

Living as God's People

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

***Selected Scripture:
Matthew 5:1-12***

MATTHEW CHAPTER 5, verses 3-12, contain what is commonly referred to as the Beatitudes. The word "beatitude" means blessedness, or happiness. In these verses, Jesus tells his followers the qualities of character which will lead them to such a state. A Bible student once said that the Beatitudes tell us of

the "attitudes" we want to "be"—coining the phrase "be-attitudes." We will look briefly at some of the attitudes of heart and mind mentioned here by the Master.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (vs. 3) The "poor in spirit" are those who are humble. Humility is the foundation for the blessedness of our standing before God. It is only as we are divested of self, and self-will, that we can enter into a life of consecration. We must remain in that humbled condition, though, to receive the ultimate blessing of "the kingdom of heaven."

"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." (vs. 4) When we have humbled ourselves, we realize our undone condition. In this, we figuratively "mourn," knowing that in our flesh dwells nothing worthy of merit. Brought to this condition of heart, God can now deal with us. Through the merit of his Son's redemptive sacrifice, God imputes righteousness to those who come to him in humble, unreserved consecration. Thus justified by the merit of Christ's blood, we

are truly comforted and further blessed.

“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” (vs. 5) To be meek is to be teachable and submissive. While humility is a foundation principle for the Christian, meekness carries this down to the day-to-day experiences of life. This verse speaks of the blessedness of inheriting the earth. Those who are faithful unto death will inherit the opportunity to help mankind—the dwellers of earth—walk up the highway of holiness in Christ’s coming kingdom. (Isa. 35:8) To be prepared for this great work, the Christian now must be meek, teachable, and submissive, in order to receive instruction in the school of Christ, for use in this great work of the next age.

Our Key Verse presents the fourth of these Beatitudes. In our relationship with the Heavenly Father, he desires to feed us with the righteous words of truth found in his Word, the Bible. In fact, it is a requirement that we know of his plans and purposes in order to be faithful. Christian victory will not be attained in ignorance. If we are to be instruments of use to God for all eternity in the heavenly realm we must know the fundamentals of his Divine Plan. Those who have such a hunger and thirst are promised to be filled and to receive the resulting blessedness.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.” (vss. 7-9) These three conditions of blessedness can only come about as the Christian is daily developed through experience in the school of Christ. Mercy is an action emanating from love. Purity of heart comes from looking into the pure, glorious character of God and his son Jesus, and emulating them. Being a peacemaker results when we have developed a true sympathy for the poor, groaning creation. Those developed in these three conditions have progressed much in the narrow way and are thus richly blessed. ■