

I. Review

A. We have taken 3 sessions, at the onset of this study, in order to lay foundation - from which we will be corporately unified and ready to set out into the depths of this teaching. Here is list of the main points of those foundational teachings to refresh our minds and hearts before we go into the text.

1. Simple Outline –

- a. Eight Fruits – We are given an invitation to share in eight beatitudes of bridal love and aspects of the Heart of Jesus.
 - b. Six Weeds – We are exhorted to war against six aspects of the fallen or sinful heart, which hinder love and life in our hearts.
 - c. Four Cultivators – Jesus gives us four activities which position us to encounter His transformational revelation that renews our hearts.
 - d. Six Encouragements - Jesus addresses the challenges of pursuing of the SOTM lifestyle and establishes the wisdom of the SOTM lifestyle. To anchor us in our pursuit and intentionality to go for the fullness of life and love He has for us.
2. Kingdom Living Lens – We live in an already, but not fully here reality of the Kingdom of God. This has been instituted and made possible through the person and work of Jesus. The stipulations, standards, exhortations, warnings, and promises of the SOTM are a model for the citizens of God both here and now and in the age to come.
 3. Centrality of the Beatitudes – Jesus reveals eight beautiful aspects of His Bridegroom heart and invites us to the intimacy of sharing in and receiving of those eight aspects. These aspects are the essential foundation upon which the rest of the SOTM is built. Salt and light, you will know them by their fruits, narrow way to life, wise builder, etc. are all references to the establishment of the beatitudes in our hearts.
 4. Transformational Obedience – Jesus is not interested in heartless obedience through dead religious or legalistic determination to be more righteous or holy. The work of His death and resurrection made a way for us to be conformed into His image. This transformation only happens when we are empowered by the Holy Spirit, who reveals Jesus to us. Our pursuit of the Beatitudes will end up in hypocrisy, legalism, disillusionment, burnout, or frustration if we do not set our hearts to behold the one who embodies them.

5. Exhorted to a fuller Living Condition – The SOTM was not meant or intended to be a discourse or teaching on how to attain or maintain your legal status, as one who can enter the kingdom of God. Rather it is the way forward into the fullness of life and love now that you have entered it.
6. Eschatologically Significant – The SOTM is strongly focused upon both the preparation for the events leading up to the return of Jesus, and the pursuit of rewards concerning the age to come. The SOTM is designed to produce an eternal perspective in the heart of His disciples.

II. The Setting and Scene

- A. The setting and scene of various events or activities of Jesus are many times overlooked and as a result various levels of beauty and understanding are often missed. The setting and scene of the SOTM is very significant and powerful when we see it rightly. (Mat. 4:23-5:2; Lk. 6:12-20)
 1. Both Matthew and Luke give significant attention to the SOTM. Luke places the setting on a plain and Matthew places it on a mountain. However, as we look at geography and consider the scene, we can see clearly they were both right. What was transpiring was a very large gathering of people outside the city walls of Capernaum where the terrain is a level “plain” at the base of ascending hills.
 2. Jesus begins to demonstrate His power by healing and delivering the afflicted, which causes the gathering of a large multitude. As He draws this multitude, He begins to move up the mountain in order to make room for the gathering masses and to speak His word to them.
 3. It is not coincidental that the last time we saw a scene and setting like this it was at the institution of the Mosaic covenant during the giving of the 10 commandments, written by God’s own hand and given to the people. Yet again, God has descended to the earth, and drawn a great multitude to Himself, in order to make covenant and deliver His word to them.

III. Poor in Spirit

“Blessed are the Poor in Spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven” (Mat. 5:3)

- A. Introducing Poor in Spirit - We would be naive to think there is not a divine order to these Beatitudes as Jesus is never haphazard in His words. This Beatitude is first of necessity, it must come at the beginning for there is no entry into the Kingdom of Heaven apart from it. This is the foundational heart posture of the citizens of Heaven and all the other beatitudes are in a sense a result of this one.

The Beatitudes - Beholding the Beauty of His Heart (Part 1)

(Mat. 5:3-6)

1. This beatitude is in absolute contradiction to the thought of the society around us and, as a result, is despised by it. The emphasis of the world today is self-reliance, self-confidence, and self-expression. The definition of self-assurance is to have confidence in one's own abilities or character. This is the foundational principle which seems to be driven today, believe in yourself and realize power is innate in yourself. Let the world see and know it. The fatal assumption in our day is through the realm of education and knowledge and under acts of a righteous government you can transform humanity.
2. The above assumption would possibly be true if we were contrasting ourselves with other people. However, we are contrasting ourselves with God. I am convinced upon standing before His glory and seeing it rightly, I will feel utter poverty of self-assurance.

“There is no worse a screen to block out the Spirit than confidence in our own intelligence.” – John Calvin

- B. There is an age-old teaching concerning this beatitude that regards it as a call to voluntary physical poverty. Nowhere in the bible does it teach that voluntary physical poverty is a good thing or positions you nearer to the Lord. The poor man is no nearer to the God than the wealthy man. What is clearly put forward in the scripture is not to have a reliance upon riches for your joy, satisfaction, or security. Obviously, there are many people who are physically poor who rely on monetary security exactly the same as the wealthy who rely on monetary security.
- C. Beholding Poverty of Spirit - What Jesus did in His first coming was not because He was more supernatural or superhuman than you. He was putting on display what it means to be one who lives out of complete dependence upon God. He is poor in spirit in His person and work set the standard for it when He came. Exemplified in His words, thoughts, and actions was a human who was truly poor in spirit. It was His joy to choose to take on a human frame and become powerless to fulfill God's purposes, and revealed to us the depth of intimacy found in the place of powerlessness. (Jhn. 5:19-20,30, 8:28, 12:49, 14:10)
- D. Intimacy of Dependence – In the same way that Jesus enjoyed the deep intimacy and nearness of His Father through being poor in spirit the same invitation and possibly is extended to us. (Job 5:10-11; Prov. 16:18; Ps. 51:17, 138:6; Is. 57:15, 66:1-2; 1 Cor. 1:26-30, 3:18, 8:2)
 1. What the Lord is concerned with is the poverty of Spirit, in other words what is ultimately your attitude concerning your self-assurance. How much of God do you really think you need in the day to day? Do you find yourself only needing His power or life when you're in a crisis or is it a static need and prayer of your life and not based upon circumstance?