

The Beatitudes (4)
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Introduction: What is really important to us?

- A. If we possess the qualities within our hearts that are described within the beatitudes, then it will be evident! **(Mt 5:1-12)**
 - 1. In the last three beatitudes we see the Christian's heart towards men.
 - 2. As difficult as it may be, God expects us to work with others! Those who withdraw from actively working in the lives of others have fallen away.
- B. What is our first concern in dealing with people? **(Gal 1:10)**
 - 1. It has always been easier to bow to the strong demands of family members for the sake of "peace." **(Mt 10:34-36)**
 - 2. Factions are often created by the strong personality of a leader who rewards or punishes you depending upon how well you "line up." **(Gal 4:15-18)**
 - 3. When we put God first we will influence some for God and also make strong enemies of the unprincipled men of the world. It may be within our own home.

I. The work of God within us --- Peacemakers

- A. What is peace? **(Mt 5:9)**
 - 1. Peace is from Gr. G1515 εἰρήνη - eirene 1) a state of national tranquillity
 - 1a) exemption from the rage and havoc of war
 - 2) peace between individuals, i.e. harmony, concord
 - 3) security, safety, prosperity, felicity, (because peace and harmony make and keep things safe and prosperous)
 - a. The primary peace is being right with God. **(Jn 14:27; Rom 5:1)**
 - b. We also must "make peace" which involves bringing God's will to others.
 - 2. Consider some Bible examples of "peacemakers."
 - a. Jesus is called the "prince of peace," but how did He accomplish it? **(Isa 9:6; Jn 16:31-33)**
 - b. The children of the kingdom are to follow after peace **(Rom. 14:19; 1 Thess. 5:13; 2 Tim. 2:22).**
- B. We must do more than to think about peace!
 - 1. "We are to be peacemakers, not just lovers of it, or a eulogizer of its merits. We must do something positive to bring it about. Rather than angered prejudice, nurtured suspicions and animosities, a peacemaker creates understanding, harmony, sympathy and love among all men." - Jimmy Tuten
 - 2. "How sad to see the tragedy of conflict and separation in the church in the form of unbrotherliness, rancor and bitterness **(1 Cor. 3:3)**. Why is it that some brethren accentuate our differences rather than our similarities to the point of holding in contempt all who differ with them? He who shuts the door on honorable dialogue between conflicting ideas and concepts is not a peacemaker." - Jimmy Tuten
- C. How far should we seek this peace?
 - 1. It is to be pursued **(1 Pet. 3:11)**.
 - 2. We are to be zealous for it **(2 Pet. 3:14)**.

"The three words, "seek," "pursue," and "zealous" in the above Scriptures are important to our study: "Seek" (*Zetein*) means to make peace the object of our endeavour. "Pursue" (*Diokein*) means to hunt down as a hunter stalks a quarry. "Zealous" (*Spoudazein*) means to seek a thing with burning enthusiasm. Peace in relationships does not come easily or automatically. We must desire it with our whole heart, seek it with our whole mind, and strain every faculty to find it and maintain it. THEN GOD OPENS HIS HAND AND ABUNDANTLY GIVES!" - Jimmy Tuten

3. There are some who do not want peace! Your actions to bring peace will be hated!

II. The Christian's reception from the world -- persecuted for righteousness sake.

(Mt 5:10)

A. What is persecution?

1. dioko - 1) to make to run or flee, put to flight, drive away 2b) to pursue (in a hostile manner) 3) in any way whatever to harass, trouble, molest one 3a) to persecute 3b) to be mistreated, suffer persecution on account of something"
2. If you are a Christian there will be many things that will happen to you that are unfair! **(1 Thess 3:2-3; 2 Tim 3:12)**
3. What will your response be? Jesus wants you to know about it a head of time so you can think about it and be prepared. **(Jn 15:18-21)**

B. Why are Christians persecuted?

1. Because we follow the Head, Jesus Christ, and not the world.
 - a. Why does persecution come from the family? Because you act upon principle and not that of "family rules." (Ex. "Tell them I am not home!")
 - b. Why does persecution come within the church? Because we refuse to use the carnal weapons of some and will not join them in their carnal goals! **(Gal 5:10-12; 6:12)**
2. The world will demand that you limit your associates! **(Gal 4:17)**
 - a. When bitterness comes within some they will demand that you pull away from their enemies. Here is where slander becomes a tool! **(Eph 4:31)**
 - b. When you submit to the Lord you will have peace with Him and persecution from the worldly. If you submit to the demands of men you will have temporary "peace" with your earthly master and alienation from God. Which do you choose?

III. The blessings of these beatitudes

A. "Blessed *are* the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God." **(Mt 5:9)**

1. I must be like God! **(Mt 5:43-35)**
2. Our God is a God of peace. **(Rom 15:13; 16:20)**

B. "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven." **(Mt 5:10)**

1. Are you "fit for the kingdom?" **(Lk 9:62)**
2. Let suffering mold your heart to be closer to God and His people. **(2 Cor 1:5-7)**

Conclusion: Do you have the happiness described in these verses?