

Counter Culture - "Bankrupt and Blue"

Matthew 5:1-4

Some things to know about the Sermon on The Mount.

1. It is poetry. Jesus uses a lot of symbolic language, hyperbole, metaphor. We will have to look carefully at words, because the words were chosen carefully.

2. Jesus died so that we might live the Sermon on the Mount.

In Titus 2:14, Paul wrote that Jesus ... "gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us his very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds."

3. The more we live out the Sermon on the Mount, the more we will experience the blessing of God in our lives.

4. The Sermon on The Mount is not a guideline for God's will for government. It is the ethic for Christians. When people apply the Sermon on The Mount to government, you end up with a very ridiculous set of policy standards. Government is called to enact justice - to punish the guilty and protect the innocent. Don't apply the Sermon on The Mount to government.

5. The person who lives out this teaching will have influence in this world.

The overall theme of the Sermon on The Mount could be "Be Different!"

5:21-22 "You have heard,... but I say (murder vs. hate and anger)

5:27-28 "You have heard,... but I say (adultery vs. lust)

5:33-34 "You have heard,... but I say (oaths vs. yes and no)

5:38-39 "You have heard,... but I say (eye for an eye vs. turn the other cheek)

5:43-44 "You have heard,... but I say (hate enemy vs. love enemy)

6:8 - key verse "Therefore, do not be like them."

A couple of observations about all of the beatitudes.

1. They are characteristics of God's person - how to relate to God and how to relate to other people - how to be holy.

2. Those who act as such are "blessed"(makarios) - happy.

3. The reason for the happiness is that each characteristic brings a promise - with its fulfillment ultimately in heaven, but not to discount the promise while on earth.

Matthew 5:1-4 - "When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.'"

I. Blessed are those who are poor in spirit - vs. 3

A. The word "poor" progressed in meaning in the ancient Jewish culture from literal material need, to one who therefore had to find refuge in God, to one who was spiritually poor and therefore dependent upon God.

Jesus didn't teach that being poor financially = a right relationship with God or blessed.

Jesus did teach that being poor in spirit = on your way to a right relationship with God.

B. It is not that we are left in this state before God.

James 4:6 - "God opposes the proud but favors the humble."

James 4:10 - "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor."

C. Luke 17:10 - "In the same way, when you obey me you should say, 'We are unworthy servants who have simply done our duty.'"

D. In the church at Laodicea, we see an example of a church which made an improper self evaluation. Revelation 3:15-17.

II. Blessed are those who mourn. vs. 4 - to be overcome with sadness, to grieve.

A. Almost sounds like "Happy are the unhappy."

B. Jesus is talking about mourning our lost innocence and righteousness and need to mourn over our own personal sins.

Romans 7:24 - "Wretched man that I am."

They will be comforted.

1 John 1:9 - "If we confess, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us and cleanse us of all unrighteousness."

C. There is also a mourning, a grief and deep sadness we are to have for the collective sin of a nation or church.