

The Beatitudes: The Only Way to Happiness and Greatness (Mt. 5:3-12)

I. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: CORE VALUES OF THE KINGDOM

- A. The Sermon on the Mount is the “constitution of God’s Kingdom.” It is the litmus test to measure spiritual development and ministry impact. We measure our ministry impact by how much people seek to walk out the Sermon on the Mount values (not by the size of our ministry).
- B. A wise man builds his “house” (life and ministry) on the “rock” which refers to relating to Jesus according to the Sermon on the Mount. This lifestyle is doable for every believer and is the only way to experience God’s Kingdom. To neglect this lifestyle is to neglect and miss the Kingdom.
²⁴ Whoever hears these sayings of Mine (Sermon on the Mount), and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall... (Mt. 7:24-25)
- C. Why do you want God to anoint your ministry? What is your dream for it? What would you do with more influence? Would you convince others to walk in this lifestyle (secretly/consistently)?

II. OUR PRIMARY LIFE CALLING: TO PURSUE 100-FOLD OBEDIENCE (MT. 5:48)

- A. Jesus called us to be perfect in our obedience that is to be mature or complete in it. This is meant to be the primary issue in our spiritual life yet it is often overlooked and disregarded. We do this by seeking to walk in all the light that the Spirit gives us. The pursuit of full obedience is not the same as attaining it. Our pursuit for complete obedience is relative in this age and absolute in the age-to-come. Our responsibility is to focus on “seeking” to completely obey God. We trust God’s grace to empower us to “attain” full obedience in an ever increasing measure.
⁴⁸ You shall be perfect (walk in all the light you receive) as your Father...is perfect. (Mt. 5:48)
- B. The pursuit of “complete obedience” includes ***bridling our speech*** (Jas 3:2), ***disciplining our physical appetites*** (1 Cor. 9:27), ***managing our time*** (for service and prayer with the Word) ***and money*** (to increase the Kingdom beyond our comfort and honor; Mt. 6:19-21) and ***making a covenant with our eyes*** to refuse to look upon anything that stirs up lust (Job 31:1).
- C. Because of God’s zeal for deep relationship with us, He requires that we walk in all the light that He gives us. Our pursuit of full obedience expresses our value of our relationship with Jesus. Our obedience is an expression of our love for Him.
²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. (Jn. 14:21)
- D. We only experience the “full light” or brightness of the Spirit when the eye of our heart is good (single) so that it brings light to our inner man. We only do this by pursuing 100-fold obedience.
²² The lamp (source of light) of the body is the eye (of the heart). If therefore your eye is good (single, KJV), your whole body will be full of light. 23 But if your eye is bad (lacks single focus), your whole body will be full of darkness. (Mt. 6:22-23)

- E. Only in a lifestyle that seeks full obedience can we know the “brightness” of being connected to God’s heart and feeling His presence. There are powerful dynamics that occur in us only when we pursue 100-fold obedience. Pursuing obedience in 98% of our life has limited blessing. It is in the last 2% that we receive “double” grace and experience a bright spirit or spiritual vitality.
- F. A spiritual dullness touches our heart unless we love righteousness. All the areas of our spiritual life are inter-connected. We rob people of joy (oil of gladness) by lowering the truth of the gospel in our human sentiment that seeks to make it easier by presenting a “lesser gospel.”
- ⁹ *You (Jesus) have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions. (Heb. 1:9)*

III. THE CALL TO BE COMPLETE IN CHRIST: 2 DIFFERENT REALITIES

- A. The Scripture presents two aspects of being complete before God. First, the moment we are born again, we are instantly made complete in Christ in our legal position (justification) because of Jesus’ work on the cross (2 Cor. 5:17-21). Second, we progressively become “complete in our obedience” in our living condition before God (sanctification). Both are foundational truths.
- ¹⁰ *You are complete in Him... (Col. 2:10)*
- B. Before God, our primary objective in this life is to become perfect or complete in our obedience.
- C. Scripture uses different terms for the same truth: it exhorts us to be complete in our obedience (2 Cor. 13:9, 11; Phil. 1:6; Col. 4:12; 2 Tim. 3:17; Heb. 13:20-21; Jas. 1:4); perfect (Mt. 5:48; 19:21; Jn. 17:23; Gal. 3:3; Eph. 4:13. Col. 1:28; 1 Thes. 3:10; Jas. 2:22; 3:2; 1 Pet. 5:10; Rev. 3:2); mature (Phil. 3:15); blameless (Lk. 1:6; 1 Cor. 1:6-8; Phil. 2:15; 1 Thes. 3:13; 5:23; 1 Tim. 3:2, 10; 5:5-7; 6:14; 2 Pet. 3:14; without spot (Eph 5:27); Worthy (2 Thes. 1:5-12; Lk 21:34-36; 20:35-36; Col. 1:9-10 Mt. 10:37-38; 22:8; Rev 3:4-5; Eph. 4:1; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thes. 2:12); Stand (Lk. 21:36; 1 Cor. 10:13; 16:13; Eph. 6:10-14; Phil. 4:1; Col. 4:12; 1 Thes. 3:8; Rev. 6:17).
- ⁹ *This also we pray, that you may be made complete.* (2 Cor. 13:9)
- ¹² *Epaphras...always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.* (Col. 4:12)
- ²⁸ *We preach warning every man (believer) and teaching every man...that we may present every man perfect (mature) in Christ Jesus. 29 To this end I also labor... (Col. 1:28-29)*
- ³ *The testing of your faith produces patience (endurance). 4 Let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing (in our obedience)... (Jas 1:3-4)*
- ¹⁰ *Praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith...12 May the Lord make you increase and abound in love... (1 Thes. 3:10-12)*
- ¹⁰ *But may the God of all grace...after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. (1 Pet. 5:10)*

IV. BEING PERFECT: TO WALK OUT THE 8 BEATITUDES

³ ***Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for 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 sons of God. 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Mt. 5:3-10)***

- A. Jesus defined being “perfect” or being “complete in obedience” as walking out the 8 beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12) as we pursue 100-fold obedience (Mt. 5:48). This is our foundational call in life. We cannot focus on walking out the Sermon on the Mount without being very familiar with it. The 8 beatitudes do not make sense separated from the context of pursuing 100-fold obedience.
- B. The beatitudes are like 8 beautiful flowers in the “garden in our heart” that God wants to fully blossom. They define love, godliness and spiritual maturity and describe life in the Spirit (true discipleship and/or spiritual maturity). They also describe how God wants to bless us and what He wants to duplicate in the nations through ministry.
- C. These 8 flowers need to be carefully and continually cultivated as we “weed our garden” by ***resisting the 6 negative influences*** (toxins/poisons) related to our natural lusts (Mt. 5:21-48) and as we “water our garden” by ***pursuing the 5 positive nutrients*** (prayer, fasting, giving, serving and blessing enemies, Mt. 6:1-18) that position us to receive a greater impartation of grace.
- D. Jesus gave six practical areas in which we must wage war against lust (1 Pet. 2:11): ***anger*** (spirit of murder, Mt. 5:21-26), ***adultery*** (spirit of immorality, Mt. 5:27-30), ***disregarding the marriage covenant*** (spirit of treachery, Mal. 2:13-17 that breaks covenant for selfish pursuits, Mt. 5:31-32), ***false commitments*** (spirit of manipulation that seeks to promote ourselves, Mt. 5:33-37), ***demanding justice*** (spirit of pride or bitterness that insists on our personal rights, Mt. 5:38-41) and ***retaliation*** (spirit of revenge or animosity in relationships, Mt. 5:42-47).
- E. Jesus describes five “grace-releasing activities” in our devotional life that position our heart to receive more strength in the grace of God. Our heart receives more grace as we consistently and secretly ***serve and give*** (charitable deeds: giving service and/or money (6:1-4, 19-21), ***pray*** (6:5-13), ***bless adversaries*** (forgiving, 6:14-15; 5:44) and ***fast*** (6:16-18).
- F. Spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, meditation, etc) are ordained by God as a necessary way to posture our heart to freely receive more grace. These activities do not earn us God’s favor but give us the opportunity to express the value we have for our relationship with Jesus. God gives more to those who are hungry for relationship with Him. Our hunger for Him is an expression of our love for Him. God gives more to our heart but does not love us more when we live in spiritual disciplines. ***Analogy***: we put our cold heart before the bonfire of God’s presence. The power is in the “bonfire of God’s presence” not in the “cold flesh” positioned in front of it.

V. BEATITUDES: ONLY WAY TO BLESSEDNESS (HAPPINESS, GREATNESS FREEDOM)

- A. Jesus revealed 8 beatitudes or 8 attitudes that release blessedness on our lives. To be blessed is to experience abundant life which is the happiness, greatness and freedom that God created us for.
¹⁰ I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. (Jn. 10:10)
- B. We need a revelation that only in the beatitudes, can we experience abundant life. Our natural mind cannot see this without the aid of the Spirit. The natural mindset thinks that happiness is best found through favorable circumstances (much money, honor, influence and ability, etc.).
¹⁷ Blessed are you, Simon...for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 ...On this rock I will build My church... (Mt. 16:17-18)
- C. By revelation, we conclude that the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle is not just the best way to experience abundant life (happiness, greatness and freedom) but it is the only way.
- D. ***Being poor in spirit*** (theirs is the kingdom, Mt. 5:3) – to acknowledge that we are in great need of help to sustain wholeheartedness (Mt. 5:48). This is to understand, that we are in a serious dilemma in needing a breakthrough in our heart (insight/power) and ministry in godliness.
- E. ***Mourning for breakthrough*** (for they shall be comforted, Mt. 5:4) – to be desperate enough to be “extreme” in pursuit of a progressive breakthrough in our heart (insight/power) and ministry.
- F. ***Walking in meekness*** (shall inherit the earth, Mt. 5:5) – to walk in the fasted lifestyle or to have a servant spirit in the use of our strengths (time, money, energy, reputation, authority etc.).
- G. ***Hungering for righteousness*** (for they shall be filled, Mt. 5:6) – sustained faithfulness in seeking God with wholeheartedness through the changing seasons of our life instead of being burned out by our disappointments with God or by our offense at the way people treat us.
- H. ***Relating to others with mercy*** (for they shall obtain mercy, Mt. 5:7) – having a tender spirit in how we treat others who fail spiritually as well as those who attack, resist or disappoint us.
- I. ***Being pure in heart*** (they shall see God, Mt. 5:8) – breakthrough of purity in our thoughts (bitterness, immorality) and motives (helping people for their benefit without any personal gain). To “see God” even in a small measure causes our spirit to be bright (i.e., fascinated with God).
- J. ***Becoming an anointed peacemaker*** (called sons of God, Mt. 5:9) – anointing to bring peace (healing, restoration) to that which is out of God’s will (broken relationships, sick bodies, etc.)
- K. ***Enduring persecution*** (theirs is the kingdom, Mt. 5:10-12) – bearing the counterattack for plundering Satan’s Kingdom because we operate in power and/or stand for righteousness. We rejoice for the glory of knowing Jesus and the privilege of suffering for His name. (Acts 5:41).