the lowly ways of this old world, above "the weak and beggarly elements" (Galatians 4:9) of this world.

Notice, it did not just say "a highway." Isaiah 35:8 says, "And an highway shall be there, and a way." A highway would be useless and

totally inaccessible without an entrance ramp, without a "way to get on the "highway." What is this way? Jesus said in John 14:6, "I am the way." Christ is the way for man to access holiness. In Luke 1:69 it says, "And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." And Luke 1:74-75 says: "That he [Who? This horn, this power; in the house of his servant David, speaking of Jesus Christ.] would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." Christ is man's only route to holiness.

That route encompasses changing man's nature. Isaiah 35:8 went on to say, "The unclean shall not pass over it." Isaiah 35:9 says, "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast." He was not speaking in the literal, but he was speaking, just as he was in the previous portions of this text, in a symbolic manner. He was telling us that an experience with Jesus Christ will change man's nature. It will take the ravenous part out. It will take the carnivorous, devouring, predator part out of a man and change him from a lion, change him from a predator, to being one of the sheep in the fold of God. In 1 Thessalonians 4:7 it says, "For God has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." When we have been cleansed and become "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Peter 1:4), we are no longer lions or predators or a ravenous beast, but rather one of "the sheep on his right hand" (Matthew 25:33).

The church is "pure gold." God's people are a holiness people, and God's church is a holiness church. In Isaiah 33:5 it says, "The LORD is exalted; for he dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion [or this is a figurative expression of the church] with judgment and righteousness." His people are a righteous, holy people. His church is a righteous, holy church. This is how we know that the true church is not the sects and creeds of men because they unequally yoke together believers with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

There may be ones there who have a real experience of salvation and have been made a new creature in Christ Jesus, but when they join that sectarian organization, they are joined right together with those who have never had that regenerating power, never have experienced that new birth and because of that they are unequally yoked together. And the natures of some are not changed, so there is a mixture of light and darkness, truth and error, righteousness and sin in these man-made institutions and bodies. However, in God's church, it is not so. God's church is pure gold. It is holiness. It is righteousness right in the present world in which we live.

So here we see that the church is "pure gold" (Exodus 25:31). Isaiah 35:9 tells us the only ones on this highway of holiness are "the redeemed shall walk there." This lampstand "of pure gold; of beaten work" (Exodus 25:31) represents the purity of the true New Testament Church. Revelation 21:27 tells us, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." There is not anything in the true Church that "defileth."

This thought of it being a "beaten work" portrays the suffering and beating that Christ went through to establish the church. In this particular figure of our text, "the candlestick [or the Greek 'lampstand']" (Matthew 5:15), Jesus takes us back into Hebrew history

and back to the type to reveal to us the intricate details of the church. These lessons on the "lampstand" will give us a keen insight to the components and operation of the New Testament church. May God help us to gain an understanding of this precious symbolic expression that Jesus chose to employ to reveal the truth concerning the church. We will go a little further in our next lesson.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH—THE LAMPSTAND

#### PART TWO

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

In nature, certain laws are established and fixed. There is a law of gravity that is fixed and immutable. It is settled and each time operates the same. There is no deviance, or variance, in that law. There are laws of physics, laws such as the laws of cause and effect, and laws of thermodynamics. These natural laws have no alteration. They are fixed laws of nature. So it is in the spiritual realm. There are also some fixed laws, and one of them we find vividly portrayed in our text. In Matthew 5:14 Jesus said, "Ye are the light." He is speaking of an individual experience, but then He goes on to say, "A city that is set on an hill." This speaks of a collective unit. Jesus reveals the truth that when one is truly "light," they will not stay merely an individual, but there will be a natural succession and they will congregate with the other lights and form a collective unit or "a city." That fact is reiterated in Matthew 5:15 where Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle [or the Greek 'a lamp'; depicting our initial experience of salvation], and put it under a bushel, [something man-made; a picture of false religion], but on a candlestick [or the Greek "a lampstand]."

Here we see the bringing together of the individual lamps, or experiences of salvation, and bringing them to what Matthew 5:15 denotes as "a [in the singular] candlestick" or "lampstand." It is a picture of the one collective body of believers, the one true biblical church, which the Scriptures speak of, that God desires to fit every individual member into. In these texts, Christ reveals that the natural outgrowth of true discipleship is unity. He reveals that everyone who truly has experienced the saving grace of Jesus Christ and truly has been regenerated and had their lamp lit, the natural succession to this is unity. True saints and true disciples desire unity. The desire and the practice of unity is a natural outgrowth of salvation. The desire and practice to be joined together with the other saints of God is a desire that the Spirit of God places within the heart of every believer.

In Matthew 5:15, Christ employs the figure of a "candlestick" or the Greek actually renders it as a "lampstand." And in Revelation 1:20 He tells us that this symbol of a "lampstand" represents the church. The Prophet Zechariah saw a vision, just as John did in the Revelation, and in his vision he gives us an insight to the operation of the New Testament Church. In Zechariah, Chapter 4, the prophet received a vision. Part of that vision he recognized, but another portion was very new and strange to him. In Zechariah 4:2 the angel asked him, "What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick [or the

Hebrew 'a lampstand'] all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof." Here was the portion of the vision with which the prophet had no difficulty understanding. This "candlestick" or as the Hebrew renders it "lampstand" was an object with which every Hebrew was very familiar; it was an object that was in the Old Testament tabernacle.

In this vision, it was not only just a portion of the Old Tabernacle furniture, but it had a definite spiritual significance. What does this figure reveal to us? First it is "a candlestick," or the Hebrew says "a lampstand." What does this tell us? This tells us that the church is God's luminary agent in this sin-darkened world. And it tells us that the church, in the singular, God's true church, the Body of Christ, is God's dispensary of Light in this sin-benighted world. The reason it can shine forth is because "God is light" (1 John 1:5). The reason the church is Light is because she is "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians 2:22), and the reason God abides there is because the church is "all of gold" (Zechariah 4:2).

When Zechariah was asked by the angel in Zechariah 4:2, "What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold." This is the very reason why God dwells in the midst of the true church because it is "all of gold." This is teaching us that every member of the church, every part of the "lampstand," which is a symbol of the church, is pure and holy. Isaiah 62:12 tells us, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the LORD: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." Here, we see it is a "city" he is speaking of. He is speaking of the city of God which is the Church of the living God, according to Hebrews 12:22-23, and he tells us this "city" is comprised of people. They are not just any type of people, but they are "The redeemed of the Lord" and they are "The holy people" (Isaiah 62:12). This is why it is "A city not forsaken" (Isaiah 62:12) because God has not forsaken a people that will live in a holy manner, so every member is holy and pure.

This is what separates The Church of God from every other religious institution. Everyone who is a member of the true Church of God has been born again and experienced this heavenly birth. The realms of religion cannot say such. Jesus said in John 3:3, "Except a man be born again [or the Greek 'born from above'; a heavenly birth], he cannot see the kingdom of God." Psalm 87:5, speaking of the church tells us, "And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her." The reason the Church of God is "all of gold" (Zechariah 4:2) is because all are pure. This is because each has been born of a heavenly birth. Each member has been "born of the Spirit" (John 3:6), and that Spirit is a Holy Spirit and it makes a holy people.

This is why this "candlestick" is so distinct. This is why the true church is so distinct from all other religious organizations. Other organizations allow the unbeliever to be yoked together with the believer. They allow members in their ranks who are not free from sin and not living a holy life, but this "candlestick [or lampstand]," the true church, is "all of gold" (Isaiah 62:12).

What else did Zechariah notice in this vision? What kept the "oil" flaming? In Zechariah 4:2 it says, "With a bowl upon the top of it." In Zechariah 4:3, we see "two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of

the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof." What does this portray to us? That "the golden oil" (Zechariah 4:12) goes, as this verse teaches us, "through the two golden pipes" and then into the "bowl," and then to "the lamps." What does this depict? It shows the position that a true God-called ministry holds. Its position is between the people, "the lamp," the experience of salvation that the individuals have, and the source of Light, the Divine. They stand between God and man, as God's agent, to convey truth to mankind.

Is that the picture here? Zechariah 4:2 says "a candlestick," or the Hebrew "a lampstand," letting us know that it was, first and foremost, singular. It was "a." There was only one. Secondly, it tells us it was "all of gold" (Isaiah 62:12). This is denoting purity and holiness. This is a symbol of the church and it tells us that this "lampstand" was "with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon" (Zechariah 4:2).

What are these lamps? Isaiah 62:1 tells us "the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." This portrays the individual experience of salvation. Why were there seven lamps? To portray there had been a people of God, with an experience of salvation, in each of the seven periods of time that comprise this Gospel Day, or Christian Dispensation. In the original Hebrew it reads "seven several." This is letting us know that in each age of time, there has been not only "a lamp" but several who had a real experience of salvation in every age.

Look closely at what Zechariah 4:2 denotes as a "bowl" and the "oil" (Zechariah 4:3) in it from the "two olive trees" (Zechariah 4:11). The "oil" went from the "two olive trees" that these verses speak of and through the "pipes" through the "bowl" and to the "lamps." This "bowl" portrays the picture the ministry holds; the position that the ministry holds between God and man. We see this picture again in Revelation 4:4 where the Revelator is seeing a vision and he said, "And round about the throne were four and twenty seats [or the Greek 'thrones']: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." Notice it says "round about the throne," or those closest to God, those closest to His lips, those closest to hear His Word and hear His message, those who are in the position to hear from God first.

Who are these elders that the Revelator sees? The Apostle Peter tells us in 1 Peter 5:1-2: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder . . . Feed the flock of God . . ." The elders are those who feed the flock of God, the ministry. The ministry stands in a very responsible position. In Ezekiel 33:7 it states, "I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." We clearly see the Lord spoke to the prophet and then he conveyed it to the people. This is the case with the ministry. In 1 Corinthians 11:23 the Apostle Paul says, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you.

When we see this "bowl" (Zechariah 4:2), we see a picture of how God gets to man, how He ministers to the church. We see that He ministers to the church through human instrumentality, through the ministry. He speaks not independently, but rather He speaks through those ordained channels that He has chosen—the ministry. The Lord does not work independent of His ministry. Amos 3:7 tells us, "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."



In Ephesians 4:11-12 he declared, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." We see that the Lord has chosen to use human instrumentality to feed the "oil" to the church, so that the church can furnish "light" to a sin-darkened world. Even speaking of the lost he said in Romans 10:14, ". . . how shall they hear without a preacher?"

The "bowl" upon the top of this "lampstand" that Zechariah saw (Zechariah 4:2) is symbolic. He saw this "bowl" in an elevated position "upon the top of it," in an elevated position. This "bowl" was a portrait of the ministry and the exalted position that God had placed them in. It portrays that the ministry hears the Word of God from the mouth of God, and then brings it to the people of God. This is so the people of God can incorporate those truths into their lives to where they can walk in the Light as He is in the light, and be able to shine forth and radiate forth this life in the midst of a darkened world, and truly be "the light of the world." We see that this "bowl" represents the ministry.

What else do we have? What else do we see? In Zechariah, Chapter 4, the prophet gives us a great insight to many truths, but he tells us in Zechariah 4:2, "I have looked, and beheld a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof." Here, he tells us about "seven pipes." The "pipes" get the "oil" from its source to the "bowl" (or the ministry), and then it goes on to the "lamps," or the people. In 2 Peter 1:4, giving us an insight as to what these pipes are Peter said, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature."

Here, we have "the golden oil" (Zechariah 4:2) being pumped out of "the two olive trees" (Zechariah 4:3). It goes through "the seven pipes" or "the exceeding great and precious promises." It comes from the "promises" of God's Word into the "bowl" or the ministry, and by route of the ministry it comes into the "lamps" or the saints with their experiences of salvation, and then shines forth as bright light in the midst of a sin-darkened world. These "seven pipes" that get the "oil" from its source down to the "bowls" or the ministry are these "exceeding great and precious promises." These promises, and taking faith in them, and the ministry inspiring the saints to incorporate these into their lives is what produces the consistent life.

Part of this vision, the prophet recognized readily enough, the portion where he saw a "candlestick [or 'a lampstand'] all of gold, with a bowl" (Zechariah 4:2). But in Zechariah 4:3 there was a scene with which the prophet was not familiar. In Zechariah 4:3 it says, "And two olive trees by it." This was something the prophet did not understand, and in Zechariah 4:4 he posed a question which said, "So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my Lord?" This was something the prophet was not familiar with showing us there were "two olive trees" and they had "the golden oil" (Zechariah 4:12). They fed the "lampstand" so that the light could be maintained. These trees, again, distinguish the true church from religious organizations. This is a very vital portion of the operation of the church, for these trees represent the ultimate source of Light.

In our next lesson, we want to look a little closer at these "two

olive trees" (Zechariah 4:3), and identify them by the Bible so we can see what separates the true church from the realms of religion and makes the people of God unique in the midst of a world filled with religiosity.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE LAMPSTAND

#### PART THREE

*Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*

*15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.*

*16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

Too many times, when the Scriptures are read, they are only given a very casual perusal. The Apostle Paul admonished the young minister Timothy that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine" (2 Timothy 3:16). The great apostle informs us that there is not any non-essential words incorporated in the sacred Scriptures, teaching us that each and every portion, "All Scripture, is given by inspiration" (2 Timothy 3:16), or the Greek word for inspiration is the word *theopneustos* which literally means "God breathed." Just as the breath of God brought literal life to man in Genesis 2:7, the Scriptures will bring life to the soul of man if they will take them in, just as man takes in air.

When we view this passage, or any passage of the Word of God, we are not to merely view it superficially, not just give it a casual perusal, but 1 Corinthians 2:10 tells us that "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." The Lord desires, if you are not a child of God, that, first of all, you become one; that you be "born of the Spirit" (John 3:6). So you may have the Spirit of God. Then, if you have the Spirit of God, He desires that you get beyond just a casual reading of this Living Word and let the Spirit of God take you down into the deep things of God.

In our lesson text, Christ has come to the conclusion of the Beatitudes, and He has now come to the last portion of the outgrowth of the Beatitudes. He is now revealing to us the institution that He has put in place to shine forth these realities and truths in the midst of a sin benighted world. As we begin to view our lesson text, we want to draw our focus on where Jesus said, "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick" (Matthew 5:15). As we begin to consider this passage, He said, "Neither do men light a candle [or the Greek 'a lamp'] and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick [or the Greek 'lampstand']."

There are several lessons of truth incorporated in this passage. First, it reveals to us when it speaks: "Neither do men light a lamp." That man, in a unregenerate state, is darkness. In Ephesians 5:8 the Apostle Paul penned and said, "For ye were sometimes darkness." When ones come to Christ, "the true Light, which lighteth every man" (John 1:9), Jesus Christ lights our "lamp" and turns us from darkness into Light. We have become "light in the Lord" (Ephesians 5:8), or as our lesson text states in the Greek, "a lamp lighted." This is why Jesus cried, "Ye are the light." This lighting portrays the initial experience

of salvation. However, He does not stop there. As soon as one is converted, what is one of the first obstacles that they are confronted with? They are tempted to "put it under a bushel." This bushel was a man-made earthenware and was used to obscure the light. This is a picture of man-made religion, false religion, that the enemy of souls uses to obscure the Light.

Where does the Light belong? Where does our individual experience belong? It belongs being brought together with others of like experiences, or "on a candlestick" (Matthew 5:15), or the Greek "a lampstand." Why? What makes the true church different than the realms of religion? Well, many things, but one is its mode of operation. Let us go back into prophesy where the Prophet Zechariah received a vision of this "lampstand" and see what he saw that distinguishes the true church from all others. In Zechariah 4:1-3 we want to begin reading: "And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick [or the Greek 'a lampstand'] all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof."

In the New Testament, John received the Revelation. He received a panoramic view that included many things. But throughout the course of Old Testament history, many of the prophets received a portion of what John saw in its entirety. Many times they saw it in more explicit detail, in the portion that they received, than in the overview that John received in its entirety. Here we see the Prophet Zechariah is receiving a vision of a "candlestick" or a "lampstand" just as John did in Revelation, Chapter 1. What did the prophet see? This is the question the angel posed to him in Zechariah 4:2, "What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick [or a lampstand] all of gold." The prophet knew what he saw. This was a scene with which any Hebrew would be familiar because in the Old Testament tabernacle, there was this "golden lampstand." This "lampstand" is figurative; it represents the church (Revelation 1:20).

At the end of these lessons on the Beatitudes and the outgrowth of these Beatitudes, why does Christ introduce us to this "lampstand"? Because this is the institution that Christ ordained to shine forth truths down throughout the remainder of human history. This is why "seven lamps thereon" (Zechariah 4:7), and why in the Revelation account Christ was shown "in the midst of the seven candlesticks" (Revelation 1:13). Why? To show that there are seven distinct time periods in his Gospel Day, and that in each period, God had a people who had Light and were holding it forth to those in a sin darkened world, and through this avenue, Light and truth would shine forth throughout the duration of human history.

Look a little farther into this prophet's vision. Although he recognized the "lampstand" and as a Hebrew was very familiar with it, the next scene was something with which he was totally unfamiliar: "And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof" (Zechariah 4:3). Here was something that was totally foreign to the prophet. In Zechariah 4:14 he asked, "What are these, my Lord?" Here was something the prophet did not

recognize, and this is one predominant element that makes the true Church unique.

What are these "two olive trees" (Zechariah 4:3)? In Zechariah 4:14 the prophet is told that "these are the two anointed ones." In Zechariah 4:12 he tells us they "empty the golden oil out of themselves" and into the church. In other words, these are the ultimate source of what feeds the church. Yes! It goes through the "bowl [or the ministry" (Zechariah 4:2) before it goes to the "lamp" or the experience of the saints, but "the bowl" or the ministry would not have it to give or minister if it did not come from these "two olive trees" (Zechariah 4:3).

What are these "two olive trees" (Zechariah 4:3)?" The Revelator caught a glimpse of them as well in his vision. In Revelation, Chapter 11, he gives us a little more of a description to what we are seeing in these "two olive trees." In Revelation 11:3-4 he penned: "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." We see that he lets us very clearly know that he saw these "two olive trees."

We must remember as we view the Revelation that it is a symbolic book. Revelation 1:1 tells us that it was "signified," which means "revealed by signs." *Webster's New World Dictionary*, giving us the definition of "sign" tells us it is a "symbol." Revelation 11:3-4 tells us: "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothes in sackcloth. These are the two live trees." Who are they? "My two witnesses" (Revelation 11:3). We have the "two olive trees" (Revelation 11:4) equated with "my two witnesses" (Revelation 11:3).

The speculation in the realms of religion, as to whom the identity of these "witnesses" are, runs rampant. Sad to say, there is much confusion in the realms of religion on this subject and much conjecture by suppose Bible scholars and religious advocates. But in 1 Corinthians 14:33 it tells us very plainly that "God is not the author of confusion." If we will merely let the Scriptures speak and put "precept upon precept; line upon line" (Isaiah 28:13), there will not be any confusion. There need not be any confusion if we will simply let the Scriptures give us the understanding.

Biblically, who are these "two witnesses" (Revelation 11:3)? For in identifying these "two witnesses" we identify the "two olive trees". Whoever they are, they must provide "the golden oil" (Zechariah 4:12) to "the bowl" (Zechariah 4:3), or the ministry, to feed the church and to sustain the Light. Look at Jesus' words in Matthew 24:14 where He said, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." Jesus clearly tells us that the Gospel, or the Word, is a witness. It is one of the avenues which God provides to the ministry to feed the church. The Apostle Peter charged the ministry to "feed the flock of God" (1 Peter 5:2). The Apostle Paul cried "feed the church of God" (Acts 20:28).

What are the ministry to feed the church? The Apostle Paul said to "preach the word" (2 Timothy 4:2). The ministry is to "preach the Word," not short stories, not essays, not current events, not Time magazine or political issues, but "preach the Word." Second Peter 1:16 states, "For

we have not followed cunningly devised fables." What is the ministry to feed with? The Word! What will it do? Jeremiah 3:15 says, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding."

Where do they get that? How does the "bowl" get "the golden oil" to feed to the lamps? "The two olive trees" or "the two witnesses," and one of those witnesses is the Word of God. This is one of the things that make the true church unique. It does not preach men's doctrine, it does not preach men's ideas, it does not preach social events or political issues, but rather it preaches the Word of God or what "thus saith the LORD" (Zechariah 1:16). In the song "The Church's Jubilee," written by C.W. Naylor, the brother penned these words: "The Bible is our rule of faith and Christ alone is Lord." The true biblical church, the Church of God, stands in a unique place as deriving our doctrine, our stance, and our food and nourishment, not from the sayings of men, but rather, exclusively from the Word of God.

What about the second witness? Revelation 11:3 says, "My [these are God's two witnesses] two witnesses . . . ." We found that one is the Word. What is the other? Again, let us lay human and religious traditions and suppositions aside and let the Scriptures speak. Who do they say that the second witness is? Let us lift some Scriptures. Romans 8:16 tells us, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Who is this second witness? It is the Spirit of God. Let us lay "line upon line" (Isaiah 28:13) and lift a couple of other passages.

Hebrews 10:15 declares, "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us." In 1 John 5:6 John penned, "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness." We can clearly see from these verses that, as the Hebrew writer exclaimed, the Holy Ghost also is a "witness." So the "two witnesses" (Revelation 11:3) are the Word of God and the Spirit of God. We can see this in Zechariah's prophesy as well. When the angel said in Zechariah 4:6, penning the angel's reply to Zechariah's question of "what are these" (Zechariah 4:4), it says, "This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." The angel identifies who these "two olive trees" (Zechariah 4:3) are to the prophet: "the word of the LORD . . . [and] my spirit" (Zechariah 4:6).

This is what produced the Light in the church. This is what makes the Church of God unique. The reason it is the Church of God is because that which feeds it, that which enlightens it, is "the two witnesses"-the Word of God and the Spirit of God. And as the "two olive trees," the Word of God and the Spirit of God, are on each side of the "lampstand," they pipe the "golden oil" out of the Word of God and the Spirit of God, through the men of God, to shine out through the Church of God. This produces a Light in the midst of a dark world. This is what makes the Church of God unique. She is fed by "the two anointed ones" (Zechariah 4:14). The Word of God and the Spirit of God is what feeds the Church of God. This is why the wise man said "she is the only one of her mother" (Song of Solomon 6:9); She is the only one who is Divine.

Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my church [singular]." The true church is singular. As the Song of Solomon 6:9 said, "She is the only one . . . ." Why? Because She is the only one who will fully yield to the two vicars of the church. She is the only one who Jesus

instructed in our lesson text, for every light to get to the "lampstand," for every saint to get to the church because that is the only place where you can receive "the golden oil" (Zechariah 4:12) to keep your experience intact. Also, because it is the institution that the Lord has ordained to perpetuate and shine forth these Truths that He has incorporated in these Beatitudes. It takes the Word and the Spirit to enable one to understand these truths and put them on. the Word and the Spirit is in the true church so that as the saints put these truths on they will shine out and radiate out. We are to truly be a light of such magnitude that it is not a single light, but it is "a city set on an hill" with the Light of all the saints living the truth out. We are to be saints that shine forth as God's dispensary of Light in the midst of this sin darkened world. We are to shine so that men can see the Light and see that they are in darkness and press their way to the Light, and to know where help and Light and deliverance can be found.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### THE BEATITUDES: THE OUTGROWTH-THE CONCLUSION

*Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

In this verse of Scripture text, we see Christ uttering words which conclude this portion of His famed address. In this passage He concludes "The Outgrowth of the Beatitudes." As we consider this passage of the sacred Scriptures, we see that it is the conclusion of a portion of a much larger discourse, a discourse which began in Matthew 5:3. This message is unique because it was the first recorded message of our Lord after He commenced His public ministry. Matthew 4:17 tells us, "From that time Jesus began to preach." And in Matthew 5:3, He begins the first message that was recorded after that time.

Christ, in His First Advent, came to establish "a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20). And in the form of these Beatitudes He sets forth the tenants of this new way, this New Testament economy, or the "new and living way." Through the vehicle of these Beatitudes He first shows man the route to life. In John 10:10 Jesus declared, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." So, Jesus first shows the route to obtain spiritual life. Then He portrays the truths necessary to sustain and even perpetuate this life in others.

Jesus begins in Matthew 5:3 by declaring, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," showing us the first thing that is necessary for man to realize is that he is spiritually bankrupt, or spiritually poor. A man who is dead in "trespasses and sins" (Ephesians 2:1) is in utter, absolute, and abject poverty. When a man comes to the startling realization of that, he will "mourn" (Matthew 5:4), or he will have "godly sorrow [which] worketh repentance to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). When "godly sorrow worketh," or is really working as it ought, it will lead to "repentance to salvation." There is no repentance without, first, godly sorrow striking the soul, or that one truly mourning their pitiful condition and plight when they realize their utter and abject poverty spiritually before the sight of God. "Godly sorrow," when it truly strikes the soul and one truly mourns, as for the loss of a life, when they see that they are dead and they mourn that death, it will produce repentance. They will want to turn away from that which caused that death; turn away from sin, and "turn ye, turn ye," as the prophet declared in Ezekiel 33:11. Real repentance will lead to salvation. There is no real salvation without a repentance, or a turning away, from sin. When real repentance is working, and godly sorrow is working, it will lead to salvation.

We know Salvation occurred in Matthew 5:4 because Jesus said, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." John 14:26 tells us that "the Comforter . . . is the Holy Ghost." Romans 8:10 tells us that the Holy Ghost, or "the Spirit is life." We see an experience of salvation has taken place, and as Jesus said, "they have life" (John 10:10). In the next seven Beatitudes, the Biblical number of perfection, He shows the way to maintain that life. In Matthew 5:5 He speaks of the "meek," those who inherit or control the earth. He begins to show us the



key to discipleship—controlling our earthen vessel and bringing our flesh under subjection to the power of the Spirit. When we learn to subdue the flesh and keep it under, then we are able to "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). When we are truly disciples and spiritual, we are in a position to be "merciful" (Matthew 5:7), or be the dispensers of God's mercy.

By incorporating these attributes in our lives, we are truly "the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8). That is how they, and we, shall see God: right in the manifestation of our own lives. When this occurs, the saints as a body become "the children of God" and are "the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9). They, or we, are the ones who "follow after the things which make for peace" (Romans 14:19). He did not say "peace-lovers," but rather "peacemakers." In order to make for peace, many times, there must be conflicts first. There must be conflicts and wrong must be contested to have those ones sue for peace. The true church must stand against wrong and they must stand against it as a collective body.

When this is done, many times, the natural succession to it is that they are "persecuted for righteousness sake" (Matthew 5:10). This passage speaks of physical persecution, or of what the hand can affect, but this is not all. The persecution gets wider than this and it takes on a wider scope "when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely" (Matthew 5:11). Here, persecution is widened out to take in slander, calumny, and false accusations. But Jesus said in Matthew 5:12, "Rejoice, [And He talked about the ultimate end of our experience when He said] great is your reward in heaven."

Through the avenue of these nine Beatitudes, Jesus portrays how we "might have life, [Initially, and then how that we] might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10), or how to sustain and maintain that life. He goes on in Matthew 5:13 and says, "Ye are the salt of the earth." He is revealing to us that if we will take hold of the truths of the Beatitudes, there are some natural outgrowths as a result of incorporating these truths in our lives. One is in Matthew 5:13 where it says, "Ye are the salt." This tells us that the saints of God are a preservative in this corrupt world. Also, Matthew 5:14 says, "Ye are the light of the world." This lets us know that in the midst of a sin-darkened world, the saints with their "lamp lighted" (Matthew 5:15; in the Greek), or have an experience of salvation, are the only source of life and hope to lost humanity.

He goes on, in this passage, to show that to have the effect and impact He intended we have, we need to avoid the "bushel" (Matthew 5:15), speaking of man-made religion. Also, that we need to bring our "light" together with all the other lights and put them "on a candlestick", or the Greek "on a lampstand" (Matthew 5:14). In the words of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:18, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body." We see there are many members, but there is one body. As Christ comes to the conclusion of this portion of His address, He is letting us know that the only way for these truths to be shone forth to the world is for the people of God to come together in a visible body, so that the world may see.

This leads us to our lesson text today, the concluding verse in our study of this series. Look how Jesus closes this portion of His address here in Matthew 5:16 where He said, "Let your light so shine." What does

He mean by "so shine?" In other words, we are to shine in this manner. What manner? As instructed in the previous verses where He said "light a candle [or 'a lamp'] . . . but on a candlestick [or 'on a lampstand]" (Matthew 5:15). Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light [your individual experience] so shine [shine as a lamp that is part of the lampstand] before men." This tells us that collectively we can make an impact upon men. We can make an impact upon mankind that we could never make individually.

This is why the enemy of souls, the Devil, is so against unity. He is so set against harmony and the saints working together. In Matthew 5:16 Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works." The church, the collective unit, the visible body of Christ in a locality, is God's ordained manner for men to see. Is that what He is truly teaching here? Certainly so! Matthew 5:14 tells us, "A city [or the collective unit, the church] that is set on an hill cannot be hid." This lets us know that it is the collective unit that enables man to see. Thank God for the individual experience! Thank God for the individual life, but it is the collective unit, many voices gathering together, many lights coming together, that enables men to see. In 2 Timothy 2:2, the Apostle Paul told the young minister Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses." This is teaching us that many witnesses, testifying and confirming to the same truth, serves as a convincing agent to a cynical and skeptical world.

In this verse Jesus is concluding this portion of this famed discourse and in essence is saying to His audience, who were "His disciples" (Matthew 5:1) that if the world is ever to see the truth, to see that this new economy works, that there is "a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20). The only way that they are going to see this is if you first have experienced it personally. Then all those personal experiences need to come together in a body so that all the light together can shine brilliantly to where "it cannot be hid" (Matthew 5:14), and "that they may see" (Matthew 5:16).

Christ's desire is for those lost in sin, those in the realms of religion, to be able to see the truths of these Beatitudes, and of how this "new and living way" works. His desire is that they might be able to see the New Testament economy works, that there is "a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (Hebrews 8:6), but to show the world that He has the better way, and that there is "a new and living way." He has to be able to show forth a working model, and that model is the New Testament church, the Church of the Living God.

Notice the last phrase in our text. In Matthew 5:16 Jesus said, "And glorify your Father which is in heaven." He began by saying in Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine." How? So shine! As in the previous verses, by being brought together with all the others and put on a lampstand so that men may see. In this last phrase in Matthew 5:16 it says, ". . . glorify your Father which is in heaven." How do we do this? Read it in its context: "Let your light so shine" (Matthew 5:16). We glorify God when we are in unity and harmony with the rest of the body of Christ.

Where is the glory of God? Well, look at the Revelator's words in Revelation 21:9-11: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's

wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." John was receiving a vision and He tells us that he is seeing "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Revelation 21:9). This is a symbolic expression representing the church.

What was the first thing he saw? What was Her most outstanding feature? "Having the glory of God" (Revelation 21:11). Where is the glory of God? It is in the city. It is in the true church. Why did he see the glory of God here? Why does the true church have the glory of God? Well, look at this verse closely. In Revelation 21:11 it says, "Having the glory of God: [Why does the church have God's glory?] and her light [the church's light] was like unto a stone most precious." We see that "her light," the church's light was like His light, was like unto a stone. That stone is Jesus Christ. It said that "her light," the church's light, was like unto a stone. Her light was like His light, or "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship" (1 John 1:7). The church has the glory of God because they walk in the Light of Christ; they walk in the Light of His Word.

We see a type of this with Moses' tabernacle. Back in Exodus 40:16 it says, "Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he." And Exodus 40:34 says, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." Why? Because Moses had been fully obedient and compliant to the Word. What is this lesson teaching us? For the world to see these truths, for them to ever be convinced, for them to see that there are people who have this experience and can live these Beatitudes out, they need to see a people who have come together and are walking in full obedience and full compliance to God's eternal Word, to where God can come down and dwell in the midst of them and they have the glory of God. A people who can come together, and "so shine" (Matthew 5:16). Not shine by just having one, not just two, but a whole body; that all the lights have come together and each one has victory and are living out these truths of these Beatitudes, living them out in such a manner that they are so fully obedient and compliant and victorious to where the very glory of God has come into the camp.

By this, our lesson text says "that they may see" (Matthew 5:16). This glory only came when they obeyed the complete Word. It says in Exodus 40:16, "Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he." It only came when they obeyed the complete Word. At the completion of this portion of His message, Jesus talks about the glory of God that only comes through a people who will put on the complete message and put on the complete truth and be completely obedient and compliant. When that is done, the glory of God will move in the midst in such a way that the presence of God and the glory of God will show forth "that they may see" (Matthew 5:16) by all the saints coming together and forming this "city" (Matthew 5:14). Jesus said these truths "cannot be hid."

As we conclude this study, and as Jesus concluded this portion of the message, He realized that for mankind to see the truth it would take more than a message. He realized it would take a people who would put that message on and live it out and show it forth by example that Christ

instituted "a new and living way" (Hebrews 10:20); that we would live in such a manner to where those who are dead in trespasses and sins out here in the world, if they are truly honest and desire life, they can see where life is. They can see that it is in the Light, and when they come to the Light they can experience the saving graces of Jesus Christ and get saved. Also, if they are in the realms of religion where there is twilight and darkness, they can see that "city set on an hill" (Matthew 5:14), a people living out these truths, a working model. By that they can "come out of her my people" (Revelation 18:4) and "come up hither" (Revelation 4:1) and enter into this city and bring their light there, where they then can be part of "a city that is set on an hill" (Matthew 5:14), the glorious Church of God, God's luminary agent shining forth in the midst of this sin-darkened world. If you are not in this glorious Church, God desires that you be.