

Sermon Series: Spurred on to Holiness (and Power) by Immersing Ourselves into the Life of Christ Through the Eyes of the Apostles – A Harmony of All Four Gospels

Sermon Title: Christians, Despised by the World, but Super-Blessed by the Father. From Matthew 5:1-7: 29; Mark 1:22; Luke 6:20-7:1a; 16:17; 12:57-59; 12:22b-31; 4:32

September 30, 2018

Theme verse: Acts 4:13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus. (ESV)

Introduction: I do not believe Brett Kavanaugh is guilty of any of the accusations hurled against him. If it is true that he is indeed innocent as he says he is, then Brett and family would do well to re-read the portion of Scripture we are studying today called the Beatitudes.

Context

Exegesis

Main point: Christians need to know that we are blessed beyond belief because we have a greater reward than the world, even though we may go hungry, be scorned, and be seriously hurt in this life. Non-Christians need to know that their future fate is beyond horrible if they choose to value this life and its values over God's values.

Beatitude comes from the Latin word *beatitude* and means happy, blessed, blissful.

The Greek word in this passage is: makarios = happy, blessed.

General observations:

1. These blessings do not apply to everyone in the world who is poor, hungry, sad, or scorned, only those who are poor, hungry, sad, or scorned because they have decided to passionately follow Jesus, no matter what and their poverty, starvation, hurt and ridicule is the result of their decision to follow Jesus.
2. However, not all dedicated Christians who passionately follow Jesus are poor, and hungry (and not all are scorned). Many devout Christians are rich.
 - It helps our understanding know that Jesus is speaking directly to the twelve. They have by now left everything to follow Jesus. They will be poor, and often hungry, and certainly scorned and demeaned. But,
 - So will many of those who followed after the twelve. In most of the world today Christians are despised and persecuted. Just like many in the First Century lost homes and income, so today do many around the world lose income because of

their stand for Jesus.

3. Define 'blessed' by its Greek meaning not English. I.e. in English when we say "I am blessed" people take it to mean "God has rewarded me with pleasurable circumstances". The Greek means that suffering Christians are content, even inwardly happy because they know their present circumstances are temporal and their eternal circumstances blissful.
4. There were both Apostles, (the newly appointed 12) disciples, (those who have decided to place their trust in Jesus for their salvation) and the crowds (those that are curious). Jesus did not have two separate messages for two separate groups. It is our hope at Cornerstone that non-believers will feel welcome to come and hear messages that are for believers so they can know what the Christian life is all about.

Specific Applications of each Beatitude and Woe

- 3 *Blessed* are you who are poor (beggars)! For yours is the Kingdom of God.
 - Devout Christians will spend their money as if only a heavenly bank account matters, leaving them poorer than non-believers. Matthew 6:19–21 [19] "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, [20] but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. [21] For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (ESV)
 - All Christians are called to tithe 10%.
 - Devout Christians who are looking for a greater reward will give until it hurts. That will be different for each individual believer. 2 Corinthians 8:1–4 [1] We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, [2] for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. [3] For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, [4] begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints— (ESV)
 - In coming days believers will be losing jobs and income and will have to depend on one another to survive and eventually will be cut off from any buying or selling unless they voluntarily take the Mark of the Beast. The Bible warns professing believers to not take it at the risk of their own eternal salvation (professing Christians who may or may not be elect).

"But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

- In contrast to believers who are laying up all their treasures in heaven and living on far less than their neighbors are those who think that this life is all there is. They are living paycheck to paycheck going into debt in order to buy everything this world

says will bring them happiness in this life. The Lord says that these folks have received their reward. When their Escalades rust and their Rinker boats leak, and their portfolios crash, and their homes are foreclosed on, Jesus says, "I hope they were worth it". Can't enjoy those items in hell. Gospel time.

Blessed are you who hunger now! For you shall be satisfied. *Woe* to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

- This is an expansion of the previous beatitude. The Poor go hungry, the rich eat out at all the expensive restaurants daily.
- When will the poor eat sumptuously? For all eternity starting with the marriage supper of the Lamb. Scholars want to spiritualize this and say it is spiritual hunger but context indicates the reality of devout Christians (and starving persecuted Christians) going hungry occasionally or daily.
- Where will non-believers go hungry? It's called hell. Here is one more description of hell – constant hunger and never satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now! For you shall laugh. "*Woe* to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

- What do devout believers weep about? Can't be their circumstances since Jesus indicates that believers are happy now by living by faith in their future reward. Must be weeping about the injustices caused by evil and unrighteous people/leaders in this world. Must be when the name of Christ and the Father are blasphemed and accused of evil. Must be when people reject the Savior and seem to indicate they love this world more than the next. When will they laugh? When all creation is restored to its former and future glory. When all men bow down to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords as Scripture says they will. When all the trees of the fields clap their hands with joy Isaiah 55:12.
- What do non-believers laugh about today? Whenever their financial, social, political condition advances over others and at others expense. They laugh when they can stop a righteous Supreme Court nominee by any means necessary (their own words). They laugh when they can cheat the government out of governing by slow walking reforms as evidenced by the James O'Keefe expose videos. When will they weep? Non-stop in hell.

"Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.

“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.
(ESV)

- Jeremiah 20:1-9 Jeremiah 20:1–9
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- Now Pashhur the priest, the son of Immer, who was chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things. Then Pashhur beat Jeremiah the prophet, and put him in the stocks that were in the upper Benjamin Gate of the house of the LORD. The next day, when Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him, “The LORD does not call your name Pashhur, but Terror on Every Side. For thus says the LORD: Behold, I will make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends. They shall fall by the sword of their enemies while you look on. And I will give all Judah into the hand of the king of Babylon. He shall carry them captive to Babylon, and shall strike them down with the sword. Moreover, I will give all the wealth of the city, all its gains, all its prized belongings, and all the treasures of the kings of Judah into the hand of their enemies, who shall plunder them and seize them and carry them to Babylon. And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. To Babylon you shall go, and there you shall die, and there you shall be buried, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied falsely.”
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- O LORD, you have deceived me,
- and I was deceived;
- you are stronger than I,
- and you have prevailed.
- I have become a laughingstock all the day;
- everyone mocks me.
- For whenever I speak, I cry out,
- I shout, “Violence and destruction!”
- For the word of the LORD has become for me
- a reproach and derision all day long.
- If I say, “I will not mention him,
- or speak any more in his name,”
- there is in my heart as it were a burning fire
- shut up in my bones,
- and I am weary with holding it in,
- and I cannot. (ESV)