

Importance of Both Law and Gospel

Early in the history of mankind Moses descended from Mt. Sinai with the 10 Commandments. They were the absolutes of a godly life, etched in stone by the finger of God. They are “the law” and are as absolute today as when God gave them to Moses. They are the foundation that anchors our faith.

Jesus described a perspective of a godly life that leads to reward in the Sermon on the Mount. Preaching to His disciples on a hillside overlooking Lake Galilee, Jesus talked about the blessings of comfort, humility, being satisfied, forgiveness and peace – things that bring happiness. It is a great summary of the teachings of the Gospel. Pope Francis commented about the Beatitudes saying they are the “path that God indicate as the answer to man’s innate desire for happiness.” It offers happiness because God blesses those whose actions display the virtues and values that Jesus preached. It describes living the moral code of the Bible. Here is a perspective of their meanings:



- *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3).* As we live a godly life we can be satisfied with what we have and share the good things with others. Poor in spirit relates to being humble because all of our blessings come from the love of God. Humility brings openness and inner peace, which enables us to do the Will of God.
- *Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted (Matthew 5:4).* We can comfort those who are suffering.
- *Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5).* Humility is having a true sense of who you are. Being meek is an act of self-control and for us to be faithful to God rather than to oppose Him.
- *Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied (Matthew 5:6).* The key word is righteousness; that we will seek to be fair in all we do. We seek a perpetual appetite for virtue and justice.
- *Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy (Matthew 5:7).* Forgive people who are unkind to you and look for ways to show kindness to others. Love, empathy and mercy towards others will bring peace to our relationships. *Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful (Luke 3:36).*
- *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God (Matthew 5:8).* When we are free of selfish purposes and self-seeking motives we will do what is right just because we know it is the right thing to do.
- *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God (Matthew 5:9).* Do your best to bring peace into all relationships and control your own behavior so that people can see Jesus through you.
- *Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. (Matthew 5:10-11).* We stand up for our faith and abide by God’s laws even if we are tested, teased and insulted. Even if we are wrongly persecuted we will be blessed eternally in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Oswald Chambers said “The Sermon on the Mount is not a set of rules and regulations – it is a picture of the life we will live when the Holy Spirit is having His unhindered way with us.” The Sermon on the Mount emphasizes God’s reward for those whose life reflects God’s virtues and values. As Jesus told His disciples: *Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you (Matthew 5: 12).*

Prayer: Heavenly Father. Life is not easy but there are great rewards for living a godly life. Thank you for showing us the way to the salvation of believers and the blessings of those who live the faith. Amen.