

Our text for this week's study is Matthew 5:1-12:

¹ Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him,

² and he began to teach them, saying:

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

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

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

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.

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

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

¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

This section of Scripture, the opening segment of the Sermon on the Mount, is called "The Beatitudes". The word beatitude does not appear in the text: it is a designation given to the list found here. The word means "supreme happiness".

That's amazing when you think about it. Read the passage again. You will notice a couple of very obvious things:

1) Happiness as Jesus defines it is VERY different from the way the world defines it.

2) The happiness Jesus promised will not, for the most part, be realized in this lifetime.

Preachers are sometimes accused of putting their listeners to sleep with their sermons. Not

Jesus. And not with this sermon. This sermon is radical. This sermon challenges the accepted way of doing things. This sermon...taken seriously...will change your life.

That's why we are going to take it in small doses.

That's enough for this week; but before you move on with the rest of your day read the passage again and ask yourself: "Am I willing to see if Jesus is right about what brings happiness?"

See you next time!

Bill