**Christianity – Simple or Complicated? #5**

***The beatitudes – One Way To Read Them***

*Has a teacher or a coach or anyone else ever taught you something more than what they set out to teach you? Explain.*

**From Last Week –** *Each Beatitude begins with, “Blessed are the…” What does it mean to be blessed? Is it a*

*description of an emotional state?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*“Blessed,” is a state of being that is granted by God. When fully accepted and submitted to, this state brings about the “full/abundant” life* (John 10:7-10) *that Jesus came to restore.*

*Sin locked up abundant life.*

*Sacrifice set it free*

*Adulterated freedom*

*put abundant life beyond our reach.*

*Grace-generated freedom*

 *planted it deep in our hearts.*

*Heart-planted grace*

*produces gracious living.*

*This is what the Beatitudes and the Sermon On the Mount are all about. But what does this mean? Back to work…*

 **Matthew 5 – The Beatitudes**

1When Jesus saw the crowds, His disciples came to him, 2and he began to teach them.

He said:

3“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
    for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4Blessed are those who mourn,
    for they will be comforted.
5Blessed are the meek,
    for they will inherit the earth.
6Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
    for they will be filled.
7Blessed are the merciful,
    for they will be shown mercy.
8Blessed are the pure in heart,
    for they will see God.
9Blessed are the peacemakers,
    for they will be called children of God.
10Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
    for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Interpretation #1**

**A Journey from Darkness To Light**

*This interpretation describes a journey. A journey that begins with spiritual poverty, travels through spiritual regeneration, and finds its home in persecuted, self-denial. Blessed are the…*

**The Poor in Spirit** *– What a horrible place to begin! Or is it? A person that is poor in spirit is a person that*

*is\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**The Mourners** *– The journey isn’t getting any better! Why is the second part of this journey for “those who mourn?”*

*What are they mourning about?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**The Meek** *– What does it mean to be a meek person and why is it the third leg of this rather depressing journey? This still doesn’t seem to be a trip many people would*

*sign up for. Don’t forget. This is a journey from darkness*

*to light.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Hungry and Thirsty for Righteousness** *– Hungry and thirsty? That’s still not a great selling point for a trip. And what is righteousness? We should probably address that first. Then maybe the hungry and thirsty part will*

*make more sense. So, what is righteousness?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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**The Merciful** *– At first glance, being merciful seems more desirable than the first four stops on the journey. But is it? Really? What has to happen before*

*someone can be considered merciful?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**The Pure in Heart** *- This journey began with someone that was poor in spirit. How does one that is poor become*

*pure? How is purity born out of poverty?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**The Peacemakers** *– Now this is a title most people would be happy to have. But can any man or woman actually make peace? Actually create peace? And what is the*

*nature of this peace?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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**The Persecuted** *– That’s it? That’s the journey? It was supposed to take me from darkness to light. Has it done that? It took me from poverty to purity and then to persecution. Is that the same as going from darkness to light? Hmmm…*

*Any examples from scripture?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*This interpretation seemed to be working for a while. How has it held up?*

*Let’s end today’s study with one more comment from Jesus…*

11“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”