

Jesus Ministry Beatitude

Matthew 5:1-2, *And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. ² Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:*

Matthew 4:23-25,

Matthew gave us the two clear distinctive marks of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

1. His words
2. His deed

From today onwards we are going to look at **Matthew chapters 5 to 7**.

We come to a familiar passage of Scripture called the Beatitudes.

Verses 3- 11 there is word appears which is “Blessed”.

These are the Beatitudes. These are the pronouncements of blessing.

V 1-2, *And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. ² Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:*

Jesus was saying something different than what those people were used to hearing and even what the disciples were expecting to hear. He was talking about an internal happiness that only God can grant, and He grants it to the most unlikely people, those who are poor, sorrowful, meek, hungry, thirsty, merciful, pure in heart and peacemakers, persecuted, and insulted.

Jesus always cared for the multitudes, they always filled His heart with sympathy and a deep desire to help them.

When He looked over the multitudes and saw them as sheep without a shepherd.

When they were hungry, He fed them.

When they were sick, He healed them.

When they were ignorant, He endeavoured to teach them.

There was a wonderful attraction in Him that drew the crowds. They came to Him. Great multitudes followed Him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

There were Pharisees and tax collectors.
There were ritualists and legalists.
There were harlots and prostitutes.
There were scholars and there was the illiterate.
There were the refined and there were the degraded.
There were the rich and there were the beggars.
There were the well and there was sick.
There were men and women.

The good news that God had a kingdom, and they could enter into that kingdom. It was a spiritual kingdom, and they could enter that kingdom. There was a way to true happiness.

They were kind of a secondary audience because it says He went up on the mountain.

A mountain somewhere on the north of the shore of Galilee. There is a traditional site that is believed to be the place where Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount.

It is a beautiful spot, the slope of which is so far elevated above the sea of Galilee that look down upon that beautiful water beneath and see the fields all around.

“After He sat down,”
That was the teaching posture the rabbis always took.

when He was seated His disciples came to Him. ² Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying.

Though the multitude was there, closest to Jesus was the disciples, and the multitude only heard the sermon in a secondary way.

Probably the further away they were from Jesus, this massive amount of people, the less they heard at all because Jesus was sitting.

He would have been above them if He was sitting on that slope of the mountain because being even seated, the crowd would have been below Him because the slope is that severe.

So as Jesus begins to talk about happiness, He talks to the people who will understand what He means.

Beyond them, certainly the multitude could have heard.

He took the official Jewish rabbinical position, sat down, began to teach.

The primary listeners were the 12 disciples and others those who were having faith in Him, namely true believers.

They are the *mathētai*, followers.

The message is for all, in every age, but it is only able to be understood and grasped by those upon whom God has worked powerfully and graciously to transform their hearts.

They gathered around Jesus with believing hearts and hearing ears, and they could understand what He was saying. So could the others but not nearly as well until God marvellously worked upon their hearts.

So, Jesus speaks primarily to the souls loyal to His kingdom, that they might understand the principles of true happiness.

The message that the King preaches so that we can pass it on to the rest. It would then become the responsibility of the disciples to go to this multitude as they went out from Christ. They would go back to this multitude wherever they were in whatever city or location, and they would preach what they learned from Jesus.

To start we must acknowledge the fact that Jesus is committed to providing true happiness.

The Lord Jesus Christ has come into the world to provide real happiness, lasting happiness. Sadly, however, not everyone knows and believes that. Not even everyone in His kingdom has enjoyed the reality of that provision of happiness, but happiness is His concern.

It is God's concern.

It is Christ's concern.

This becomes very evident from the fact that the first recorded sermon of Jesus in the New Testament begins with the issue of happiness.

The word "blessed" really can be translated (and often is in Scripture) by the word "happy."

What are we talking about when we talk about blessedness?

The Greek word is *makarios*

It appears nine times here in the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount that we know as the Beatitudes, but it also appears in one form or another fifty times in the New Testament.

The best that can be said about the word "blessed" is it describes the happy condition of the soul!

It also can be translated blissful, and that is exactly what the word is intended to convey.

In ancient Greek writing the word to describe a wealthy man who was satisfied with all that he had. Plato used it to describe a prosperous man.

Another way this Greek word used as Greek gods as being blessed in themselves. The Greek gods were in a state of perfect contentment. They were happy with their condition – unaffected.

So, this talks about contentment and satisfaction.

We are talking here about what we tend to call happiness, inward happiness, a condition of bliss, which is neither the result of external circumstances nor is it the result of some outside influence subject to change.

Most people in the world experience a little bit of happiness when they have internal emotions that are positive or when they have external circumstances that for the moment are positive, but both of those things are fanciful.

The basic New Testament meaning that we are looking at is a continual, constant state of happiness, a state of bliss, a state of blessedness, a state of well-being in which a person finds satisfaction and fulfilment.

Now, the word is also indicative of character. It is connected to believers, and we want to make that very clear at the very beginning.

It is used to describe those who are believers. It is not used to describe, anywhere in Scripture, those who are not believers.

So, a permanent state of happiness, true bliss and contentment, satisfaction and fulfilment belong only to those who know God.

It is a word used to describe God Himself.

Psalm 68:35, *O God, You are more awesome than Your holy places. The God of Israel is He who gives strength and power to His people. Blessed be God!*

Psalm 72:18, *Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only does wondrous things!*

Psalm 119:12, *Blessed are You, O Lord! Teach me Your statutes.*

1 Timothy 1:11, *according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.*

1 Timothy 6:15, *which He will manifest in His own time, He who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords,*

So, God is by nature happy, content, fulfilled, satisfied, blissful, and blessed. Those who belong to God share in that same bliss. It is a word then used of God, used of Christ to describe the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:4, *by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

We are blessed because we possess the life of God by His grace granted to us in Christ. We share in the bliss of God. We share in the joy and satisfaction, fulfilment, and happiness that God Himself experiences.

No one can know true happiness if he is not a partaker of the divine nature.

We are going to learn here in this portion of Scripture is for Christians. It is for those who believe in the Lord God.

It is for those who have come to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

It is for those who have come to the cross to obtain forgiveness for sin and to receive the gift not only of righteousness imputed but the gift of a new nature - the divine nature - and can thereby enter the true divine happiness.

Once a person comes to know God through Christ, then comes this happiness.

Jesus is talking about inward character. He is not talking about something connected to a momentary emotion or an external event subject to change.

In redemptive history the Messiah comes to introduce the new covenant and to provide the new covenant sacrifice in His death and resurrection. True blessedness, then, is consonant with the provision of this new covenant.

The Old Testament starting in Genesis Adam was the first king in history.

Adam was given rule over all the creation.

Genesis 1:28,

However, Adam failed as a king and plunged the entire race into sin and depravity.

The Old Testament ends with a curse.

Malachi 4:6, *And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."*

The Old Testament begins with sin and ends with a curse.

The New Testament begins with Jesus Christ with a blessing, and that blessing is connected to the new covenant. The New Testament opens with a new King, who will not fail in the realm of His rule, and the message is blessedness.

The first Adam was tested in a beautiful garden and failed.

The last Adam was tested in a dangerous desert and triumphed.

The first Adam fell into sin and was cast out of paradise.

The last Adam turned to a thief on the cross and said, "Today you will be with me in paradise."

The book of the generations of Adam ends with a curse, but the book of the generations of Jesus Christ, which is how Matthew begins, ends with a promise.

Revelation 22:3, *And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him.*

The Old Testament gave the law to show man his misery.

The New Testament gives the life of Christ to show man true happiness.

So, Matthew presents the King who reverses the tragedy of Adam's fall and makes us subjects of His glorious Kingdom.

Revelation 1:5-6, *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ⁶and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

The New Testament is all about blessedness, happiness.

It is all about fulfilment and satisfaction.

It is for only the people of the King!

Matthew focuses on Christ the King coming to give true happiness. He has come to bring happiness to the subjects of His Kingdom, to those over whom He reigns.

That is His purpose!

In the midst of this happiness, there is a paradoxical picture of misery. All the qualities that make up real happy life do involve some pain, do involve some misery.

The world assumes that true happiness means the absence of misery and pain. Whereas we as believers understand that true happiness is found in the midst of pain, and misery. Everything changed when Jesus brought His kind of happiness.

World definition of Happiness is that,

- Happiness is the successful man.
- Happiness is the wealthy person.
- Happiness is the person in love.
- Happiness is the go-getter, the one who can push everyone out of his way and get what he wants, when he wants, where he wants it.
- Happiness is acquiring.

But this is not Jesus' plan, pattern, and divine nature.

- Jesus does not say happy are the rich here.
- He does not say happy are the famous.
- He does not say happy are the noble.
- He does not say happy are the successful.

Rather Jesus says that happy are the

- ✓ poor in spirit,
- ✓ those who mourn,
- ✓ the meek or humble,
- ✓ the hungry and thirsty,
- ✓ the merciful,
- ✓ the pure in heart,
- ✓ the peacemakers,
- ✓ who are persecuted, and
- ✓ who are insulted.

It is a paradox.

If you are looking for the same kind that the world designed, it is not here. The tree of happiness that grows in the cursed earth is nothing like the happiness that God offers us in Christ.

Solomon is a classic illustration.

- He was the royal line of David, and nobody could have been more noble than that.
- His palace literally was the shining example of the earth in the city of God.
- His wealth immeasurable with treasures so vast that silver was as common as rocks.
- His pleasure was fabulous food, stables, horses, buildings, servants, vineyards, fishponds, gardens, to say nothing of an almost endless string of women.
- His intelligence was unequalled in the world of men.
- He was the wisest of all men.

But did he find happiness in it?

No!

Not at all!!

Solomon found only emptiness.

When we read the book of Ecclesiastes and all appeared empty and useless.

All is vanity!

Solomon said repeatedly.

A man's life consists not in the abundance of things which he possesses. That is not the key to happiness.

Pleasure is not the path to happiness.

Possessions are not the path to happiness.

Ridiculous to spend your whole life trying to make yourself happy on things that are all going to end up on the junk yard.

Happiness is never found in the cursed earth and it is never found in the evil system.

Why?

Because physical things do not touch the soul.

You cannot fill a spiritual need with a physical substance.

Anyone that has a deep longing for true happiness is unsatisfied with any material things which cannot quiet the heart.

Things which cannot bring peace to the heart in a storm cannot provide any true, lasting happiness.

You cannot pour oil on a wounded spirit.

When Saul was sore distressed all the jewels of his crown could not comfort him for a moment.

Things of this world will no more keep out trouble of spirit than a piece of paper will stop a bullet.

Proverbs 23:5, *Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.*

External things do not bring permanent comfort to the soul.

Ecclesiastes 5:13, *There is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.*

They are fuel for pride, and lust.

They are a snare in a trap.

They choke out the Word of God.

They tear our souls as thorns tear our clothes.

But riches do not bring true happiness.

What God is saying to us that through the very words of Jesus in this passage is that you cannot find real happiness in the ways of the world.

You cannot seek the living among the dead.

Happiness is not here in this world.

The world cannot bring it.

It cannot offer it.

It is spiritual in nature. It belongs in essence to the nature of God and is only enjoyed by those who share His nature.

Jesus came as the King to present this tremendous truth. He came to introduce the principles of His kingdom, which were inward and spiritual.

The Jews were looking for a political kingdom. They were looking for a material kingdom.

They were really attracted to Him when He created food for them. They were very much attracted to Him when He healed their diseases and cast demons out of them, when He increased the state of their physical well-being, their earthly condition.

But when He began to pork into their hearts and talk about the fact that they were sinful and alienated from the life of God and needed to receive the blessedness that God gives to those who share His nature by recognizing their sins and repenting before Him, they took issue with that.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' great sermon not one reference is made to a social issue, and the political aspects of the kingdom.

The Jews were so concerned about that, but Jesus was not.

The importance of the Sermon on the Mount is,
what a man is and not
what a man does or
what a man has or
what a man achieves.

It was true all the way through the King Jesus's ministry. They were all wanting to hear about what a man can have and what he can become and what he can possess, and Jesus only wanted to talk about what he is. That is why He said, "My Kingdom is not of this world."

So, the position of the blessed is the most exalted position in which you share the very nature of God and participate in His blessedness, but it is antithetical to anything in this world.

Absolutely nothing in this world fits into that category. This is a material, earthly, passing world and His is a spiritual, eternal Kingdom.

They had come to the conviction that they were living life as God wanted them to live it and that things were okay with them.

The religious life of Israel was quite diverse.

There was chaos among the Jewish people because they were splintered into so many groups.

1. Pharisees,
 2. Sadducees,
 3. Essenes, and
 4. Zealots.
- The Pharisees, who believed that happiness was found in tradition and legalism.
 - The Sadducees, who believed that happiness was found in liberalism and philosophy.
 - The Essenes, who believed that happiness was found in self-denial and separation from the world - they were monks, monastics, living in sort of minimal conditions out on the edge of the desert in caves.
 - The Zealots, they were the ones who assassinated the Romans at every turn. Some of them carried daggers around, and when they saw a Roman soldier, they slit his throat. Zealots believed happiness was found in the overthrow of Rome.
- To the Pharisees, happiness meant go back. They were the nostalgia people. They wanted to go back and hold to the traditions.

- To the Sadducees, happiness meant go ahead, modernize, get away from the past, let us liberalize.
 - To the Essenes, happiness was to go out, let us isolate.
 - To the Zealots, it was to go against, let us revolt, and kill.
- The Pharisees, in going back to the law and back to tradition, rejected the present and sacrificed spiritual reality to hold onto the past. They killed their Messiah to hold onto the past.
 - The Sadducees, in rejecting the past and going only with the present and their future, ignored the Messiah who was the fulfilment of all the past prophecies and types.
 - The Essenes, in their desire for holy living, made an issue out of geography and for them, holiness was all about where you live and the style of life you live, not the heart.
 - The Zealots were caught up in violence and rejected the message of Jesus Christ as well.

All these religious factions all looking for happiness in some zone and not ever finding it because it is not there. It is not in tradition. It is not in philosophy and modern thought. It is not in self-denial and isolation from the culture. It is not in political overthrow.

Jesus came into the situation and said, “Happiness is...” and gave all new direction for the answer to the longing of the heart of man.

He literally dismantled all those groups.

- Pharisees and Sadducees, He confronted regularly.
- The Essenes disappeared into oblivion. In their isolation, they eventually went out of existence.
- The Zealots were perhaps for the most part slaughtered by the Romans in 70 A.D. - they disappeared.
- Jesus brought a completely different way. He brought a way of happiness that had to do with the heart and nothing else.

People have tried to apply the Sermon on the Mount, even the Beatitudes, socially. They have tried to apply this sort of externally, in a social way. It has become kind of a social gospel.

But that effort is doomed to failure. This is not a social gospel. This is not an ethical message. This is not something that is trying to call people to a higher level of human devotion.

This is a message that tells people how to get into God’s kingdom. It reminds the disciples of the attitude that they had when they came to this happiness. It is the message they must preach.

Matthew 5:44, *But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,*

Jesus is teaching the life patterns of true believers. That is what the Sermon on the Mount is about, and it starts with the Beatitudes, which show us that God designs for us to be happy, and here is how we enter the kingdom wherein happiness dwells.

It starts out with the Beatitudes because that is the point of entry and then goes on through the rest of the sermon to discuss life among kingdom citizens.

It is attitudinal, it is not what you possess, it is poverty of spirit, mourning, gentleness, hunger and thirst for righteousness, mercy, purity, peace.

It is attitudes that produce happiness.

It is attitudes that are God-like attitudes, that literally come to us by virtue of us sharing His divine nature.

Jesus was saying happiness, then, starts from the inside and works its way out. Even where there is suffering and sorrow, happiness is not cancelled out.

The sequence leads from the first step of entering a relationship with God that produces happiness and that is being poor in spirit.

That is simply admitting spiritual bankruptcy. That leads to dealing with my attitude toward my spiritual bankruptcy. Spiritual bankruptcy simply means I am in sin and nothing else, and that leads to mourning, mourning over my sin.