Building An Indestructible Life

*Qualities That Bring Blessings*

Matthew 5:1-9

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**INTRODUCTION**

How would we define “happiness?” The better question…who gets to do the defining?

* our culture uses criteria like possessions, emotions, social status to make a person “happy”
* the Lord teaches what will bring about true (eternal) happiness)

“Beatitude” comes from a Latin term meaning “consummate bliss or happiness.”

While it is not a Biblical term, it is what we’ve come to call the text from **Matthew 5:1-12**.

**THEME**

This text might be most recognizable section of the *Sermon On The Mount*

* Wise Man/Foolish Man (little children’s song)
* “Judge not, lest you be judged.” (often misconstrued)

As familiar as The Beatitudes are, they might be equally misunderstood or misapplied.

Once we properly understand what Jesus is saying, and possess the courage to apply it, we will be well on our way to finding “True Happiness” and living that Indestructible Life.

**BODY**

This year’s theme = Building An Indestructible Life

* for the moment, jump to the end (just like with a mystery book)
* **Matthew 7:24-27**
* a life built on the rock (not shifting sand) is stable, secure; it has meaning & purpose
* it is able to withstand life’s storms that are sure to come
* it is a life that is prepared for eternity…not based on popular fads that change

A long time ago, the Son of God ascended a Galilean hill/mountain and taught common, everyday people (not the elite) **(Matthew 5-7)**

His audience knew His words rang truer than anything they heard before **(Matthew 7:28-29)**

May we be as receptive as we study the greatest sermon ever preached.

**Matthew 5:1-9** describes the citizens ***IN*** heaven’s kingdom

* these characteristics (traits) are not…
  + hereditary (DNA, hair, eye, & skin color)
  + product of environment (language, accent)
* they are entirely **CHOSEN**
* they do not describe 8 different citizens (the “meek” one vs. the “merciful” one)
* they are a composite of each kingdom citizen…to possess 1 is to possess them all

*“Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.”* **(v. 3)**

* not literal poverty, but “…in spirit”
  + people not very likely to *choose* to be literally penniless
* "poor" comes from a word meaning "to crouch, cringe" *(pitiful condition)*
* **chosen** to make me aware of my spiritual bankruptcy caused by sin **(Matt 18:23-27)**
* to be totally aware of my need for God…it makes me a beggar **(Lk 15:18-19)**

*“Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”* **(v. 4)**

* not the indiscriminate sorrow that comes to all men (death, funerals, etc.)
* **chosen** because of what my sins have done to God **(Gen. 6:5-6)**
* one will find true happiness (comfort) when he willingly mourns/grieves enough to change **(2 Cor. 7:8-9)**
* the spiritual mourner knows God is gracious/merciful to forgive contrite, penitent sinners

*“Happy are the gentle (meek), for they shall inherit the earth.”* **(v. 5)**

* meekness not a natural, inborn temperament…it is learned
* often incorrectly confused with weakness
* a better definition…strength under control
* it is not “weak shyness” but rather “humble strength”
* a **chosen** resolve to refrain from using power we may possess to defend, right a wrong **(Mt 26:53; Num 12:3)**
* not passive indifference (apathy) towards evil
* meek are more concerned with abuse hurled toward God than that directed toward himself

*“Happy are those who hunger & thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”* **(v. 6)**

* the terms “hunger” & “thirst” are strong words describing deep human needs
* to long for; crave; eagerly desire
* physically hungry men will eat anything, even foods they hate (not normally choose), and then beg for seconds **(Lk 15:16-17)**
* a spiritual hunger/thirst that is **chosen**…a longing to be filled with what only God supplies
  + sadly, too many fill themselves w/ things not as eternal as they are **(Eccl. 5:10; 6:7)**
  + this will fail because we are eternal beings **(Eccl. 3:9-11a)**
* we must choose the right food/drink **(Jn. 6:26-27, 53-56, 60, 66-68)**

*“Happy are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”* **(v. 7)**

* compassion; pity; refraining from dispensing punishment to those who deserve it
* even forgiving those who have done wrong towards him
* **chosen** because he wants the same from God…mercy, forgiveness
* we must extend the same to others—what we want from God **(Mt 18:21-35)**
* we show mercy because we understand our own need from God for the same **(Titus 3:3-5)**

*“Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”* **(v. 8)**

* not discussing those who are already pure
* describing that which is genuine, sincere; free from corruption (i.e. purified metals)
* one who **chooses** to be completely honest with himself…more importantly, with God
* to be spiritually focused
  + having a “single” (healthy) eye **(Mt. 6:22-23)**
  + refusing games & gimmicks to achieve desired outcome **(Lk 16:1-8)**
  + not to be “double-minded” or a “fence straddler” **(Jas. 1:5-8; 4:8)**

*“Happy are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.”* **(v. 9)**

* yes…we know peace among men is desirable **(Rom. 12:18)**
* we also know this desire was not the Lord’s focus in coming to earth **(Mt. 10:34-36)**
* this is not describing the arbiter or umpire, negotiating peace between parties at odds with skillful compromise
* this is describing a **chosen** mindset to achieve the most important peace…peace with God
  + peace among men = horizontal peace
  + peace with God = vertical peace
* when one is in fellowship with God, he is in harmony with the “God of peace” and is blessed to be one of His children **(Rom. 15:33)**

**CONCLUSION**

With every one of these statements, Jesus widens the gap between those who choose to be citizens in His kingdom and those who refuse to accept His invitation.

When one enters the Lord’s kingdom, he chooses to make a drastic exit from a world full of pride, passion, and selfishness…he now agrees to be a servant & vessel of Him who saved him.

Ironically, those who choose to adopt these truths as their new life are the only hope of the world that now scorns & persecutes them.

* they are “salt” & “light” (the next section of the sermon)

It is indeed a radical, new way to live. But it is the only logical choice to make to gain heaven.