

“THE KEYS TO A BLESSED LIFE”

Big Idea . . . Part 1: Blessedness is . . .

Matt. 5:1-2

INTRO: What do you want out of life? What is your main ambition? Survey revealed that the world most common answer was to be happy. One philosopher said, “The whole world is on a mad quest for security and happiness.” A past Harvard president said, “The whole world is searching for a creed to believe and a song to sing.” Happiness is the great quest of the human soul. To find it some get married, some get divorced; others seek pleasure, wealth; change jobs, etc. All seek it, but few find it. Nearly everyone we meet either wants to be someone else, live somewhere else, or do something else.

Jesus is in the blessing business. Jesus wants us to have more than circumstantial happiness. Blessedness is internal. The first recorded teaching of Jesus to His disciples is here in our text. As He begins, what is the first word He uses? BLESSED—9 times! He began His teaching ministry with the KEYS to blessedness. In the opening paragraph of the greatest sermon ever preached (SOM), Jesus told His disciples (both faithful and fringed) and the overhearing crowd how to enjoy a blessed life. Look at Matt. 5:1-16.

I. (v.1) THE PREACHER: Illus. “One less than you think...”

- A. The **BEST**: Jesus was the best teacher ever. His content and authority was unequalled (Matt. 7:28-29; Mk. 1:22; Jn. 7:46)
- B. The **BEATITUDES** intro the SOM. They contain the KEYS that lead to a blessed life. They describe the attitudes that need to be in a blessed life. Jesus, the greatest teacher, began His teaching with the most needed message saying, “I came to bless your life!”

II. (v.1) THE PEOPLE (Audience is 3-fold):

- A. Mainly, He speaks to His **faithful** disciples, the 12 He had just called. It is their “ordination” sermon.
- B. Also hearing are some **fickle** and **fringe** followers. Included the harlots, publicans, rich, poor, etc. (See 4:23-25)
- C. And a large “crowd”, mostly **faithless**, but searching for happiness. At least 4 groups were there:
 - 1. **Pharisees** said happiness is found in tradition and legalism. “Love the past.” *Go back.*
 - 2. **Sadducees** sought it through liberalism and modernism. Religion is old-fashioned and needs to be updated. “Forget the past, live for today.” *Go ahead.*
 - 3. **Essenes** believed to be happy you had to isolate yourself from the world. “Get away.” *Go now.*

- 4. **Zealots** said we’ll never be happy until overthrow the government. Need social reform. *Go against.*

Jesus said to them all - “You’re wrong!”

III. (v.1) THE PLACE (“on a mountainside”)

- A. Jesus loved the mountains and hills. He prayed all night in them (Lk. 6:12). He was transfigured on one (Mk. 9:2). He died on one (Matt. 27:33). He ascended from one (Matt. 28:16). He will return to one (Zech. 14:4).
- B. This mount is unnamed, but probably north shore of the Sea of Galilee - a natural amphitheater. Pic of mt of Beatitudes and Church of Beatitudes.

IV. (v.1) THE POSTURE (“sat down”)

The posture for unofficial rabbinical teaching was to stand. But, when he sat down, all he spoke was authoritative and official. Colleges try to get people to endow chairs. When the Pope speaks officially he does so *ex cathedra*, “from the chair.” Jesus’ posture indicated you’d better listen.

V. THE PURPOSE (“Blessed”)

- A. **WORD** “blessed” means satisfied, content, fulfilled, etc. It is God’s seal of approval. It is only available to believers. It has nothing to do with circumstances. Each has a requirement to receive reward.
- B. The **WAY** to blessedness is not what we’d think and surely not what world says. Jesus says those who are poor in spirit, mournful, meek, hungry, merciful, pure, peaceable, persecuted, and insulted are blessed! And Jesus says this with certainty. They are progressive. He didn’t say Blessed are... I think, been told, etc. He said, “theirs is... will be... Blessed is the way it is if you’ll be this.” Compare to 10 Commandments.

VI. THE PROMISE (3b, 10b “theirs is the kingdom of heaven”)

The KOH is the theme of the SOM. This kingdom has nothing to do with armies or lands. It is spiritual. The KOH is rulership of Jesus Christ. Only when a person let’s Jesus reign do they find true and lasting blessedness, now and forever.

Gallup Poll: “How good is your life?” Living a Beatitude life is the best possible life!

CONC: What are the keys to a blessed life? Do you know God’s approval in your life? Is His joy in you? His is a joy consequences cannot quench; a peace circumstances cannot steal. You are only one decision away from true blessedness.