
THEME: "THE BEATITUDE"

THE BRUTAL FACTS FROM JESUS' SERMON ON THE MOUNT

ADEOYE, EMMANUEL (EVANG.)

OVERVIEW/THEMATIC ANALYSIS

An exegesis of the Sermon on the Mount, found in **Matthew 5-7**, reveals a foundational ethical framework for God's kingdom, characterized by humility, selflessness, love for enemies, and prioritizing God's will over material wealth. Key themes include the Beatitudes, salt and light principles, fulfilling the Law, secret acts of giving and prayer, serving God not money, seeking first the kingdom, loving enemies, and discerning between false prophets and true followers.

Exegetical approaches emphasize that the sermon illustrates the life of a kingdom citizen, contrasting with the established Law BY ESTABLISHING A HIGHER STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

FOUNDATION FOR ALL TEACHINGS:

As the first beatitude, it sets the foundation for the entire list of blessings taught by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

Without recognizing spiritual poverty, the other qualities of a blessed life, such as mourning, meekness, and hunger for righteousness, cannot be fulfilled.

A COUNTER INTUITIVE TRUTH:

Jesus presents a perspective that is contrary to worldly wisdom, where worldly kingdoms are often possessed by those with financial or political power. He proclaims that those who seem to have nothing are, in fact, the ones who inherit everything from God.

WHAT TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS

Being a master Teacher, our Lord did not begin this important sermon with a negative criticism of the scribes and Pharisees. He began with a positive emphasis on righteous character and the

blessings that it brings to the life of the believer.

The Pharisees taught that righteousness was an external thing, a matter of obeying rules and regulations. Righteousness could be measured by praying, giving, fasting, etc. In the Beatitudes and the pictures of the believer, Jesus described Christian character that flowed from within.

Imagine how the crowd's attention was riveted on Jesus when He uttered His first word: "BLESSED." (The Latin word for blessed is BEATUS, and from this comes the word BEATITUDE.) This was a powerful word to those who heard Jesus that day. To them it meant "Divine joy and perfect happiness."

The Beatitudes describe the attitudes that ought to be in our lives today.

FOUR ATTITUDES ARE DESCRIBED HERE.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OURSELVES

To be poor in spirit means to be humble, to have a correct estimate of oneself (**Romans 12:3**). It does not mean to be "poor spirited" and have no backbone at all! "Poor in spirit" is the opposite of the worlds

attitudes of self-praise and self-assertion. It is not a false humility that says, "I am not worth anything, I can't do anything!" It is honesty with ourselves: we know ourselves, accept ourselves, and try to be ourselves to the glory of God.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD OUR SINS

We mourn over sin and despise it. We see sin the way God sees it and seek to treat it the way God does. Those who cover sin or defend sin certainly have the wrong attitude. We should not only mourn over our sins, but we should also meekly submit to God (see **Luke 18:9-14; Philippians 3:1-14**).

Meekness is not weakness, for both Moses and Jesus were meek men (**Numbers 12:3; Matthew 11:29**). This word translated "meek" was used by the Greeks to describe a horse that had been broken. It refers to power under control.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE LORD

We experience God's mercy when we trust Christ (**Ephesians 2:4-7**), and He gives us a clean heart (**Acts 15:9**) and peace within (Rom 5:1). But having received His mercy, we then share His mercy with others. We seek to keep our hearts pure

that we might see God in our lives today. We become peacemakers in a troubled world and channels for God's mercy, purity, and peace.

OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD THE WORLD

It is not easy to be a dedicated Christian. Our society is not a friend to God nor to God's people. Whether we like it or not there is conflict between us and the world. Why? Because we are different from the world and we have different attitudes.

As we read the Beatitudes, we find that they represent an outlook radically different from that of the world. The world praises pride, not humility. The world endorses sin, especially if you "get away with it." The world is at war with God, while God is seeking to reconcile His enemies and make them His children.

We must expect to be persecuted if we are living as God wants us to live. But we must be sure that our suffering is not due to our own foolishness or disobedience.

HOW TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS COMES

Certainly after the crowd heard our Lord's description of the kind of

person God blesses, they said to themselves, "But we could never attain that kind of character. How can we have this righteousness? Where does it come from?" They wondered how His teaching related to what they had been taught all their lives. What about Moses and the Law?

In the Law of Moses, God certainly revealed His standards for holy living. The Pharisees defended the Law and sought to obey it. But Jesus said that the true righteousness that pleases God must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees - and to the common people, the scribes and Pharisees were the holiest men in the community! If they had not attained, what hope was there for anybody else?

CONTEXTUAL UNDERSTANDING:

The Sermon on the Mount should not be viewed as a random collection of verses but as an intentionally organized teaching to guide followers in the way of God's kingdom, contrasting with the established teachings of the scribes and Pharisees.

APPLICATIONS FOR TODAY:

While ancient in its setting, the sermon's emphasis on humility,

mercy, love for enemies, and seeking God's will provides principles for contemporary Christian ethics and daily living.

MISINTERPRETATION:

Some interpretations have led to doctrinal issues, such as the idea that the Sermon on the Mount prohibits Christians from civil participation or swearing oaths, which can be harmonized with the broader teaching of scripture.

CONCLUSION

Jesus explained His own attitude toward the Law by describing three possible relationships.

HYMN 597, BY BEN CUMNOCK, "THE BEAUTY OF JESUS".