

Sermon Title: Don't Hide Your Joy

Sermon by Pastor Tom Harrington
Week of February 6, 2011

Sermon Based Small Group Discussion Guide

Icebreaker Think of a time in your life when something happened that seemed negative at first, but then turned out to be a blessing to yourself or to someone else. (ie: a time when you went through a hard time, but then were later able to help someone else because of it.)

It is Well with my Soul

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul.

It is well, with my soul,

It is well, with my soul,

It is well, it is well, with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blest assurance control,
That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

refrain

My sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul

refrain

And Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so, it is well with my soul.

refrain

Big Idea: No matter your situation, you can experience God's abundant blessings in your life.

Sermon Text:

Book Ch: Matthew 5:1-16 New International Version

Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ² and he began to teach them.

The Beatitudes

He said: ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Salt and Light

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In

the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Learning more about the lesson

In verse 1 it states, "he went up on a mountainside and sat down." This was the tradition of the time, for a teacher to sit while teaching.

This passage of scripture is referred to as the *Beatitudes*.

Definitions:

Beatitude---highest form of happiness; heavenly bliss

Blessed--enjoying happiness (synonyms...joyful, delighted.)

(antonyms...miserable, sad, cheerless)

1. Who are the poor in spirit? Why do you think the kingdom is theirs?

2. Who are those that mourn? How will they be comforted?

The word meek according to Webster's dictionary means "lacking spirit or backbone, submissive."

The Bible definition, however, is quite different. It means "mild of temper, not easily irritated, submissive to the divine will."

3. When is the last time you were *really* hungry or thirsty? Why do you think Matthew used the words hunger and thirst here?

4. How do Christians learn to show mercy?

"Be merciful as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). Do you think that our ability to show mercy is proportionate to our having experienced (God's) mercy?

"Mercy is a practice, not a mere feeling or sentiment." (**Broadman Bible Commentary.**)

5. Who are the "pure in heart" ?

In the Bible, the term heart stands for the whole person: mind, body and emotions.

6. What does it mean to "make peace"? What actions are involved?

Jesus is the Prince of Peace(Isaiah 9:6), therefore, peacemakers are the

children of God.

7. How are persecution and insults considered a blessing?

8. Have you ever been insulted or treated badly because of your Christian beliefs?

Salt is used as a preservative and to give flavor. When salt loses its flavor it cannot do what it was intended to do.

9. How can we as Christians be salt to the world? What happens if we "lose our saltiness"?

10. If the non-Christian world is living in darkness, in what ways can we as Christians help to light their path?

"Apart from Christ, we are unlighted lamps; but he lights his lamps that they may give light to all men." (Broadman Bible Commentary.)

True joy is contagious. Can you think of someone you know that exhibits true joy? How do you feel when you are around them?

Taking it Home

How will I live it? Apply it?

The Beatitudes are a roadmap for us to receive God's blessings and to be able to bless those around us.

Read through Matthew 5:1-16 each day for the next week as a reminder and focus on a specific verse each day.

Keeping in mind that true joy is contagious, focus on sharing your joy with those you meet each day.

Prayer Requests and Praises: