



The Beatitudes

Jesus Reveals Pathway to Spiritual Maturity

When He said, “Blessed are ...” (Matt 5:3-10)

1. The poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
3. The meek (humble, gentle) for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied
5. The merciful, for they shall receive mercy
6. The pure in heart, for they shall see God.
7. The peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God



1. Blessed are the poor in spirit...

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

Must see our poverty, that we lack something – incomplete

To begin a walk with God, we must see our need, that we are missing something. Blessed are the poor in spirit. We must begin to our poverty.

The turning point came for me when I sat on my couch and saw that I was in a very sad condition and realized that everything in my life was a wreck (R. Nault).

We are spiritually dead, because we are not in contact with our spiritual being, even though it more important than our natural being. We feel that we are incomplete, missing the spiritual part of our being, our other half—the part that puts us into contact with spiritual things and brings about a sense of wholeness.

Like Jesus, we are both natural and spiritual, so half of what we are is missing. At some point, we become aware of this. We know that we are not whole. We see others who have something we do not have. Then the search begins.

Must recognize that there is something more

We see some individuals who seem to be different. They have hold of something that attracts us, is compelling. Then we recognize that there must be something more to Christianity and more to this religious walk than what we have experienced.



We begin to see it in the lives of people around us, recognize it is available, and make a decision that we want it for our self.

There is a knowing there; the knowing has to be there. You have to become aware of the fact that there is something more in life that you don't have a hold of. You can see it in some other people; they are more complete than you are. They have something more to their life – whatever you would call it, a different realm. They are bigger; they are somehow more complete than you are. This is what bothers some people: "Well, whatever it is that they have got, that's what I want. That's what I need." It becomes obvious after a while, once we become aware of the fact that we are lacking something. That awareness has to come first (R. Nault).

Must search, seek, ask questions

... but seek first His kingdom and His righteousness ... (Matt 6:33).

Jesus gave us this spiritual principle: We must do the seeking. This is something required of us.

- I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock; and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives, and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened (Luke 11:8-13).

Once I recognize that there is something more, then the search begins. Sometimes we begin to look for someone around us to follow. We see something in that person that attracts us. And we think, "Yes, this is going to bring me to where I want to go. They are in touch with something that I am not, and I want it." (R. Nault)



2. Blessed are those who mourn ...

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

Must recognize our failures and condition

Must recognize our sad condition, that we are failures, sinners. Sin simply means that we have missed the mark of God's righteousness.

- All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).
- Be miserable and mourn and weep, let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom... (James 4:4-10).

God has to let us keep trying to perfect ourselves until we learn that we cannot. We bring an "A" home on our report card the day we learn this. It's strange, isn't it? In the natural realm, we must become perfect in order to pass, but in the spiritual walk, when we learn that we are a failure, we pass. This is the point God is waiting for us to reach (R. Nault).

Must stop blaming others

Must surrender the need to blame someone, releasing others from owing us something, from our judgment on them.



Instead of trying to blame the world, blame God, and blame everybody, I finally took responsibility upon myself, and because of that, all of a sudden it opened up the door to me (R. Nault).

Must take full responsibility for our own life

Must take full responsibility for our lives, for our problems, choices, etc. Why is this important?

Assuming responsibility for my own life liberated me from anger, unforgiveness, resentments, and released me from blaming other people for everything. I realized that the Church was not to blame, my wife was not to blame, and nobody was to blame but myself. In that statement where I said, "God, I have failed," I assumed total responsibility right back to childhood for all of my mistakes and all my sin and everything I had done, and all of a sudden, it took me from a position where God could not do anything to a place where God could work powerfully.

As I sat on my couch and admitted I was to blame for my own mistakes, I reached the place described in Scripture as "repentance" because I turned my life around and began going a new way. I had gone to God in prayer many times before, but I had never been able to go completely. The Bible says, "when you come with all your heart, with all your mind" ...and I wasn't able to do this until then. That night was a total reversal of my life, and I began heading in a new direction."

Admitting I was a failure put me in a place where God could move powerfully in my life. Making that decision turned the focus around from others to myself. I am not going to hold somebody else responsible for my life any longer. If I make mistakes, if I fall on my face, whatever, then it is my responsibility. I realize now that everyone must make this kind of decision (R. Nault).

Must repent and confess our sins

We must repent, turn away from our sins and receive forgiveness of our sins (Ps 38:18).

- Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:38).
- If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9).

3. Blessed are the meek (humble)...

Blessed are the meek (humble) for they shall inherit the earth.

Must humble ourselves before God

How long wilt thou refuse to humble thyself (Ex 10:3)?

- God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble... Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you (James 4:4-10).
- If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and



seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sins, and will heal their land (2 Chr 7:14).

Must understand humility

Humility means to bend the knee, bring low, under, into subjection. To humble yourself is a surrender to guiding powers deeper than those of a conscious mental level; it removes the ego from the identity center of personality. You are not your mind, your body. Ego-centered people insist on doing everything rather than letting it be done through them.

Humility means to actively place yourself under another authority; to surrender, submit, to subject yourself, to place yourself under the Lord God; to let go of your thoughts (Is 55:7-8), of your striving and know that He is God (Ps 46:10).

The ability to humble ourselves is an important and powerful key in the search for inner healing through the Holy Spirit.

Thoughts on humility (Ralph Nault, Out of Confusion¹)

- *The humble person knows it all comes from God – the gifts, the positions, are all bestowed by God.*
- *Humility is the result of the work of God's Spirit in our lives. It is something that is formed within us, not something we put on or off.*
- *Being humble is not about being weak, but it has to do with being strong enough to have inner confidence, trusting the Lord in all things.*
- *A humble person knows who he or she is and moves with power and with authority.*
- *A humble person does not have a chip on the shoulder.*
- *Humility will show up in areas of our life with no effort on our part. If we try to be humble, it will stick out like a sore thumb.*
- *Humble people trust God. They can do things the proud cannot do; they can go places where others can never go, because they trust God.*
- *Humble people can let others have the spotlight or be quick to accept it when God directs. They can sit at the foot of the table, the head of the table, or even serve the table and not be disturbed about it.*
- *Humility will always wait and let God do the exalting. Pride exalts itself.*
- *A humble person is able to receive a pat on the back from God without becoming inflated.*
- *A humble person is able to receive correction from God without having it destroy him.*

To humble yourself does not mean...


- *Passive optimism – this does not cure anything.*
- *A serene spiritual parasitism that expects God to do one's work. It is dynamic; humility is rooted in hope and authentic faith (sincere) – in a true knowledge of who God is. Hope is a persistent looking for what is good.*
- *Self-effacement, the practice of avoiding the notice or attention of others by keeping oneself in the background and minimizing one's own actions; modest, retiring behavior.*

1 Ralph Nault, *Out of Confusion: On to Spiritual Maturity*, ISBN 978-1545012420, 2017/1982.



- *Self-abasement is acts of humiliation or abasement preceding from consciousness of inferiority, guilt, or shame.*


The Romans in the early Apostolic Church had a word that has been forgotten, that is "Proprium." It means that we appropriate to ourselves that which does not belong to us and our ego becomes involved in that appropriation (David Seabury).



4. Blessed are the merciful...

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

Must forgive others; cease from anger

- And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your transgressions (Mark 11:25).
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5. Blessed are those who hunger & thirst for righteousness

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

Must come with our whole heart – not double-minded

- Draw near to God and He will draw near to you... (James 4:4-10).
- God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, in a dry and weary land where there is no water (Ps 63:1).
- Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found by you, declares the Lord (Jer 29:13-14a).

Must seek the face of God

- If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sins, and will heal their land (2 Chr 7:14).

Must stop struggling, trying to

- Cease striving, and know that I am God (Ps 46:10).
- I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay; and He set my feet upon a rock, making my footsteps firm (Ps 40:1-2).



6. Blessed are the pure in heart...

Blessed are the pure (*Katharos*) in heart, for they shall see God.

Jesus is telling us we need for some kind of inner cleansing action deep inside of us--if we want to see the indwelling God within us.

How does one get pure in heart?

- Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be miserable and mourn and weep, let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom... (James 4:4-10).
- Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification (*Hagiasmos*);, without which no one will see the Lord (Hebrews 12:13).

What does it mean to be pure in heart?

A "pure heart" refers to a heart that has been cleansed, washed clean; painful memories, ungodly beliefs and destructive emotions like guilt, shame, anger, envy, etc. have been cleaned out.

7. Blessed are the peacemakers...

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

We arrived at the point of emotional and spiritual maturity.

- Much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ (Rom 5:17b).
- I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. ... God's word lives in your hearts, and you have won your battle with the evil one (1 John 2:14).