

Revisiting the Documents of the New Testament (1)

Lesson #11

Scripture: 1 John 4:8 *“The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”*

Introduction:

"The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of our attitudes about life. Attitude, to me, is just important as the facts if not more important.

It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do.. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home.

The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past ... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude ...

I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you ... we are in charge of our Attitudes."

Chuck Swindoll

Transitional Statement:

The beatitudes and the Love chapter will help us shape our attitudes for Christ. The way we see and understand the things around us are either shaped by God or by ourselves. We must be active in our choice of perception.

Lesson:

I. The spiritual heart is described in the beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-10)

A. 3 *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”*

1. This is the recognition that we don't have what it takes to save ourselves
2. Here is seen the full surrender of the soul to the will of God.

B. 4 *“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”*

1. Describes a heart sensitive to the condition of mankind without God
2. The heart that mourns, knows that some folks around him will end up in hell
 - a. And no matter how hard we try....they will not all respond to the gospel.

3. This is a heart that is saddened knowing that we can't be or even fully understand all that God wants us to be.
4. And this a heart that is homesick for heaven.
5. Comforted

C. 5 *"Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."*

1. "gentle" is the word meek in the original language
 - a. Has to do with being mild
 - b. Not quick to judgment
 - c. Not harsh
 - d. But cool, and even headed with regard to spiritual matters.
2. And their inheritance will be full

D. 6 *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."*

1. Here the spiritual are seen
 - a. As a people who is starving
 - b. Or even thirsty
 - c. For a right standing with God.
2. And with this attitude...God will help them be satisfied.
 - a. We can't do righteousness on our own.

E. 7 *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."*

1. Being merciful is a key to spirituality.
 - a. Because it is only when we move away from a justice system, where each one gets what they deserve, that we can truly understand the grace that saved us.
2. Here the giving of mercy is requisite to receiving it.

F. 8 *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."*

1. Here a pure heart is brought forth.
2. Purity here is that which is clean and free from the soils of this life.

- a. Spirituality includes the constant effort of cleaning one's life.
 - b. Not ever settling for "this is the best I can do"
 - c. But pushing on toward maturity in Christ
3. Considering ever action and every thought before God.
 4. And it is people with this mindset that will be allowed to see the face of God.
- G. 9 *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*
1. The kingdom of heaven exists within the parameters of peace.
 2. Jesus Himself is our peace
 3. And with the spirit of God working in us...peace is always our motive and our direction.
 4. Through peacefulness...God includes us as children.
- H. 10 *"Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*
1. The way of God is opposite of the worlds ways.
 2. Here spirituality includes the willingness to die on the hill of God's word
 3. Willing to suffer for His namesake
 4. Ultimately toward this end is the kingdom of heaven

II. The Love of 1 Corinthians 13

A. We are nothing without love. (Verses 1-3)

1 "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing."

B. Love comes from God

1. In fact, God is love 1 John 4:8
2. Love is not something we muster up of our own strength
3. It only comes from inviting love (God) into our hearts.

C. Spirituality can suffer as Christians forget that the core of love is God and that works are just the result.

D. Can you fill in your name in the following sentence?

1. _____ is patient,
2. _____ is kind
3. _____ is not jealous
4. _____ does not brag and is not arrogant
5. _____ does not act unbecomingly
6. _____ does not seek its own
7. _____ is not provoked
8. _____ does not take into account a wrong suffered
9. _____ does not rejoice in unrighteousness
10. _____ rejoices with the truth
11. _____ bears all things
12. _____ believes all things
13. _____ hopes all things
14. _____ endures all things.

E. 8 Love never fails;

Conclusion:

Spirituality draws us to understand the beatitudes

And calls us to a deep love