

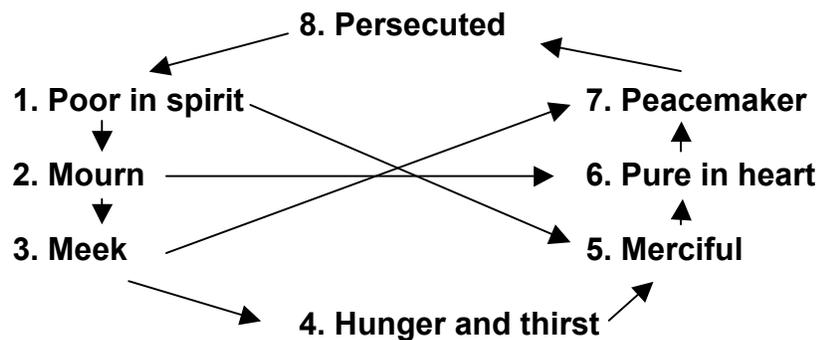
A DIFFERENT KIND OF LIFE

Essential or Extra

TEXT: Mt. 5:8

INTRODUCTION:

This morning we talked of the importance of purity. One might ask, "If it's so important, then why is it #6? Why not #1, #8, or #4?" The answer is that they are all important and each make a perfect piece in its perfect place, properly put in order in the mind of God. Martyn Lloyd-Jones reveals several insights into the arrangement of the beatitudes.



1. Poverty of spirit, humility, leads to
2. Mourning over our own sin.
3. When we are more aware of our own sins and failures, we are more attuned to getting our strength under control.
4. Getting our power under submission stirs a greater hunger and thirst for righteousness,
5. which in turns causes us to see our need for mercy, come to the cross where the fountain of mercy flows, and having received mercy, grant mercy to others.
6. The cross that granted us mercy also cleanses us and makes us pure.
7. The cleansed, singleminded intentionality of purity makes us peacemakers, which you probably do not yet understand, but you will when we study how God makes peace and how we can be peacemakers.
8. But when we do God's kind of peacemaking, it often stirs persecution.

But then, far from complete, the cycle begins again as a godly response to persecution is to be poor in spirit, and on we go.

Notice also the cross relationship.

- Being poor in spirit encourages us to both seek and give mercy.

- Mourning over our sin drives us to our knees in confession where we receive forgiveness and cleansing anew.
- The self control of meekness and the zeal for God's glory coverts us into peacemakers.

Each beatitude is so interrelated with the others, none is dispensable. You can't say, "Well, there's eight so I'll pick this one and this one, but these other ones are for you!"

No, it is all cyclical progression of discipleship, of becoming and being a disciple of Christ. Each building on the other yet repeating each step over and over.

Yet **purity is often the missing link in development of Christian character**. Because our society has so undermined this noble virtue, I think it is important for us to see its essential nature tonight.

I. IT WAS ESSENTIAL WHEN JESUS SPOKE IT.

A. Historical background

1. Israel politically oppressed by the Romans
2. But spiritually oppressed by the Pharisees

Legalists

Mosaic Law – Oral tradition – written tradition – Rabbinic interpretations (ex. knots, bread)

End result was a burdensome legal code no man could keep.

Authorities "keep some" or finally "keep one"

But no one could.

So people were burdened with sin and guilt and shame. (May be why John the Baptist drew a crowd. They needed to unload their sin and guilt.)

We see it in questions people asked Jesus.

Lawyer, "What one thing must I do?"

Rich young ruler, "What must I do?"

Nicodemus, the teacher of the law, "I know you're from God."

Unspoken question, "What must I do to enter the kingdom of God?"

Each question reveals that they knew they weren't making it. They were dissatisfied and longing for something they didn't have.

They tried to keep the code. Had all traditions down. They were as Jesus said it, sparkling white on the outside, white tombs, but dead on the inside.

They tithed leaves used as spices but inside their hearts were hard, cold, and black.

Jesus said, "You need your heart cleansed."

What Jesus was telling them was not another law to tack to the end of a burdensome code, but a transformation of approach.

They – we must do, keep, work
Jesus – Trust Me to do it for you.
My Father’s standard – perfection
You can’t do that.
I can
Trust Me

II. PURITY OF HEART IS STILL ESSENTIAL TODAY.

There are only two religions in the world.

Religion of human achievement
 Many names
Religion of divine accomplishment
 One name – Christianity

Purity of heart is an essential to spiritual life and without it there is no spiritual life.

Ps. 24:3-5 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?
 Or who may stand in His holy place?
⁴ He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
 Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol,
 Nor sworn deceitfully.
⁵ He shall receive blessing from the LORD,
 And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Is. 59:1-5, 12, 16-17, 20

¹ Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened,
 That it cannot save;
 Nor His ear heavy,
 That it cannot hear.
² But your iniquities have separated you from your God;
 And your sins have hidden *His* face from you,
 So that He will not hear.
³ For your hands are defiled with blood,
 And your fingers with iniquity;
 Your lips have spoken lies,
 Your tongue has muttered perversity.

⁴ No one calls for justice,
Nor does *any* plead for truth.
They trust in empty words and speak lies;
They conceive evil and bring forth iniquity.
⁵ They hatch vipers' eggs and weave the spider's web;
He who eats of their eggs dies,
And *from* that which is crushed a viper breaks out.

¹² For our transgressions are multiplied before You,
And our sins testify against us;
For our transgressions *are* with us,
And *as for* our iniquities, we know them:

¹⁶ He saw that *there was* no man,
And wondered that *there was* no intercessor;
Therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him;
And His own righteousness, it sustained Him.

¹⁷ For He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
And a helmet of salvation on His head;
He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing,
And was clad with zeal as a cloak.

²⁰ "The Redeemer will come to Zion,
And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,"
Says the LORD.

Mt. 5:8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart,
For they shall see God.

CONCLUSION: "They alone" will see God.