

THE BEATITUDES OF THE WORLD

DR. WSDOMN

Excerpts from the book "To be Like Jesus" of Fr. P. Ribes, s.j`

The Beatitudes

The Values of the World VS. The Values of Christ

Once upon a time, there arose a great teacher of men. He was very wise in the ways of the world. His name was Dr. World. . Being a very rich and powerful man, Dr. World owned a T.V. broadcasting station from which he preached to all the peoples of the earth. On one special occasion, Dr. World sat on this seat of wisdom and preached his hot 'gospel' His teachings were gladly accepted and practiced by all. He said

"My dear friends and fellow humans: Long, long ago, there lived a so called Master:

1. **Who was foolish enough to say:** Blessed are the poor in inspirit because the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them".
But I say to you: "Blessed are the rich, the millionaires, the super-landlords, the industrial barons of the world, because all the kingdoms of the earth belong to them".
2. **He was simple-minded enough to say:** "Happy are those who mourn and wail, because God will comfort them".
But, I say to you: "Blessed are the merry makers and the pleasure seekers, the fun lovers and those who laugh in season and out of season, because they will not need anyone to comfort them".
3. **He was naïve to say:** "Blessed are the meek because they will receive whatever God has promised them".
But, I say to you: "Happy are the violent, the arrogant, the powerful and the aggressive because they will not have to depend on God or man to receive what they want."
4. **He was dull enough to say:** "Blessed are those whose only desire is to do the Will of God, because God will satisfy them to the full".
But, I say to you: "Blessed are the self-willed, the stubborn and those who do just what they want. They will not need either God or men to satisfy their whims and wants."
5. **He was weak-headed enough to say:** "Blessed are the merciful, the forgiving and those who love their enemies because God will be merciful to them".
But I say to you: "Blessed are the revengeful, the vindictive and those able to destroy their enemies. They will not stand in need of anyone's forgiveness, nor be at the mercy of anyone".

6. **He was prudish enough to say:** “Blessed are the pure of heart because they will see God”.
- But, I say to you:** “Blessed are those who can wallow in all sorts of worldly pleasures because they will feel deeply gratified. They will not need to experience God to be satisfied.”
7. **He was simplistic enough to say:** “Blessed are those who work for peace among men because God will call them his sons”.
- But, I say to you:** “Blessed are the quarrelsome and the bellicose, and those fighting for the possession of the world, because they will be feared and greatly respected by all”.
8. **He was dull-witted to say:** “Happy are those who are reviled and persecuted for doing the right and for striving for justice in the world, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them.
- But, I say to you:** “Blessed are those who do not care for fairness and justice, because they will live in peace protected by the mighty of the world”.

Dr. Wisdom concluded his encouraging and epoch making speech with these words:
“My dear comrades and fellow humans do this and you will live! Farewell!”

It goes without saying that the peoples of the world, ever since, readily followed Dr. World’s “wisdom” not “Christ’s wisdom!”

THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

- To be Christians – Christ-like - means that first we put on and practice the values of Jesus Christ and then, we imbue the world and its institutions with the same values of Jesus as He expressed them in the Beatitudes, in the Sermon of the Mount.
- In order to Christianize others and the world’s institutions we have to Christianize ourselves first. There has to be a sincere and deep personal conversion of mind and heart, a conversion that makes us put on the mind, the values and the loves of Jesus Christ.
- **We live, however, in a world that has been contaminated by the “Beatitudes of Dr. World, namely, a mentality, a set of values inimical to Christ**
- In practice, unfortunately, Dr. World’s beatitudes and values, rule human society and unconsciously our hearts.
- True enough, in theory, we Christians preach the “Beatitudes” of Jesus, namely the Gospel values. We keep telling our children, our neighbors and even ourselves: “Be kind! Be Honest! Be Just! Forgive! Be simple! and the like
- Yet, all around us, through newspapers, ads, TV, radio, books, films, internet, etc. we are bombarded with the opposite beatitudes and values. We are told: “Be rich! Be powerful! Be popular! Fight back! Enjoy the pleasures of life – drink, smoke, have sex, be smart etc...”

- Worse still, all over – in our very homes, schools, colleges, offices, even churches – we see many of the, so called model figures, - *parents and elders, teachers, even our religious leaders - unawares of course* – practicing, reinforcing, inculcating and rewarding the values of Dr. World.
- In our consumerist, globalized, pleasure-seeking and competitive society’, there has been such contamination of the Gospel values that many of us, unawares, lead ‘double standard lives’.
- We preach one thing, yet we practice the opposite! There is sort of a “split Christian personality”. a kind of a spiritual and moral schizophrenia!
- The need of the moment is sort of a personal re-evangelization’! We have to pray to God to make us see the cleavage existing between our ‘belief’ and our ‘practice’
- **We need God’s help to reject the teachings of Dr. World and wholeheartedly accept those of Christ.**
- Let us squarely face the question: ‘**Whom do we want to follow? Christ or Dr. World?’ “Christ or our pleasure seeking society?”**
- Remember Luke 16/13. **“No servant can be the slave of two masters; he will hate one and love the other; or be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both, God and money””.**

POINTS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Our priorities, our values, of necessity, rule our behavior and our actions.
- What we love and long most for in life betrays what our priorities are. Therefore, ask yourself:
 - What are the things you worry most about?
 - What are the things on which you spend most of your time?
 - What are the things on which you spend large amounts of money?
- The things that worry you most, those on which you spend lots of time and money will tell you what your priority values are.
- Honestly question yourself: How much do you value?
 - Money, wealth, possessions?
 - Pleasures, food, drinks, partying, entertainments, videos, etc.?
 - Personal appearance, fitness, health, etc.?
 - Pride, self-conceit?
 - Forgiveness and acceptance of others?
 - Revenge and vindictiveness?
 - Popularity and vanity?
 - Honesty, fairness and justice?
 - Patience and meekness?
 - Wealth and power?
 - Humility and service?
 - Prayer and time spent with God?
- By reflecting on the answers you have give to the above questions you may discover how much your values have been contaminated by the spirit of the world.
- Ponder on: **“Where your treasures are, there your heart will be”**

- Squarely face this question: Could people just by observing your behavior, recognize that you are a follower of Jesus ?

TEXTS OF MATHEW 'S GOSPEL ON THE VALUE SYSTEM OF CHRIST

Mt. 5/1-14	The Beatitudes.
Mt. 5/13-16	Being Salt and Light. Evangelize by our example.
Mt. 5/21-26	Forgiving.
Mt. 5/33-27	Honesty.
Mt. 5/43-48	Love your enemies
Mt. 6/1-4	Honesty in dealing with God.
Mt. 6/19-20	Value of money.
Mt. 6/24-34	God and Possessions.
Mt. 7/1-6	Kindness in thought
Mt. 4/1-10	Jesus rejects the values of the world – Christ's Temptations.
Mt. 8/18-22.	Attachments keep us away from Christ – Would- be-followers.
Mt. 9/9-13.	Call of Mathew. Give up your wealth and follow Jesus.
Mt. 13/53-58	Jesus rejected by his own town people. He was poor.
Mt. 15/10-20	What makes a person unclean. Not externals! Only the heart!
Mt. 15/21-23	Jesus and Peter. God's thoughts are not man's thoughts.
Mt. 18/1-5	Who is the greatest? The humble and the lowest!
Mt. 19/13-15	Jesus blesses little children. Simplicity and humility.
Mt. 19/16-30	The rich young man. Give up all you have! Follow me!
Mt. 20/20-28	A Mother's request. Who is great in the Kingdom?
Mt. 21/12-16	Jesus and the merchants in the temple. God and money do not mix
Mt. 23/1-12.	Jesus warns us against the wrong values of the Teachers of the Law.
Mt. 23/13-28	Jesus condemns hypocrisy.
Mt. 26/36-46	Jesus in the Garden. Submission and faithfulness till the very end.
Mt. 26/57-68	Honesty and courage to stand for the truth.
Mt. 27/11-14	Jesus and Pilate. Greed for Power. Lack of courage.
Mt. 27/32-44	Jesus' last moments. Courage, Compassion, Faith, Trust