

In Matthew 5:1-16

Jesus describes the present happiness and future reward of His subjects.

Problem:

- Read the following article:

<http://www.spring.org.uk/2013/08/4-dark-sides-to-the-pursuit-of-happiness.php>

- Imagine a person who fits all the criteria of happiness. This person would still be situationally happy.

- Read Psalm 73. Taking the person that is situationally happy is silly because even if they are 'fat and happy,' they will still pass away like grass.

- Read ecclesiastes 2. (The term under the sun means essentially 'without God')

- How do the beatitudes answer Solomon's dilemma? (jesus' conditions for a happy life are completely different, even opposite than the world's)

Text:

Matthew 5:1-2 - Jesus taught His disciples to:

- read Colossians 1:9-14. How do the beatitudes relate to us in the church?

Matthew 5:3 - Stop believing the lie of self sufficiency

- read Isaiah 57:15. What does it mean to be 'poor in spirit?'

- Read 2 Corinthians 3:5 and 12:9. What does it look like to be poor in spirit?

- Read Luke 18:9-14. How and in what ways do you identify with the pharisee in this passage?

- Read Job 38:1-7. God's main point to Job was this: "you are not God, I AM."

- We must reject the lie of self sufficiency. We must remember that we are not God.

- Read the following article and discuss:

- <http://carm.org/christianity/devotions/there-god-you-are-not-him>

Matthew 5:4 - Stop believing the lie of self love

- read 2 Timothy 3:1-2a. What is our problem today according to this passage?

- How is self esteem the opposite of mourning your sin?

- read Romans 3:10-12. Why is it silly to think so highly of ourselves?

- Read James 4:1-10, specifically verse 9.

- In terms of mourning your sin, discuss the following quotes by John Owen:

- *If you are fighting sin, you are alive. Take heart. But if sin holds sway unopposed, you are dead no matter how lively this sin makes you feel. Take heart, embattled saint!* (Owen, John; Kelly M. Kapic; Justin Taylor (2006-10-16). Overcoming Sin and Temptation (p. 13). Good News Publishers. Kindle Edition.)

- Do I account communion with him of so little value, that for this vile lust's sake I have scarce left him any room in my heart? How shall I escape if I neglect so great salvation? In the meantime, what shall I say to the Lord? Love, mercy, grace, goodness, peace, joy, consolation—I have despised them all, and esteemed them as a thing of naught, that I might harbor a lust in my heart. Have I obtained a view of God's fatherly countenance, that I might behold his face and provoke him to his face? Was my soul washed, that room might be made for new defilements? Shall I endeavor to disappoint the end of the death

of Christ? Shall I daily grieve that Spirit whereby I am sealed to the day of redemption? Entertain your conscience daily with this treaty. See if it can stand before this aggravation of its guilt. If this make it not sink in some measure and melt, I fear your case is dangerous. (Owen, John; Kelly M. Kapic; Justin Taylor (2006-10-16). Overcoming Sin and Temptation (p. 105). Good News Publishers. Kindle Edition.)

Matthew 5:5 - Stop believing the lie of personal entitlement

- we often act in a manner that is the opposite of meek. This is the lie of entitlement. Wherein we demand our rights and privileges.
- Read Matthew 11:29 and 21:5. How was Christ different than this?
- Read Psalm 37:7-11. How are we to differ from being entitled?
- Read Romans 6:20-23. What are we actually entitled to?

Matthew 5:6 - believing the lie of worldly compromise

- the opposite of hungering and thirsting for righteousness is to settle for worldly compromise.
- Read Ezekiel 9:1-6. In what ways have you simply settled for the status quo of worldly compromise in your life?
 - How might this settling make you unhappy? Based on Matt. 5:6 what would you not be looking forward to by settling?
 - Read Revelation 7:15-17 and 21:1-8 to find out.

Matthew 5:7 - Stop believing the lie of personal vengeance

- the opposite of being merciful is the taking of vengeance. Read Matthew 18:23-35.
 - Vengeance is a dangerous thing. What is God were to take vengeance on you?
- Read James 2:12-13. Notice that we are to be stewards of mercy not vengeance.
- Read Romans 12:9-21. Notice how similar the passage is to the beatitudes and then notice who vengeance belongs to.
- For further study read the following sermon by Piper and discuss if time permits.
 - <http://www.desiringgod.org/resource-library/sermons/blessed-are-the-merciful>

Matthew 5:8 - Stop believing the lie of idolatry

- read Deuteronomy 6:4-5 and Exodus 20:4-6. What is the first commandment of God and how might it relate to being pure of heart?
- Someone pure in heart is someone without idols in their heart. Read Jeremiah 2:13. God is not in competition with our pleasure but with our idols. We value what we delight in. God is upset by our delight in idols rather than Him.
- What are your idols?
- Read Philippians 3:8 and 4:10-13. What did Paul value? How much did he value it?

Matthew 5:9 - Stop believing the lie of us versus them

- Read Hebrews 12:14 and Titus 3:2-3. How might we be peacemakers today?
- Our danger is to think people are our enemy in our fight for faith. Read Ephesians 6:12. Who is our real enemy?
- How might we be happier when we remember that we are simply beggars telling other beggars where we found bread?

- read the following article and discuss:

- <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/december/25.54.html>

Matthew 5:10-12 - Stop believing the lie of a comfortable life

- read John 15:20 and 2 Timothy 3:12. Why should we reject the lie of a comfortable life?

- It seems hard to imagine that persecution and social rejection could bring happiness. But not only are we identified with the great people of God from the past in our persecution we also become free from the lie of always trying to be accepted by everyone.

- Read the following secular article and discuss how this guys point might relate to ours:

- <http://rejectiontherapy.com/one-rule-to-transforming-your-life-and-the-big-lie/>

Matthew 5:13-16 - Stop believing the lie of a private faith

- these passages explode the lie of a private faith that impacts nothing.

- Read Acts 19:18-27. How should our faith impact our environment? How has it? How do you want it to?

For present happiness and future reward

The Main Idea is that:

The beatitudes are not only a description of what we will be (rewarded), but a description of what we can be now (happy).

Read 1 Samuel 30:1-6. This is the same David who wrote Psalm 23. Read psalm 23 and remember the present tense of the word blessed.

The beatitudes are not only a description of normative discipleship, they are not only promises of future reward, but they are invitations to happiness NOW. In other words, this is how people, of every generation, are freed to live when they commit themselves to Jesus as their King! Happiness is available now- this very moment

In sum:

Its ok to need God

And be upset about your sin

Its ok to forgo your rights

waiting for a better day

to give up vengeance

having no other security and significance but God

Its ok to see yourself as a beggar telling other beggars where you found bread

and be persecuted for it

Its ok to be different and not like the world around you

Because the Lord is your shepherd and you shall not want

Discuss specifically how to stop believing the lies of the world and then repent for the kingdom of God is at hand.