

40-05-02.wpd – The Happiness of True Christians, Part 2
discipleship, happiness, lifestyle, character, reward
Mt.5:6-8

The joy of Christian living is the blessing of Christ living in us.

INTRODUCTION: (text for Scripture reading)

–The word "*blessed*" that Jesus used in these Beatitudes means *extreme happiness*. The Greeks used it to describe the blessedness of the gods. When used to describe people, it meant their happiness was at a level that only divine blessing could bring.

–The *blessedness* of true Christian happiness is not just the fact that *God has blessed us*, but the reality of His divine life in us:

True Christian joy is the blessing of Christ living inside of us.

–By looking carefully at these next 3 beatitudes, we'll see how they point to the indwelling Christ as the basis of our true happiness.

I. Where Are We Seeking Our Spiritual Satisfaction? - v.6

A. Our spiritual satisfaction can never be found in becoming righteous [Legalism attempts: "*I'm righteous by doing righteous things.*"]

1. **Deut.6:25**, "And if we are careful to obey all this law before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us, that will be our righteousness." (But we don't. We can't! So what the law does is expose our desperate need for a Savior: ***The law brings us to Christ!***)
2. God asks if we *hunger and thirst for righteousness*. *Willingness* to do His God makes us realize our need for Jesus– in **John 7:17**, (Jesus said) "If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." (Longing to obey truth leads us into recognizing the truth)
3. Also, we must have a genuine hunger and thirst for righteousness
 - a. We should not be deceived by mere appearances or by a partial attainment of righteousness:
 - (1) We can find no real satisfaction in a zealous legalism or a rigid perfectionism, BUT ALSO...
 - (2) We can find no real satisfaction in sentimental morality (*a religiosity based on whatever is currently popular*).
 - b. God wants us to get all He offers us. (We need to "*hunger*" for *the whole loaf*; to "*thirst*" for *the whole pitcher*.)

B. The **promise of this beatitude** is that "*they will be filled*"

1. Christ was filled in this way– **John 4:34**, "My food," said Jesus,

"is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work."

2. **Our food is to feed upon Christ**– **John 6:53-57**, Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me."

Trans: Do you know how Holy Communion works. Our souls are starving for God. When we invite Christ into our hearts, we feed on Him by faith to satisfy our "*hunger and thirst for righteousness*." We have no righteousness on our own. He is our righteousness. The Lord's Table reminds us again and again of that fact. **The joy of Christian living is the blessing of Christ living in us.**

II. What Does It Mean to be Merciful? - v.7

- A. *Sympathy* and *mercy* are related but different: one is a feeling of the heart and the other is an action of the heart–
 1. *Sympathy* [to "suffer together" with another's pain or sorrow.] is a built-in human reflex ["Tearjerker" movies are successful. *Why?*].
 2. *Mercy* is a God-like response to another's *pain, sorrow*, OR (**and this is a big difference**) their *transgressions* and *sins*
- B. *Mercy* is one of God's most sought-after responses to our human needs, especially as sinners [The sinner's prayer is: "Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner."]
 1. God sets the standard for the meaning of mercy, and if we are to be "*merciful*," we need the God of mercy living in us.
 2. God's example determines our response to those in need, esp. *in need of forgiveness*– **Mt.18:21-22**, Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. (*Mercy is a godly kindness that doesn't keep score*, even with the undeserving)
- C. The **promise of this beatitude** is that "*they will be shown mercy*"
 1. By human Incarnation, God's Son showed us *sympathy*.
 2. But by the Cross, He responded to our need by paying for our sins, so that He could show us *mercy* of forgiveness.
 3. This *merciful Savior* living in us makes us into "*merciful*"

people, who will bypass the coming judgment-- Ja.2:12-13,
 Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives
 freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone
 who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

Trans: The more *mercy* we receive, the more light we must live up to. But how can we live up to God Himself, Who *is* the Light of the world. Only by God living inside of us. This is the *happiness of true Christians: the blessing of Christ living in us.*

III. How Do We Get a Pure Heart? - v.8

- A. God's focus-- 1Sa.16:7, "The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (Because He wants to live there....)
1. God wants our hearts to be "*pure*" [3 Greek meanings :
 - a. cleansed-- as of a soiled garment that is washed
 - b. purged-- as of an army of first-class warriors with discontented, cowardly, and unwilling soldiers removed
 - c. unadulterated-- as of wine or milk unmixed with water, or of a pure metal with no alloy mixed in.]
 2. Our need for purity is recognized by self-examination:
 - a. *Is our heart carrying the baggage of unconfessed sin?*
 - b. *Are we whole-heartedly ready to be soldiers of the Cross?*
 - c. *Are there mixed motives for our Christianity: a holy appearance, our moral reputation, our social standing?*
 3. Only Christ purify our hearts by cleansing our sin, purging away worthless distractions, and creating a single-minded devotion.... He does this only by coming to live in us.
- B. The **promise of this beatitude** is that "*they will see God*"-
- a. During this life, with Christ indwelling us, we will see God in nature, in circumstances, and in people.
 - b. But at the end of this life's sojourn, we will be able to share Job's testimony at the end of his time to testing-- Job 42:5 (KJV) "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."

CONCLUSION:

--What is the happiness of a true Christian? A hungry heart that feeds on Christ; a merciful heart indwelt and purified by Him.

True Christian joy is the blessing of Christ living inside of us.

Matthew 5:6-8 (NIV)

- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.
- 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.