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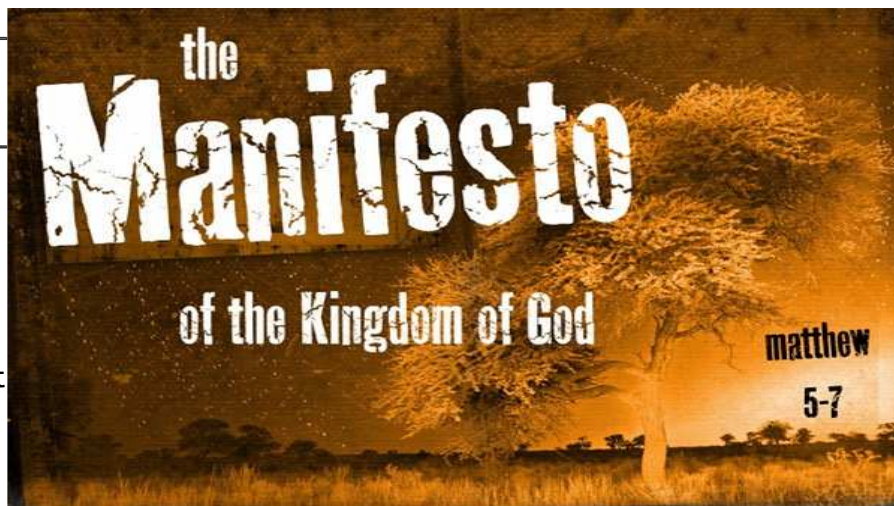
Sunday Morning

September 24, 2006

Matthew 5, part 4

Review:

As we have been studying the Sermon on the Mount we have seen that there is a very important PROGRESSION in the development of the character of the citizen of God's Kingdom.



KEY OBSERVATION:

In the first three Beatitudes the progression has followed the line of EMPTYING.

- Blessed are the poor in spirit - God has brought the individual to the realization that they are spiritually bankrupt.
- Blessed are those who mourn - They have been so broken over that reality that they have cried out to God for mercy and grace (That is always the place of blessing).
- Blessed are the meek - Having been EMPTIED of self reliance and self righteousness - having been BROKEN over their condition - they now have a different attitude towards their God, themselves, and fellow - Meekness.

KEY OBSERVATION:

As we followed this Kingdom Progression we came to a transition after the attitude of meekness. We see the disciple go from being EMPTIED to being FILLED.

Matthew 5:6 (NKJV) - Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

Your heart begins to love the things that He loves, you heart begins to dislike the things that He dislikes. In other words, you have an innate hunger for HOLINESS. You have a hunger for MORE of this righteous God.

Building on the Foundation

Having described the process that is FOUNDATIONAL to the development of Christian Character, Jesus goes on to describe the POSITIVE traits of the disciple.

KEY INSIGHT:

In fact, it is this HUNGER and THIRST for God that results in the next descriptions of the man or woman who is a citizen of the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 5:7 (NKJV) Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

Mercy is a Divine attribute. By nature, God is merciful. He delights in mercy. Therefore, the man or woman who is hungering and thirsting after this righteous God will be FILLED with mercy.

KEY APPLICATION:

Mercy is the mark of nearness to God. This hunger and thirst for righteousness also results in

PURITY OF HEART.

Matthew 5:8 (NKJV) Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

KEY INSIGHT:

We learned that God places a PREMIUM on the heart.

Proverbs 4:23 (NLT) Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

KEY INSIGHT:

This Beatitude also tells us that PURITY OF HEART is a PREREQUISITE to seeing God. This verse literally reads - Blessed are the pure in heart for they, and they only, shall see God.

- 1.) ONLY those who are pure in heart in a judicial sense can ultimately live in the presence of God for eternity.
- 2.) We also noted that the believer has the ability to SEE GOD in the here and now as he keeps his heart PURE.

PURE in the sense of CLEAR - unclouded by sin.

PURE in the sense of UNDIVIDED - unmingled.

We come now to another OUTWORKING of being filled by God.

The Peacemaker

Matthew 5:9 (NKJV) - Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

Peace

KEY INSIGHT:

PEACE is one of the DOMINATING themes of the Bible. The theme is introduced in the very first book of the Bible - Genesis. In the “Book of Beginnings” we find man living in perfect peace in the Garden of Eden. The theme of PEACE is carried on through the whole Bible right out to the LAST book of the Bible - Revelation. In the last book of the Bible we find God restoring perfect peace.

Revelation 21:4 (NKJV) “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

KEY INSIGHT:

The Bible is the account of God restoring Peace to His fallen creation. Everything from Genesis 3 - Rev 21 is the account of the God restoring Peace to His Universe.

The God of Peace

Paul the Apostle made reference to God as the “God of Peace”, five times:

Romans 15:33 (NKJV) Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Romans 16:20 (NKJV) And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Philippians 4:9 (NKJV) The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NKJV) Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely;...

Hebrews 13:20 (NKJV) Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Gideon refers to God by this title -

Judges 6:23-24 (NKJV) Then the LORD said to him, "Peace be with you; do not fear, you shall not die." {24} So Gideon built an altar there to the LORD, and called it The-LORD-Is-Peace (Jehovah Shalom)

KEY INSIGHT:

Jesus is given the title, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV) For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

KEY INSIGHT:

The reason Jesus died on the cross was to restore peace to man once again.

Colossians 1:20 (NKJV) and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

Keep this scripture in your mind because it is KEY!

KEY QUESTION:

If God is the God of Peace, and Jesus is the Prince of Peace, then why is there no peace in the world? There are two reasons:

1.) The Opposition of Satan.

This is where peace was lost. It was through his influence and presence in the world. Satan's rebellion brought into:

Isaiah 14:13-14 (KJV) For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

WHY NO PEACE?

1.) The Opposition of Satan.

2.) Man, in his own disobedience, chose to join Satan in his rebellion. Unbelieving man is at war with God.

Romans 8:7 (NLT) For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will.

CRUCIAL:

As long as man is at war with God, he can NOT be at peace with man. THAT is why we have wars, greed, deception, etc..

No Jesus - No Peace

KNOW Jesus - KNOW Peace

Treating symptoms

KEY QUESTION:

What does the world do in response to war and violence and greed? There is an effort to combat these bad things in the world. They organize relief efforts. They call for "peace treaties". BUT - They're only treating symptoms of a much deeper, inherent problem:

James 4:1 (KJV) From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

James 4:1 (NLT) What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Isn't it the whole army of evil desires at war within you?

The Real Need

KEY INSIGHT:

According to Scripture, the REAL PROBLEM is in the HEART OF MAN. The REAL PROBLEM tells us about man's REAL NEED.

KEY INSIGHT:

Until the hearts of men are back in line with the heart of God, there will never be true peace!
Man will never be at peace with his fellow man until he is first at peace with God. Until the heart of man is changed, man will never be able to solve his problems by simply trying to treat what is seen on the surface.

MAN NEEDS A NEW HEART!!!

You might say, "That's all fine and good. You've defined for us the problem of peace in the world. But what does all of this have to do with this beatitude?"

KEY INSIGHT:

All of this is crucial to understanding the person described in the beatitude. All of this helps to answer the all important question -

Who is the peacemaker?

- Dahli llama
- Ghandi
- Mother Theresa
- Martin Luther King
- Henry Kissinger

Who is the peacemaker?

1.) He is, first of all, someone who is at peace with God. It is the person who has had the enmity between himself and God reconciled.

Colossians 1:20 (NKJV) and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

Romans 5:1 (NLT) Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.

The peacemaker has not only been reconciled to God,

- He has become poor in spirit
- He has mourned over his sin
- He has become meek
- And he has hungered and thirsted for righteousness, and HAS BEEN FILLED!

A person still living with the old heart will still be governed by envy, pride, jealousy and thus they could NEVER be a peacemaker. He is a person who is still ultimately concerned with himself and not anyone else! So, the peacemaker is someone who is at peace with God Himself.

The peacemaker:

- 1.) He is, first of all, someone who is at peace with God.
- 2.) A peacemaker is someone who is CONCERNED about other people also being at peace with God. A peacemaker is one who doesn't just sit back and do nothing while others are perishing outside of Jesus Christ!
- 3.) Not only concerned, but WILLING to bring the peace of God to lost souls, even if it costs:

NOTE WELL:

Jesus was the greatest peacemaker that the world can ever know, yet He offended and upset a lot of people in the process. Multitudes walked away from Him. Paul the Apostle preached the "gospel of peace" but he created riots almost everywhere he went!

KEY APPLICATION:

A peacemaker is one who has counted the cost, and decided to be a peacemaker!

KEY INSIGHT:

As we consider the examples of Jesus and Paul, we realize that PEACE can only come by confronting the issue with TRUTH. You can not have real peace at the expense of truth!

Who is the peacemaker? The Sons of God

Matthew 5:9 (NKJV) Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

The Sons of God. This literally reads, "for they shall be OWNED as the children of God."

KEY OBSERVATION:

WHO is going to OWN them? God is going to own them as His children! It means that the peacemaker is a child of God.... Some one BORN AGAIN into the family of God. As such he or she is like their Father.

REMEMBER - God is the "God of Peace."

KEY QUESTION:

Why did Jesus come to this world?

KEY OBSERVATION:

Because God, who is Holy and Righteous and Just, is a God of Peace. He did NOT stand by and watch man live in war and discord and greed. It is because God is a God of Peace that He made peace at the cost of sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins.

To be a peacemaker is to be like God!

To be a peacemaker is to be like His Son, Jesus Christ!

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