

## The Kingdom Part 5:

Matt. 5:3-12

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

*4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

*5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

*6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

*7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*

*8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

*9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

*10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.*

*12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

## **Recap;**

Our Lord said that :

*My Kingdom is not of this world*

*Or the Kingdom is not something you observe!*

He said His kingdom was something far greater than something that lines your stomach, far greater than something armies could fight for, far greater than a political position, a successful business, or a ministry.

*The Kingdom of God is within you.*

That is, inside of you.

The Kingdom of God is according to Our Lord's own definition:

*God's rule and reign in man's heart through Jesus Christ.*

Simply put, the Kingdom is God's redemptive action through the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **The Word Blessed:**

The Greek word used here is an adjective, it means, chance, good-luck, well off, it means happy.

Now the translators and commentators seem to have a real challenge with that.

But 'happy' is what Jesus said.

It is an old Greek word that talks largely of an outward manifestation, or outward prosperity.

This word 'happy' is about the outward manifestation that happens because of an inward revelation.

## **We have so far looked at Mid-point change.**

I made mention of a change that happens at this mid-point in the Manifesto of His Kingdom.

The first four points or principles of the Kingdom are focused on our relationship with the King of this Kingdom.

The next four are concerned with our interaction as representatives of the Kingdom to those around us.

One set is God's works in us; the next set is our work on His behalf as citizens of His Kingdom.

## **Happy Are the Merciful, For They Shall Obtain Mercy:**

To be **merciful** means to be actively compassionate.

To obtain **mercy** means to receive or experience mercy.

To have help brought to you in a time of need.

So we can read this as:

*Happy are those that are actively compassionate for in their time of need they shall receive the help they are desperate for.*

## **Happy Are The Pure in Heart; For They Shall See God:**

Everyone will see God.

But some, when they behold Him will meet Him for the first time as judge and not as a well loved and known friend.

To see someone 'face to face' was a term amongst the Jews that meant someone had great favor.

They often used it in terms of relationship to royalty.

It was a great honor to be ushered into the presence of the king and to be permitted to see him.

Only the favorites and the friends of the king could look upon his face.

To see God here means just that.

To see God here means that we are His friend and favorite.

Now think about the implications of this.

I do.

I have always longed to be counted as special and beloved in the eyes of God...haven't you?

Haven't you longed to know that you are special in your Fathers eyes?

Have you ever desired to know that you are loved above all others??

My kids do.

They all went through a stage asking me if they were the favorite.

And as their father I have told them for years and will continue to tell them:

'You're my favorite big girl'  
'You're my favorite little girl'  
'You're my favorite son.'

We may have guest in our house but they never have the favor that the children do.

I may have known many people, but there are a few who can call me any time and ask anything, and if I have it, they have it.....they are friends.

*Happy are the pure in heart for they shall be the favorites and friends of God.*

Don't be a guest in God's house.  
Don't try and be a guest in His Kingdom.

Why be a guest when you can be a friend and a favorite?

When you and I read this or maybe have heard it preached, we often do so as the Pharisees would have.

They would have emphasized the 'pure' and not the heart.

But that is not the focus of this passage.

Our Lord is not interested in sacrifice, but obedience.

It is the heart that is the focus here, not the issue of personal perfection as we have been led to believe.

The main focus here is the condition and the statue of the person and the heart they have before God, not the sterility of the lifestyle. Not the total absence of foreign matter, or polluting matter from their life.

Jesus constantly taught that purity is determined not by what goes into a person but what comes out of a person as a result of who they are.

Think about this.

Pornography does not defile a person, the lust and lack of restraint has already defiled them.

They are just choosing to use pornography in the same way as others use food, or exercise or work or television.

The condition is a pre-existing condition.

It is something that is already present and will always be present within them.

Holiness is an external manifestation of an internal work.

So is purity.

To the pure all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure.

George Boardem says:

*'It is the heart that gives character to circumstances rather than circumstances that give character to the heart.'*

So who then are these people who are the favorites of God?

Who are those people?

Who are the pure?

Who are these that are called friends of God?

## What does pure mean?

### What It Is Not:

Well first of all what is it not?

This is not a promise only open to perfect people.

No person in this life is free from sin.

The decision made by Adam and Eve as seen to that.

Their decision to:

1. *Desire that which was not of God.*
2. *Doubt the will of God.*
3. *Disobey the Word of God.*

Their response to the command of God led to the fall of man when they committed the original sin.

Now this original sin was not something that just affected them, it affected them AND all of mankind from that point forward.

Paul says:

*'All have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God.'*

And

*'There is none righteous, no not one.'*

This is something that happens at the point of conception, we do not become sinners after our first sin, and we are born sinners.

David wrote a Psalm after her had sex with Bathsheba, and killed her husband and was confronted by the prophet Nathan.

He said:

*Psalms 51:5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."*

Now this does not mean that David's mother was involved in lewd behavior.

It means for the first time in his life, he is sitting there looking back over who he is and he realizes the source of every issue he has ever faced lies within him, not outside of him.

The original sin by Adam and Eve led to a condition within the heart of man that is called-

Total Depravity

or Total corruption

or Absolute inability

Now don't get confused here...these terms simply mean that-

- mankind is totally separated from God with no way to find Him without being guided
- Or man has no way to cry out to God by himself
- And he has no desire for God unless God puts it in him

These are the condition of the heart before we are saved  
There are some Christians that do not believe this

They believe that we are all born good and don't know sin until we commit our first sin, the problem with this thought is it not Biblical, it might be 'pretty' or 'warm and fuzzy' but it is not scriptural.

J.I. Packer in his book Concise Theology says that:

*'Total depravity signifies a corruption of our moral and spiritual nature that is total, not in degree, (no one is as bad as we could be) but in extent, It declares that no part of us is untouched by sin.*

*We cannot earn God's favor, no matter what we do, unless grace saves us, we are lost.*

Arthur Pink put it this way, we have all been touched by the:

Pollution,  
the power  
and the penalty of sin.

So Jesus when Jesus says -

*Happy are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

He is not talking about someone who is sinless and perfect.  
He is not saying that only a certain small percent of Christians that get their life together will be able to stand in His presence.

Remember that the Beatitudes are not a path of works that lead to salvation.

This entire passage of scripture has nothing to with salvation.

They are guidelines for sanctification.

They are guidelines that help us know how a Christian should live and conduct themselves.

Now I want to spend sometime on this in response to a statement I made last week.

Since I mentioned my desire to have a home for unwed mothers, so that we are doing our part for there never to be a need for a baby to be aborted again, I have received offers from at least 5 women in our church to help anyone in that position, none want to see another person go through one.

I have had at least 4 offers from families who would be prepared to adopt a child than see it aborted.

Gentlemen, if you have ever been actively involved in helping a women have an abortion, by encouraging her, or not encouraging her, you will have grappled with guilt and shame for as long as she has, it is something to be talked about, not denied.

And there are many women and men who wonder what happened to their child as a result of their abortion or an early death.

One of the challenges of having a theology that says you have to first approach God is that what do we do about babies and small children who die prematurely? What do we do with babies that are aborted?

I have a friend whose wife is a pro-life advocate and he is a word of faith denominational guy, as apposed to a Christian who believes the word of faith, and they told me that they don't care what the Bible says about Absolute Corruption because then that would mean that all children and babies would go to hell if they were aborted or died young.

The circles that they are from have developed a new theology to handle this...and this is where it gets complicated for people once you start to make up a patch quilt theology.

They now say that a baby isn't a sinner till it sins and only God knows when it sins and that only from that point on are they held accountable for their sin.

There are two outcomes from this statement

1. All babies conceived are sinless and immediately qualify to go to heaven.

Or

2. That all children who die in infancy or as young children after they have committed their first rebellious act would go to hell because there are unable to make a choice of their own will to become Christians.

Here are my problems with this line of thought:

1. Would we NOT all be hoping that all our children die early so they are guaranteed a place in glory? That sounds a little weird and cultish to me.
2. My children committed their first rebellious act at 8 months old...how does that work? They have no way of acknowledging the drawing of God to salvation.

Let us deal with this issue scripturally and theologically instead of irrationally and purely emotionally.

So there are essentially two groups of people who preach either:

A child who dies goes to hell because they are not chosen by God.

Or

A child goes to hell because they did not choose God

Or

An aborted baby goes to hell because of the sins of the mother and father.

And if it this is not preached directly it is felt so by the parents.

All of these points of views are perversion in someway or another, of these great exaltation that the pure in heart shall see God.

So let me tell you what I told a young lady from our church that had an abortion when she was 16 years of age.

What does the bible say about babies who die early either by our own hand or through other circumstances?

Ready?

Here we go...

Nothing.

It does not address the issue at all.

So in the absence of a direct statement from scripture on a topic what we look at is the general tenor of scripture and I always look at what the church fathers have said down through church history.

Spurgeon says this misconception of babies going to hell because they were not chosen by God or did not choose God is:

*“The wickedest false statement and the basest lie ever uttered”:*

He goes on and says:

“We say, with regard to infants, Scripture saith but very little, and therefore where Scripture is confessedly scant, it is for no man to determine dogmatically...

Rev. Dr. Alexander Nowell, an English puritan who lived in the late 1500s said:

“I testified my firm belief that the souls of all departed infants are with God in glory; that in the decree of predestination to life, God hath included all whom he decreed to take away in infancy, and that the decree of reprobation hath nothing to do with them.”

Now think through this statement:

*That in the decree of predestination to life,  
God hath included all whom he decreed to take away in  
infancy,*

God knew that you would have an abortion.

That your father, boyfriend or even husband, or even yourself, out of selfishness would one day do what you have lived every day to regret.

God knew that a child would die early and be taken away.

Now that might not ease the sense of human loss you have, a sense of grief, but it answers a human condition with a divine answer.

As Spurgeon rightly observes, the scripture says very little about the subject at all and so we cannot be dogmatic, but I believe that the whole tenor of Scripture would point us in the direction that little children dying in infancy are saved by God's sovereign ability to choose who He shall save.

God in His foreknowledge knew that you would make a mistake.  
That you would force someone to have an abortion.  
That you would lose a child in their sleep.  
That you would lose a child to cancer.

And in His foreknowledge, based upon His mercy and sovereign power and ability to act, He chose them as His own.

And to this day they reside with Him waiting for you.

It was  
not based upon your character  
not based upon what you would do,  
It was not based upon their ability to chose Him or acknowledge Him,  
not based upon them knowing scripture,  
or knowing anything,

...but based upon His loving kindness.

What joy and comfort this must bring to both women and men who abort their children or lose a child.

God in His foreknowledge knew of their grievous mistake and preordained their children to salvation.

## Who Then Are Pure?

Well let us remember the groupings that these beatitudes are in.

The first four are about our relationship with God.

The last 4 are about our relationship on behalf of God with other people.

The first four points or principles of the Kingdom are focused on our relationship with the King of this Kingdom.

The next four are concerned with our interaction as representatives of the Kingdom to those around us.

So even from that observation alone we know that this is not a statement about our standing before God

### The Word Pure:

The word pure means free from defilements.

Or a clear way to say it means it is free from admixture, the pure of heart have unalloyed hearts.

*Unalloyed* means that a metal is not mixed with other metals.

It means it is free from mixture.

It is not a heart that has the love of God and money.

It is not a heart that embraces all teaching regardless of doctrine.

It is not a heart that says I am Christ and Buddha's and Mohamed's.

It is not a heart mixed bitterness or jealousy.

It is a heart that is aware that He is a jealous God and will have no other god before Him.

It says of the early disciples that they:

*(Acts 2:46) So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with **gladness and simplicity** of heart,*

**Simplicity:** smooth, to contain a single ingredient.

To be pure of heart means singleness of aim and moral intention.  
Free from the alloys, that is free from being mixed with the attitudes  
of the world.

Free from the distraction of peer pressure and the passions of others.

A pure heart is a simple heart.

A repentant heart.

A single purposed heart.

A straight forward heart.

To be pure in heart is to be naïve and innocent.

Believing the best.

Wanting the best.

Dreaming for the best.

Longing for the best.

All for yourself and others.

It is a heart free from pomp and pretences.

The person who is like this, they are not perfect, they are not other  
worldly, they are intentional.

This person simply loves God and loves God alone.

They are aware of their sin, but more so His gracefulness, this person  
shall be a friend and a favorite of God.

## **Death to a false salvation:**

With each one of these elements of the manifesto of the Kingdom another nail is driven into the coffin that contains the corpse of a false salvation.

A false salvation that says a person can be saved without changing.

A false salvation that says your works and actions earn you points with God.

A false salvation that says that a person can inherit eternal life even if their attitudes, actions and associations are the same as unbelievers.

One after one each new beatitude gives us insight into the different aspects of this all encompassing conversion.

John Piper puts it like this:

'If we don't obtain mercy, we receive judgment.

If we don't see God, we are not in heaven.

If we are not son's of God we are outside the family.'

It all builds upon one another.

It all adds up line upon line.

## **David a man after God:**

You see this is what I believe it means when the Word calls David a 'man after God's own heart.'

David wasn't perfect.

David knew he wasn't perfect.

But he knew who God was.

So in his times of moral collapse, unwise and arrogant decisions he ran to his one refuge.

His one rock.

He ran to God not from God.

This is a sign of someone who loves God, they run to God in humility, they run to their church in humility, not away from church, not away from God in pride and shame.

It was this purity of heart that won the favor of God and allowed him David to know God as a friend.

### **Altar Call**

I want to pray for people who have been bound by religion and who have been bound by a sense of performance anxiety.

Who have been bound by a sense that they have never been good enough for God, they could never be a friend or have His favor.

And now they realize that He is not asking for perfection, just for them to passionately pursue Him.

And you can commit to that a new and a fresh.