**Christianity – Simple or Complicated? #7**

***The beatitudes – Group Therapy -***

***The In-The-moment Interpretation***

*Dale – In your experience, What are the toughest things about counseling?*

***Agree/Disagree*** *– One characteristic of emotional and spiritual maturity is to learn to live and thrive when confronted with unresolved challenges.*

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*What if we learn to experience the Sermon On the Mount as a massive moment of group therapy?*

**The Transformative Experience of Reframing**

*One more important realization – Jesus is not* ***granting*** *blessedness. He is* ***reframing*** *blessedness.*

**Matthew 5 – Reframing The Beatitudes**

**Important Note – The beatitudes, as they appear in the New International Version of the Bible, are presented in *BOLD* *Italics.***

The suggested reframing of Jesus’ teaching are not in Bold nor are they italicized.

*Here we go…****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.***

3“If you are poor in spirit, you are being blessed by God.
    The kingdom of the world will recede and the kingdom of heaven will take hold.

Its riches will become your riches… And you will be rich. Rich indeed.

***4Blessed are those who mourn,
    for they will be comforted.***

4.If you are caught up in a season of mourning, you are being blessed by God.

His ministering Spirit of comfort will surround and care for you.

*5****Blessed are the meek,
    for they will inherit the earth.***

5If you feel insignificant, and worthless, you are being blessed by God.
When God’s will is finally done on earth as it is in heaven, you will rule it.

***6Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
    for they will be filled.***

6If you are starving for the reemergence of justice and perfection, you are being blessed by God,
    Your appetite for God’s reign will be satisfied..

***7Blessed are the merciful,
    for they will be shown mercy.***

7If you have been mistreated but have not pursued retribution, you are being blessed by God.,
God’s mercy will be upon you and you will be made whole. Forever whole.

***8Blessed are the pure in heart,
    for they will see God.***

8If you have tried to shelter the purity of your heart in a broken and spiritually polluted world,

 you are being blessed by God.
Yours is an invitation to his house. You will see him face to face,

***9Blessed are the peacemakers,
    for they will be called children of God.***

9If you have promoted peace in a violent and vindictive world, you are being blessed by God.
You will be recognized as the adopted children of God.

He will call you, “Daughter.” He will call you, “Son.”

And, forever, you will nestle in his loving embrace… And call him, “Papa.”

***10Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
    for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.***

10If you are persecuted for your humble pursuit of a God-centered life,

you are being blessed by him.,
The kingdom of heaven belongs to you.

For you have sought it and are assisting in its re-creation.

All of these blessings will become real to you

as the kingdom of God becomes real to you.

The authentic, upside down, kingdom of God.

***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.***

“11“In the meantime, and I know this is difficult to hear, if you are insulted, persecuted, and people try to destroy your life because you have trusted me, you are being blessed by God. 12Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

*In closing…*

*Is your life hard?*

*You are blessed by God.*

*Can you see it?*

*Is the world unfair?*

*You are blessed by God.*

*Can you feel it?*

*Are things turning out worse than you hoped they would?*

*You are blessed by God.*

*Will you hang on – as long as it takes?*

*A word from James and Paul…*

**James 1**

2Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=James+1&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30269a)] whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything

**2 Corinthians 12**

I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. 8Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. 10That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.