

**Breaking Into Spiritual Orbit****Class Schedule****January 20, 2008**

6:30 pm

**The Master Teacher's Masterpiece:**

The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5 – 7

Breaking Into Spiritual Orbit

**January 27, 2008**

6:30 pm

**What's So Rich About Being Poor?**

(Beatitude #1 – Humility of Mind)

**From Mourning to Morning**

(Beatitude #2 – Sorrow of Heart)

*February 3, 2008**Super Bowl Sunday (No Class)***February 10, 2008**

4:00 pm

*(Baptism Service 6:00)***Meekness to Weakness**

(Beatitude #3 – Yielding of the Will)

Be Filled With the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18)

**February 17, 2008**

6:30 pm

**Satisfying Your Appetite (INWARD)**

(Beatitude # 4 - Desire for Righteousness)

**What Goes Around Comes Around (OUTWARD)**

(Beatitude #5 – Mercy Toward Others)

**February 24, 2008**

6:30 pm

**Seeing Beyond Sight (UPWARD)**

(Beatitude #6 – Purity of Heart)

The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

**March 2, 2008**

6:30 pm

**Peacemaking is a Battle**

(Beatitude #7 – Ministering as Salt and Light)

**Persecution for Righteousness**

(Beatitude #8 – By-Product of a Transformed Ministering

Life)

All *Deeper* classes are being taught by Dr. Curt Scarborough, founder and chancellor of Pillsbury College and Seminary.

# Comparing the Eastern Mind With the Western Mind

A fundamental difference exists between the way Asians and Europeans (including Americans) view situations and analyze problems.

The typical Oriental person perceives a basic truth more by intuition than by deduction. The Eastern mind examines the thesis from all sides and from every angle in order to confirm the original intuitively-discovered truth or reality.

On the other hand, the typical Occidental person arrives at a basic truth or reality more by deductive reasoning than by intuition. The Western mind examines the different facets of the situation or problem, then organizes them logically in order to come to a reasonable conclusive deduction.

## The Asian Thought Process:

1. Basic TRUTH is perceived by intuition.
2. TRUTH is examined on all sides (East, West, North, and South) in order to confirm its validity.

North  
West TRUTH East  
South

## The European Thought Process:

1. All sides of a problem (North, South, East, and West) are examined.
2. These facets are organized logically to deduct the TRUTH.

North  
+ South  
+ East  
+ West  
= TRUTH

Jesus began His Sermon on the Mount by stating seven basic truths. Then He gave 28 illustrations and applications . . . four for each beatitude. (*This is not merely an interesting coincidence!*) In this sermon, Jesus cycled through the seven beatitudes, giving two simple illustrations and two practical applications for each.

In this study, we will attempt to follow Jesus' Eastern-style of teaching by taking each of the beatitudes one at a time, attempting to determine/perceive which of the applications and illustrations match it. (Of course, we do not claim to have the final word! But, most of the connections are fairly obvious to the diligent student.)

My prayer is that these lessons will bring a new excitement to your Bible study and a renewed commitment to discerning truth through the Holy Spirit's enlightenment.

- Dr. Curt Scarborough

# **The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5 - 7**

## **(The Beatitudes with Illustrations and Applications)**

### **Introduction: Matt. 5:1-2**

#### **I. Blessed are the poor in spirit, Matt. 5:3**

1. Matt. 5:13-16, Influence (salt, light) I
2. Matt. 5:41, Unlimited service (second mile) A
3. Matt. 6:19-21, Heavenly investments (treasure, heart) A
4. Matt. 7:13-14, Narrow road (two roads & destinations) I

#### **II. Blessed are those who mourn, Matt. 5:4**

1. Matt. 5:23-26, Reconciliation (gift at altar) A
2. Matt. 5:31-32, Marriage sacred (divorce) A
3. Matt. 6:16-18, Fasting (privately) I
4. Matt. 6:25-32, Trust in God (don't worry) I

#### **III. Blessed are the meek, Matt. 5:5**

1. Matt. 5:21-22, Self control (anger; murder) A
2. Matt. 5:33-37, Guard speech (oaths) A
3. Matt. 6:24, Undivided service (two masters) I
4. Matt. 7:21-27, Wise man built (hear, obey . . . rock) I

#### **IV. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, Matt. 5:6**

1. Matt. 5:17-20, Law is eternal (righteousness exceeds Pharisees) A
2. Matt. 6:5-15, Prayer (Model Prayer) I
3. Matt. 6:33-34, Primacy of kingdom (put God first) A
4. Matt. 7:7-11, Divine benevolence (good gifts) I

#### **V. Blessed are the merciful, Matt. 5:7**

1. Matt. 5:38-40, Non-resistance (give coat) I
2. Matt. 5:43-47, Universal love (enemies) A
3. Matt. 6:1-4, Almsgiving (charity) A
4. Matt. 7:1-5, Charitableness (do not judge) I

#### **VI. Blessed are the pure in heart, Matt. 5:8**

1. Matt. 5:27-30, Inward purity (adultery) I
2. Matt. 5:48, Divine standard (be perfect) A
3. Matt. 6:22-23, Spiritual vision (eye; light) I
4. Matt. 7:15-20, Fruit test of life (false prophets) A

#### **VII. Blessed are the peacemakers, Matt. 5:9**

1. Matt. 5:10-12, Suffering persecution (blessed) A
2. Matt. 5:42, Benevolence (give to borrower) I
3. Matt. 7:6, Stewardship of truth (pearls before swine) I
4. Matt. 7:12, Golden Rule (do unto others) A

### **Conclusion: Matt. 7:28-29**

# **Beatitudes, Illustrations, and Applications**

## **I. Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-9)**

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit. (Humility)
2. Blessed are those who mourn. (Sorrow)
3. Blessed are the meek. (Yieldedness)
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
5. Blessed are the merciful. (Mercy)
6. Blessed are the pure in heart. (Purity)
7. Blessed are the peacemakers.

## **II. Illustrations & Applications**

### **Cycle One**

1. Peacemakers: suffering persecution, 5:10-12
2. Humility: influence, 5:13-16
3. Hunger/Thirst: law eternal, 5:17-20
4. Yieldedness: self control, 5:21-22
5. Sorrow: reconciliation, 5:23-26
6. Purity: adultery, 5:27-30
7. Sorrow: divorce, 5:31-32

### **Cycle Two**

1. Yieldedness: oaths, 5:33-37
2. Mercy: non-resistance, 5:38-40
3. Humility: second mile, 5:41
4. Peacemakers: benevolence, 5:42
5. Mercy: love enemies, 5:43-47
6. Purity: perfect, 5:48
7. Mercy: charity, 6:1-4

### **Cycle Three**

1. Hunger/Thirst: prayer, 6:5-15
2. Sorrow: fasting, 6:16-18
3. Humility: treasure, 6:19-21
4. Purity: vision, 6:22-23
5. Yieldedness: two masters, 6:24
6. Sorrow: worry, 6:25-32
7. Hunger/Thirst: God first, 6:33-34

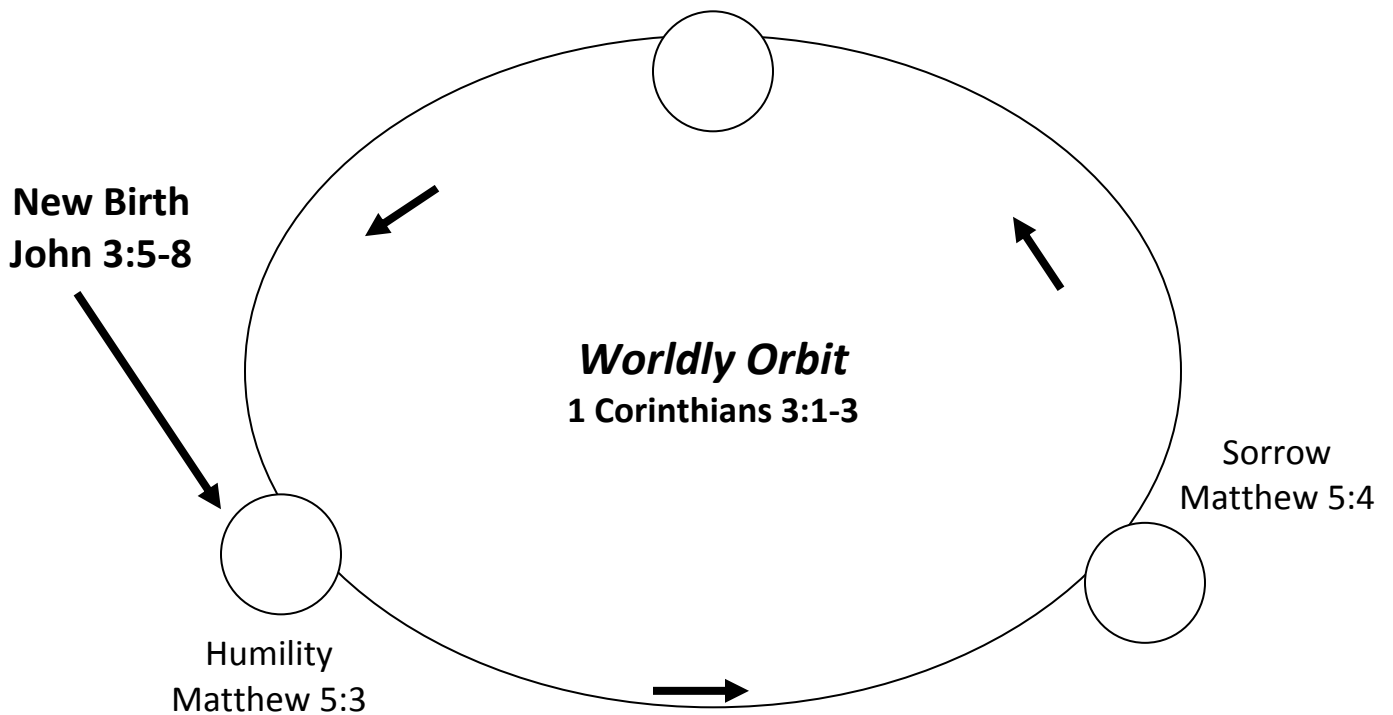
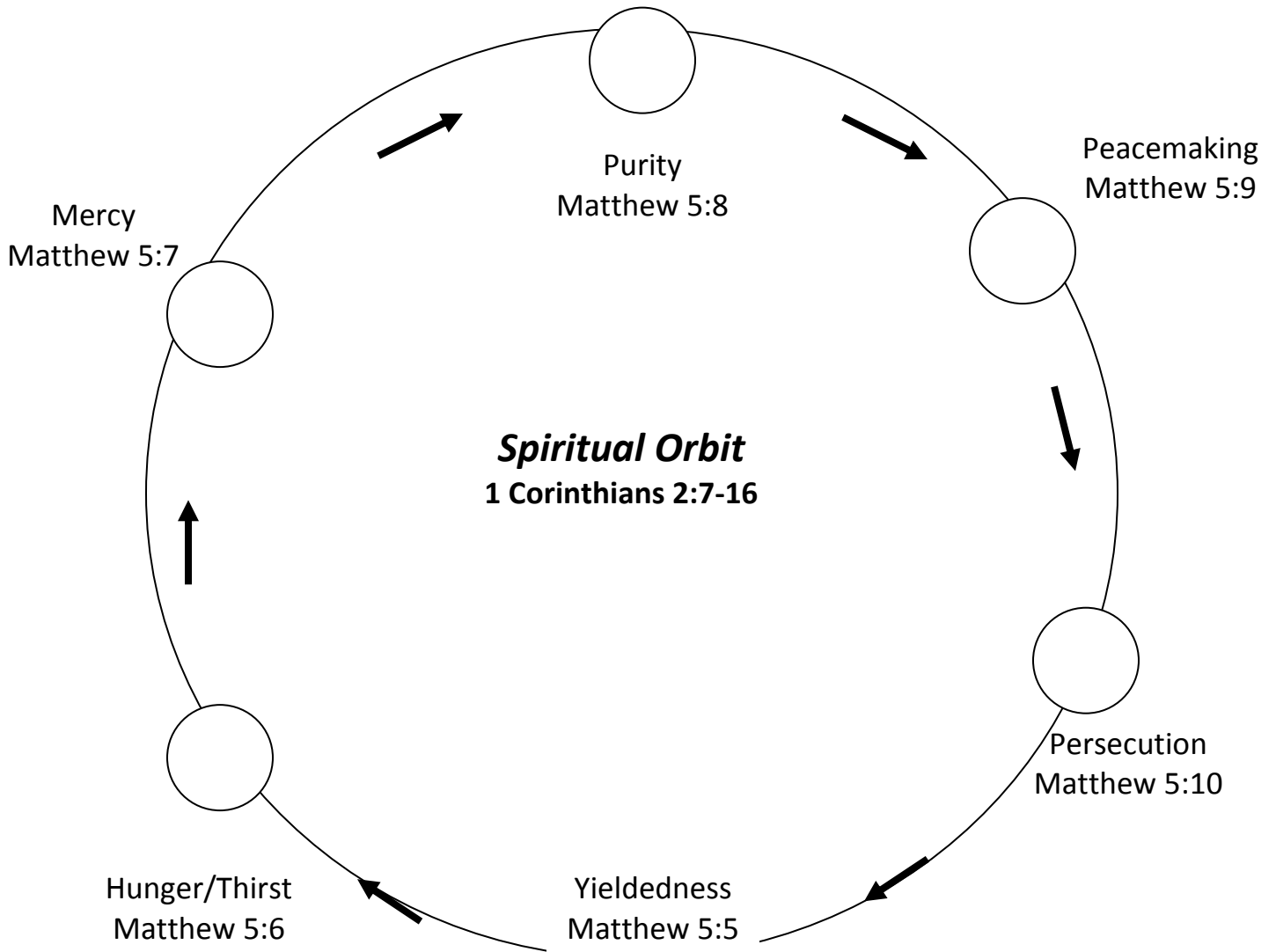
### **Cycle Four**

1. Mercy: judging, 7:1-5
2. Peacemakers: pearls/swine, 7:6
3. Hunger/thirst: benevolence, 7:7-11
4. Peacemakers: Golden Rule, 7:12
5. Humility: narrow road, 7:13-14
6. Purity: fruit, 7:15-20
7. Yieldedness: wise man, 7:21-27

## Jesus' Style of Teaching

<u>Beatitude</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
Illustration							
1							7
2	1						
3				4			
4			3				
5		2					
6						6	
7		2					
8			3				
9					5		
10	1						
11							7
12					5		
13						6	
14					5		
15				4			
16		2					
17	1						
18						6	
19			3				
20		2					
21				4			
22					5		
23							7
24				4			
25							7
26	1						
27						6	
28			3				

**Breaking Into Spiritual Orbit**



# **Breaking Into Spiritual Orbit** **(Outline)**

## **Introduction: Truth and Light: Psalm 43:3**

### **I. Presentation, Romans 12:1**

1. Humility of mind. "Pour in Spirit" Matthew 5:3
2. Sorrow of heart. "Mourn" Matthew 5:4
3. Yielding of will. "Meek" Matthew 5:5

### **II. Transformation, Romans 12:2a**

1. Desire for righteousness. "Hunger" Matthew 5:6
2. Mercy toward others. "Merciful" Matthew 5:7
3. Purity of heart. "Pure" Matthew 5:8

### **Fruit of Transformation. Galatians 5:22-23**

1. INWARD: love, joy, peace
2. OUTWARD: patience, kindness, goodness
3. UPWARD: faith/faithfulness, yieldedness, self-control

### **III. Demonstration, Romans 12:2b**

1. Ministry of peacemaking. "Peacemakers" Matthew 5:9
2. Persecution for righteousness. "Persecuted" Matthew 5:10

### **Conclusion:**

"Salt" Matthew 5:13; "Light" Matthew 5:14  
Peacemakers are "salt of the earth."  
Persecuted are "Light of the world."

# **Breaking into Spiritual Orbit**

(Matthew 5:1-14)

## **Introduction: Truth and Light**

*“Send forth Your light and Your truth, let them guide me,” Psalm 43:3*

The method of the Master always was to speak the truth and then to illustrate it in a way the disciples could visualize and understand. So it is with His teachings in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3-14), where He taught about the character of the citizens of the kingdom. He listed the characteristics of true disciples and illustrated these qualities in His own life.

During all of Christ’s public ministry . . . from His baptism and temptation to experiences through His agony in Gethsemane, His crucifixion on Calvary, and His resurrection for the tomb . . . He exhibited the characteristics which He listed in the Beatitudes.

Note these traits in Matthew 5:3-14:

1. Humility of mind, v. 3.
2. Sorrow of heart over sin (man’s sin, not His own), v.4.
3. Yieldedness of will to the Father’s will, v. 5.
4. Intense desire to fulfill righteousness, v.6.
5. Compassion; loving grace extended toward needy and hurting mankind, v. 7.
6. Inner holiness; sinlessness; absolute purity, v.8.
7. Bringing peace to troubled hearts, v.9. (In Matthew 5-7, The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gives 28 illustrations of these seven traits . . . four illustrations for each trait.)
8. Suffering persecution and death for righteousness’ sake, v. 10.
9. Influencing society through direct contact with it (salt), v. 13.
10. Influencing society through radiance and illumination (light), v. 14.

## **I. Presentation**

*“Therefore, I urge you, brethren, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to Go . . . which is your spiritual act of worship.” (Romans 12:1)*

**1. Humility of mind.** “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” Matthew 5:3.

Truth: The starting point is humility of mind. No disciple can experience spiritual growth before first recognizing his own poverty in the eyes of God. When we see ourselves as God sees us, the result is a devastating sense of humiliation.

Light: Jesus exemplified humility by leaving heaven's glory to dwell on earth among sinful humanity, Phil. 2:5-8. His spirit of humility was not caused by His own sin before God the Father, although He did, in fact, become sin for us, II Cor. 5:21.

2. Sorrow of Heart. "Blessed are those who mourn," Matthew 5:4.

Truth: As soon as we see ourselves as God sees us, our humiliation produces a mourning of the soul. In our case, this godly sorrow works toward producing repentance, II Cor. 7:10. This is true before the experience of regeneration (or the new birth). It is true, also, as we progress into a deeper walk with Christ, called sanctification, Heb. 2:11.

Light: Whereas we mourn for our own sinfulness, Christ mourned over the sin and unbelief of those He met, Matt. 23:37.

3. Yielding of will. "Blessed are the meek," Matthew 5:5.

Truth: The key that unlocks the door into a transformed life is meekness: being yielded or "broken" as a wild horse is tamed to accept direction from a rider. A "gentle" horse is not a weak animal, but one that is submissive to the bit and bridle. This is a definite act of the will . . . a deliberate choosing to allow God's will to be done, regardless of circumstances. It is complete surrender; total submission.

*Unfortunately, most believers today spend all their lives on steps one and two of the Beatitudes . . . seeing their sinful selves and mourning over the humiliation. Intellectually, they recognize their sinful condition as worldly Christians. And emotionally, they are sorry for the mess they've made of their lives. But until they something volitionally . . . exercise their wills . . . they will never experience the fullness of Christ.*

Light: From His decision to "fulfill all righteousness" at His baptism in the Jordan River, Matt. 3:13-17, to His struggle in the Garden of Gethsemane and the resulting decision. "May Your will be done," Matt. 26:36-46, Jesus continually exhibited meekness . . . yieldedness to following His Father's will.

## **II. Transformation**

*"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2a)*

4. Desire for righteousness (Inward). "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness," Matthew 5:6. (see Matt. 3:15; 5:17; Lk. 4:21; Psa. 42:2.)

Truth: When a Christian turns the key of meekness, he opens the door to a transformed life. It will be a life transformed through a genuine hunger and thirst after righteousness. His mind will think about what is right; his emotions will love what is right; his will continually chooses to do the right thing.

This inward transformation is accomplished as the sincere seeker is filled with the Spirit of the Living Christ. The food and drink so desired by a believer is Christ Himself. The way to receive this sustenance is through communion with Him in the word. Christ is the Living Word . . . the bread and water of life.

Light: Christ's life was a living example of a deep and abiding desire to fulfill all righteousness. He always was right, so He never failed to think right, love the right, and choose to act rightly.

5. Mercy toward others (Outward). "Blessed are the merciful," Matthew 5:7.

Truth: Because of our sense of humiliation and sorrow, followed by a yielding to God and a hunger for Him, the disciple in the process of transformation develops a changed attitude toward others. Rather than a spirit of criticism, judgmentalism, and condemnation, the growing disciple of Christ extends loving kindness, grace, and forgiveness toward his fellow beings. His mind, emotions, and will are set upon mercy.

Light: Christ's ministry on earth . . . just as Yahweh's in the Old Testament . . . shows the never-failing mercy of the Father toward wayward children. In fact, the place where God's presence was manifested in the tabernacle (and temple) was that part of the Ark of the Covenant where the blood was sprinkled . . . called the "Mercy Seat," Matt. 9:36; Jn. 8:11; Lk. 6:35-36; I Jn. 2:2; 4:10.

6. Purity of heart (Upward). "Blessed are the pure in heart." Matt 5:8

Truth: The transformation inwardly (hunger and thirst) and the transformation outwardly (mercy) culminates in the transformation upwardly (pure in heart). This upward transformation affects the believer's mind (he thinks pure thoughts), his emotions (he loves those things which are holy), and his will (he chooses to act as Christ acts . . . in purity and holiness). This purity of heart results in a developing awareness of what God is doing in the world, and what is the disciple's part in God's plan. He "sees" God.

Light: Christ, of course, was the personification of God's holiness, purity, and perfection in human form. As Christ lives His life through His disciples, they begin to exhibit the true purity of heart that only God can impart, II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26.

### **Fruit of Transformation**

*"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control," (Galatians 5:22-23)*

The word "transformed" in Rom. 12:2 is the same word "transfigured" in Matt. 17:2. The true nature of Christ burst out brightly at His transfiguration (metamorphosis). There His divinity radiated forth through His humanity (flesh).

The transformation of a Christian . . . by the renewing of his mind(Rom. 12:2) . . . changes the person three ways:

1. Inwardly. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled,” Matt. 5:6. These persons more and more think righteously, love righteousness, and choose to live righteously. Evidences of this inward transformation are the first three fruits of the Spirit listed in Gal. 5:22-23. These changing believers are filled with love, joy (delight), and peace (harmony) . . . all traits’ which only God can impart.
2. Outwardly. “Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy,” Matt. 5:7. As God extends His mercy and grace to His children, they, in turn, channel that love outwardly to others. These outward evidences of transformation are listed as the second trilogy in Gal. 5:22-23. Believers exhibit the traits of patience (long-suffering), kindness (graciousness of heart), and goodness (benevolence, generosity, goodness of action) toward others.
3. Upward. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God,” Matt. 5:8. Holiness of heart (the upward transformation) results in the ability to see God, His will, and His work. Such spiritual perception (revelation or vision) manifests itself in the final three fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Gal. 5:22-23. A pure-hearted believer has faith in God (accompanied by faithfulness to Him), yieldness to God’s will (meekness; gentleness), and self-control . . . not control by “self” but control of “self” by God. This final trait (sometimes translated as “temperance”) carries with it the idea of a believer being disciplined or regulated by a strength or power outside himself.

### **III. Demonstration**

*“Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is . . . His good, pleasing, and perfect will.” (Romans 12:2b)*

7. Ministry of Peacemaking. “Blessed are the peacemakers,” Matt.5:9.

Truth: The seventh Beatitude . . . peacemaking . . . is the natural result of the first six in operation. As we present our minds, emotions, and wills, God begins to change our lives inwardly, outwardly, and upwardly. This transformation makes us fit instruments to be used by God as peacemakers. Since we have found this “peace that passes understanding,” Phil. 4:7, we are now in a position to act as priests. Our ministry, therefore, is to bring man and God together (soul-winning), to bring man and man together (reconciliation), and to bring man to find peace within his own heart (inner healing).

Light: Only as Christ lives His life through us are we able, in any true sense, to help others find peace. It is the task of the Prince of Peace to actually give peace to troubled souls, Jn. 14:27; Isa. 9:6. He is our peace, Eph. 2:14.

8. Persecution for righteousness. “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,” Matt. 5:10.

Truth: A by-product of a transformed, ministering life is opposition and persecution and suffering. Disciples who experience persecution because of righteousness are placed in the same position of honor before God as the prophets of the Old Testaments, Matt. 5:12; Jas 5:10.

Light: Jesus suffered and died . . . learning lessons about obedience through that suffering, Heb. 5:8. He left us an example in suffering, I Pet. 2:20-21, and we are privileged to participate with Him, I Pet. 4:13, 16. If the world persecuted Christ, Jn. 15:18-20, it also will persecute His followers, II Tim. 3:12; Phil. 1:29; Col. 1:24; Rom. 8:17-18; Acts 5:41; Phil 3:10.

## Conclusion

Yielded, transformed, ministering, and persecuted Christians influence an evil world. They affect society as salt . . . by contact, Matt. 5:13. And they function as light . . . radiating the light of Christ into the darkness of a sinful world, Matt. 5:14; Phil. 2:15-16. Peacemakers are the “salt of the earth” and those who are persecuted for righteousness are the “light of the world.”

In addition to the repeated word “blessed” (meaning “happiness”), Christ also listed in the Beatitudes these other benefits and rewards that His followers would receive:

1. God will rule (kingdom) in man’s heart: “Thy will be done.”
2. Comfort and sorrowing.
3. Inheritance of all the promises of God.
4. Filling with the Holy Spirit.
5. God’s grace extended to man.
6. Ability to observe the Father at work.
7. Reputation as a member of God’s family, with characteristics resembling the Father.
8. Same as #1; “Thy will be done” is the Alpha and Omega of the beatitudes.

## Notes

# **What's So Rich about Being Poor?**

## **I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:3**

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

## **II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications**

1. Matt. 5:13-16, Influence (salt, light) - common, ordinary things are useful.
2. Matt. 5:41, Unlimited service (go second mile) - do surprising, submissive service.
3. Matt. 6:19-21, Heavenly investments (treasures) - true values aren't material.
4. Matt. 7:13-14, Narrow road (two destinations) - right way isn't usually popular.

## **III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude**

Common, ordinary, humble people who fulfill their purpose in life by doing over-and-above service for others find true happiness in life through the blessings of God; such people have their priorities straight, knowing that spiritual values are more important than material things, and they walk the less popular road with an eye on their final destination . . . eternal life, which has two dimensions: both a quantity (an everlasting life) and a quality (a productive, fulfilling life).

## **IV. Illustration: on how humble (poor in spirit) people are happy and blessed**

1. Salt and light people are spiritually happy (fulfilled) because they accomplish the purpose for which God created them. Salt salts food; light lights darkness!
2. Persons who go above and beyond the call of duty (who serve others more than the minimum expected or demanded) are happy (fulfilled) because other people who are affected recognize their godly motivation and glorify the Father in heaven.
3. Salt and light, second-mile persons are making deposits in their bank account in heaven; they may be poor and humble materially, but they will be wealthy in the life to come. Realization of this spiritual reality brings true happiness (blessedness).
4. Salt and light, second-mile, spiritual investors are pilgrims on the right road, leading to life. They experience in the "here-and-now" the abundant, bubbling, overflowing spiritual life Jesus described in John 10:10.

## **V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .**

1. Discover my divine destiny, my purpose in life . . . my reason for living . . . my salt and light function within my circle of influence.
2. In Jesus' name, always do more than the minimum required of me . . . whether at home, in school, at work, or in my community. Surprise other people with a sincere willingness to be kind and thoughtful; genuinely be helpful and considerate.
3. Know through experience the truth of Jesus' statement, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," Acts 20:35. (Be a cheerful giver, not a grabby taker in life.)
4. Enjoy my daily walk with Jesus on the "straight and narrow," keeping an eye on the future rather than on my instant gratification. (It may be a little lonely, but I need to remember that if, "Everybody's doing it" . . . it's probably wrong!)

# **From Mourning to Morning**

## **I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:4**

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

## **II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications**

1. Matt. 5:23-26, Reconciliation (leave gift at altar) - interpersonal conflicts (including law suits) cause emotional distress (pain and sorrow).
2. Matt. 5:31-32, Divorce - a broken home is a major cause of emotional distress.
3. Matt. 6:16-18, Fasting - sorrow often is connected to fasting; a person fasts because he is too upset to eat and/or as a spiritual exercise associated with prayer.
4. Matt. 6:25-32, Trust in God (don't worry) - worry often is connected with sorrow (emotional distress), but Christians should trust God and receive His comfort.

## **III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude**

Conflicts among persons (law suits, divorce, etc.) interfere with genuine spiritual worship of God, so Christians should take the initiative to seek reconciliation. Such serious emotional distress (sorrow; mourning) should lead a believer into fasting and a deeper level of faith in God's grace, which brings divine peace and comfort.

## **IV. Illustration: on how sorrowing people are happy and blessed**

1. Persons who immediately seek reconciliation (as soon as a breach in fellowship occurs) are putting themselves into a position to truly worship God (by presenting an offering to Him); thus, these persons are blessed spiritually.
2. Jesus warned about the seriousness of divorce, which is a major cause of sorrow, mourning, emotional pain, and mental/spiritual distress in families. All of God's commands (i.e. adultery; divorce) magnify His ideals and are given for our own good, blessing, and happiness. However, in His love and mercy, God promises to give comfort even in the case of family disruption and divorce.
3. Just as fasting eventually gives way to feasting, so also the darkness of mourning turns into the light of morning. God promised this!
4. Worry is unnecessary (v. 26), unproductive (v. 27), untrusting (v. 30), and un-Christian (v. 32). Trust in God; He is trustworthy!

## **V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .**

1. Fulfill my ministry as an agent of God's reconciliation, II Cor. 5:18-21.
2. Magnify the importance of godly relationships within the home, and guard against a bitter, unforgiving spirit toward others . . . especially within my family.
3. Practice the spiritual discipline of fasting in order: (1) to focus my thoughts on God's word, (2) to allow God to reveal Himself to me personally, (3) to bring myself to repentance and deliverance, and (4) to receive victory over temptation, and power for effective ministry through the Holy Spirit.
4. Quit worrying and start trusting completely in the Lord, "Casting all my cares upon Him, for He cares for me," I Pet. 5:7.

## Notes

# **Meekness Is Not Weakness**

## **I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:5**

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

## **II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications**

1. Matt. 5:21-22, Self-control (anger; murder).
2. Matt. 5:33-37, Guard speech (oaths).
3. Matt. 6:24, Undivided service (serving two masters).
4. Matt. 7:21-27, Wise man built a house on the rock (hear and obey).

## **III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude**

Meekness means being yielded or "broken" as a wild horse is tamed to accept direction from a rider. A "gentle" horse is not a weak animal, but one that is submissive to the bit and bridle. This is a definite act of the will . . . a deliberate choosing to allow God's will to be done, regardless of circumstances. It is complete, unconditional surrender. Such yieldedness (meekness) includes allowing one's temper and speech to come under God's control. It is a decision to serve God, without any mental reservation or thought of compromising to serve materialism or some other Satanic idol. It is true spiritual wisdom: hearing and obeying the words of Jesus Christ . . . building one's life upon the principles taught by the Son of God.

## **IV. Illustration: on how meek (yielded) people are happy and blessed**

1. Jesus' teachings fulfilled (filled full of meaning) the law of Moses (Matt. 5:17), which included more than a prohibition against murder. Jesus went to the heart of the matter: the act of murder has its roots in evil thoughts and emotions (anger, vengeance, retaliation). The happy, blessed heart is completely yielded to God.
2. The tongue also must be yielded to God. Swearing (trying to bolster one's speech with oaths or curse-words) is a sin because it comes "from the evil one," Matt. 5:37. A sanctified tongue blesses and edifies others. See James 3:1-12.
3. Wishy-washy fence-straddling (trying to serve two masters) is not meekness, but stupidity! In fact, according to Jesus, it's an impossibility: "You cannot serve God and mammon (riches)," Matt. 6:24. Spiritual happiness (blessedness) involves an undivided loyalty to Christ.
4. Yieldedness (meekness; submission) is a mark of a truly wise person, one who heeds (hears and does) his master's words. The "house" of such a wise person is blessed; it can withstand all the storms of life.

## **V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .**

1. Submit my heart and mind to God's control.
2. Watch my mouth! . . . speak only blessings, not cursings.
3. Choose to set my mind on serving Christ . . . always and in all ways.
4. Hear and obey the Lord's words, and live in peace and security (blessedness).

## Notes

# **Satisfying Your Appetite**

## **I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:6**

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

## **II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications**

1. Matt. 5:17-20, Law is eternal (righteousness must exceed the Pharisees').
2. Matt. 6:5-15, Prayer (Christ's model and commentary).
3. Matt. 6:33-34, Primacy of the kingdom (seek God's righteousness first).
4. Matt. 7:7-11, Divine benevolence (ask, seek, knock for the Father's good gifts).

## **III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude**

God abundantly blesses the person who has a deep spiritual longing (appetite) for Him, a desire to be right with both God and man, a desire that far surpasses the legalism of the Pharisees. In making this point, Jesus gives His disciples a simple, unpretentious model prayer including a double emphasis on giving and receiving genuine forgiveness. Seeking God's kingdom (His rule) and righteousness must be given top priority, and when this "hunger and thirst" is present in a person's heart, the heavenly Father fills us with the good gifts for which we ask, seek, and knock.

## **IV. Illustration: on how hungry and thirsty persons are happy and blessed**

1. Persons with a deep spiritual appetite for God's righteousness obey His laws, but they do more than legalistically keeping the letter of the law; Jesus not only kept the law, He filled it full of new meaning . . . teaching and exhibiting the inner, spiritual aspects of God's will and purpose . . . we should do likewise!
2. Jesus' eight-point model prayer focused on God, not on receiving praises of men for voicing a "beautiful prayer"; the one point He emphasized is the key to true happiness and blessedness . . . forgiveness of others, which puts us in the position of receiving God's forgiveness and enjoying our spiritual relationship with him.
3. Putting God first in our lives (trusting Him completely) removes all worry and allows Him to bless us with peace and contentment.
4. God the Father is ready, willing, and able to supply all the needs of His children; in fact, even more than an earthly father, He loves us and gives us what is best.

## **V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .**

1. Obey God without falling into the trap of legalism, realizing that behind every law is a divine benevolent purpose motivated by love; I need to exemplify this spirit.
2. Use the Lord's outline when I pray, carefully examining my heart to see whether I am practicing toward others the same spirit of forgiveness I am asking from God.
3. Quit worrying and start trusting God with the small details of my life just as I am trusting Him to take care of the big things . . . like my salvation.
4. Be persistent when I ask, seek, knock in prayer, claiming the promise that I shall indeed receive, find, and have the door opened for me; remember that Father God loves me and that He will give me all I need . . . whatever I ask for if it's good for me . . . and He knows what's best for my life.

# **What Goes Around, Comes Around**

## **I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:7**

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

## **II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications**

1. Matt. 5:38-40, Non-resistance (give your coat).
2. Matt. 5:43-47, Universal love (how to treat enemies).
3. Matt. 6:1-4, Almsgiving (charity).
4. Matt. 7:1-5, Charitableness (do not judge).

## **III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude**

God blesses persons who have compassionate, merciful hearts, and Jesus showed such a spirit by literally turning the other cheek and by giving up his garments to the soldiers who crucified Him. He showed mercy to His enemies (refusing to call upon the angels to take vengeance), and He demands no less than a similar loving response from His disciples. However, such charitable acts must not be done for show or for the approval of man! Furthermore, showing mercy exhibits a Christ-like spirit that is the opposite of judgmentalism. Whatever we "dish out" to others will be warmed over and served to us tomorrow . . . whether it is meanness, gossip, criticism, and condemnation . . . or compassion, kindness, grace, and mercy.

## **IV. Illustration: on how merciful people are happy and blessed**

1. Persons who refuse to retaliate when they are insulted (slapped in the face), and who without resistance give up more than is demanded by a plaintiff in a lawsuit, have the sure promise of God that they will be spiritually blessed.
2. While we were His sinful enemies, Christ loved and died for us, Rom. 5:8. This merciful act gives Him the right to call us to join Him in the blessed privilege of loving, helping, and praying for our enemies who hate, curse, and persecute us.
3. There is a genuine joy and an inexplicable delight in giving anonymously. Try it! The Father in heaven sees and rewards such merciful acts of charity.
4. Jesus does not forbid our giving of honest critical opinions nor our condemnation of wrongdoing. What He does forbid ("Judge not!") is the harsh and mean spirit of faultfinding that overlooks one's own shortcomings while assuming the role of the supreme judge with regard to the sins of others. (Judging is God's job.) So, if we do not show mercy to others, we will not be shown mercy . . . and vice versa!

## **V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .**

1. Learn to "take it" (insults and cursing) as an act of mercy . . . and worship.
2. Love, bless, serve, and pray for those people who do just the opposite to me.
3. From time to time, secretly give to meet someone's acute need, enjoying the spiritual blessing of watching as they give all the praise to God.
4. Be a "fruit inspector," but first check the quality of my own character. What about my Spirit-fruit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control"? (Gal. 5:22-23) Is it juicy and fresh, or dry and rotten?

## Notes

# Seeing Beyond Sight

## I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:8

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

## II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications

1. Matt. 5:27-30, Inward purity (lust; adultery).
2. Matt. 5:48, Divine standard (be perfect).
3. Matt. 6:22-23, Spiritual vision (eye; light).
4. Matt. 7:15-20, Fruit test of life (false prophets).

## III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude

Persons who think pure thoughts, who love the things that are holy, and who act in purity and holiness are truly blessed by God. They are divinely endowed with the ability to see God, to comprehend His will, to understand His purposes, and to perceive his plan of destiny for their lives. Such "pure in heart" disciples realize that outward sins originate from within (adultery is the evil plant growing from the bad seed of lust). They strive through the grace of God to attain spiritual maturity (perfection) . . . to grow "into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," Eph. 4:13. Their "eye" (spiritual perception) is full of divine enlightenment, and they can see the difference between true and false prophets, between good and bad fruit. Genuine spiritual happiness is the fulfillment of I Jn. 3:2: "We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

## IV. Illustration: on how "pure in heart" people are blessed and happy

1. Christians who guard their thoughts (including what they read and what they watch on TV and the internet) are blessed with the assurance that their intimate fellowship with God is unimpeded.
2. Although sinless perfection is impossible in this life, there is spiritual joy in our making an honest attempt to live a life of purity and holiness before God, and in the realization that when we do sin, God's forgiveness is available for us, I Jn. 1:9.
3. Spiritual enlightenment brings the blessing and happiness of being able to see into the spiritual realm, rather than stumbling around blindly in the darkness.
4. There is spiritual joy and contentment in being able to perceive, through divine revelation, whether a prophet's teaching is true or false, and in being able to discern the difference between grapes and thorns, between figs and thistles.

## V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .

1. Watch my spiritual diet (what I read, see, think about, and meditate upon) just as carefully as I watch the sugar, salt, etc. contained in my food and beverages.
2. Constantly keep in mind the thoughts, words, and deeds of Jesus as my pattern, asking myself in every situation and circumstance: "What would Jesus do?"
3. Remember that my eyes are the windows to my soul; keep them clear and clean.
4. Function as a "fruit inspector" within my circle of influence, being very careful to distinguish, teach, and model the difference between right and wrong, Ezek. 44:23.

## Notes

# **Peacemaking Is a Battle**

## **I. Concentration: on Matt. 5:9**

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

## **II. Meditation: on Christ's Illustrations and Applications**

1. Matt. 5:10-12, Suffering persecution (blessed).
2. Matt. 5:42, Benevolence, (give to the borrower).
3. Matt. 7:6, Stewardship of truth (pearls before swine).
4. Matt. 7:12, Golden Rule (do good unto others).

## **III. Revelation: on Christ's main point of this beatitude**

Just as the merciful find mercy, so also the peacemakers find peace . . . God's blessing, contentment, and happiness. This beatitude encompasses what we do (our function in Christ's kingdom) as a spiritual result of who we are (citizens of Christ's kingdom). Our ministry is peacemaking: helping persons to find peace with God, peace with other individuals, and inner peace. Often this ministry leads to conflict and opposition, to persecution and suffering . . . which, God promises, will produce His blessing and happiness, as exemplified in the lives of Old Testament prophets.

Peacemaking involves lending to those in need without expecting or demanding repayment. Peacemaking also involves using discrimination in presenting God's truths to those who exhibit a contemptuous, blasphemous, and malevolent attitude toward the holy things of God; "casting pearls before swine" (totally uninterested pagans) not only cheapens the gospel message but also endangers the messengers. The Golden Rule summarizes all that Christ requires of us in our relationships with others . . . it's the Sermon on the Mount in a nutshell: it's God's new law of love!

## **IV. Illustration: on how peacemakers are happy and blessed**

1. Peacemakers, who suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness, experience the mysterious joy and fulfillment of doing God's will, and like Jesus, suffering for it.
2. Cheerfully giving, without any expectancy of being repaid, brings God's blessing.
3. Perceiving the glorious worth of the gospel entrusted to us is its own reward.
4. Genuine blessedness comes from disciples being pro-active rather than re-active; there is spiritual joy in taking the good-deed initiative, "doing unto others" before they have done anything for us. Demonstrating God's love to others is fun!

## **V. Applications: as a Christian, I need to . . .**

1. Make peace with my Lord, then share His peace with others by actively helping persons come to know the "Prince of Peace," and to live at peace with each other.
2. Receive God's blessings with an open hand (not a grasping hand) . . . passing His blessings along to others in need.
3. Be spiritually perceptive enough to follow the Holy Spirit's guidance regarding when to speak the word of God to unbelievers and when to remain silent.
4. Choose to live by the Golden Rule . . . always and in all ways.

## **Beatitudes**

Poor in spirit

Mourn

Meek

Hunger/Thirst

Merciful

Pure in heart

Peacemakers

Persecuted

## **Life-skills**

Self-esteem

Stress Management

Coping

Decision-making

Problem solving

Communications

Conflict resolution

Values

