

The Beatitudes (Lesson 9)

Introduction:

1. We are presently studying "the Beatitudes" that Jesus presented as He began His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12).
2. In the Beatitudes,:
 - a. Jesus revealed some special blessings that are available to His followers
 - b. Jesus gave His requirements for receiving these blessings.
3. In this lesson we are beginning a 2-part study of the 5th Beatitude -- "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy*" (Matthew 5:7).
4. As we begin our study of this Beatitude, we are examining:
 - a. passages that teach us to be "merciful"
 - b. passages that explain what being "merciful" means.

Discussion:

- I. PASSAGES THAT TEACH US TO BE "MERCIFUL"
 - A. Luke 6:36 is an important passage.
 1. The Lord clearly commands His followers to be "merciful."
 2. In being "merciful," the Father is to be our example (see Psalm 103:8).
 - B. In the context, Jesus showed how being "merciful" relates to:
 1. the treatment of enemies (Luke 6:27-28, 35)
 2. the Golden Rule (Luke 6:31)
 3. judging (Luke 6:37-38, 41-42).
 - C. Religion that lacks "mercy" is vain (Matthew 9:10-13; 12:1-8; 23:23).
 - D. Since being "merciful" is such an important matter, let us turn our attention to . . .
- II. PASSAGES THAT EXPLAIN WHAT BEING "MERCIFUL" MEANS
 - A. Mercy is defined as "kindness or good will towards the miserable and afflicted, joined with a desire to relieve them."
 - B. Examples of people asking Jesus for "mercy" help to illustrate this definition.
 1. (Matthew 9:27-30) Two blind men asked Jesus to have "mercy" on them.
 2. (Matthew 15:21-28) A woman asked Jesus to have "mercy" on her by healing her daughter.
 3. (Matthew 17:14-18) A man asked Jesus to have "mercy" on his son who suffered from demon possession.
 4. (Matthew 20:30-34) Two other blind men asked Jesus to have "mercy" on them.
 - C. "Mercy" involves compassion toward:
 1. the less fortunate (ex.: the Good Samaritan -- Luke 10:33-37)
 2. sinners (ex.: the prodigal son's father -- Luke 15:20-24).
 - D. In addition to providing relief in various ways, having hearts filled with "mercy" will lead us to refrain from:
 1. doing cruel deeds
 2. saying cruel words.

Conclusion:

1. The passages we have examined should impress us with the importance of being "merciful."
2. Lord willing, in our next lesson we will consider the rewards of being "merciful" as well as the consequences for being unmerciful.