

Perfect Faith

Intro:

1. The translation:

- a. The Sermon on the Mount is the main points of the Lord's sermons to His disciples. It is the compilation of His teachings.
- b. We have an English translation of a Greek text which was an interpretation of several sermons spoken in Aramaic (A Hebrew dialect)
- c. So we wonder, how can we have any accuracy here? It's because the Holy Spirit is in this whole process, interpreting & safeguarding what we have!

2. What are the Beatitudes?

- a. This is not something in the future you can look forward to; it's something you already have or the potential of having.
- b. So this would read, "You are so fortunate when you are poor in spirit because you are experiencing the kingdom of heaven!"

3. So God is using your experiences, the circumstances of life (good & bad) to mold your character.

- a. God cares very much about the circumstances you experience. He feels deeply with you when you go through your trials.
- b. BUT - He is more concerned about the molding process than He is about your circumstances - because He sees you from His eternal perspective!

4. These beatitudes are the character traits He is molding into you so you can experience the final results!

Matthew 5:3

I. How Do You Get "Perfect Faith" out of "Poor in Spirit"?

A. The words:

1. The Greek word **Poor** (πτωχός) = to crouch or tremble.
 - a. The beggar in absolute poverty utterly dependent on the generosity of others.
 - b. He crouches to show his low estate in the hopes of getting a handout.
2. The Hebrew word: **Poor** (עני) = feeling in want, destitute.

B. The culture: The Jews were in a religious culture so both of these words came to mean "the person who, because he has no earthly resources, puts his whole trust in God to provide his needs".

C. God's promises to the poor is what this trust would rely on.

1. Ps 34:6 - This poor man called, and the LORD heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles.
2. Ps 9:18 - But the needy will not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted ever perish.
3. Ps 68:10 - Your people settled in it, and from your bounty, O God, you provided for the poor.
4. Ps 132:15 - I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food.

D. So - what does this mean?

1. Combining the meanings of the Greek & Hebrew words in the religious cultural setting, we have, **you are so fortunate when you realize your utter helplessness & put your whole trust in God to provide your needs.**
2. This idea is supported in **Jam 2:5 - Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?**
3. So **poor in spirit** implies that God wants you to have the character of complete trust in Him to provide your needs regardless of how much or how little you have materially.
4. **ILL: The Parable of the Pharisee & the Tax Collector (Lk 18:9-14).**

E. God wants you to be emotionally detached from things & attached to Him! Phil 4:12 - I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

II. What is the Kingdom of Heaven?

A. What is a kingdom?

1. A kingdom is a territory where a king rules.
2. Mk 10:14 - Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.
3. Why does the kingdom belong to people who are like little children? Because they are trusting, teachable & obedient; ideal citizens for a kingdom.
4. So - the Kingdom of God is the reign of God in your heart!

B. Where is the Kingdom?

1. The church.
 - a. The message of John the Baptist was **the kingdom of God is near** (Matt 3:2).
 - b. After John was imprisoned, Jesus preached the same message (Matt 4:17).
 - c. When Jesus sent out the 12 on their 1st mission journey, this was their message (Matt 10:17).
 - d. The place where the rule of God is accepted in this life is the church.
 - e. The church is nothing more than the assembly of people who have accepted the rule of God in their hearts & band together to encourage one another.
2. Heaven.
 - a. The Bible also talks about the kingdom of God coming after this earthly life is over.
 - b. I Cor 15:50 - I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.
 - c. Matt 8:11 - I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.

**God wants to mold into your life a perfect faith
so when you get to heaven you will not feel out of place!**

**He may use trials to make you "poor in spirit".
When you have that faith, it will be worth it
because you'll have the Kingdom of Heaven!**

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