

Introduction to the Beatitudes

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Greek lessons were progressively taught
Patrick Fairbairn vs Fairbairn
Charles Middleton, 361 pages on "The"

Blessed == Happiness

"Blessed are the poor in spirit." Happy are the poor in spirit. Our happiness is never tied to our circumstances but to our relationship with Christ, whom we follow.

Psalm 65:4 How happy is the one you choose and bring near to live in your courts! We will be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple

Psalm 127:4-5 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons born in one's youth. Happy is the man who has filled his quiver with them.

Though the shadow of the cross would not fall across the place of the Skull until ... later, it was already in Jesus' heart the day He preached on "How to be Happy." - Bishop Sheen

Philip Jenkins in "The Next Christendom" informed, "But for the foreseeable future, deep poverty does characterize the lives of many millions of Christians in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. These are people for whom the New Testament Beatitudes have a direct relevance inconceivable for most Christians in Northern societies. When Jesus told the "poor" they were blessed, the word used does not imply relative deprivation, it means total poverty, or destitution. A majority of global South Christians (and increasingly of all Christians) really are the poor, the hungry, the persecuted, even the dehumanized."

Our message is GOOD news!

The Good News must be represented with an undying hope, an enduring peace, an unconquerable love, an unquestioning faith, and an unquenchable joy.

Words matter. "...words often contain a witness for great ... truths—Richard Trench.

Living the Beatitudes == Discipleship

Bonhoeffer concluded, “Happy are they who, knowing that grace, can live in the world without being of it, who, by following Jesus Christ, are so assured of their heavenly citizenship that they are truly free to live their lives in this world. Happy are they who know that discipleship simply means the life which springs from grace, and that grace simply means discipleship. Happy are they who have become Christians in this sense of the word. For them the word of grace has proved a fountain of mercy.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer tells us “...grace and discipleship are inseparable,.”

Character ≠ Conduct

Luke 17:21 the kingdom of God is within you. [most translations say, “in your midst” but both ideas are grammatically possible.

Question: How can mourning be a blessing? How can one be “happy” while being persecuted?

Answer: Because the Beatitudes are not action but *character*, spiritual *qualities*, “the beautiful *attitudes*.” They are the principles by which the believer must live to be happy. They are who we are because we have been transformed.

Romans 12:2 be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—

his good, - Gramma's hamburgers

pleasing and - what brings fulfillment, meaning, and, yes, happiness

perfect will. - what and who we are as we mature in Christ.

We are best served when God's truth is not made dull lest it offend, or, as we say, “dumbed down” as if we were not capable of the challenge to live it. It is God's counsel we need in a world that is growing more and more contrary to our faith. We need to hear from God.

Temperance [vs Grace?] : Fruit of Spirit and part of Peter's 8 step program to assurance of salvation: Faith, Knowledge, virtue, temperance, patience

Quoting D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones reminds us “The Lord Jesus Christ died to enable us to live the Sermon on the Mount. This is how Christians ought to live; this is how Christians are meant to live.

The Sermon on the Mount is a description of *character*what we Christians are meant to be.”

Titus 2:14 Jesus died. ‘That he might ... purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works’.”

A quick distant look

Read Matthew 5:3-12

N.T. Wright wrote, “When God wants to sort out the world, as the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount make clear, he doesn't send in the tanks. He sends in the meek, the broken, those hungry for justice, the peacemakers, the pure-hearted”

Revelation 12:10-11 the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony

1. More conscious of God's provision and less self-reliant, (Mt 5:3) Blessed are the poor in spirit
2. More prayerful and less critical (Mt 5:4) Blessed are they that mourn
3. More of a servant and less entitled (Mt 5:5) Blessed are the meek:
4. More wanting to be our Lord's instrument and less getting our own way, (Mt 5:6) Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness
5. More wanting to help others and less self-serving, (Mt 5:7) Blessed are the merciful:
6. More truthful, virtuous, spontaneously natural in living our witness and less self-deceived and deceiving, less self-serving , less greedy, less consumerism(Mt 5:8) Blessed are the pure in heart
7. More seeking reconciliation, being forgiving and united and less divisive and partisan (Mt 5:9) Blessed are the peacemakers
8. More courageous to witness and less intimidated, (Mt 5:10) Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake
 1. To quote Peter, “we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” [Acts 4:20].
9. More like Jesus and less worldly (Mt 5:11) Blessed are ye, when men shall say all manner of evil against you for my sake.
10. More joyful and less of a grumbler and complainer (Mt 5:12) Rejoice, and be exceeding glad:

Conscience ≠ Conviction

Conscience is culturally trained; Conviction is Spirit-led.
Guilt in the Bible speaks of liability or worthy of punishment.

The meaning “to make (someone) feel guilty, especially in order to induce them to do something” is *not* Biblical

2 Corinthians 7:10 ESV For godly grief [emotional pain] produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

John 16:8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.

The Work Of Christ							
Theory	Christ's Work	View	Purpose	Reason	Aspect	Christ is Made Unto Us (1 Co. 1:30)	The Spirit's Work John 16:9
Substitution/ Satisfaction	Savior	Objective	Penal: Satisfies Himself	guilty	Satisfaction	Justification	Sin
Cristys-Victor	Victor	Classic	Overcomes the devil	in bondage	Triumphant	Redemption	Judgment
Moral Influence	Teacher	Subjective	inspires us New Life	apathetic	Regenerative	Sanctification	Righteousness

All three of the major explanations of the death of Christ contain biblical truth and can to some extent be harmonized, especially if we observe that the chief difference between them is that in each God's work in Christ is directed toward a different person. - John Stott. p. 226

It is from him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom from God for us — our righteousness (justification), sanctification, and redemption. - I Corinthians 1:30

Commandment ≠ Legalism

Conviction leads to following; conscience ill-trained leads to legalism.

Bonhoeffer says it well, “When we are called to follow Christ, we are summoned to an exclusive attachment to his person. The grace of his call burst all the bonds of legalism.

Psalm 119:45 "I will walk at liberty, for I seek Thy commandments.”

Discipleship takes Grace but *grace is costly*: [1 Corinthians 7:23 Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.]

but because it costs us, ours, as well: [**Luke 9:23** And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him *deny* himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.].

We are called to “**deny ourselves.**” And what does it mean to “deny”? Its most basic meaning is “to say, 'No!'”

A grace that saves us but does not change us: our perspective on life, our passions, our dreams or how we live, is a cheap grace since it has accomplished nothing for which Christ gave His life to provide.

The Sermon on the Mount is so much at variance with all that our world holds dear that the world will crucify anyone who tries to live up to its values. The Beatitudes cannot be taken alone: they are not ideals; they are hard facts and realities inseparable from the Cross of Calvary. What He [Jesus] taught was self-crucifixion. - Bishop Sheen

Bonhoeffer calls fellowship, fellowship

1 Corinthians 1:9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

But we are still left with an abstract idea: What does it mean to follow Jesus? The church’s attempt at an answer often reduces to a legalism.

Matthew 28:20 “observe all, whatever I did command you, and lo, I **am with you...**”

Matthew 9:9-10 As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “**Follow me,**” [calling] he told him, and Matthew got up and **followed** [**Impf**: began to] him.

Grace == Forgiveness

One word for forgiveness derives from the word for grace.

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Grace might be free but it is not cheap. Grace is cheapened when we are thereby forgiven without any interest in forgiving.

But is this idea incorporated in the Beatitudes? It is part of the sermon on the Mount, in our Lord's prayer "And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors" [Mt 6:12].

And is this not part of being a peacemaker? [Mt 5:9].

Just and Righteous are the same Greek word.

Righteousness is the state of one as he ought to be before God.

A. W. Tozer, correctly noted, "justice and righteousness are scarcely to be distinguished from each other. The same word in the original becomes in English justice or righteousness, almost, one would suspect, at the whim of the translator.

Romans 3:25-26 (Marrow of Christian theology)

NIV 25 God presented Christ... through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. ...— 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness ... so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

What is the "Righteousness of God"?

Romans 1:17 "in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed"

Romans 3:21 "apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known"

1 Corinthians 5:21 "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

God is the author and provider of all that is right, just, and fair in His kingdom.

Deuteronomy 32:4 "He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he."

Knowledge ≠ Academic

“Following Jesus” can become what Bonhoeffer calls “**an abstract Christology.**” What I call **theological distancing**. Faith can be preserved in creed. Bonhoeffer calls this “an abstract idea .. a ... **formal knowledge**, to become enthusiastic about ..., and perhaps even to ... practice; but it can never be followed in personal obedience unless we are following the Savior as also our Lord.

Both Testaments use the word “knowledge” as knowledge gained through experience.

Faith === Faithfulness

Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Luke 6:46 Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?

Faith without faithfulness is dead theology (faith without works is dead, **James 2:20**)

Faithfulness without faith is human effort or works (a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, **Galatians 2:16**)

Which came first? This is another case of what in evolutionary biology is called **irreducible complexity**.

Only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes.

Romans 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Faith is absolute reliance, total commitment, **trust**

- Believing *into* Kittell: “Generally faith is regarded as man's relation and attitude to God” “commit oneself to”
- John 14:1 You believe in God; believe also in me.

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith[fulness] of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in [trust] Jesus Christ, that we might be justified [declared and made righteousness] by the faith[fulness] of Christ [on Calvary]....

There is no such salvation that allowed a believer to live an unchanged life

Obedience begs the rich man's question: "What must I do to have eternal life?"

Matthew 19:16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Not what must I believe! And then Jesus put a huge price tag on grace. The young man went away dispirited when Jesus gave him the same choice He gave Matthew: "Sell all you have and come follow me" [**Matthew 19:21**].

He wanted a faith that required no faithfulness, no further directive, no newness of life that would change his perspective on his wealth

Does obedience lead to faith? Could this rich young man become a believer by simply liquidating his wealth and distributing it among the poor? Of course not **Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.

If we maintain that only those who obey God (those who are faithful) can be candidates for God's gift of faith (salvation), we are teaching a salvation by works. God would be granting faith by the Law? Paul was careful to disavow such a notion

Romans 4:14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect:

If we maintain that **only those who believe are** considered, thereby, **obedient**, we have cheapened grace.

Romans 8:4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Learning to observe Jesus' teachings means learning to observe Him.

We are in unison, in sync, in harmony, in step "that you should **follow in his steps** [tracks, footprints]. **1 Peter 2:21**

From “Challenged”

Faith can mean many things from our walk with God to our church’s doctrinal position. Faith is first and foremost an awareness of that relationship we enjoy with God and which is well documented in the record of Scripture. Faith, then, is the source of all conviction and confirmation in the God and His response when we diligently seek Him and His mercy.

I don’t want to analyze faith. “You have faith and you don’t.” [When I was **hospitalized** in '79]

I only want my faith to peacefully acknowledge the presence of God in my life. Jehovah **Shammah, Ezekiel 48:35** (the final words of the prophet)

Albert Einstein cautioned about describing everything scientifically. Like a beautiful piece of music as a variation of wave pressure, faith can be understood merely in theological terms, lifeless descriptions, dead dogmas, instead of the very quality that inspires vision and breathes life into hope.

Faith is not the foot, but the step in our walk;

Faith is not the eye but the twinkle in it that shows we are in love

Faith is not the face but the glow upon it of a joyous anticipation of better things to come from God.

We must not hope for (expect) what faith does not affirm!

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is confidence in what we anticipate and wait for from God which He will most assuredly bring to pass.

Only Christian

Stephen Prothero. God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World--and Why Their Differences Matter:

As odd as this might sound, faith and belief don’t matter much in most religions. ...but to be a Christian has typically been to care about both faith and belief. “We believe,” the Nicene Creed begins, and two hundred or so words later Christians the world over have summarized their collective faith. As the term Christianity implies, this faith revolves around the person of Jesus...

Tell Me

Lois Shelton,"The Lord spoke by giving me a burden for Africa. A burden which became heavier and heavier. Formerly I feared God might send me; now I feared He wouldn't. Then the burden centered on Liberia. I prayed, 'Oh Lord, I **must** help them. Please let me go.'"

An Intellectual Caution

Not every Biblical truth is learned by studying Greek words.

Faith in God, admittedly, needs some definition. We need language to give expression to our thoughts and our experiences. We depend on some doctrine, to define our faith as a living faith and not just an emotion, not just a feeling.

We have tasted and discovered how good God is and then we want to explain this experience in words, - doctrine.

"I must cultivate a spirit of inward detachment" wrote **Bonhoeffer**, "so that my heart is not in my possession."

Martin **Luther** admonished, "Plunge into the deep waters beyond your own comprehension."

Philippians 3:7-8 "I decided to suffer the loss of all things. . . . that I may win Christ,"

"The Sermon on the Mount . . . is like a great musical composition," Martin **Lloyd-Jones** explained through this analogy, "a symphony. . . the whole is greater than a collection of the parts. . . ."

Living the Beatitudes is a symphonic composition of holiness, of a sanctified life that is a far more powerful witness to our world than mere words or organized evangelistic campaigns.

"There is a kind of logical sequence in this Sermon," **Martin Lloyd-Jones** observed, "... a spiritual order... Certain postulates are laid down, and on the basis of those, certain other things follow."

There are eternal benefits attached to each Beatitude—to be sure: theirs is the kingdom of heaven; they shall see God and be comforted and shown mercy, etc. But looking forward to these promises is not the source of happiness.