

BLESSED BEATITUDES



Scripture:

Psalm 34:1-10

¹I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. ²My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. ³O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together.

⁴I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. ⁵Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. ⁶This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD, and was saved from every trouble. ⁷The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. ⁸O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in him. ⁹O fear the LORD, you his holy ones, for those who fear him have no want. ¹⁰The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

Matthew 5:1-16

A video of this passage from the fifth chapter of Matthew was shown to the congregation.

Before watching this video of our second scripture reading from Matthew 5, imagine you are sitting at the foot of Jesus. He is teaching and your earnest intent at this moment is to become a disciple of Christ. You still are a bit confused by this miraculous healer and Rabbi. But you know it is a great honor to be his student disciple.

You are listening to every word as if your life depends upon it. You feel in your heart that these words are very important. In fact, these words he is about to say are some of the most memorable of all Jesus preached. These are the beatitudes:

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:
³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot.
¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. ¹⁵No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house.
¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

This is the Word of the Lord! Thanks be to God.



BLESSED BEATITUDES

The Beatitudes are world famous beyond Christianity. When I was asked to give a short speech in Washington, D.C. at the Vietnam Veteran’s Wall, I didn’t know what to say, or how to frame my speech. Then the Beatitudes came to mind. They are non-denominational and ecumenical. Most people around the world have at least some of them memorized such as “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,” “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called children of God,” two of the most often quoted. Some call them Blessed Attitudes.

YOGINANDA

Last week Kathryn and I went to see the movie *Awake*, about the Yoginanda who brought Yoga to the United States in the early 1900’s. He became very famous and

preached in Christian churches even in those very traditional days because Yoginanda admired Jesus Christ so much. He would say he was a disciple of Jesus, and of all the role models he had, Jesus was his number one, while he was still a Hindu from India.

When you study who Christ was and how Jesus behaved, as Yoginanda did, it is not surprising that he was his disciple. I think if Jesus was still in the flesh on this earth when Yoginanda was here they would have been good friends because they had a lot in common. Both were compassionate, articulate, and natural born leaders. And both decided to serve God and to complete their purpose on earth they should not marry or have children. They devoted themselves to prayer, meditation, and to serving God. But Yoginanda knew he was not God as Jesus was. And he honored Christ with prayers and reverence.

WHO IS JESUS?

Do you know Jesus enough to know why you follow him? What is it about Christ that most attracts you to him?

I want to offer a simple Bible study class on Sunday mornings while the regular Bible study is on recess. It will be four sessions on the basics about Jesus as our Messiah.

It is not shameful to not know much about Christ. Many people these days have not grown up in the church. And even if you grew up in the church, if your parents didn't emphasize your attendance in Sunday school, or if you didn't continue to study the Bible, you may have forgotten the main stories. So let's refresh our memories and study who Jesus was and is for us today.

For me, the more I learn about Jesus the more I am attracted to him and want to be more like him.

Blessed are those who know Jesus, for theirs is the path of faith with all its challenges and benefits. Amen

Benediction:

The last part of our scripture today says, "You are the light of the world. ... No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket. Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." There is a famous children's song that goes: This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine let it shine..... So let your light shine out with a blessed attitude so others will see that your light comes from love and faith in our beloved Messiah.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and forevermore. Amen



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THE EIGHT BEATITUDES OF JESUS

*"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are they who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.*

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure of heart,
for they shall see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called children of God.*

*Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*