

# **BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO ARE MEEK & WHO HUNGER AND THIRST**

**Week #2 of a 4-Week Series on the Beatitudes: "Attitudes of Being"**

**Sunday, May 28, 2023**

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*So God was missing for six days. And then the Archangel Michael found him resting on the seventh day and inquired of God, "Where have you been?"*

*And God sighed a deep sigh of satisfaction and excitement, and he pointed down through the clouds and said, "Look, Michael! Look what I've made!"*

*And the Archangel said, "What is it?"*

*He said, "It's a planet! And I've put life on it, and I'm going to call it Earth and it is going to be a place of great balance.*

*"Balance?" Michael inquired.*

*God said, "Yes! There will be some countries with great wealth and opportunity and some with poverty and lack; there'll be high elevations and low elevations; big animals, small animals; fair-skinned, dark-skinned ... I mean, everything! There will be balance in all things!" And he said, "This one will be extremely hot; this one will be cold. This one will be covered with ice"*

*And the Archangel said, "Wow; that's nice! But what's that one?"*

*And God said, "Ah; that's the state of Washington." [Congregation laughs] "That is going to be the most glorious place on Earth. There will be beautiful mountains and rivers and streams and lakes and forests and hills and plains ... people from Washington State are going to be intelligent, hard-working and modest. They're going to be known for their honesty and integrity and working for the common good. They will be highly respected all over that nation and the world."*

*And Michael gasped in wonder and admiration and said, "But God, what about the balance? You said there'd be balance!"*

*And God smiled and said, "Well, there will be another Washington." [Congregation laughs] "Wait 'til you what the people I put there!"*

[Congregation laughs] Anyway. Alright; bad joke.

So how many people have ever felt like your life was out of balance? Anybody ever? How many people have ever been stubborn, rigid or inflexible? [Congregation murmurs] And then how many people have ever been uncertain and unsure about what you wanted in some aspect of your life? Anybody? Alright.

So today we're in Week #2 of our four-week series on the Beatitudes, which are the eight first statements that lead into Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. These Beatitudes hold in them the general summary of the entire teachings of Jesus. These eight statements really represent eight states of mind. The Beatitudes: that actually means "the blessedness of life." They are the eight states of mind that open up the blessedness of life if we are able to achieve that level of consciousness and mindset.

It's kind of tough sometimes to understand the depth and the profound wisdom in the Beatitudes, because the language that Jesus spoke -- Aramaic -- was transferred into Greek and then to English. And so there's some things that just kind of get lost. Some of those words that it was translated into don't quite fit or make sense to us in our modern culture ... like "poor in spirit" and "meek." Those things we don't really connect and think about being blessed.

Neal Douglas Klotz says the Bible translation misses layers of meaning that creates a sense of separation between God, nature and humanity. That the Aramaic approach is a holistic approach. It doesn't have sharp lines defining ends and means and inner and outer. So when you hear "the kingdom of heaven," that is within and without. When you hear about a neighbor, that is without and within. And the self is within and without.

So there's a lot more richness and depth in the meaning of these Scriptures and lines, but you have to contemplate and meditate and study them, and assimilate them at a deeper level, to extract the richness and the blessedness that can come with achieving those states of mind.

And so last week we looked at, **"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."** And "poor in spirit" really means to empty one's self: to empty one's self of our ego; to empty one's self of our attachments; our need to be right and to be in control; and to allow ourselves to be filled with awareness with the expanding potential of God that's within us. To fill ourselves with the awareness that the kingdom of heaven is within us and all around us.

Here's one possible translation from the Aramaic. It says:

*"Happy and aligned with the One are those who find their home in breathing; to them belongs the inner kingdom and queendom of heaven."*

And I love that line, *"Who find their home in breathing."* The word "breath" comes from the word meaning spirit -- "spiritus." And so to find our home and to be centered in the breath. And the cool thing about the breath: It can actually help us get to a place of being "poor in spirit" -- emptying ourselves and also feel filled with the Spirit.

So everyone take a deep breath and, as you exhale, I just won't you to empty yourself, okay? So exhale. Deep breath again. As you exhale, just let go and surrender to God. One more time: Deep breath in; exhale and just open yourself fully to Spirit.

And now as you breath in: Breathe in the life of God. Breathe in the light of life. And breathe in the awareness that the kingdom of heaven is within you and all around you. Deep breath.

So Beatitude #1 is, **"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."**

And the second one is, **"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."** And this is important, because Jesus said, "In this life there will be trials and tribulations." There will be loss; there will be hurt; there will be struggles and pain that we go through. Jesus wept! And this is saying: Express your emotions and process them. Don't bury them. Don't bottle them up; that will block the flow of love and peace and joy and goodness in our lives.

This Beatitude -- **"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted"** -- really is a message that there is a process of healing. There is the process of overcoming and renewal when you're willing to process your emotion and feel your feelings.

A translation would be:

*"Healed are those who weep for their frustrated desires, for they shall see the face of fulfillment in a new form."*

That if you move through the grieving process, there is new life; new possibilities. But you have to go through the process! You have to be willing to feel to heal.

Today we're going to look at two more. And that is:

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

*and*

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

So let's start with, *"Blessed are the meek ..."*

So "meek" really conveys the idea of weak; timid; passive; soft. And being meek does not exactly sound like the ticket to success and happiness that wants to have. It's not a word that any of us really resonate with. But I think it is powerful! In the Aramaic translation, "meek" would be:

*"Blessed are those who soften the rigidity within themselves."*

I really don't think that meek is weak; I actually think that it is the symbol of strength: the strength that comes with being humble and gentle. It is a soft, centered strength. It is a humble, gentle strength that helps us to soften the rigidity within ourselves.

And I would say two forms of strength this idea of meekness represents: number one, I think it is the strength to have self-awareness. Eckhart Tolle said that the first thing that is needed if we want to change and transform our lives is to be aware of what isn't working. Be aware of what doesn't feel right. Aware of where we're hurting.

So I ask you: Where in your life are you a bit rigid? Or closed off? Where in your life have you put up a wall? Where in your life are you holding yourself back in some way? Where in your life are you inflexible and not letting things in? That is a powerful strength: To be meek -- to have the self-awareness to know where those parts of our lives are -- is the beginning to being liberated and healed and transformed in those areas. It is the beginning of being free to be inspired with new ideas and possibilities and greater perspectives and greater levels of peace.

Einstein said that ideas came to him after he relaxed and stopped forcing and stressing things. As we soften, things begin to flow with greater ease in our lives. And to soften begins by using the power and the strength of self-awareness.

The second type of strength that I think meekness shows in this context is the strength of self-control and self-discipline. Self-control and self-discipline, I will say, is an absolute vital key to a happy and successful life ... so much so that in 2 Timothy it says:

*"God did not give us a spirit of fear and timidity, but a spirit of power, love and self-discipline."*

Think about that! Love, of course, would be in the top three. Power! But did you think about self-discipline as being one of the top three things that are great? And the truth is: It is! If you want success in any area of your life, it absolutely requires self-control and self-discipline.

How many people have ever been on a diet and you couldn't keep it? You went off? [Congregation laughs] Exercise: you need self-discipline. A meditation practice: you need discipline. You want to have success in your job: you need self-control and self-discipline. You want to develop good habits? It requires self-discipline. This is a powerful thing is what it's saying here! It doesn't sound sexy, but it's powerful and it's real. And it is absolutely invaluable.

Another aspect of self-control comes in terms of our relationships. To develop a level of self-control where we show restraint; where we show patience; where we show a willingness to understand; a willingness to listen; a willingness to not take things personally. Because that helps us avoid conflict and misunderstanding and resentments that build up. Self-control is a powerful thing. This meekness gives us a soft-centered level of strength and power for self-awareness and self-control.

And what happens when we get there? It says we shall inherit the earth! This doesn't mean you're going to get a piece of real estate or property! [Congregation laughs] As lovely as that idea is! But in Aramaic, the word "inherit" emphasizes this idea that we share some of the same substance with nature. That we are connected and a part of nature. So that we are entitled to the natural abundance that is in nature and is in life.

And in Aramaic, nature is seen as a living force, not just separate collections of things: that mountain; that ocean; that bush or tree. Nature is considered a living force that we are a part of. And as we are meek and soften with self-awareness and self-control, that we will receive all the natural abundance that life and the life force has available to all of us. Okay, here's a translation:

*"Ripening towards those who soften what's overly rigid within them, they will naturally absorb the power, the abundance and the healing, their sustainable inheritance from nature."*

So this is some really, really powerful stuff. This meekness is really a symbol of strength and power that comes with being humble. And self-awareness and self-control, I would say, are two of the greatest things we need in a mindset to experience the fullness and the blessedness of life.

The second one that we're going to look at today is, *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."*

In Aramaic, this Beatitude shares an idea of an image of one watching by night; waiting by lamplight for something to happen. And it is this kind of desire -- waiting for something to happen -- that creates a vortex of possibility that draws that object of the heart. And so the idea of hunger and thirst -- to be hungry; to want to be fed; to sustain the life force and the physical being; to thirst; to hydrate and replenish -- is an important aspect of what it's trying to say. It is trying to express this idea that we have this incredible creative power through desire and intention.

If you look at the chronology of these things, first it's saying to empty yourself to have a blessed life. Mourn and go through that healing process. Soften where you're overly rigid. Develop a level of self-awareness and self-control. And the next thing it's really saying is: So what do you want now? What is your heart hungering for? What are you thirsting for? What are you truly longing for? To attract and to have and to manifest in your life?

You know, sometimes I think we don't really know what we want. We can say what we don't want very quickly. Or sometimes we can just hit the usual things, like "I want more money; I wanted a nicer car; I want a bigger house." You know, there are all kinds of things that we can attract and have in our lives.

But the question is: What is your heart hungering for? What is your soul yearning for? What is that thing that you've been called here to do? What is that thing that you've been holding back that you are a little afraid to fully step out and commit yourself to? What would make your life more full? What would make your life fulfilling?

I think it's such an important thing. You know, when Scripture says, "Ask and ye shall receive," there's always this underlying thing that says: Take time to consider what it is you're seeking; where you're knocking; what you are desiring to have in your life.

In Aramaic, "righteousness" creates a sense of inner balance and "rightness." Have you ever felt like something was kind of "off" in your life? Or "off" in a situation that you were in? This is about calling for an inner balance and a rightness. And it says, "of honesty and justness." That balance is something that we all seek in our lives. And that is our nature; we want to get back to center. We want to get back to balance in all ways, including balancing the inner with the outer.

Neal Douglas Klotz says this:

*"In moments when we experience inner honesty and outer justice of rightness, ripe intention and ripe action, this creation reveals itself around us. The strength of our intention -- equal to being hungry and thirsty -- makes a big difference in the way that we perceive and deal with everything that appears outside of us."*

So what he's really talking about is a balance: as within, so without. And it's talking about the power that we all have for desire and intention.

So my question for you is: What is your desire? What is your intention for your life? What is your intention for your work? What is your intention for your relationship? What is your intention for how you want to live today?

In Unity, when I came to Unity and I heard the word "righteousness," somebody said that righteousness means "the right useness of your mind." And I thought that was kind of cool! That praying for righteousness is praying for the right use of our minds and our mental faculties.

Do you remember in Scripture when it says:

*"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer"?*

It's calling for the right use of our words; our thoughts; and our minds; and what we meditate on. Emmett Fox says:

*"The importance of hungering for righteousness is vital, because the great Law in the universe is what we think and hold in our minds will produce in our lives."*

He writes:

*"If it were possible for us to affect our lives directly without changing our thoughts or our attitudes or our mindset, it means that we could think one thing and produce another. That we could think hate, but only produce love. That we could think anger, but only produce peace. That we could think failure and only produce success. We could think negativity and only produce positivity."*

And so what it's saying is that, when we need to hunger and thirst for righteousness, it's important to hunger and thirst for the consciousness and the mindset that we need to bring forth those things into our lives. It's one thing to pray for a great relationship; it's another thing to hunger and thirst for the consciousness of someone being a better partner.

Or the hunger and thirst for someone being more prosperous. Or living a life of purpose and meaning. Or living a life of wealth or joy. It's the consciousness behind the activity that is a vital and important thing!

The Apostle Paul said two things that really inspire me. The first one is:

*"Let the same mind that was in Christ Jesus be in you."*

That our hunger needs to be to attain the Christ consciousness: the same mind that was in Christ Jesus. That God Mind.

He also said:

*"Do not conform to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind."*

Sometimes our minds get distracted. Sometimes we think all kinds of negative things or hurtful things to ourselves and others. And when we are in that place, what it's saying is: Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. That sometimes when we're stuck in negativity, we need to pray for a renewed mind. We

need to pray for that consciousness of positivity and abundance and good and joy and love and forgiveness to re-enter our mind.

We're all going to drift. We're all going to struggle. That's why I love this renewing of the mind! We all need our minds renewed. Hungering and thirsting for a renewed mind is an important thing.

And it says that when we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we shall be filled. That when there is a sincere desire for the right consciousness; the right mindset; the right thought and attitude, that we will be filled.

In Aramaic, to be filled means a contained holding a new creation. That new creations are possible for us. This is a powerful, powerful, powerful Beatitude! It says the power of your intention and the right thinking will attract new and greater things to your life.

How many people here have been to Niagara Falls? Alright! Did you know that Niagara Falls has 3,160 tons of water falling a minute? A minute! Oh, actually, I'm sorry; a second! [Congregation laughs] But here's the interesting thing: Over 750,000 gallons per second; 681 of them are on the Canadian side, and 75 are on the American side! Okay; all Canadians know that. So we always like. No, just kidding ...

It's 12,000 years old and all this power has been there kind of almost wasted. I mean, just falling -- and being entertaining and nice to see. But it wasn't until 1882 that they harnessed and channeled that, bringing and guiding and directing that water to turn those turbines to create electricity.

Here's the analogy: We have incredible spiritual power. The Beatitudes are like those turbines: That when we channel and direct our spiritual energy and our consciousness and our mindset where it's directed, we can create light in our lives and in our world. We can create greater blessings and abundance.

One thing that I want you to not forget is that meekness is not weakness. It is a valuable, understated, softened strength that every one of us has. And we need to use it for self-awareness: to see those areas where we're rigid, so we can be liberated from them to attract the natural abundance of life. And to have greater self-control: the discipline that's needed to have success in any and every area of our lives.

And finally, hunger and thirst for righteousness. For the consciousness and the mindset for that which you desire to have. Because through your intention and desire, you have the power to create and fill your life with new and greater things.

And those are the two mindsets that can bring us into a greater level of blessedness in all areas of our lives.

God bless you all!

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