

## ***Grace to Walk Out the 8 Beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12)***

### **I. THE 8 BEATITUDES: THE CORE VALUES OF THE KINGDOM**

- A. The Holy Spirit's first agenda is to establish the first commandment in first place in the Church. God loves us with all of His heart and mind and empowers us to love Him with all of ours. Our greatest destiny is to participate in the great love shared within the fellowship of the Trinity.  
***<sup>37</sup>Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. <sup>38</sup>This is the first and great commandment." (Mt. 22:37-38)***
- B. The Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5-7) is Jesus' most comprehensive statement about a believer's role in cooperating with grace. It is a litmus test to measure our love and spiritual development. The 8 beatitudes are like flowers in the "garden of our heart," that God wants to blossom. They define love, godliness, and spiritual maturity, and describe the kingdom lifestyle.  
***<sup>3</sup>"Blessed are the poor in spirit... <sup>4</sup>Blessed are those who mourn... <sup>5</sup>Blessed are the meek... <sup>6</sup>Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness... <sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful... <sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart... <sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers... <sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt. 5:3-10)***
- C. ***Blessed:*** This blessedness includes having a vibrant heart, feeling God's presence and the joy of His approval over our life, having grace to walk in love, and ministering His power to others. It is a great blessing to sense His approval and pleasure over our lifestyle and choices (2 Cor. 5:9).
- D. There is always a greater measure of grace to experience as we seek the Lord for more (Jas. 4:6).  
***<sup>6</sup>He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God...gives grace to the humble." (Jas. 4:6)***  
***<sup>16</sup>Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may...find grace to help... (Heb. 4:16)***
- E. In Matthew 5:21-48, Jesus spoke of 6 temptations to be resisted: ***anger*** (5:21-26), ***immorality*** (5:27-30), disregarding the ***sanctity of marriage*** (5:31-32), not ***keeping our commitments*** (5:33-37), ***retaliation*** (5:38-42), and ***passivity*** in loving our enemies (5:43-47).
- F. In Matthew 6:1-18, Jesus spoke of 5 kingdom activities that we are to pursue: ***servicing and giving*** (charitable deeds: giving service and/or money (6:1-4, 19-21), ***praying*** (6:5-13), ***blessing our adversaries*** (full forgiveness, 6:14-15; 5:44), and ***fasting*** (6:16-18). These spiritual disciplines do not earn us God's love, but place our cold hearts before the "bonfire of His presence."  
As we embrace these disciplines, He gives more to our heart, but He does not love us more.
- G. Near the end of this Sermon, Jesus called us to ask for His help to live out the Beatitudes (Mt. 7:7). Later, He described this continuous dialogue with Him as ***abiding*** (Jn. 15:5). He gave His final exhortation in the Sermon (Mt. 7:7) and then gave a great promise and warning related to obeying Him (Mt. 7:14-27). The verbs ***ask***, ***seek***, and ***knock*** are in the continuous present tense. We are to ask and keep on asking, seek and keep on seeking, and knock and keep on knocking.  
***<sup>7</sup>Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (Mt. 7:7)***

## II. POVERTY OF SPIRIT (MT. 5:3)

- A. Being poor in spirit is the foundational beatitude from which the other seven beatitudes flow. Being poor in spirit is being aware of our spiritual need to experience more of God's presence and power in our life (our heart, family, ministry, city, nation, etc.). We see the gap between what God has freely made available to us in Christ and how much we are actually experiencing.
- <sup>3</sup>***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt. 5:3)***
- B. We see ourselves as spiritually poor in terms of our experience in light of the fullness of what God has made available to us in Christ. We need the Spirit's help to experience what is already ours. We see that we do not have the spiritual strength to establish godliness in our own hearts or to inspire it in others *without the Spirit's continual help* (Jn. 15:5). We have no confidence in our natural abilities to obey or serve God in the fullness of His grace without His constant help. We are not poor in spirit unless what we see moves us to seek Him more. That which Jesus' work on the cross freely ***worked for us*** is that which the Spirit progressively ***works in us*** as we seek Him.
- C. We are to seek God earnestly that we might walk in the fullness of His grace in each season of our lives. It is by the Spirit's power that we are enabled to love God and people and to effectively inspire others to do the same. It takes more than a zealous personality, a strong mind, and a determined will to walk in fullness of grace. It requires the continual intervention of the Spirit empowering our heart, as we dialogue and engage with Him in prayer (Mt. 7:7; Jn. 15:5).
- D. Jesus addressed this as the root problem in the “successful” church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-21). We must not be content with the increase in finances, popularity, impact or favor with people. Jesus wants us to repent by zealously seeking Him. The Lord told H. Pittman that the condition of the Church in the West was like the condition of the Laodiceans (see his book, ***Placebo***).
- <sup>16</sup>***“You are lukewarm...<sup>17</sup> Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked...<sup>19</sup> As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.” (Rev. 3:16-19)***
- E. ***Theirs is the kingdom***: This speaks of a greater personal experience of the kingdom.

## III. SPIRITUAL MOURNING (MT. 5:4)

- A. Mourning refers to the pain we feel when we see the gap between what God has for us and what we are actually experiencing. We mourn seeing how little we experience as compared to how much God is willing to release to our life, ministry, and church, and to the nations. Mourning also includes the pain we feel over our sin and failure to follow through in obedience to Jesus. This beatitude is not about mourning over difficult circumstances, but rather for a greater spiritual breakthrough in light of what Jesus has made available to us.
- <sup>4</sup>***“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Mt. 5:4)***
- B. Being poor in spirit speaks of how we *see ourselves*; spiritual mourning refers to how we *feel about what we see*. When we *see* differently, then we *feel* differently. The result of seeing our great need is that we feel pain as we mourn for more experience of God's presence in our life.

- C. This mourning is God’s gift to us; it is essential to our spiritual growth. Feeling the pain of godly desperation causes us to reorder our life to spend our strength, time, and money to seek God for all that He has made available for us.

<sup>10</sup>***Godly sorrow produces repentance*** [renewed commitment to obey] ***leading to salvation*** [breakthrough]...<sup>11</sup>***What diligence it produced in you...what indignation*** [against personal compromise], ***what fear*** [of God], ***what vehement desire*** [for God], ***what zeal.*** (2 Cor. 7:10-11)

- D. ***Mourning and joy***: We hold these two truths in tension. We rejoice in who we are in Christ and what we are experiencing in God, while we are aware of how much more there is to experience. We are grateful for all that we experience, but continually seek the Lord for a greater measure.
- E. ***Shall be comforted***: We will progressively experience the breakthrough of the Spirit in our lives.

#### IV. BLESSED ARE THE MEEK (MT. 5:5)

- A. The meek view their resources and people and their needs from God’s point of view. Jesus owns all that we possess. Our natural mindset is to see our resources (gifting, money, position, favor, etc.) as belonging to us instead of to the Lord, and to mostly use them to increase our personal comfort and honor instead of using them for the kingdom. The meek refuse to use all their resources on their own desires; instead, they use them to serve God’s will and to help others.

<sup>5</sup>***“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”*** (Mt. 5:5)

- B. Meekness also involves our indebtedness to God for all that He has given us spiritually, financially, physically, relationally, etc. Thus, the meek are filled with gratitude.
- C. ***Shall inherit the earth***: This promise includes influence and impact. It is partially fulfilled in this life and completely fulfilled in the age to come (Mt. 19:28; Rev. 3:21; 5:10; 20:4-6).

#### V. HUNGERING AND THIRSTING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS (MT. 5:6)

- A. Jesus exhorted us to hunger to experience more of the grace of God. He affirmed the value of seeking Him for a greater release of righteousness in our hearts, for others, and in society.

<sup>6</sup>***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”*** (Mt. 5:6)

- B. Grace *increases our hunger* to earnestly press into God instead of validating spiritual passivity that does not aggressively seek God for an increase of His presence in our life. Paul pressed in for the prize of walking in the fullness of His destiny in grace. Lack of hunger is a sign of spiritual sickness. Many live in a “spiritual intensive care unit” and have no hunger for prayer or the Word. This is abnormal Christianity. Ask the Spirit for help (Mt. 7:7-11).

<sup>12</sup>***Not that I have already attained...I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me*** [fullness of Paul’s destiny]...<sup>14</sup>***I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call*** [fullness of Paul’s destiny] ***of God in Christ Jesus.*** (Phil. 3:12-14)

- C. ***Shall be filled***: We will progressively experience more grace for righteousness in our lives.

## VI. BLESSED ARE THE MERCIFUL (MT. 5:7)

- A. We are to be merciful to people who are suffering; we are to help them (Lk. 10:30-37), especially those in great need caused by poverty, sickness, oppression, persecution, or other trials. Helping others often requires denying our own comfort. We are to be merciful towards those who stumble in scandalous sins as well as to those who mistreat or complain against us.

<sup>7</sup>*“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.” (Mt. 5:7)*

- B. *Shall obtain mercy*: We shall receive more mercy in our circumstances from God and others.

## VII. BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART (MT. 5:8)

- A. We approach this beatitude with a deep sense of wonder and awe. Purity includes godliness in our morals, motives, and methods. There is no substitute for it for those who want to see God.

<sup>8</sup>*“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Mt. 5:8)*

- B. *Shall see God*: The ultimate experience of Christianity now and for eternity is to know, or see, God (Rev. 22:4). The reality of seeing God is the highest privilege that a human being can experience. The pure will have an increased capacity to see and experience God. Purity does not “earn” revelation of God, but positions us so our spiritual capacity is enlarged to experience God.

## VIII. PEACEMAKERS, PERSECUTION, AND GREATNESS (MT. 5:9-12, 19)

- A. Jesus calls us to be peacemakers. This includes working to reconcile and repair relationships, individually or in society, and not creating strife in relationships by promoting ourselves. The peacemaker sees the value of investing time and energy to bring peace between individuals, families, races, and ministries, in social, civic, and marketplace issues, and even in the nations. God’s peace is not sought at the expense of truth and righteousness; it is not a peace at any price.

<sup>9</sup>*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Mt. 5:9)*

- B. Jesus warns His servants to expect persecution for being faithful witnesses of the truth. This will include being attacked physically, financially, or verbally (slandered, resisted, or ostracized). Jesus blesses those who endure persecution and sustain their commitments to serve God in the face of resistance instead of quitting. The *kingdom being theirs* speaks of experiencing more of it in a personal way now (1 Pet. 4:14) and of receiving great rewards in the age to come.

<sup>10</sup>*“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom...*

<sup>12</sup>*Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven...” (Mt 5:10–12)*

- C. Jesus invites everyone to be great in His kingdom by walking in the Beatitudes. We cannot repent of the desire for greatness, because God designed our spirit with this longing. We are to repent for seeking it in a wrong way. God invites us to greatness without regard for outward achievements or the size of our ministry. It is based on the development of our heart in love.

<sup>19</sup>*Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments...shall be called least in the kingdom...whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom. (Mt. 5:19)*