

Power Plays

Up is Down (Part 2)

The beatitudes is the first sermon or sermon series recorded in the New Testament preached by Jesus. **Nine times Jesus begins each sermon topic with a promise of happiness.** He was able to reach out to the multitudes seated on that hillside that day – people who were oppressed politically, socially, and economically – with the offer of genuine happiness.

- Chuck Swindoll, in his book Simple Faith, made the following observation. After noting that Jesus used nine, back-to-back announcements of blessing, he remarked, “Having endured a lifetime of verbal assaults by the scribes and Pharisees, the multitude on the mount must have thought they had died and gone to heaven.”
- G. Campbell Morgan wrote that blessed is a word “full of sunshine, thrilling with music, brimming over with just what man is seeking....”

Way too often people consider God as negative, full of prohibitions, curses, and judgments. They see God as an impossible Father who is always put-out and looking for ways to make people miserable and leave people with the impression that God has the disposition of a dill pickle. They seem to see God as the “cosmic killjoy” who spends His time trying to think up new ways to make people miserable. When Jesus stood on his hillside podium that day, he painted a different picture of God and man.

Happiness is a common desire among all of us. We are so highly motivated by happiness that we often act before we think. That is the secret behind impulse buying. If a commercial can get you to connect with their product emotionally then you will never consider the reason in the purchase. The end result is not happiness, but a short lived experience that can leave you at the same place you started, frustrated and at times ripped off.

Many people have resolved that “happiness” is that magical find, similar to a four-leaf clover and the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow – the elusive, the unattainable.

One person said that the beatitudes are supposed to ‘be’ your ‘attitude’. The way to a blessed attitude in life is by the power of God and we see this in the beatitudes.

1. A blessed attitude toward self, (Vs. 3,4,5)
2. A blessed attitude toward God, (Vs. 6,8,10)
3. A blessed attitude toward people/others, (Vs. 7,9,11)

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

● A BLESSED ATTITUDE TOWARD SELF

- Blessed are the poor (Vs. 3)
- **Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted (Vs. 4)**
- Blessed are the meek (Vs. 5)
- **Blessed are those who mourn: the verb *mourn* is in the present tense which speaks of a habitual attitude of mourning or mourning as one’s lifestyle.**

- **Jesus is teaching us happiness through pain and the challenges of life. Sometimes life can get so consuming that we do not realize the pain and sorrow of separation between us and God. Jesus is helping us get true perspective on how to deal with pain in our life.**
 - **Many people try to suppress it**
 - **Many people act out, lashing out at everything but the issue. (Referred Pain)**
- **What Mourning is Not:**
 - **In our culture** it is hard to have a complete understanding to know how to mourn. We might be permitted, for a little while, but often our schedule, people around us or our responsibilities demand that, “It’s time for you to move on. Get over it. Stop mourning and get on with it.”
 - **He was not being *superficial*** (“Don’t worry--be happy”)- ignoring the reality of the situation and outlook that refuses to look reality in the face because it would overwhelm you.
 - **He was not being *cynical*** – His remarks on the day he shared this message was not a tongue in cheek presentation. He wasn’t trying to lighten everyone by being grammatically humorous or witty by speaking in a riddle, he was telling it like it was.
 - **He was not being *macho***- He wasn’t basically saying, “Hey guys, life sucks, get a grip on it.” As I’ve heard so many people say, “Who said life was fair?” Well it’s not fair, but Jesus was not speaking with this kind of attitude.
 - **Jesus does not say, “*Blessed are those that 'moan'!*”**
 - **Jesus does not say, “*Blessed are gloomy.*”**
 - **Jesus does not say, “*Blessed are the miserable Christians.*”**

Jesus was speaking in an attitude that described the ability to "mourn" as allowing yourself to be emotionally affected by the brokenness of this world, your own sin, the sin nature of man and the consequences that affects us all that is all around us.

- **Mourn: *Pentheo* 3996-** means to grieve, to lament, to show sorrow. It was the strongest of several Greek words that expressed grief or sorrow. It carries the idea of deep inner agony, which may or may not be expressed by outward weeping, wailing, or lament.
- It is to grieve with a grief which so takes possession of the whole being that it cannot be hid. (Trench, R. C. Synonyms of the New Testament)
- In Classical Greek in most uses of **pentheo**, it expresses a sorrow which is outwardly expressed in some way, such as by tear or laments. Among the Greeks the verb and noun (**penthos**) were used especially for public mourning.
- **Phil Newton** draws an important distinction regarding the correct interpretation and application of Mt 5:4, noting that this...
 - is a favorite verse at funerals...as the assurance that in the time of bereavement and loss, they can be certain that God will give comfort. But this verse is not speaking to that issue. Others suppose that it is the assurance of comfort for some deprivation in life or some loss of

perceived privilege. Some mourn because of being caught in a sin or deed that brings about certain consequences of great discomfort. So they comfort themselves that as they mourn they will eventually be comforted from this time of distress. They mourn over the penalty not over the deed. As the Puritan pastor in London, Thomas Watson, penned, "To mourn only for fear of hell is like a thief that weeps for the penalty rather than the offense" [The Beatitudes, 62]. There is no promise of comfort in this situation. Some mourn due to hurt feelings or perceived wrongs or personal injustices or the inability to accomplish personal goals, but that is not the type of mourning spoken of in this text. Mourning also has nothing to do with the habits of our lives. Some people are naturally melancholy so that they can easily weep or easily feel pity over a situation or quickly shed tears for a loss. But this is not a promise of blessing for a particular type of personality. To sum it up in one phrase, "It is not the sorrow of bereavement to which Christ refers, but the sorrow of repentance" [John Stott, 40-41].

It is interesting that we are so accustomed to quoting certain passages of scripture that inadvertently we do not know the rest of other scripture and lose the full context of what the scripture is saying. For instance let's look at an often quoted scripture in James 4:

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

James 4:7-8

"Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

James 4:9-10

- **Be Afflicted/Grieve:** *talaiporeo* {tal-ahee-po-reh'-o} 5003- to toil heavily, to endure labours and hardships, to be afflicted, to feel afflicted and miserable
- **Mourn:** *pentheo* 3996- **means to grieve, to lament, to show sorrow. It was the strongest of several Greek words that expressed grief or sorrow. It carries the idea of deep inner agony, which may or may not be expressed by outward weeping, wailing, or lament.**
- **Wail/Weep:** *klaio* {klah'-yo} 2799- to mourn, weep, lament, weeping as the sign of pain and grief for the thing signified

Far too often we lament in this life, grieve within ourselves which leads to depression and can lead to a life of hopelessness and send you on a spiral of descent to self destruction, addictions and broken lives while all the while accusing God of your failures and troubles of life. You have learned to entertain the accuser and have become a victim of his lies and deceitfulness.

Jesus' Invitation Dinner- A Lesson In Mourning

"Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, she brought an

alabaster jar of perfume..."

Luke 7:36-37

"...and as she stood behind him as his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them."

Luke 7:38

"When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, 'If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is- that she is a sinner.'" "Jesus answered him, 'Simon, I have something to tell you.'" "Tell me, teacher," he said."

Luke 7:39-40

"Two men owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, (a denarii was a coin worth about a days wages), and the other fifty. Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he canceled the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?"

Luke 7:41-42

"Simon replied, 'I suppose the one who had the bigger debt canceled.'" "You have judged correctly," Jesus said."

Luke 7:43

Warning to the seasoned Christian:

We have to be careful not to lose the reality of what it was like to come to Christ. It is also important to review the day of your recognizing the depth of your sinfulness and need of Christ. Communion is one of those times. It is easy to get away from our first love and lose the sting of the reality of sin in our life, like the church in Laodicea, in Revelation 3:15-16:

"I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm- neither hot nor cold- I am about to spit you out of my mouth."

Revelation 3:15-16

"You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see."

Revelation 3:17-18

- **Playing the fence with God**, you are neither hot nor cold, hiding in deeds of accomplishment and extravagance.
- The **temptation to become overconfident in security of \$\$\$ and knowledge**
- **Unrealistic in your position before God:**
 - **Wretched**- taliporos 5005- [from talanton 5007- a scale of a balance or that which is weighed and 3984 peira- a trial, experience, to have a trial of a thing] weighed in the enduring toils, troubles and affliction of life.

- **Pitiful/Miserable eleeinos 1652- You are pitied and miserable by God. You don't even know your condition and you think you are fine.**
- **Poor ptochos 4434- [from two words- ptoeo: to terrify and to descend from a higher place to a lower, to be thrust down] basically it is the horror of being reduced to begging and asking for alms, completely broke and destitute.**
- **Blind taphlos 5185- blind and mentally blind, darkened by smoke, King Nebuchadnezzar and his insanity.**
- **Naked gumnos 1131- unclad, without clothing, you are walking around in the emperors clothing!**

"Oh that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together!"

Job 6:2

"Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity."

Job 31:6

- There are many things that we mourn, financial loss, terminal sickness, the death of loved ones, loneliness, a divorce, or some rejection being experienced. Paul in **Romans 7:24:**

"What a wretched man I am!"

Romans 7:24

- **Mourning is the first step in Repentance:** It is also the kind of mourning that brings unbelievable joy and hope to the believer. Paul wrote about this in **2 Corinthians 7:10**

"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. "

2 Corinthians 7:10

- **Warning to the seasoned Christian continued...**

"Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."

Revelation 3:19-20

"To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who as and ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Revelation:3:21-22

- **What are you overcoming?**

Example #1: The King of Babylon- King Nebuchadnezzar

- In **Daniel 4:30-37**, the king of Babylon, **Nebuchadnezzar** stood in the palace of his kingdom and said, "Isn't this the great Babylon that I have built...by my mighty power and for my glory?" While the words were in his mouth, vs. 31, words fell from heaven saying, **"You just lost your kingdom."**
 - **You will be driven out with the beast of the field**

- You will eat grass like an oxen
- And you will go through this over and over, you will have seven revelation times, until you get it that God rules over all the kingdoms and he gives it to whoever He wants to.
 - He ate grass, body constantly wet with dew until his hairs were grown like eagles feathers, dread locks, and his finger nails like birds claws.
- Daniel 4:34- In his last revelation experience, he not only became cognizant, but he had full revelation of God.

“I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my sanity was restored. Then I praised the Most High; I honored and glorified him who lives forever. His dominion is an eternal dominion; his kingdom endures from generation to generation.”

Daniel 4:34

- **Calvary Temple, Irving, Texas-** I remember visiting Calvary Temple on a few occasions during the 80's and there was a man in his 30's who wore an outdated suit, had a beard and looked like he tried his best to dress up. When worship time started he would run around in this huge church that would seat around 2000 people. He would run down the isles, skip, clap his hands, raise his hands and would spin around and around as he danced around the auditorium. It was distracting to me until I found out what had happened in his life. He was a drug addict. He had absolutely blew his brain on drugs. He knew about God, but he was accustomed to riding the fence. One day he went too far. He was placed in a mental institution, straight-jacket and was a blubbering idiot. But God gave him a flash of reality, a quick moment of rational thinking and in that moment, he knew what he was doing, he knew where he was and he knew what was going to happen to him if God didn't intervene. He immediately told God that if He would restore him, he would be extravagant in his worship toward God every time he had the opportunity. And God immediately restored him and he held up his part of the bargain.
- **Look what Nebuchadnezzar said:**

“At the same time that my sanity was restored, my honor and splendor were returned to me for the glory of my kingdom. My advisers and nobles sought me out, and I was restored to my throne and became even greater than before.”

Daniel 4:36

“Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble.”

Daniel 4:37

Example #2: Daniel 5:1-4- King Belshazzar, Nebuchadnezzar's son had the same problem as his father. In defiance of God, he ordered the gold and silver goblets that Nebuchadnezzar, his father, had taken from the temple in Jerusalem and wanted to party with them with his nobles, his wives and concubines.

- **Can you imagine the reverence King Nebuchadnezzar had for the articles of the temple of God. It was so stupid to Belshazzar, it was defiance to God and his father.**

“As they drank the wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, of bronze, iron, wood and stone.”

Daniel 5:4

- Daniel 5:5-7- A human finger appeared and wrote on the wall. It got everyone's attention.

“His face turned pale and he was so frightened that his knees knocked together and his legs gave way.”

Daniel 5:6

- King Belshazzar tried to find someone to interpret the writing on the wall offering incredible gifts of royalty to **enchanters, astrologers and diviners**, but none to interpret it. Even the **kings wise men and nobles were baffled. And belshazzar became more terrified, (vs.8)**
- Finally **his mother, the queen told him about Daniel** and he was called upon. He retold the story of Nebuchadnezzar and how he repented but then had this word for Belshazzar.

“But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them...”

Daniel 5:22-23a

You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.

Daniel 5:23b

- ***Vs.25- The words on the wall? Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin***
- ***Vs. 26- Mene: God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.***
- ***Vs. 27- Tekel: You have been weighed on the scales and found wanting.***
- ***Vs. 28- Peres: Your kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians.***
- **That very night Belshazzar was slain and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom**
- ***Wretched- a scale of a balance or that which is weighed in the enduring toils, troubles and affliction of life.***
- **Revelation of the Holy Spirit:** The truth is, no one mourns unless the Holy Spirit convicts him of the reality of his separation from God. Sin is a God Word, it is not a moral standard. Sin is what separates us from God and that separation is unseen to the human consciousness. There are moral offenses that hurt others and discredit our name and hurt our loved ones, but sin is a recognition between you and God. This consciousness from God reveals to the individual that he is a violator of the Word of God. The person who mourns is the one who recognizes that he is a sinner before God and has violated the purpose of their life, (to glorify God). Only a true Christian would declare that they were enemies of God through acknowledging that to sin is to set oneself against a holy God. The unbeliever on the other hand feels that this is

nothing but foolishness, and he has no time for any of it. For the wicked refuse to take down such barriers to God as pride and arrogance.

●

Return to Luke 7:36-50- What was the setting?

- **Who "crashed" the party? A woman, a sinner**
- **What did she do and why?**
 - Wept
 - Wet his feet with her tears
 - Wiped His feet with her hair
 - Kissed His feet
 - Anointed His feet with perfume
- She was **mourning** and **weeping over her sins** which were many
- The religious Pharisee was reclining as was the custom across from Jesus, watching, judging this woman who had a horribly bad reputation.
 - **What was Pharisee's reaction?**
 - If Jesus was a prophet he should have known she was a sinner
 - **What did Jesus teach Simon Peter?**
 - **The greater the debt forgiven the greater the love** - Like the woman and totally unlike **the Pharisee who did not think himself a sinner!**
- **How did Jesus "comfort" the woman?**

"Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet."

Luke 7:44-45

"You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven- for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little."

Luke 7:46-47

"...then Jesus said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

Luke 7:48

"Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Luke 7:50

- **How did Jesus "comfort" the woman?**
 - **Forgiveness**
 - **Salvation by faith**
 - **Peace (definition)**

Conclusion:

1. How long has it been since you have admitted your own poverty of spirit, or have you been trapped entertaining angry and resentful thoughts toward God?
2. Have you made it a practice to live your Christian life in accordance with Jesus' Words

in Mt 5:3? Do you have a sense of spiritual bankruptcy and total dependence on the Spirit of the Living God?

3. When was last time you have been overwhelmed with the reality of your sin or mourned or wept over your sin?
4. Is it possible that you have become insensitive to sin's effect on your life and heart?

What Do We Do?

“But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.”

Hebrews 3:13

Don't forget this...

- **Sin** will take you farther than you ever thought you would **stray**.
- **Sin** will keep you longer than you ever thought you would **stay**.
- **Sin will cost you more than you ever thought you would pay**

“The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.”

Psalms 34:18

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.”

Psalms 51:17

Again, we need to clarify that this beatitude does not refer to someone who cries a lot or mourning for some reason; **BUT blessed are those who mourn refer to being broken-hearted because of the sin you have committed toward God.**

No matter how difficult the toils of life might be and the sorrowing of a heart, but the heart that has no capacity to grieve over sin has hedged on a life without grace or one who has surrendered their heart to the voice of grace. No one enters the Kingdom of God without the crying out for the mercy of God. Grace brings you to the reality of your life and the condition of your heart, for to God your heart is far more important than your life.

- **According to Jesus' words: “There can be no comfort where there is no grief” (Bruce).**

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven...”
Ecclesiastes 3:1

“...a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance...”
Ecclesiastes 3:4

FOR THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED- Given The Spirit of God!

- **Comforted** (3870) (**parakaleo** from **para** = beside + **kaleo** = to call) means literally to call to one's side and so refers to the act of calling someone to one's side in order to help one. The noun form of **parakaleo** (**parakletos**) is translated "**Comforter**" (KJV, "Helper" in NAS) and is what is referred to as a verbal adjective which refers to aid of any kind. In Classic Greek a "parakletos" referred to a **legal adviser, a pleader, a proxy, or an advocate**. The idea was one who would come forward in behalf of and as the representative of another. John is the only NT writer to use parakletos and four

times for the Holy Spirit and once for Jesus...

*"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Helper (Comforter, KJV)**, that He may be with you forever."*

John 14:16

*"But the **Helper (Comforter, KJV)**, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."*

John 14:26

*"When the **Helper (Comforter, KJV)** comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me..."*

John 15:26

*"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the **Helper (Comforter, KJV)** shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."*

John 16:7

"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous..."

1John 2:1

- The **Holy Spirit** is called a **Paraclete** because He undertakes Christ's office in the world while Christ is not in the world as the God-Man in bodily form. In addition, the Holy Spirit is also called the Paraclete because He acts as Christ's substitute on earth. The Parakletos in the widest sense it means "a helper, a succorer, one who aids another." In the three passages in the Gospel noted above, the Holy Spirit is the Comforter to the saint, not that He comforts him in the sense of consoling him merely, but that He is sent to be the One to come to the aid of the Christian in the sense of ministering to him in his spiritual life. In 1John 2:1 the Lord Jesus is the parakletos of the believer in the sense that He pleads our cause before our heavenly Father in relation to sin in the life of the Christian, praying us back into fellowship with God by the way of our confession and the cleansing blood (cf Hebrews 7:25, Ro 8:34)