**Christianity – Simple or Complicated? #9**

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

 ***“Follow Me” #2***

*Dale – How does Paul’s instruction in 1 Corinthians 11:1 affect you?* **Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.**

*Might this little verse be a key that unlocks the entire Sermon On the Mount? Let’s see…*

**The Beatitudes – Two Interpretations Previously Explored**

*(If you have questions, be sure to bring them up after the following reviews.)*

***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.*

*Any questions?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*The full lesson on this topic can be found at this link…*

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

*Any questions?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

*The full lesson on this topic can be found at 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 understand The Beatitudes…*

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

*How many times did Jesus say, “Follow me.” More important, what did he mean? What did he want people to do? What does he want us to do? Be ready to respond to these questions, after we read a bit from the gospel*

**22 Times – Give Or Take…**

**Matthew (7 times)**

Matthew 4:19 And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 8:22 And Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

Matthew 9:9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

Matthew 10:38 Whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, “If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

Matthew 19:28 Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Mark (4 times)**

Mark 1:17 And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”

Mark 2:14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he rose and followed him.

Mark 8:34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Mark 10:21 And Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “You lack one thing: go, sell all that you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

**Luke (4 times)**

Luke 5:27 [ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, “Follow me.”

Luke 9:23 And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

Luke 9:59 To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”

Luke 18:22 When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”

**John (7 times)**

John 1:43 The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.”

John 8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

John 12:26 If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

John 13:36 Peter said to him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.”

John 21:19 This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, “Follow me.”

John 21:22 Jesus said to him, “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!”

*When Jesus said, “Follow me.” what did he want people to do? What does he want us to do?*

*Back to the opening question… A quick trip to 1 Corinthians. This time, let’s start in chapter 10…*

**1 Corinthians 10-11**

*The setup.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

31So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. 32Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— 33even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. **11** 1Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

*Context, Context, Context! What does* ***Paul*** *mean when*

*he says, “Follow me?”\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

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***For Next Week***

*A Riddle – What two things do you have that you don’t realize you have, but use every day to do nearly everything you*

*do?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

***A Peek At The “Follow Me”***

***Interpretation Of The Beatitudes***

**Matthew 5**

3“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
    for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

**Psalm 22**

1My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
    Why are you so far from saving me,
    so far from my cries of anguish?
2My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
    by night, but I find no rest.

3Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
    you are the one Israel praises.
4In you our ancestors put their trust;
    they trusted and you delivered them.
5To you they cried out and were saved;
    in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

6But I am a worm and not a man,
    scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

*Oh, and don’t forget this…*

**Hebrews 4**

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.