**Christianity – Simple or Complicated? #8**

***The beatitudes – A Third Interpretation***

*Has there ever been someone in your life that you admired so much that you wanted to be like them…or do something the way they did it? Explain.*

 **The Beatitudes – Two Interpretations Previously Explored**

***Interpretation #1*** *–* ***The Beatitudes As A Roadmap***

 *This roadmap is a guide for the most important journey on which a human being will ever embark. This journey starts in soul-crushing poverty A most debilitating poverty. A poverty of spirit. This poverty results in the deepest of mourning, the despair of worthlessness and the life-threatening sense of moral starvation.*

 *Along the way, however, there are glimpses of hope. Hope of a heavenly kingdom. Hope of uncommon comfort. And hope of a poverty-conquering inheritance.*

 *There is more to this journey. This link will take you to it…*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-KAhSYRqXM&t=605s*

***Interpretation #2*** *– Two Kingdoms – Two Ways To Live*

 *According to Jesus, there are two kingdoms and two vastly different ways to live.*

 *First, there is life in the kingdom of the world. This kingdom doesn’t know it yet, but it is a failure. It has failed everything that God created. And it has failed God. Greed, violence and selfishness are its core values and it destroys everything and everyone that lives under its rule.*

 *Second, there is life in the kingdom of heaven. In the beginning, the kingdom of heaven ruled everything. But the kingdom of the world was established by “…the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 6:12) When this happened, a great divide, a ferocious fracture occurred. The kingdom of the world began to reign and everything broke down. Then Jesus began his work of reconciliation with these words, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” (Matthew 4:17)*

 *The Beatitudes are a reframing of reality, a tale of two kingdoms. If you need more clarification on reframing life from a worldly perspective to a heavenly perspective, follow this link…* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQWDXpAKzeo&t=43s*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQWDXpAKzeo&t=43s)

*And now, a third way to consider The Beatitudes…*

**The Beatitudes – Interpretation #3 – Follow Me**

*As always, we need to rewind a bit…*

**Matthew 4**

18As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” 20At once they left their nets and followed him.

21Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, 22and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

*­­­­If you weren’t one of those church going kind of people, after reading this, you would probably have some serious*

*questions. What might they be?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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**Luke 5 – Help Us Out, Luke!**

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. 2He saw at the water’s edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. 3He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

4When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

5Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.”

6When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. 7So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” 9For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon’s partners.

Then Jesus said to Simon, “Don’t be afraid; from now on you will fish for people.” 11So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

*First, remember what type of material you are reading.*

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*Did Luke help us out with any of our questions?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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*What are the most important words Jesus says in these two passages - the words we have always focused on?*

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*Words that may be more significant…\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*Till next time…*

**Hebrews 4**

*A quick setup\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

4…since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,] Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. 15For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. 16Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

*Any idea why we end today’s study wi this passage?*