

The Beatitudes

Overview

True Christianity involves more than mere adherence with church “laws”. The real challenge for Christians is to see things the way that God does – and to live life in a way that reflects it.

What are the Beatitudes?

Matthew 5:1-2 begins the account when Jesus was preaching to the multitude – *“When he saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he had sat down, his disciples came to him. He began to teach them, saying:”*

These very familiar words begin what is called the Sermon on the Mount. At the time of Jesus many thought that to be financially rich and famous was important – and that it was a sign of God’s blessings. Jesus challenges the peoples of all times that the ways of God are of love and compassion. These words are not easy to live by but it is the way and the path that Jesus shows us.



The words of the beatitudes are as follows from Matthew 5:2-11:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
6. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
8. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
9. Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and utter every kind of evil against you [falsely] because of me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward will be great in heaven. Thus they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Living the Beatitudes

In the early church Christians were called people of the way – because of the way that they lived. In the Acts of the Apostles (11:26) we hear them called Christian for the first time in the community at Antioch because the Gentile members of that community were able to stand out clearly from Judaism - as followers of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps the following shorter version will be easier to keep in our minds:

1. Blessed are those who need God
2. Blessed are those with self-control
3. Blessed are those who reject sin
4. Blessed are those who pursue holiness
5. Blessed are those who are merciful
6. Blessed are those who love with their hearts
7. Blessed are the peace makers
8. Blessed are those who suffer in God’s name because they do what is right