

Sermon on the Mount – The First Beatitude (Part 2)

September 12, 2004: “Sermon on the Mount – The First Beatitude” by Pastor Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor of College Park Church. Pastor Kimber continued his series on Matthew and the focus on the first beatitude, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:3 (NIV).

Pastor Kimber contrasted the prideful lifestyle and words of famous singer, Frank Sinatra. “I did it my way”¹ is the antithesis of poor in spirit. Stories of others infamous people were used to drive home the point that not bowing down to God leads to destruction and a life of arrogant deception. Israel was set apart in the Old Testament as God’s covenant people and in today’s sermon Pastor showed us how the promise made to Abraham was also for us in the new covenant. We in Christ are to be different. In Matthew 6:8a Christ says, “Do not be like them” there is a great outline in the sermon notes describing how we are to be different. Our lives must emanate from a pure heart and a humble spirit within us. It is not outwardly that we are different, but in the heart.

To be “poor in spirit” is to recognize one’s spiritual poverty and wretchedness because of sin in our lives. Pastor again contrasted the attitudes of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector in Luke 18:9-14, with the Pharisee standing up and praying [publicly] about himself. Ultimately we need to see ourselves as God sees us. We are not to be self-deprecating or self-exalting. The humble person sees himself as made in the image of God, yet able to be free of bias toward him showing the same excitement for others’ God given gifts and abilities as his own. There is a sense that a person with poverty of spirit is self-forgetful, and anything but self-absorbed. This is the opposite of pride, which is endemic to the human condition. Pride is deeply offensive to God, and at the heart of all contention. Peter, Paul and Isaiah are just a few men in the Bible that see their utter depravity and God’s perfect moral character.

For us today, God’s love should not be looked at as “I am so unworthy of His love, He could never love a wretch like me” which is suicidal thinking. What His love should engender in our souls is the question “how could He, perfect and pure love a wretch like me?” What a savior, what amazing grace that God has shown to us while still sinners! Thank God for His grace today.

Application Questions

Do people see your appreciation for Christ? Do they see you satisfied in Christ?
How does your family compare to the one Kimber described in the sermon?

Humility is the crowning virtue of Christ. Discuss what humility is and is not in your group.

Special Note: Remember Pastor Kimber encouraged us to pick up a copy of “Praying through the Sermon on the Mount” located in the foyer of the church, and use it for our devotions during the coming weeks. Download Pastor Kimber’s sermon notes and meditate this week on Robert Murray M’Cheyne’s poem Jehovah Tsidkenu.

¹ “My Way” written by Revaux/Francois/Anka and sung by Frank Sinatra. For lyrics and contrasting words of doing it “God’s way”, visit http://dalessio.topcities.com/My_Way.htm