



LINKS PLAYERS DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Links Players

“BLESSED ARE....”

Blessed are..... for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:3-10 NIV)

Both the PGA and the USGA have codes of conduct for their members, players, and even spectators, which emphasize integrity, sportsmanship, and respect, as well as adherence to the Rules of Golf. Rule 1.2 of the Rules of Golf outlines the conduct expected of all players.

Scripture provides us with a “code of conduct” or ethic for guidance on how to live in a God-pleasing manner. Matthew describes Jesus’s early teaching ministry, as he sat among his disciples and a large crowd and delivered The Sermon on the Mount.

It has been termed “the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest preacher who ever lived.” St. Augustine said that anyone who considers the sermon “will find in it... the perfect standard of the Christian Life.”

The introduction to The Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5:3-12 contains “The Beatitudes”, a concise statement of the ethos of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Besides summarizing the principles of the Kingdom that Jesus later articulates in the Sermon, they also set the tone and framework for understanding the more specific teachings that follow. As a preamble to the Sermon, they are a lens through which all of Jesus’s ethical teaching should be interpreted.

The name of these ten verses comes from a Latin noun, *beatitudo*, meaning “blessedness” or “supreme happiness.”

The word “blessed” appears nine times in the Beatitudes. It is derived from the Greek word *Makarios*, meaning a state of being truly fortunate, well-off, or divinely favored.

It implies an inner joy or a deep spiritual contentment resulting from God’s divine favor that is independent of one’s circumstances. It is something much more than a subjective earthly happiness.

The Beatitudes emphasize eight principal traits of Christian character and conduct. The first four concern our relationship with God. The second four deal with our relationships with others. Each is coupled with a divine blessing, which is given to those whose lives show these qualities.

Jesus used the Beatitudes to challenge the proud and legalistic leaders of his day. That challenge carries forward into our daily lives in the 21st century. In describing the Kingdom’s values, Jesus turns the world’s values upside down. The Beatitudes present a countercultural way of living to how the world wants us to live.

In the Kingdom of Heaven, power, selfishness, and pride are unimportant. They are replaced by humility, self-sacrifice, meekness, compassion, and kindness, to name a few. Each Beatitude is a direct contradiction of society's worldview and typical way of life. They provide attitudes for the heart that God wants us to have.

In both the Old and the New Testament, we are commanded to "not do as they do" (Lev. 18:3) and "Do not be like them" (Matt. 6:8). The prescription for "not being like the world" is found in these ten amazing and thought-provoking verses.

If you would like to experience a deep inner joy and contentment resulting from being blessed by God, join me in the coming months on a journey through these words, which are simple on their face yet require an incredible depth of thought.

These words provide the principal marks of Christian character and conduct. From "being poor in spirit" to "meek" to "hungering and thirsting," we'll examine each of these principles to see how they build on one another and, in the end, help us better understand not only Christ's specifications of what every Christian ought to be but also the blessings that are in store for us both now and in the future Kingdom.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for your gift of The Beatitudes.

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