

Protocol

Kingdom Etiquette (I)

Our Focus:

“**Kingdom** Etiquette” is nothing more than the designed behavior for the kingdom dweller. There are certain moral and ethical attitudes and behaviors that identify the follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. The attitudes and behaviors of kingdom dwellers are explained in precepts, which are codified in the “*Sermon on the Mount*.” Today we begin a series of lessons explaining these precepts and helping the kingdom dweller to incorporate them into his or her daily life.

Main Theme:

*The Way of Kingdom
Discipleship*

Scripture Setting

✠ MATTHEW
5:3-4 KJV

3. Blessed [are] the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4. Blessed [are] they that

mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

I. The Poor In Spirit

- A. Blessed
- B. The Poor In Spirit
- C. Why Are They Blessed?

II. The Mourners

- A. A Deceived Society
- B. The Mourners
- C. They Shall Be Comforted

Summary

Introduction

DNA has been called the *Instruction Manual for All Life*. It tells your body things such as how fast your hair should grow, how small your feet will be, what color your eyes will be, what shape to take, in other words; it is an instruction manual for building a body.

The “*Sermon On The Mount*” (Matthews 5 & 6) can be called: the *Instruction Manual for Making A Kingdom Dweller*. It is the instruction manual as to what attitude to possess, what behavior to exhibit, how to respect God, and how to treat our fellow man. The closer you examine a physical body, the more you begin to see the effects of DNA. The closer you examine the spirit of a follower

Welcome to our study of *spiritual* and *church protocol*. “Protocol” is a code of correct conduct. It is the forms of ceremony and etiquette observed by diplomats. Since we are ambassadors in the Kingdom of God, we must know the correct way of doing things. We will study those *etiquettes* and *ceremonies* connected with dwellers of the Kingdom of God.

of Christ, the more you see the reflections of Jesus' teachings. Just as there is DNA in all of the body's cells, there should be *Sermon on the Mount* principles in every aspect of a kingdom dweller's spiritual life.

I. The Poor In Spirit

A. Blessed

"Blessed" are the poor in spirit . . ." (v.3). The Greek word *makarios*, which is translated "blessed," is hard to translate into English. Incorporated in it is the meaning of wholeness, joy, well-being, and a holistic peace. It is a word that expresses inner satisfaction.

You can hardly hear or read the words, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit*" (Matthew 5:3), without feeling some kind of shock and amazement. They are such contradictions to the world's standards. Therein lies the problem, the people to whom Jesus was preaching, including his disciples, had lost sight of the where the true "blessing" is found. The church today has the same problem. Here is truth: Blessings come from God (Malachi 3:10). If Jesus says you are blessed when you follow His words, then **when you follow them**, you will truly be blessed.

B. The Poor In Spirit

When we understand our own guilt and helplessness, and realize that by nature we are void of any goodness, and of any tendency to perform that which is good; then we are "poor in spirit" (v.3). It is one thing to hold this in theory, to say we understand this with our minds, and another thing to be painfully aware in our hearts, of that humbling fact.

Being poor in spirit implies that we see in its true light, the tendency in us to everything evil. It is to know that our mindset, that our appetites and propensities, that nearly the whole of our being continually tends to selfishness. Being poor in spirit means that we have the conviction that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the only possible way of getting help. It is to have a deep and abiding sense of the absolute need we have of a Savior from our wickedness, helplessness and just condemnation. The mind must perceive and feel its guilt in such a sense as to be sure that its salvation is out of the question, except Jesus Christ has died for us.

It is easy to say we are helpless and that Christ is our only hope and dependence; it is easy to recite our creed, "I believe that salvation is through Christ alone." But how hard is it to see our guilt, our abominable filthiness, our loathsomeness, and our hopeless condemnation

except Christ be applied to our souls in his offices and relations as Redeemer, Savior, Sanctifier, Teacher and King. The poor in spirit is the man who sees his



THE ENSLAVED IN BONDAGE.

spiritual bondage, who is conscious of his/her debt of sin. It is one who knows that it is a debt that he could never pay, one who knows he has nothing to offer – doesn't even try, but confesses his sin and his unworthiness before God.

C. Why Are They Blessed?

Why are those, who are poor in spirit, blessed? It is because the kingdom of God is within them. Our lesson text says, "*Theirs is the kingdom of heaven*" (v.3). They already have the first elements of the kingdom of God within them. They have already overcome the greatest difficulty in the way of their salvation: the recognition of their true condition. It is a great work to make men feel themselves hopeless, to humble them, to

tear away their self-dependence and self-righteousness, and the notion of the means in themselves for anything good. God is constantly engaged in bringing about this result.

The poor in spirit are blessed because they have no self-interest. They have seen themselves to be perfectly destitute and worthless. They have no reputation to build up; they have no appetite that must be gratified, no passion that must be catered to. They are



emptied out, and every particle of self-value is gone entirely. They labor not for themselves, but for Christ. ***To be poor in spirit is to be rich in faith.*** Poor in the proper sense, emptied of dependence upon themselves, then, they are rich in faith.

II. The Mourners

A. A Deceived Society

“Blessed are they that mourn” (v.4). To mourn is to care deeply, to know godly sorrow for sin, to be deeply concerned about the evil in the world, and to know the meaning

of suffering because of the sin, injustice, and perversion in the world. Mourners are blessed.

This is in complete contrast to what the world believes. The world believes that happiness and joy come only from focusing on circumstances that are fun and forgetting about any troubles that may be around. The title of Neil Postman's book, ***“Amusing Ourselves to Death,”*** so rightly describes our society's mad chase after fleeting happiness, for even what should be educational and help us to live responsibly has been turned into entertainment and amusement.

Amusement's original meaning was to "delude or to deceive" (American Heritage). Its usage now means, "to occupy in an agreeable, pleasing, or entertaining manner." It is the opposite of "muse" which means to "be absorbed in one's thought, a state of meditation." Our society is preoccupied with diversion, not deep thought, for diversion may bring happiness. Deep thought may bring pain. The original meaning of amusement still applies. Our society is deceived.

B. The Mourners

If you have experienced what it is to be driven out of self, and torn away from self, and crucified to self; if you have ever been emptied of self without any expectation of

helping yourself, having no more thought or intention of trying to save yourself, or of doing any thing effectual for yourself, having it well settled in your mind, that you will no more succeed in doing any thing in your salvation, than you would succeed in walking from the earth to the moon, if you have been like this, then you know about mourning.

Remember, you must be thoroughly emptied of self in order to come into the state of mourning described above. Most people have so much self-reliance, so much complacency in self, and know so little of themselves, that they cannot have this state. It can be produced in no other way than by showing a man his character and nothingness as they really are. The mind mourns when it is completely emptied of all self-trust. It mourns for sin, for its own alienation; it mourns at the thought of being separated from God, it mourns over its lost condition. It is a state of most perfect mourning.

Our godly sorrow should not, however, be restricted to just ourselves. We are to mourn over other's sins as well. We should mourn over sin in the body of Christ, the church, because it brings reproach upon God. Jesus mourned for those who did not or would not believe in Him. He wept because they did not recognize the time of their visitation (John 11:35) and He knew what was in store for

them in the future. We should be burdened and mourn for those who do not know, or don't want to know Jesus; because we know the ending of the story, and we know what is going to happen to them in the last days if they do not repent (Mark



16:16) and call on Him as Lord and Savior.

C. They Shall Be Comforted

Those who mourn primarily for lost loved ones need one kind of comfort, and those who bemoan the state of the world need another; but in both cases the only true comfort comes from God. That's what the passive voice means; "...*they shall be comforted*;" it is the Bible's polite way of saying, "God will comfort them."

In Psalm 46:10, we find words of great comfort. It says, "*Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*" God takes responsibility for comforting us in our anguish and turmoil. Our loving Father lifts from us the burden of making sense of it all. He says, "Hush, I, not you, am God,

so don't even think of trying to explain all this. Just be quiet! And when you are quiet you will know that there is a loving God exalted among the nations and that I am He." That is all we need to know.

Jesus assures the above described mourners of the comfort of God: "... *for they shall be comforted*" (v.5). There is a direct relationship between the word for "comfort" and the word describing the Holy Ghost as the Comforter for the believer (John 14:16). Today, we have a heavenly teacher that comes straight from God, the Holy Spirit. Through Him we gain knowledge of God's ways. He also convicts us of sin. As we humble ourselves before the Lord, and mourn over our sinfulness, He is just and faithful to forgive us and to cleanse us. This is our comfort: He cleanses us with the washing of water by the word, which causes a regeneration and renewing in us through the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5). Abide in Jesus, and He will abide in you and give you life. What a comfort!

except possibly a greater awareness of your need for help. Jesus said that the poor in *spirit* were blessed because they are in the kingdom of heaven. Pride is gone, self-assurance is gone, and they come to God empty-handed. This is the nature of those that are truly righteous. It describes the person's attitude toward himself or herself. This is what is meant by being "*poor in spirit*," and "*theirs is the kingdom of heaven*."

Spiritual poverty leads to mourning over sin. But the blessing does not come from the mourning itself, but from what that mourning brings - God's comfort. Godly sorrow leads to repentance, and repentance leads to forgiveness, and forgiveness is God's comfort, and there is no greater joy that can be known than that of God's forgiveness, which draws you closer to God. The starting point of drawing near to God (James 4:8) is being poor in spirit and mourning over your sin.

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Summary

Being "poor in spirit" does not have anything to do with finances or material wealth (or lack thereof). There is no benefit in being materially poor



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