

**Call to Obedience #257**  
**PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA**  
**www.schultze.org**

Out-of-this-world happiness is offered to every believer in Christ.

## **Salt and Light**

**By Reimar Schultze**

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world...” (Matthew 5:13–14).

This passage comes to us from the Sermon on the Mount. Specifically, it immediately follows the eight Beatitudes. In short, if we live the Beatitudes, we are salt to the earth and lights to the world. If we Christians are not living the Beatitudes, then we are like the world—we are neither salt with savor nor light. This is Jesus’ introduction to Christianity in the most primitive, yet pungent form.

If we are not poor in spirit, if we do not mourn over what Jesus mourns over, if we are not meek, if we do not hunger and thirst after righteousness, if we are not merciful, pure, and peacemakers, if we don’t have enough of Christ to be persecuted by the world, then we neither have Christianity nor Christ dwelling within us, and we will have no impact on this world.

What the Ten Commandments are in weight and glory under the old covenant, the Beatitudes are in weight and glory under the new covenant. The life of Jesus is the Beatitudes lived. The apostolic writings are nothing else but the apostles calling all of God’s children to live the Beatitudes.

One of the greatest problems of the early church was that within one generation, she had lost the vision of the Beatitudes. She became worldly. As Paul puts it, even Christians with spiritual gifts began to act, think, and react like the men of the world (1 Cor. 3:3). When the old, carnal, Adamic nature rules in Christians, the Beatitudes have no place in their hearts. But when the new life of Christ dominates, the Christian becomes a walking Sermon on the Mount, salt and light. Let me now bring to you the main characteristics of the Beatitudes:

### **I. The Beatitudes Are the Way to Happiness.**

There are nine “Blesseds” or “Happy are ye” in the eight Beatitudes. Jesus came to bring us a formula for happiness. Husband, wouldn’t you like to be married to a happy wife? Wife, what is it like to continually live in the presence of a happy husband? Parents, what is it like to live with ever-cheerful children? Pastor, what is it like to have a sanctuary full of happy parishioners every week? If Holy Ghost Christianity has taken hold of us, then that is the way it will be, and that is the way it was in the early church. The early church lived in praise, in joy, and in abundant thanksgiving despite all kinds of persecutions and material shortcomings.

Jesus gave us the Beatitudes so that we might be the happiest people in the world. Nothing attracts people more than a happy man. When the Holy Spirit came upon the first believers, they were so happy that the world thought they were drunk, and multitudes were attracted to Christ. They were not attracted to church programs, to religious entertainment, to loud and lively music, or to good speakers, seminars, and Bible programs. They were attracted to happiness that was out of this world.

Next, let us consider what is the genius in the eight Beatitudes.

### **II. The Beatitudes Make Us Happy Regardless of External Circumstances.**

Jesus offered a happiness detached from the things of the world, the affairs of the world, and the events of the world. I say to you again, if you live the Beatitudes, the physical circum

stances surrounding you will no longer influence your moods, your attitudes, and your responses.

Jesus tells us here that if a man follows the Beatitudes, he can be just as happy when he has little as when he has much. The size of his house, the quantity and quality of his furniture have nothing to do with true happiness. How much or how little he has in his bank account has nothing to do with it. Whether he drives an expensive car or a rusty, rattling, old junker has nothing to do with it.

Don't tell me that this is not true. I have seen people with ecstatic joy who had absolutely nothing of the world. But they had everything of God. And don't deceive your children by causing them to believe that they need to get the world's goods in order to be happy. In Matthew 5, Jesus taught us that only the fulness of his life brings blessed happiness, not the things of this world.

I have seen many, many Christians lose their happiness when they got cancer or diabetes or when they lost a limb. If you lose your happiness through the loss of things, of health and money, and fortunes, and favor in the world, then your happiness was a worldly happiness. You can't lose Sermon on the Mount happiness by the change of circumstance. This happiness does not leave you when the job is lost, when the car breaks down, when the house is washed away by a flood, or when your friends leave you.

Yes, should there not be a happiness that cannot be diminished by physical, external events? A philosopher once said that if I can conceive something in my mind, then it must exist. Since I can conceive God in my mind, he must exist. Well, for many ages, man has conceived of the possibility of an artesian well of joy and of a perpetual motion machine, therefore they must exist. Glory—the artesian well is Jesus (John 7:38), and the perpetual motion is the Beatitudes working and flowing into us by the Holy Spirit.

Most Christians that I know bless and praise the Lord when they are blessed materially, when they have good health, and they say they are happy in the Lord. Yet most of them, when their circumstances become worse, only find out that their happiness was not in the Lord but really in the things that the Lord had provided them.

You say, "I can't live this way." **Yes, you can!** When God created the Christian, he created a superman. Stop thinking about yourself in the natural. If Christ is in you, you have "this treasure in earthen vessels" (2 Cor. 4:7), you are supernatural. Yet, you are supernatural not for the purpose of ruling over others, but supernatural in happiness in order to become superior in servanthood.

### **III. The Foundation of All Beatitudes and For All Christians Is Poverty of Spirit.**

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:3).

That is the foundation—all other beatitudes are built upon it. This is the founding principle of Christianity as we read it in the kenosis passage in Philippians: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (2:6–8).

Jesus' first step in his incarnation was that he humbled himself, emptying himself to become a slave. Hence, the first step of the incarnate Christ was a demonstration of "Blessed are the poor in spirit." He became poor, making many rich as Paul also could say of himself, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:10). One of the paradoxes of Christianity is that we, by becoming poor, make many rich.

By our coming to nothingness, we become totally detached from things to become totally attached to God, becoming utterly dependent on God and utterly independent of things. By this

process, God can bring all things to us that we need. That gets us to the first bucket of happiness. That bucket of the first beatitude will remain full and overflowing as long as we abide in Jesus through continual self-denial.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit” is the first flower in our varied, beautiful bouquet. Every happiness is of a different species. It has a different fragrance. One is like a gardenia, another like a rose, and another like a tulip, and so on. Thus, the happiness of a pure heart has a different fragrance than the happiness of hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

Now, when we come to the bottom of poverty of spirit, we have given our last complaint, made our last judgment over our brothers, and given our last criticism. We have run out of self-pity and resentment, and we spread joy wherever we go. We indeed have the kingdom of heaven.

#### **IV. All Other Beatitudes Are Built on the First One: Poverty of Spirit.**

“Blessed are they that mourn...” (Matt. 5:4) is like saying, “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Ps. 126:5). It is mourning over what Jesus mourns over but being happy in the fellowship of his sufferings as tears roll down our cheeks.

“Blessed are the meek...” (Matt. 5:5). As the Amplified Bible says, “...the meek (the mild, patient, long-suffering)” are like Moses was. If we live this beatitude, there will be no abrasiveness or harshness.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness...” (v. 6). This hunger for the things of God destroys all hunger for the world, its dress styles, its music, its glitter and pomp, and its toys.

“Blessed are the merciful...” (v. 7). When mercy fills the heart, there is forgiveness toward all who have harmed us.

“Blessed are the pure in heart...” (v. 8). Purity of heart brings in the light of the revelation of God so that we can find that perfect and acceptable will of God.

“Blessed are the peacemakers...” (v. 9). These are they who can work with friend and enemy alike without hostility or ill-will.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted...for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets...” (vv. 10, 12). Again, if our Christianity is in conformity with Christ, we will be in nonconformity with the world, and we will be hated and despised by many. Yet, great is our reward in heaven.

It is then that Jesus said, “Ye are the salt of the earth...Ye are the light of the world” ! Oh, may we never miss the connection. The professing church today is neither light nor salt because she has lost her vision of the Beatitudes. May you take up your cross today and enter the kingdom of heaven through poverty of spirit, and you will come to a happiness independent of circumstance. You will become a light for Jesus and a savor to a lost and dying world.