

The Basics of the Beatitudes

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 5:1-12.

B. The Sermon on the Mount has been praised but also decried as impractical.

II. The basics on the Sermon on the Mount.

A. The audience that was addressed was the disciples, but the conclusion was for the masses. (John 6:1-3)

B. The purpose of the sermon.

1. It cannot be to save, for the demands are too difficult for anyone.

2. It is not for judgment because it was not addressed to the world.

3. It is not written to convict of sin because it is addressed to people who already have turned to Christ.

4. It is not written to the Christian church even though elements of it are repeated in the epistles because the church has not been invented. (Matthew 28, Ephesians 2)

5. It is not written as a constitution for behavior when the kingdom comes because there would be no need to pray for the coming of the kingdom and warn of evil that is to come before then. (Matthew 6, 7)

6. It is written to direct the disciples during the interim time.

C. The theme is genuine righteousness.

D. Believers must follow the principles of the Sermon because they are also heirs of the kingdom.

III. The Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount.

A. There is a pronouncement of blessing. "Blessed" means "congratulations."

B. There is a virtue.

C. There is a characteristic of the kingdom.

D. Blessed are the poor in spirit. This refers to the person who recognizes his own spiritual poverty in comparison to God.

E. Blessed are those who mourn. This refers to those who mourn over their abject spiritual poverty.

F. Blessed are the meek. This refers to the person who has power but does not retaliate.

G. Blessed are those who hunger after righteousness. This refers to those who hunger for righteousness in society.

H. Blessed are the merciful. Unlike grace, mercy emphasizes the misery of the recipient.

I. Blessed are the pure in heart. These will have a heightened relationship with God.

J. Blessed are the peacemakers.

K. Blessed are the persecuted for righteous' sake.

IV. Application.

A. The Sermon on the Mount deals with what you are. Being precedes doing.

B. This type of person is not a normal person—he must be born again.

Application questions:

1. How do the recipients of the Sermon on the Mount tell us about its purpose?

2. Which beatitude stands out to you? What strikes you about it?

3. Why does the Sermon on the Mount demand a supernatural person to fulfill its demands? How does one become “supernatural?”
