

[If you want to skip the author's introductory stuff, as I commonly do, turn now to page 4.]

A Study of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)

Based upon

Matthew Henry's Commentary,

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Why is this document important?

In life, we all face three existential* questions we need answers to; origin, meaning/morality, and destiny.

[* existential means the basic questions relating to existence]

In these pages you can study the Beatitudes. They are the first part of Jesus' stump speech, what we call the sermon on the mount. It was the talk He started with whenever He taught the crowds. They come to us as bedrock answers to the second of the three basic questions above. He said you do well if these traits are routinely found in your life.

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 1 | These beatitudes describe what our character should be. |
| 2 | He says we need to fulfil this character of living in order to qualify for the only good alternative (Heaven) in the next of the three existentials, <i>destiny</i> . |
| 4 | It is one thing to know the list of character traits Jesus said we must exemplify, and it is quite another thing to actually live them. That mojo, that power, is solely and intricately bound into Jesus's life, death, and resurrection and the 2nd chapter of Acts. " <i>With Him</i> ," that's how we live these be-attitudes. |
| 14 | That is why this study is important: Jesus taught it as primary. It is the target. If you don't know the target you can't hit it. |
| 18 | |
| 20 | |
| 22 | And so, read on. This is how you are to be, as you walk hand in hand with the Spirit. It's love! Love God. Love those around you. |
| 26 | |
| 30 | |
| 32 | |
| 35 | |

LC

The Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12

5 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.

Summary, with word count

1- humble	kingdom of heaven	13
2- mourn	comforted	10
3- meek	inherit the earth	10
4- seeking God	filled with righteousness	14
5- merciful	shown mercy	10
6- pure in heart	they will see God	11
7- peacemakers	called children of God	12
8- persecuted	great reward in Heaven	61

[LC's comments on Matthew Henry

One day in my normal reading through Scripture I came on Matthew 5, the Sermon on the Mount, which begins with the Beatitudes. I read a few words and my mind rebelled! - I thought, "This is too familiar! There has to be more to this than I know! I have to go deeper!"

And so I went to Matthew Henry.

Matthew Henry published his Commentary on Scripture in 1710, over 300 years ago. It is one dense block of text, and much of it archaic to the modern mind.

It's not uncommon to find sentences longer than 100 words, and others top out at over 200! It is difficult reading, but the reason I keep going back to it is it forces me to concentrate to get what he is saying, and when I do that work, I find gold in it!

Below is Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Beatitudes. The scripture is 12 verses. His Commentary with my clarifying and comments, is 37 pages (so far, this is a draft.

But it is easy to read. Here's why:

Your ability to read starts with you knowing the definitions of individual words. An author, who also knows those words, takes words and makes phrases out of them, and then sentences.

A phrase is a collection of several words that is a building block in a sentence. Reading enters your mind not as words, which you already know, but as phrases. And phrases are not yet communication,

but rather the building blocks to making a sentence, which does carry meaning.

When you read your mind searches for the phrases, knowing that they make up a sentence, and evaluates how they relate to one another, and so when you get that epiphany, and understand how this phrase modifies that one, and how these two phrases are subordinate to the previous one, the sentence slides into your mind!

Think of what I do as pre-digesting Matthew Henry's sentences for you. I separate the phrases with newlines and tabs. The way you see it printed here is just how it is to be understood and to slide into your mind!

Note; MH's words are all there! You are reading his work. Any comments of mine are clearly identified and set off so as not to detract from his words. All my work is in italics within [square brackets]

What I have added is white space (new lines and indentations.) You may see bullet points- they were in his text as comma separated phrases, I make them clearer with white space, as they would be typeset today.

I add definitions of words common and obscure. I also provide the text of some Scripture he only provides the reference to.

I put text in a box emphasize it.

It all makes for easier reading and a fuller understanding of God's word.

LC]

Matthew Henry's Commentary on

Matthew 5:1-2

We have here a general account of this sermon.

I. *The Preacher was our Lord Jesus,*

the Prince of preachers,
the great Prophet of his church,
who

*came into the world,
to be the Light of the world.*

The prophets and John
had done virtuously in preaching,
but Christ excelled them all.

He is

the eternal Wisdom,
that lay in the bosom of the Father,
before all worlds,

and perfectly knew his will ([Joh 1:18](#) ↓);

[18 No one has ever seen God,
but the one and only Son,
Who is
himself God
and is in closest
relationship
with the Father,
has made Him known.]

and he is the eternal Word,
by whom
he [*the Father*]
has in these last days spoken to us.

The many miraculous cures wrought by Christ in Galilee,
which we read of in the close of the foregoing
chapter,
were intended
to make way for this sermon,
and to dispose people to receive

instructions from one
in whom there appeared so much of a divine
power and goodness;
and, probably, this sermon
was the summary, or rehearsal,
of what he had preached up and down
in the synagogues of Galilee.

His text was,
Repent,
for the kingdom of heaven
is at hand.

This is a sermon on the former part of that text, showing
what it is to *repent*;
it is
to reform,
both
in judgment
and practice;

and here he tells us wherein, in answer to that
question ([Mal 3:7](#) ↓),
Wherein

[ie: “where to” or “to what”]

shall we return?

[*Malachi 3:7*
Ever since
the time of your ancestors
you have turned away
from My decrees
and have not kept them.
Return to Me,
and I will return to you,”
says the Lord Almighty.]

He afterward preached upon the latter part of the text,
[ie: “*for the kingdom of heaven*
is at hand”]

when,
in divers* parables,
[* divers : of varying types; several.
synonyms: several, multiple,
assorted]

he showed what the kingdom of heaven is like, ch.
13*.

[* “ch. 13” - MH means
Matthew ch. 13, where Jesus gives
several parables starting with “The
Kingdom is God is like...”]

because
upon a *mountain*
the law was given;
and
this was also a solemn promulgation*
of the Christian law.

[* *promulgate*: to officially put
a law into effect]

II. The place was a mountain in Galilee.

As in other things, so in this,
our Lord Jesus was but ill accommodated;
he had no convenient place to preach in,
any more than to *lay his head* on.

While the scribes and Pharisees had
Moses' chair to sit in,
with all possible ease, honour, and state,
and there corrupted the law;
our Lord Jesus,
the great Teacher of truth,
Is driven out to the desert,
and finds no better a pulpit than a *mountain* can
afford;
and not one of the *holy mountains* neither,
not one of the *mountains of Zion*,
but a common *mountain*;
by which Christ would intimate [teach]
that
there is no such distinguishing holiness of places
now,
under the gospel,
as there was under the law;
but that
it is the *will of God*
that men should pray and preach
every where, any where,
provided it be decent and convenient.

(↑ 116 word
sentence!)

Christ preached this sermon,
which was an exposition of the law,
upon a mountain,

But observe the difference:

when *the law was given*,
the Lord *came down* upon the *mountain*;
now
the Lord *went up*:

then,
he spoke *in thunder and lightning*;
now,
in a still small voice:

then
the people were ordered to keep their
distance;
now
they are invited to draw near:

a blessed change!

If God's grace and goodness are His glory,
(as they certainly are)

then
the glory of the gospel
is the glory that excels,
for *grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*,
2Co 3:7; Heb 12:18, etc.

[MH cites 2 Cor. 3:7, here is 3:7-11

7 But if the ministry of death,
written and engraved on stones,
was glorious,
so that the children of Israel
could not look steadily
at the face of Moses
because of the glory

*of his countenance,
which glory was passing away,*

*8 how will the ministry of the Spirit
not be more glorious?*

*9 For if the ministry of
condemnation had glory,
the ministry of righteousness
exceeds much more in glory.
10 For even what was made glorious
had no glory in this respect,
because of the glory that excels.
11 For if what is passing away
was glorious,
what remains is much more
glorious.*

MH also mentions Heb 12:18, here's 18-24
- refreshing!

*You have not come
to a mountain that cannot be
touched and that is burning with
fire;
to darkness, gloom and storm;
19 to a trumpet blast or to such a
voice speaking words that those who
heard it begged that no further word
be spoken to them,
20 because they could not bear what
was commanded: "If even an animal
touches the mountain, it must be
stoned to death." 21 The sight was so
terrifying that Moses said, "I am
trembling with fear."*

*But you have come
to Mount Zion,
to the city of the living God,
the heavenly Jerusalem.
You have come to thousands upon
thousands of angels in joyful
assembly, 23 to the church of the
firstborn, whose names are written in
heaven. You have come to God,
the Judge of all,
to the spirits of
the righteous*

*made perfect,
24 to Jesus
the mediator of a new covenant,
and to the sprinkled blood
that speaks a better word
than the blood of Abel.]*

It was foretold of Zebulun and Issachar,
two of the tribes of Galilee (**Deut 33:19***),
that *they shall call*
the people to the mountain; [ie: Sinai]
to this mountain *[ie; the one where Jesus was]*
we are called,
to learn *to offer the sacrifices of righteousness.*

Now was this* *the mountain of the Lord,*
where he *taught us his ways,*

Isa 2:2-3 ↓ ; **Mic 4:1-2.**

[* "Now was this":

*In modern language we'd say
"Now, this was..."*

*MH is saying 'The mountain
changed! It isn't the Old
Testament Sinai anymore, it is
wherever Jesus stops to
preach! Listen!]*

[MH cites Isaiah 2:2-3

*2 Now it shall come to pass in
the latter days that the
mountain of the Lord's house
shall be established on the top
of the mountains, and shall be
exalted above the hills; and all
nations shall flow to it.*

*3 Many people shall come and
say, "Come, and let us go up to
the mountain of the Lord,
To the house of the God of
Jacob; He will teach us His
ways, and we shall walk in His
paths."*

[MH also cites Micah 4:1-2, which is virtually identical to the passage in Isaiah above. Both Micah and Isaiah lived around 700 BC]

III. The auditors [ie: hearers] were his disciples,

who came unto him; came at his call, as appears by comparing

↓ Mar 3:13, Luk 6:13.

[Mark 3:13

13 And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him.]

To them he directed his speech, because they followed him for love and learning, while others attended him only for cures.

He taught them,
because they were willing to be taught
(the meek will he teach his way);
because they would understand what he taught,
which to others was foolishness;
and because they were to teach others;
and it was therefore requisite
that they should have
a clear and distinct knowledge
of these things themselves.

The duties prescribed in this sermon were to be conscientiously performed by all those that would enter into that kingdom of heaven which they were sent to set up, with hope to have the benefit of it.

But though this discourse was directed to the disciples, it was in the hearing of the multitude; for it is said (Mat 7:28),
The people were astonished.

No bounds were set about this mountain, to keep the people off, as were about mount Sinai (Exo 19:12);

for, through Christ,
we have access to God,
not only to speak to him,
but to hear from him.

Nay,
he had an eye to the *multitude*,
in preaching this sermon.

When the fame of his miracles had brought a vast crowd together, he took the opportunity of so great a confluence* of people, to instruct them.

[* confluence: convergence, gathering, meeting]

Note,
It is an encouragement to a faithful minister to cast the net of the gospel where there are a great many fishes, in hope that some will be caught.

The sight of a *multitude* puts life into a preacher, which yet* must arise from a desire of their profit, not his own praise.

[* “which yet”; to modern minds, read this as “but this”]

IV. The solemnity of his sermon is intimated [implied] in that word, “when he was set.”

[The KJV says, “And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:]

Here’s how The Message translates it; “1-2 When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions.]

Christ preached many times occasionally*,

[* occasionally; (archaic)
as the occasion arose,
as opportunity presented itself]

and by interlocutory discourses*;

[* “interlocutory discourses”: by this, MH means dialogue or conversation, as opposed to a formal speech to a crowd. The phrase contrasts with the next line]

but this was a set sermon, *kathisantos autou*, when he had placed himself so as to be best heard.

He sat down as a Judge or Lawgiver.

It intimates with what sedateness* and composure of mind the things of God should be spoken and heard.

[* sedate: calm, dignified, and unhurried]

He sat,
that the scriptures might be fulfilled

(*Mal 3:3* ↓), *He shall sit as a refiner,*
to purge away the dross,
the corrupt doctrines of the sons of Levi.

[More of Malachi 3 is worth reading here!]

Mal 3:1-4

3 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.

2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

4 Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years.]

He sat

*as in the throne,
judging right (*Psa 9:4*);
for the word he spoke shall judge us.*

[With MH's text spread out like this, it is worth reprinting the Scripture he is talking about: Matt. 5:1,2 KJV

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,]

That phrase, *He opened his mouth*, is only a Hebrew periphrasis* of speaking, as *Job 3:1*.

[* periphrasis: the use of indirect and circumlocutory* speech or writing.

* circumlocutory: using many words where fewer would do, especially in a deliberate attempt to be vague or evasive; long-winded.]

Yet some think it intimates the solemnity of this discourse; the congregation being large, he raised his voice, and spoke louder than usual.

He [God] had spoken long by his servants the prophets, and opened their mouths (*Eze 3:27; Eze 24:27; Eze 33:22*);

[MH lists 3 references to passages in Ezekiel, which tell of times when the prophet's mouth was shut, and then opened by God.]

but now he [Jesus] opened his own, and spoke with freedom, as one having authority.

One of the ancients has this remark upon it;

Christ taught much without opening his mouth.

that is, by his holy and exemplary life;

nay,

he taught, when,

being led as a lamb to the slaughter,

he opened not his mouth,

but now he opened his mouth,

and taught,

that the scriptures might be fulfilled,

Pro 8:1,2 & 6. ↓

Doth not wisdom cry

- cry on the top of high places?

And the opening of her lips shall be right things.

[Proverbs 8:1,2,6 KJV

1 Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?
2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

6 Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.]

He taught them,

according to the promise (Isa 54:13),

All thy children shall be taught of the Lord;
for this purpose he had the tongue of the learned (Isa 50:4),
and the Spirit of the Lord, Isa 61:1.

He taught them,

what was the evil

they should abhor,

and what was the good
they should abide and abound in;

for Christianity
is not a matter of speculation,
but is designed
to regulate the temper of our minds
and the tenor of our conversations;*

[* conversations: archaic definition, means conduct and behavior, not merely talk]

gospel-time is a time of reformation (Heb 9:10 ↓);

[Hebrews 9

... as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9 Which was a figure for the time then present,
in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices,
that could not make him that did the service perfect,
as pertaining to the conscience;

10 Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.]

and by the gospel

we must be reformed,
must be made good,
must be made better.

The truth,
as it is in Jesus,
is the truth
which is according to godliness, Titus 1:1.

*fathers, lest I come and smite
the earth with a curse.]*

Matthew 5:3-12

Christ begins his sermon with blessings,
for *he came into the world to bless us* (Act 3:26),
as the great High Priest of our profession;
as the blessed Melchizedec;
as He in whom all the families of the earth
should be blessed, Gen 12:3.

He came not only to purchase blessings for us,
but to pour out and pronounce blessings on us;
and here he does it as one having authority,
as one that can command the blessing,
even life forevermore,
and that is the blessing here again
and again promised to the good;
his pronouncing them happy
makes them so;
for those whom he blesses,
are blessed indeed.

[Wow! There are 17 lines
above this, which are well
worth rereading and
pondering: “as one that can
command the blessing”, and
“his pronouncing them happy
makes them so.”]

Selah that one, baby!

“Selah” is a term found here
and there in the Biblical text
and means ‘stop and think
about it’.]

The Old Testament ended with a curse (Mal 4:6 ↓),

[5 Behold, I will send you Elijah
the prophet before the coming of
the great and dreadful day of the
Lord:

6 And he shall turn the heart of
the fathers to the children, and
the heart of the children to their

the gospel begins with a blessing;
for hereunto are we called,
that we should inherit the blessing.

Each of the blessings Christ here pronounces
has a double intention:

1. To show who they are
that are to be accounted truly happy,
and
what their characters are.

2. What that is
wherein true happiness consists,

[ie: “2. To describe the state in which true
happiness is found.”
As in, you find honey in a beehive and true
happiness in Christians who pant after God]

in the promises made to persons
of certain characters,
the performance of which will make them happy.

Now,

1. This

[“this” = the blessings and their
consequences.]

is designed to rectify the ruinous mistakes
of a blind and carnal* world.

[* carnal: relating to physical,
especially sexual, needs and
activities.

“Carnal” in the Bible means
of the self, self centered,

and contrasts with

“Spiritual,” meaning the new life of

living above carnality, living in the new marriage-to-God life, the life of unity with others]

Blessedness is the thing which men pretend to pursue;
Who will make us to see good? **Psa 4:6** ↓ .

[4:6 Many, Lord, are asking, "Who will bring us prosperity?" Let the light of Your face shine on us.]

But most mistake the end,
and form a wrong notion of happiness;
and then no wonder that they miss the way;
they choose their own delusions,
and court a shadow.

The general opinion is,

Blessed are they that are rich, and great, and honourable in the world; they spend their days in mirth, and their years in pleasure;
they eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and carry all before them with a high hand, and have every sheaf bowing to their sheaf;

happy the people that is in such a case;

and their designs, aims,
and purposes are accordingly;
they *bless the covetous* (↓ **Psa 10:3**);
they *will be rich.*

[**Ps 10:1-4**

Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?

2 In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak, who are caught in the schemes he devises.

3 He boasts about the cravings of his heart; he blesses the greedy and reviles the Lord.

4 In his pride the wicked man does not seek Him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.]

Now our Lord Jesus

comes to correct this fundamental error,
to advance a new hypothesis,
and to give us quite another notion
of blessedness
and blessed people,
which,
however paradoxical it may appear
to those who are prejudiced,
yet
is in itself,
and appears to be to all
who are savingly enlightened,
a rule and doctrine
of eternal truth and certainty,

by which we must shortly be judged.

[Wow! This is why I keep doing Matthew Henry. I was sleepily trying to knock around his words (68 in that sentence above!) to figure out what he was getting at, and then, right at the end, BAAAM! KaBOOOM! ↳ "JUDGED"]

That's serious!]

If this, therefore, be
the beginning of Christ's doctrine,

[then]
the beginning of a Christian's practice
must be to take

his measures of happiness
from those maxims,
and to direct his pursuits accordingly.

2. It

["It" here refers to Christ's core statements about

- who are the happy & blessed
 - and how they get that way]

is designed

to remove the discouragements
 of the weak and poor
 who receive the gospel,

by assuring them

that his gospel did not make happy only those
 that were eminent
 in gifts, graces, comforts, and usefulness;

but that

even *the least in the kingdom of heaven*,
 whose heart was upright with
 God,
 was happy in the
 honours and privileges of that kingdom.

3. It is designed to invite souls to Christ,
 and to make way for his law into their hearts.

Christ's pronouncing these blessings,
 not at the end of his sermon,
 to dismiss the people,
 but at the beginning of it,
 to prepare them for what he had further
 to say to them,

may remind us of
 mount Gerizim
 and mount Ebal,
 on which
 the blessings
 and cursings
 of the law were read, [Deu 27:12](#), etc.

*[12 When you have crossed the Jordan,
 these tribes shall stand on Mount
 Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon,
 Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph and
 Benjamin.]*

*13 And these tribes shall stand on
 Mount Ebal to pronounce curses:
 Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan and
 Naphtali.]*

There

the curses are expressed,
 and the blessings only implied;

here

the blessings are expressed,
 and the curses implied:

in both,

life and death are set before us;

but the law appeared

more as a ministration of death,
 to deter us from sin;

the gospel

as a dispensation of life,
 to allure us to Christ,
 in whom alone all good is to be had.

And those who had seen

the gracious cures wrought by his hand
 ([Mat 4:23](#), [Mat 4:24](#)),

and now heard

*the gracious words proceeding out of his
 mouth,*

would say that he was all of a piece,
 made up of love and sweetness.

4. It

*[Again, "it" refers to the Sermon on
 the Mount, Jesus' "stump speech."]*

is designed

to settle and sum up
 the articles of agreement
 between God and man.

The scope of the divine revelation is to

let us know what God expects from us,
 and what we may then expect from him;

and nowhere

is this more fully set forth in a few words than
 here,

nor with a more exact reference to each other;

and this is that gospel which we are required to believe;

for what is faith
but a conformity to these characters,
and a dependence upon these promises?

The way to happiness is here opened,
and made a *highway* (*Isa 35:8*);

[35:4-8

*4 say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, do not fear; your God will come,
He will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution He will come
to save you.”*

*5 Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.*

*6 Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.*

*7 The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.
In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.*

*8 And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness;
it will be for those who walk on that Way.
The unclean will not journey on it;
wicked fools will not go about on it.]*

and this coming from the mouth of Jesus Christ,
it is intimated that

from him,
and by him,
we are to receive both
the seed
and the fruit,

both
the grace required,
and the glory promised.

Nothing passes between
God
and fallen man,
but through his hand.

Some of the wiser heathen
had notions of blessedness
different from the rest of mankind,
and looking toward this of our Saviour.

Seneca,

[*Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BC - AD 65), fully Lucius Annaeus Seneca and also known simply as Seneca (/ 'sen ike/), was a Roman Stoic philosopher, statesman, dramatist]*

undertaking to describe a blessed man,
makes it out,
that it is only an honest,
good man that is to be so called:

De Vitâ Beatâ. cap. [← Title ? for ↓]

*4. Cui nullum bonum malumque sit,
nisi bonus malusque animus
- Quem nec extollant fortuita, nec frangant
- Cui vera voluptas erit voluptatum contemptio
- Cui unum bonum honestas, unum malum turpitudo.*

[MH translates ↑ to ↓]

- *In whose estimation
nothing is good or evil,
but a good or evil heart*

- *Whom no occurrences elate or deject*

- *Whose true pleasure
consists in a contempt of pleasure*

- *To whom the only good is virtue,
and the only evil vice.*

Our Saviour

here gives us eight characters of blessed people;
which represent to us
the principal graces of a Christian.

On each of them a present blessing is pronounced;

Blessed are they;
and to each

a future blessing is promised,
which is variously expressed,
so as to suit the nature
of the grace or duty recommended.

Do we ask then who are happy? It is answered,

I. *The poor in spirit are happy, Mat 5:3.*

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

There is a poor-spiritedness

that is so far from making men blessed
that it is a sin and a snare
- cowardice and base fear,
and a willing subjection to the
lusts of men.

But this poverty of spirit

is a gracious disposition of soul,
by which we are emptied of self,
in order to
our being filled with Jesus Christ.

To be *poor in spirit* is,

1. To be contentedly poor,
willing to be emptied of worldly wealth,
if God orders that to be our lot;

to bring our mind to our condition,
when it is a low condition.

Many are poor in the world,
but high in spirit,

poor and proud,
murmuring and complaining,
and blaming their lot,

but we must accommodate ourselves
to our poverty,
must know how to be abased, *Php 4:12* ↓ .

[*Paul to the church in Philippi:*
4:12

*I know what it is to be in need,
and I know what it is to have plenty.
I have learned the secret
of being content
in any and every situation,
whether well fed or hungry,
whether living in plenty or in want.]*

Acknowledging the wisdom of God in appointing us to poverty,

we must be easy in it,
patiently bear the inconveniences of it,
be thankful for what we have,
and make the best of that which is.

It is to

sit loose to all worldly wealth,
and not set our hearts upon it,
but cheerfully to bear
losses and disappointments
which may befall us
in the most prosperous state.

It is not,

in pride or pretence,
to make ourselves poor,
by throwing away what God has given us,
especially as those in the church of
Rome,
who vow poverty,
and yet engross*
the wealth of the nations;

[* engross: absorb all the
attention or interest of.

Synonym: absorb, envelop,
engulf]

but if we be rich in the world
 we must be *poor in spirit*,
 that is,
 we must
 condescend* to the poor

[* *condescend; come down
 from one's high horse*]

and sympathize with them,
 as being touched with the feeling of their
 infirmities;

we must expect and prepare for poverty;
 must not inordinately fear or shun it,
 but must bid it welcome,
 especially when it comes upon us
 for keeping a good conscience, **Heb 10:34 ↓ .**

[↑ 106 word sentence.]

*[Heb 10:32-35
 Remember those earlier days
 after you had received the light,
 when you endured in
 a great conflict full of suffering.*

*33 Sometimes you were
 publicly exposed to
 insult and persecution;
 at other times you stood side by side
 with those who were so treated.*

*34 You suffered along with
 those in prison
 and joyfully accepted
 the confiscation of your property,
 because you knew that you yourselves
 had better and lasting possessions.*

*35 So do not throw away
 your confidence;
 it will be richly rewarded.]*

Job was *poor in spirit*,
 when he blessed God in *taking away*,
 as well as giving.

[*Job 1:21b: (Job speaking)
 "The Lord gave,
 and the Lord has taken away;
 blessed be the name of the Lord."*]

2. [*To be poor in spirit*] is to be

humble

and lowly in our own eyes.

To be poor in spirit,
 is to think meanly* of ourselves,

[* *meanly: lowly, of the
 common man.
 As used here, "meanly" does
 not mean "nasty"]*

of what we are, and have, and do;

the poor
 are often taken in the Old Testament
 for the humble and self-denying,
 as opposed to
 those that are at ease,
 and the proud;

it is to be
 as little children in our opinion of ourselves,
 weak, foolish, and insignificant,
Mat 18:4 ↓ ; Mat 19:14 ↓ ↓ .

[*Matt. 18:2-5;
 2 He called a little child to him,
 and placed the child among them.
 3 And He said: "Truly I tell you,
 unless you change
 and become like little children,
 you will never enter
 the kingdom of heaven.
 4 Therefore, whoever takes
 the lowly position of this child
 is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
 5 And whoever welcomes
 one such child in my name
 welcomes Me.*

Matt. 19:14

14 Jesus said,
*“Let the little children come to Me,
 and do not hinder them,
 for the kingdom of heaven
 belongs to such as these.”]*

It is to be willing to make ourselves
 cheap,
 and mean*,
 and little,
 to do good;
 to become all things to all men.

Laodicea was poor in *spirituals*,
 wretchedly and miserably poor,
 and yet
 rich in spirit,
 so well increased with goods,
 as to have need of nothing, *Rev 3:17* ↓ .

It is to acknowledge that God is great,
 and we are mean*;
 [MH does not use “mean” to equal
 “nasty”, he uses “mean” to say lowly,
 common]

[*Rev. 3:16-18*

16 So, because you are lukewarm
 –neither hot nor cold—
 I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

that he is holy

and we are sinful;

that he is all

and we are nothing,

less than nothing,

worse than nothing*;

and to humble ourselves before him,
 and under his mighty hand.

[* “worse than nothing”:
 Wow, that’s harsh. Sinner,
 beware! Yes, God loves
 you, but let the Blood
 wash you before the Day
 of Judgment, or it’s not
 going to go well for you!]

17 You say, ‘I am rich;
 I have acquired wealth
 and do not need a thing.’

But you do not realize that you are
 wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.

18 I counsel you to buy from Me
 gold refined in the fire,
 so you can become rich;
 and white clothes to wear,
 so you can cover your shameful
 nakedness;
 and salve to put on your eyes,
 so you can see.]

3. It is to come off
 from all confidence
 in our own
 righteousness
 and strength,

- that we may depend only
 upon the merit of Christ
 for our justification**,

- and the spirit and grace of Christ
 for our sanctification*.

On the other hand,

Paul

was rich in *spirituals*,
 excelling most in gifts and graces,
 and yet poor in spirit,
 the least of the apostles,
 less than the least of all saints,
 and nothing in his own account.

It [← to be poor in spirit]

is to look
 with a holy contempt upon ourselves,
 to value others
 and undervalue ourselves
 in comparison of them.

[* Justification means
 our declared righteousness
 by God,
 made possible by Christ’s
 death and resurrection for us.

*** Sanctification means
our gradual, growing
righteousness,
made possible by
the Spirit's work in us.*

*Heb. 10:14 ESV
For by a single offering
He has perfected for all time
those who are being sanctified.]*

That *broken and contrite spirit*
with which the publican
cried for mercy to a poor sinner,
is that poverty of spirit.

We must call ourselves poor, because [*we are*] always
in want of God's grace,
always begging at God's door,
always hanging on in his house.

Now, (1.)

This poverty in spirit
is put first among the Christian graces.

The philosophers did not reckon

humility
among their moral virtues,
but Christ puts it
first.

Self-denial is the
first lesson
to be learned in His school,
and poverty of spirit
[*is*] entitled to the
first beatitude.

The foundation of all other graces
is laid in humility.
Those who would build high
must begin low;
and it [*poor in spirit*]
is an excellent preparative

for the entrance of gospel-grace into the
soul;
it fits the soil to receive the seed.

[*Selah that last line.*
“A sower went out to sow...
MAtt 13:18-23]

Those who are weary and heavy laden,
are the poor in spirit,
and
they shall find rest with Christ.

(2.) They are blessed.

Now they are so, in this world.
God looks graciously upon them.
They are his little ones, and have their
angels.
To them he gives more grace;
they live the most comfortable lives,
and are easy to
themselves
and all about them,

and nothing comes amiss to them;

while high spirits* are always uneasy.

[* *high spirits:*
the haughty,
those who put themselves first,
those who live not needing God]

(3.) *Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

The kingdom of grace is composed of such
[*the poor in spirit*];
they only are fit to be members of Christ's church,
which is called *the congregation of the poor*
(Psa 74:19 ↓);

[74:19
O deliver not
the soul of thy turtle dove
unto the multitude of the
wicked: forget not the
congregation of thy poor for
ever.]

the kingdom of *glory* is prepared for them.

Those who thus humble themselves,
and comply with God when he humbles them,
shall be thus exalted.
The great, high spirits
go away with the glory of *the kingdoms of the earth*;
but the humble, mild, and yielding souls
obtain the glory of *the kingdom of heaven*.

We are ready to think

concerning those who are rich,
and do good with their riches,
that, no doubt,
theirs is the kingdom of heaven;
for they can thus lay up in store
a good security *for the time to come*;
but what shall the poor do,
who have not wherewithal* to do good?

[* *wherewithal*: the money or other means needed for a particular purpose]

Why, the same happiness is promised
to those who are contentedly poor,
as to those who are usefully rich.

If I am not able to *spend* cheerfully for his sake,
if I can but *want* cheerfully for his sake,
even that shall be recompensed.
And do not we serve a good master then?

II. *They that mourn are happy* (Mat 5:4);

Blessed are they that mourn for they will be comforted.

This is another strange blessing,
and fitly follows the former.
The poor are accustomed to mourn,
the graciously poor mourn graciously.

We are apt to think,

Blessed are the *merry*;
but Christ, who was himself a great mourner, says,
Blessed are the *mourners*.

There is a sinful mourning,
which is an enemy to blessedness -

the sorrow of the world;
despairing melancholy* upon a spiritual account,
and disconsolate* grief upon a temporal* account.

[* *melancholy*: a feeling of deep sadness, typically with no obvious cause

Disconsolate: without consolation or comfort; unhappy

Temporal: relating to worldly as opposed to spiritual affairs; secular]

There is a natural mourning,
which may prove a friend to blessedness,
by the grace of God working with it,
and sanctifying the afflictions to us,
for which we mourn.

But there is a gracious mourning,
which qualifies *[us]* for blessedness,
an habitual seriousness,
the mind mortified *[deadened]* to mirth,
and an actual sorrow.

1. A penitential* mourning for our own sins;

[* *penitence*: the action of feeling or showing sorrow and regret for having done wrong; repentance]

this is *godly sorrow*,
a sorrow according to God;
sorrow for sin, with an eye to Christ,
Zec 12:10 ↓ .

[12:10

"And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on Me, the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son.]

Those are God's mourners,
who live a life of repentance,
who lament the corruption of their nature,
and their many actual transgressions,
and God's withdrawals from them;
and who, out of regard to God's honour,
mourn also for the sins of others,
and *sigh and cry for their abominations, Eze 9:4*
 ↓ .

[Eze 9:3,4

Now the Glory of the God of Israel went up from above the cherubim, where it had been, and moved to the threshold of the temple. Then the Lord called to the man clothed in linen who had the writing kit at his side 4 and said to him, "Go throughout the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who grieve and lament over all the detestable things that are done in it."

2. A sympathizing mourning for the afflictions of others; the mourning of those
who weep with them that weep,
are sorrowful for the solemn assemblies,
for the desolations of Zion(Zep 3:18; Psa 137:1),
especially [those] who
look with compassion on perishing souls,
and weep over them,
as Christ over Jerusalem.

Now these gracious mourners,

(1.) Are blessed.

As in vain and sinful *laughter*
the heart is sorrowful,
 so in gracious mourning
the heart has a serious joy,
a secret satisfaction,
 which a *stranger does not intermeddle with.*

[In the work of Matthew Henry, when you see italics outside of my square brackets [], it means those words are right from Scripture! Yes, the KJV uses the word "intermeddle"]

Prov. 14:10 *The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.*

It means to intrude upon, to interfere, to thwart]

They

[Always figure out what "they" refers to! In this case it refers to "these gracious mourners", ie, those who mourn correctly and not those who just grump and complain about their state in life]

are blessed,

for they are like the Lord Jesus,
who was a man of sorrows,
 and of whom we never read* that he laughed,
 but often that he wept.

[* True that it never says in the Bible that "Jesus laughed", but we need to balance "never read" with other things:

- Love is filled with laughter, and God is Love
- Jesus' enemies called Him a friend of sinners, a strong testimony that He laughed.
- The children flocked to Him, probably laughter going on there!]

They are

[“they” = “these gracious mourners”]

armed against the many temptations that attend vain mirth*,

[“attend vain mirth”

attend = comes along with

vain = producing no result; useless

mirth = laughter]

and are prepared for [by] the comforts of a sealed pardon*

[* sealed here means issued by the judge but not yet published]

and a settled peace.

[the above sentence is repeated in box below, because it's lovely!]

Blessed are they that mourn:
for they shall be comforted.

“these gracious mourners”

They are
armed against
the many temptations
that attend vain mirth
and are prepared for
the comforts
of a sealed pardon
and a settled peace.

[Wow, THIS ↑ is why I spend hours doing the work of reading Matthew Henry!]

Those words just ring in my heart:

“the comforts of a sealed pardon
and a settled peace.”

Our pardon is done! Finished!
Sealed, yes, and the world cannot see it,
but we are Blood-bought
and death holds no fear for us!

Our peace is settled,
we have peace with God,

no matter what the world
throws our way! Glory!]

(2.) They shall be comforted.

Though perhaps they are not immediately comforted, yet plentiful provision is made for their comfort; light is sown for them; and in heaven,

it is certain,

they shall be comforted, as Lazarus, Luk 16:25.

Note,

The happiness of heaven consists in being perfectly and eternally comforted, and in the *wiping away of all tears from their eyes*.

It is the joy of our Lord;
a fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore;

[Psalm 16:11

*Thou wilt shew me the path of life:
in Thy presence is fullness of joy;
at Thy right hand
there are pleasures for evermore.]*

which will be doubly sweet
to those who have been prepared for them
by this godly sorrow.

Heaven will be a heaven indeed
to those who go mourning thither;
it will be a harvest of joy,
the return of a seed-time of tears

(Psa 126:5,6 ↓)

a mountain of joy,
to which our way lies through a vale of tears.
See Isa 66:10.

[Psalm 126:5,6
*Those who sow in tears
shall reap with joyful shouting.*

6 He who goes to and fro
weeping, carrying his bag of
seed,
Shall indeed come again

*with a shout of joy,
bringing his sheaves with him.]*

III. The meek are happy (Mat 5:5);

Blessed are the meek*, for they shall inherit the earth.

[* meek: MH defines and illuminates "meek" below; this dictionary definition also may help: quiet, gentle, and easily imposed on; submissive

willingly obedient

Note: "meek" is not synonymous with "weak". Meek is said of particular racehorses, a powerful animal, yet one which is easily guided.

Moses was said to be the meekest of men. Weak? No. Strong before men, yet open and submissive to God.

Here's the Amplified translation of Matthew 5:5 (the italics and square brackets are in the AMP text)

AMP

"Blessed

[inwardly peaceful,
spiritually secure,
worthy of respect]

are the gentle

[the kind-hearted,
the sweet-spirited,
the self-controlled],

for they will inherit the earth."]

Blessed are the meek.

The meek are those
who quietly submit themselves to God,

to his word
and to his rod,
who follow his directions,
and comply with his designs,
and are gentle towards all men

(Tit 3:2);

[*Titus 3:2 KJV*
"to speak evil of no man,
to be no brawlers,
but gentle,
shewing all meekness unto all men."]

who can bear provocation
without being inflamed by it;
are either silent,
or return a soft answer;
and who can show their displeasure
when there is occasion for it,
without being transported
into any indecencies;
who can be cool when others are hot;
and in their patience
keep possession of their own souls,
when they can scarcely keep possession
of any thing else.

They are the meek,
who are rarely and hardly provoked,
but quickly and easily pacified;
and who would rather forgive twenty injuries
than revenge one,
having the rule of their own spirits.

These meek ones are here represented as happy,
even in this world.

1. They are blessed,
for they are like the blessed Jesus,
in that wherein particularly they are to learn of him,
Mat 11:29.

[*11:29 NKJV*
Take My yoke upon you
and learn from Me,
for I am gentle
and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest

for your souls.]

They are like the blessed God himself,
who is Lord of his anger,
and in whom fury is not.

They are *blessed*,
for they have the most comfortable, undisturbed
enjoyment of
themselves,
their friends,
their God;

they are fit for
any relation,
and condition,
any company;
fit to live,
and fit to die.

2. They shall inherit the earth;

it is quoted from [Psa 37:11](#),

[Ps 37:10

*A little while,
and the wicked will be no more;
though you look for them,
they will not be found.*

*11 But the meek
will inherit the land
and enjoy peace and prosperity.]*

and it is almost
the only express temporal promise
in all the New Testament.

Not that they shall always have much of *the earth*,
much less that
they shall be put off* with that only;

[*"put off with that only"
= fulfilled merely with the
things of the earth]

but this branch of godliness has,

in a special manner,
the promise of life that now is.

Meekness,
however ridiculed and run down,
has a real tendency to promote our
health,
wealth,
comfort,
and safety,
even in this world.

The meek and quiet
are observed to live the most easy lives,
compared with the foward* and turbulent.

[* *foward*: (of a person)
difficult to deal with;
contrary]

Or, *They shall inherit the land* (so it may be read),
the land of Canaan, a type of heaven.

So that

all the blessedness of heaven above,
and all the blessings of earth beneath,
are the portion of the meek.

IV. They that hunger and thirst after righteousness are happy, Mat 5:6.

NIV Matt 5:6

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

Some understand this as a further instance of [*picture of*]
our outward poverty,
and a low condition in this world,
which not only exposes men to injury and
wrong,
but makes it in vain [*useless*]
for them to seek
to have justice done to them;
they *hunger and thirst after it*
[*justice*],
but such is the power

on the side of their oppressors,
that they cannot have it;
they desire only that
which is just and equal,
but it is denied them
by those that *neither fear God*
nor regard men.

[Luke 18:1,2

*Then Jesus told his disciples
a parable to show them
that they should always pray
and not give up.*

2 He said:
“In a certain town
there was a judge
who *neither feared God*
nor cared what people
thought....]

This is a melancholy case! Yet, *blessed are they*,
if they suffer these hardships
for and with a good conscience;
let them hope in God, who will
see justice done,
[and see] right take place,
and will deliver the poor from their oppressors,

See Psa 103:6

[103:6 *The Lord works
righteousness and justice for
all the oppressed.]*

Those who contentedly bear oppression,
and quietly refer themselves to God
to plead their cause,
shall in due time be satisfied,
abundantly satisfied,
in the wisdom and kindness
which shall be manifested
in his appearances for them.

But it* is certainly to be understood spiritually,

[* “it”; the whole verse, Matt. 5:6]

of such a desire*

[desire: ie the intense desire for
righteousness]

as, being terminated* on such an object**,

[* terminated on; focused on

is gracious,

** object: the person in this
state of intensely wanting
righteousness]

[“is gracious”; is effective -
that is, the aching need in the
person is the key which opens
the floodgates to cause God’s
grace to flood in]

and the work of God’s grace in the soul,
and qualifies* for the gifts of the divine favour.

[* qualifies:
“gifts” are unmerited,
they reflect
the character of the giver
more than
the worth of the receiver.

By the state of being
“hungering and thirsting”,
the person is made
a fit receptor for the gift.]

1. Righteousness

is here put for* all spiritual blessings.

[* “is here put for”: ie,
“is here representing”

“Blessed are those
who hunger and thirst for
righteousness ...”]

See Psa 24:5;

[Ps. 24:3-5
Who may ascend
the mountain of the Lord?

Who may stand in his holy place?

4 The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.

5 They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior.]

that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.]

and to be
made the righteousness of God in Him;

[*that is,*
we who receive the offered-Christ
actually become OK with God!
The humbling of
“hungering and thirsting”
is the correct positioning,
the key-for-the-lock,
by which the old man (or woman)
is killed
and we become the new creation!]

Mat 6:33.

[6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

* “these things” =
“What shall we eat?”
or ‘What shall we drink?’
or ‘What shall we wear?’”]

to have *the whole man renewed in righteousness,*
so as to become *a new man,*
and to bear the image of God;
to have an interest* in Christ and the promises

[* *interest:* to own a portion, to be a stockholder]

They are purchased for us by *the righteousness of Christ;*
conveyed and secured
by the imputation of that righteousness to us;
and confirmed by the faithfulness of God.

- this is *righteousness.*

[!!!!!! Hooray !!!]

THIS IS RIGHTEOUSNESS !!!!!!!!
YeeeeHAAA! Shazzam!!! Whoopee!

To have Christ

*made of [ie: “by”] God
to us
righteousness,*

[*that is,*
Christ is made by God
to be the very-much-needed
means or vehicle
by which we
could be reconciled to God

2 Corinthians 5:21

*For He hath made Him
to be sin for us,
Who knew no sin;*

2. These

[... to become a new man,
and to bear the image of God ...

Wow! We must hunger and thirst not for merely “saving grace” and a ticket to heaven, but for the very substance of the things Jesus wants to give us! We must hunger and thirst to actually live out before the carnal world, the Beatitudes and the fruits of the Spirit.]

we must hunger and thirst after.

We must truly and really desire them,

as one who is hungry and thirsty
desires meat and drink,
[and] who cannot be satisfied with anything
but meat and drink,
and will be satisfied with them,
though other things be wanting.

Our desires of spiritual blessings
must be earnest and importunate*;
“Give me these, or else I die;

[importunate:
persistent, especially to the point of
annoyance or intrusion]

everything else is dross and chaff, unsatisfying;
give me these,
and I have enough,
though I had nothing else.”

Hunger is a desire of food to sustain,
such as *sanctifying righteousness*.

Thirst is the desire of drink to refresh,
such as *justifying righteousness*,
and the sense of our pardon.

Those who *hunger and thirst* after spiritual blessings,
are *blessed* in those desires,
and *shall be filled* with those blessings.

(1.) They are *blessed* in those desires.

Though all desires of grace are not grace
(feigned, faint desires are not),
yet such a desire as this is;
it is an *evidence* of something *good*,
and an *earnest* of something *better*.

Hunger and thirst

are appetites that return frequently,
and call for fresh satisfactions;

so [thus] these holy desires
rest not in any thing attained,
but are carried out toward renewed pardons,
and daily fresh supplies of grace.

It is a desire of God's own raising,
and He will not forsake the work of His own hands.

The quickened* soul calls for

[* quickened: stimulated,
made alive in Christ]

constant meals of righteousness,
grace to do
the work of every day
in its day,
as duly as the living body calls for food.

Those who *hunger and thirst* will labour for supplies;
so we must not only desire spiritual blessings,
but take pains for them in the use of the appointed
means.

Dr. Hammond, in his practical Catechism, distinguishes
between *hunger and thirst*.

Something or other
the soul will be *hungering* and *thirsting* after;

[ie: the human soul is
designed to be *hungering*
and *thirsting* - all souls do
this]

therefore
they
are blessed
who
fasten upon the right object,
which is satisfying,
and not deceiving;
and do not *pant after the dust of the
earth*,

Amo 2:7;

[2:6,7
This is what the Lord says:

“For three sins of Israel,
even for four, I will not relent.

*They sell the innocent for silver,
and the needy for a pair of
sandals.*

*7 They trample
on the heads of the poor
as on the dust of the ground
and deny justice to the
oppressed.]*

Isa 55:2.

[55 “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

2 Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.

3 Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David.]

(2.) They shall be filled with those blessings.

God will give them what they desire to complete their satisfaction.

It is God only who can fill a soul, Whose grace and favour are adequate to its just desires; and He will fill those with grace for grace, who, in a sense of their own emptiness, have recourse to his fullness.

He fills the hungry
(Luk 1:53),
[46 And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
48 for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
...
53 He has filled the hungry
with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.]

satiates* them,

Jer 31:25.

[* satiate: satisfied to the full]
[23 This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says:
“When I bring them back from captivity, the people in the land of Judah and in its towns will once again use these words:
‘The Lord bless you, you prosperous city, you sacred mountain.’
24 People will live together in Judah and all its towns –farmers and those who move about with their flocks.
25 I will refresh the weary and satisfy the faint.”]

The happiness of heaven will certainly fill the soul; their righteousness shall be complete, the favour of God and his image, both in their full perfection.

V. The merciful are happy, Mat 5:7.

5:7

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

This, like the rest, is a paradox; for the merciful

are not taken to be the wisest, nor are likely to be the richest;

yet Christ pronounces them *blessed*.

Those are the *merciful*,
who are piously and charitably inclined
to pity,
help,
and succour* persons in misery.

[*succour: give assistance or
aid to, sustain, protect, serve.]

A man may be truly *merciful*,
who has not wherewithal* to be bountiful or liberal;
and then God accepts the willing mind.

[* wherewithal: the money or
other means needed for a
particular purpose. Syn:
resources]

We must not only bear our own afflictions patiently,
but we must, by Christian sympathy,
partake of the afflictions of our brethren;
pity must be shown ([Job 6:14](#)),
and *bowels of mercy* [ie; compassionate feelings]
put on ([Col 3:12](#));

[Two translations:

KJV 3:12
Put on therefore,
as the elect of God,
holy and beloved,
bowels of mercies,
kindness, humbleness of mind,
meekness, longsuffering;

NASB 3:12
So, as those who have been
chosen of God, holy and beloved,
put on a heart of compassion,
kindness, humility,
gentleness and patience;]

and,
being put on,
they must put forth themselves
in contributing all we can
for the assistance of those
who are any way in misery.

We must have compassion on the souls of others,
and help them;
pity the ignorant,
and instruct them;
the careless,
and warn them;
those who are in a state of sin,
and snatch them as *brands out of the burning*.*

[LC rabbit trail - * “brands out of the burning” is
a reference to Zechariah 3:2

3:1 Then he showed me
Joshua the high priest
standing before the angel of the
Lord,
and Satan standing at his right hand
to accuse him.

2 The Lord said to Satan,
“The Lord rebuke you, Satan! Indeed,
the Lord who has chosen Jerusalem
rebuke you!
Is this not a brand
plucked from the fire?”

John Wesley (1703 - 1791) was the man God used
to found the Methodist movement.
JW remembered clearly
a house fire when he was 5 years old ...

“We know quite a bit about the fire at the
Epworth rectory from letters the Rev. Samuel
and Susanna Wesley wrote to family and friends
in the immediate aftermath. In these letters,
they describe the harrowing events of February
9, 1709. ...

“Remembering it “as though it were but
yesterday,” Wesley recalls yelling for help and
going to the door. Finally, he went to the
window where “one in the yard saw me.”

“With no time to find a ladder, a couple of
quick-thinking neighbors did the next best thing.
One stood on the other’s shoulders and pulled

Jacky through the window “just as the roof fell into the chamber [his room],” Susanna reports.”

<http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/shaped-by-tragedy-and-grace-wesleys-rescue-from-fire>

]

[Let us remember the scriptural text MH is expounding on Matt 5:7

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

We must have compassion
on those who are melancholy [sadness, gloom]
and in sorrow, and comfort them ([Job 16:5](#));

[[Job 16:1-5 MSG](#) Then Job defended himself:

*“I’ve had all I can take of your talk.
What a bunch of miserable
comforters! Is there no end to your
windbag speeches? What’s your
problem that you go on and on like
this?*

*If you were in my shoes,
I could talk just like you.
I could put together
a terrific harangue
and really let you have it.*

*5 But I’d never do that.
I’d console and comfort,
make things better, not worse!]*

on those whom we have advantage against,
and not be rigorous and severe with them;

on those who are in want,
and supply them;
which if we refuse to do,
whatever we pretend,
we shut up the bowels of our compassion,

[Jas 2:15, Jas 2:16; \[↓ \]](#)

[[James 14-17 MSG](#)

Dear friends, do you think you’ll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything?

Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it?

*For instance,
you come upon an old friend
dressed in rags
and half-starved and say,
“Good morning, friend!
Be clothed in Christ!
Be filled with the Holy Spirit!”
and walk off without providing
so much as a coat
or a cup of soup
—where does that get you?*

*Isn’t it obvious
that God-talk
without God-acts
is outrageous nonsense?]*

[1Jn 3:17. \[↓ \]](#)

*17 But whoso hath this world’s good,
and seeth his brother have need,
and shutteth up
his bowels of compassion from him,
how dwelleth the love of God in him?*

(from LC: it's worth adding the
MSG translation of 1 John
3:16-17 ↓)

*16-17 This is how we’ve come to understand and experience love:
Christ sacrificed his life for us.
This is why we ought to live sacrificially for our fellow believers,
and not just be out for ourselves.*

If you see some brother or sister in need and have the means to do something about it

but turn a cold shoulder and do nothing, what happens to God's love? It disappears.

And you made it disappear.]

Draw out thy soul by dealing thy bread to the hungry, Isa 58:7, Isa 58:10.

[*Isaiah 58:6-9 MSG*

"This is the kind of fast day I'm after:

*to break the chains of injustice,
get rid of exploitation in the
workplace,
free the oppressed,
cancel debts.*

*What I'm interested in seeing you do is:
sharing your food with the hungry,
inviting the homeless poor
into your homes,
putting clothes on the shivering
ill-clad,
being available to your own families.*

*Do this and the lights will turn on,
and your lives will turn around at once.*

*Your righteousness will pave your way.
The God of glory will
secure your passage.
Then when you pray,
God will answer.
You'll call out for help
and I'll say, 'Here I am.']*

Nay, a good man is merciful to his beast.

Now as to the merciful.

1. They are *blessed*; so it was said in the Old Testament;

Blessed is he that considers the poor, Psa 41:1.

Herein they resemble God,

whose goodness is his glory;

in being *merciful as he is merciful*,

we are, in our measure,

perfect as he is perfect.

It is an evidence of love to God;
it will be a satisfaction to ourselves,
to be any way instrumental for the benefit of others.

One of the purest and most refined delights in this world,
is that of *doing good*.

In this word, *Blessed are the merciful*,
is included that saying of Christ,
which otherwise we find not in the gospels,
It is more blessed to give than to receive,
Act 20:35.

[Let us again remember the scriptural text MH is expounding on Matt 5:7

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

2. They shall obtain mercy;

*mercy with men,
when they need it;
he that watereth,
shall be watered also himself
(we know not how soon we may
stand in need of kindness,
and therefore should be kind);*

*but especially mercy with God,
for with the merciful
He will show Himself merciful, Psa 18:25.*

The most merciful and charitable
cannot pretend to merit,
but must fly to mercy.

[I boxed this sentence because it is so beautiful!]

*It is worth adding the definition
of "pretend":
to speak and act
so as to make it appear
that something is the case
when in fact it is not.*

Whoa! That'll preach!!]

The merciful shall find with God

sparing mercy

(Mat 6:14),

[*For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:*]

supplying mercy

(Pro 19:17),

[*He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will He pay him again.*]

sustaining mercy

(Psa 41:1,2),

[*Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.*

2 The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.]

mercy in that day

(2Ti 1:18);

[*(Paul, speaking of) Onesiphorus - 17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me. 18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.*]

may, they shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them

(Mat 25:34-35)

[*34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:*

35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:]

whereas they shall have judgment without mercy

(which can be nothing short of hell-fire)
who have shown no mercy.

VI. The pure in heart are happy (Mat 5:8);

Matt 5:8

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

This is the most comprehensive of all the beatitudes;
here

holiness
and happiness
are fully described and put together.

1. Here is the most comprehensive character of the blessed:
they are *pure in heart*.

Note, True religion consists in heart-purity.

Those who are inwardly pure,
show themselves to be under the power
of *pure and undefiled religion*.

True Christianity lies in the heart,

in the *purity of heart*;
the *washing* of that from wickedness,

and

↓ below

*[Is where you can't aim at
all because you have
sand and muck
in your eyes.]*

Jer 4:14.

[14 KJV O Jerusalem,
wash thine heart from wickedness,
that thou mayest be saved.
How long shall thy vain thoughts
lodge within thee?

14 MSG Jerusalem!
Scrub the evil from your lives
so you'll be fit for salvation.
How much longer
will you harbor devious and malignant
designs within you?]

We must lift up to God,
not only clean hands,
but a pure heart,

Psa 24:4, Psa 24:5;

[3 AKJV

*Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?
Or who shall stand in his holy place?*

*4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart;
who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,
nor sworn deceitfully.*

*5 He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,
and righteousness
from the God of his salvation.]*

1Ti 1:5.

[Now the end of the commandment
is charity out of a pure heart,
and of a good conscience,
and of faith unfeigned]

The heart must be *pure*,
in opposition to *mixture* -
an honest heart that aims well;

and pure, in opposition to *pollution* and
defilement;

as wine *unmixed*,
as water *unmuddied*.

The heart must be kept *pure* from

fleshly lusts,
all unchaste thoughts and desires;

and from *worldly lusts*;
covetousness is called *filthy lucre**;

[* *filthy lucre*: money;
originally, money obtained
dishonestly. This term
comes from the Bible (Titus
1:11), where it refers to
those who teach wrongly for
the sake of money.]

from all filthiness of flesh and spirit,
all that which come *out of the heart*,
and *defiles the man*.

The heart

must be *purified by faith*,
and entire for God;
must be presented and preserved
a chaste* virgin to Christ.

[* *chaste*: innocent, pure,
pure as the driven snow,
guiltless, sinless]

Create in me such a clean heart, O God!

[I think what MH means above ↑
Is we aim for the best
over the good

2.

Here is
the most *comprehensive** comfort
of the blessed;
They shall see God.

[* *comprehensive*: *complete; including all or nearly all elements or aspects of something*]

Note,

(1.) It is the perfection of the soul's happiness to *see God*;

seeing him,
as we may by faith in our present state,
is a *heaven upon earth*;

and seeing him as we shall in the future state,
in the *heaven of heaven*.

To see him *as he is*,
face to face,
and no longer through a glass darkly;

to see him as ours,
and to see him and enjoy him;

to see him and be like him,
and be satisfied with that likeness
(Psa 17:15);

[*Ps 17, a psalm of David*
As for me,
I shall behold your face in
righteousness;
when I awake,
I shall be satisfied with your
likeness.]

and to see him forever,
and never lose the sight of him;
this is heaven's happiness.

(2.) The happiness of seeing God is promised
to those,
and those only,
who are *pure in heart*.

None but the *pure*
are capable of *seeing God*,
nor would it be a *felicity** to the impure.

[* *felicity*: *intense happiness.*
synonyms: happiness, joy,
joyfulness, joyousness, rapture,
bliss, euphoria, delight, cheer.

LC - You don't see this word much
today but I've noted through
other reading that in the
American colonial period, it was
in common usage.]

What pleasure could an unsanctified soul
take in the vision of a holy God?

As *He* cannot endure to look upon their iniquity,
so *they* cannot endure to look upon His purity;

nor shall any unclean thing enter into the new Jerusalem;
But [*ie; only*] all that are *pure in heart*,
all that are truly sanctified,
[*who*] have desires wrought in them,
which nothing but
the sight of God will sanctify;
and divine grace will not leave those
desires unsatisfied.

VII. The *peace-makers* are happy, Mat 5:9.

Blessed are the peacemakers:
for they shall be called
the children of God.

[Use of "children" vs "sons" is
about equal among the many
English translations.]

The wisdom that is from above is

first *pure*,
and then *peaceable*;

the blessed ones

are *pure* toward God,
and *peaceable* toward men;

for with reference to both,

conscience* must be kept *void of offence*.

[By use of the word “conscience” here,
MH clarifies that it isn’t enough
to look good on the outside,
where you might fool some,
some of the time.

Rather, the standard is set
on the inside,
where the house must be kept
“void of offense”.

You can still fool yourself,
but the good thing about
the indwelling Christ
is if we get our self up on the
“Foolin’-Myself-Train-To-Happyville”
the Helper is right there with us
to nudge us back to reality.]

The *peace-makers* are those who have,

1. A *peaceable disposition*:

as,
to make a lie,
is to be given and addicted to lying,
so,
to make peace,
is to have a strong
and hearty affection to peace.

I am for peace,

Psa 120:7.
[120:6
My soul hath long dwelt
with him that hateth peace.
7 I am for peace:
but when I speak,
they are for war.]

It [← = “A *peaceable disposition*”]

is to

love,
and desire,
and delight in peace;

to be put in it as in our element,
and to study* to be quiet.

[* study:
take an effort
to achieve (a result)
or take into account
(a person or their wishes).
to actively seek out a result,
so as to internalize it,
to make it your natural
reaction]

2. A *peaceable conversation**;

[* conversation: this use is now
archaic; MH used it to mean
conduct, behavior]

industriously,
as far as we can,
to preserve the peace
that it be not broken,
and to recover it when it is broken;
to hearken to proposals of peace ourselves,
and to be ready to make them [proposals of
peace] to others;

where distance is
among brethren and neighbours,
to do all we can
to accommodate it,
and to be repairers of the breaches*.

[* this phrase is from Isaiah
58:12. In you study of the
Beatitudes, it would be well
worth your time to now go and
read Isaiah 58:1-12, a wonderful
plea from the heart of God
showing the contrast between
selfish and Godly life choices!]

The making of peace

is sometimes a *thankless office*,
and it is the lot of him who parts a *fray**,
to have *blows on both sides*;

[* *a fray is a situation of intense activity, typically one incorporating an element of aggression or competition.*

To “part a fray” is to step into a fight with the intention of breaking it up, to be a peacemaker, and in so doing, to expose yourself to possible injury]

yet it is a good office,
and we must be forward to it*.

[* *“we must be forward to it” - it is our duty.*

I puzzled over this archaic phrase and I was saddened when I saw it; how little “duty” is taught in schools today.]

Some think that this* is intended

[* *this: ? “the making of peace” sometimes being “a thankless office”]*

especially as a lesson for ministers,
who should do all they can
to reconcile those
who are at variance,
and to promote Christian love
among those under their charge.

Now, (1.)
Such persons are *blessed*;
for they have the satisfaction
of *enjoying themselves*,
by keeping the peace,
and of being truly serviceable to others,

[*What a worthy thing, “being truly serviceable to others.”]*

by disposing them to peace.

They are working together
with Christ,
who came into the world
to *slay all enmities*,
and to proclaim *peace on earth.*

(2.) *They shall be called the children of God;*
it* will be an evidence to themselves
that they are so;

[* *it: when you act as a peacemaker, (which in human terms is optional) that will be an evidence to you that you are a child of God]*

God will own them as such,
and herein *[in this]* they will resemble Him.

He is the God of peace;
the Son of God is the Prince of peace;
the Spirit of adoption is a Spirit of peace.

Since God has declared himself
reconcilable to us all,
he will not own those
for his children
who are *implacable** in their enmity** to one another;

[* *implacable; in this use, it means unforgiving, grudge-holding.*

** *enmity: the state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone]*

for if the peacemakers are blessed,
woe to the peace-breakers!

Now by this it appears,

that Christ never intended

to have his religion propagated by
fire and sword,
or penal laws,
or to acknowledge bigotry,
or intemperate zeal,

as the mark of his disciples.

The children of this world

love to fish in troubled waters,

but the children of God

are the peace-makers,
the quiet in the land.

VIII. Those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, are happy.

*when he hears the words
of "the new creation."*

Selah that one.]

Matt. 5

10 Blessed are they
which are persecuted
for righteousness' sake:
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye,
when men shall
revile you,
and persecute you,
and shall say
all manner of evil against you falsely,
for my sake.

12 Rejoice,
and be exceeding glad:
for great is your reward in heaven:
for so persecuted they the prophets
which were before you.

This is the greatest paradox of all,
and peculiar to Christianity;
and therefore it is put last,
and more largely insisted upon than any of the rest, **Mat 5:10-12.**

This beatitude,
like Pharaoh's dream,
is doubled,
[v 10 Blessed are they
v 11 "Blessed are ye]

because hardly credited*,
and yet *the thing is certain;*

[* because hardly credited:
because it makes no sense to
the natural mind.

*Personally, I have to say,
this strikes close to home.
I do not want persecution,
hardships, and troubles.
And therein speaketh
the "old man"*

and in the latter part

there is change of the person,
"Blessed are ye -
ye my disciples,
and immediate followers.

This is that which you,
who excel in virtue,
are more immediately concerned in;
for you must reckon* upon

[* reckon:

1- conclude after calculation;

2- rely on or be sure of doing,
having, or dealing with

*Syn: be of the opinion, believe,
think, assume, figure]
hardships
and troubles
more than other men."*

Observe here,

1. The case of suffering saints described;
and it is a hard case,
and a very piteous one.

(1.) They are

persecuted, hunted, pursued, run down,
as noxious beasts are,
that are sought for to be destroyed;

as if a Christian did

caput gerere lupinum - bear a wolf's head,
as an outlaw is said to do -
any one that finds him may slay him;

they are

abandoned as the *offscouring* of all things;*

[* *offscouring: 1 : someone rejected by society : outcast.*
 2 : something that is scoured off : refuse.]

fined, imprisoned, banished,
 stripped of their estates,
 excluded from all places of profit and trust,
 scourged, racked, tortured,
 always delivered to death,
 and accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

things are laid to their charge that they knew not*,

[* “*laid to their charge that they knew not*”: ie: *blatant lies were spoken of them, things which were in fact not true*]

Psa 35:11; Jer 20:18; Act 17:6, Act 17:7.

[Here is Ps 35:11:15 from the Passion Translation

11 They are malicious men,
hostile witnesses of wrong.
They rise up against me,
accusers appearing out of nowhere.

12 When I show them mercy,
 they bring me misery.
 I'm forsaken and forlorn,
 like a motherless child.

13 I even prayed over them
 when they were sick.
 I was burdened and bowed low
 with fasting and interceded
 for their healing,
 and I didn't stop praying.

14 I grieved for them, heavy hearted,
 as though they were
 my dearest family members
 or my good friends who were sick,
 nearing death, needing prayer.

15 But when I was the one
 who tripped up and stumbled,
 they came together to slander me,
 rejoicing in my time of trouble,
 tearing me to shreds
 with their lies and betrayal.

This has been the effect

of the enmity of the serpent's seed
 against the holy seed,
 ever since the time of righteous Abel.

It was so in Old Testament times,

as we find, Heb 11:35, etc.

[11:35 Women received their dead raised to life again:
 and others were tortured,
 not accepting deliverance;
 that they might obtain a better resurrection:]

Christ has told us
 that it would much more be so
 with the Christian church,
 and we are not to think it strange, 1Jn 3:13.

[3:13 13 Marvel not, My brethren, if the world hate you.]

He has left us an example.

(2.) The are reviled, and have all manner of evil said against them falsely.

Nicknames, and names of reproach,
 are fastened upon them,
 upon particular persons,
 and upon the generation of the righteous
 in the gross, [ie: as a group]
 to render them odious;
 sometimes to make them formidable,
 that they may be powerfully assailed;

This is Acts 17 from The Message

(as you read this, remember MH's words,
 “things are laid to their charge that they knew not.”)

*5-7 They broke into Jason's house,
thinking that Paul and Silas were there.
When they couldn't find them,
they collared
Jason and his friends instead
and dragged them before the city
fathers, yelling hysterically,
"These people are out to
destroy the world,
and now they've shown up on our
doorstep,
attacking everything we hold dear!
And Jason is hiding them,
these traitors and turncoats
who say Jesus is king
and Caesar is nothing!"]*

*MH's phrase means that in
order to do violence to them,
the evil people first had to lie
and create some semblance
that the target of violence
was indeed worthy of it.*

*This is hard to write.
I (and perhaps you?)
like to skim over the parts
where Jesus said
we'd get persecution,
reviling, and slander.
This study is forcing me
(and you?)
to confront it more closely.]*

Those who have

had no power in their hands
to do them any other mischief,
could yet do this;

nor have given them the worst of
treatment,
if they had not first represented them as
the worst of men.

and those who have

had power to persecute,
had found it necessary to do this too,
to justify themselves in their barbarous usage of them;
they could not have baited* them,
if they had not dressed them in bear-skins**;

They will revile you, and persecute you.

Note,

*Reviling the saints is persecuting them,
and will be found so shortly,
when hard speeches must be accounted for (Jud 1:15),*

[* baited: bear baiting is an
inhumane bloodsport where
bears, perhaps tied to a post
or otherwise confined and
unable to defend themselves,
battle against trained dogs.

** "dressed them in
bear-skins": This is a
metaphor. Here "skins" and,
Biblically, "clothing,"
represent what you see when
you look at a person, and it
means their actions, their
character,
and symbolically,
"who they truly are".

[Jude 1:14-16 KJV
14 And Enoch also, the
seventh from Adam,
prophesied of these, saying,
Behold, the Lord cometh with
ten thousands of his saints,

15 To execute judgment upon
all, and to convince all that
are ungodly among them of all
their ungodly deeds which
they have ungodly committed,
and of all their hard speeches
which ungodly sinners have
spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers,
complainers, walking after

their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

and *cruel mockings,*

Heb 11:36.

[11:36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:]

They will say *all manner of evil of you falsely;*
sometimes before the *seat of judgment,*
as *witnesses;*
sometimes in the *seat of the scornful,*
with *hypocritical mockers at feasts;*

[a reference to
Psalm 35:16 KJV]

they are the *song of the drunkards;*
sometimes to face their faces,
as Shimei cursed David;
sometimes behind their backs,
as the enemies of Jeremiah did.

Note,

There is no evil so black and horrid,
which, at one time or other,
has not been said, falsely,
of Christ's disciples and followers.

(3.) All this
is for *righteousness' sake* (Mat 5:10);
for my sake, Mat 5:11.

If for *righteousness' sake,*
then for *Christ's sake,*
for he is nearly [*ie, closely*] interested* in the work of
righteousness.

[* interested: vitally concerned with, as in ownership]

Enemies to righteousness
are enemies to Christ.

This precludes those from the blessedness
who suffer *justly*,
and are evil spoken of *truly* for their real crimes;
let such be ashamed and confounded,
it is part of their punishment;
it is not
the suffering,
but the cause,
that makes the martyr.

Those suffer for *righteousness' sake*,
who suffer because
they will not sin against their consciences,
and who suffer for doing that which is good.

Whatever pretence persecutors have,
it is the power of godliness that they have an enmity to;
it is really Christ and his righteousness
that are maligned, hated, and persecuted;
For thy sake I have borne reproach,

Psa 69:9;

[9 For the zeal of thine house
hath eaten me up;
and the reproaches
of them that reproached thee
are fallen upon me.]

Rom 8:36.

[35 Who shall separate us
from the love of Christ?
Shall tribulation, or distress,
or persecution, or famine,
or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written,
For thy sake
we are killed all the day long;
we are accounted
as sheep for the slaughter.]

2. The comforts of suffering saints laid down.

(1.)

They are *blessed*;
for they now, in their life-time,

receive *their evil things* (Luk 16:25 ↓),
and receive them upon a good account.

[Luke 16: TPT
23 “The day came
that the rich man also died.
In hell he looked up
from his torment
and saw Abraham in the
distance, and Lazarus the beggar
was standing beside him
in the glory.

24 So the rich man shouted,
‘Father Abraham!
Father Abraham!
Have mercy on me.
Send Lazarus to dip his finger
in water
and come to cool my tongue,
for I am in agony
in these flames of fire!’

25 “But Abraham responded,
‘My friend, don’t you remember?
While you were alive,
you had all you desired,
surrounded in luxury,
while Lazarus had nothing.
Now Lazarus
is in the comforts of paradise
and you are in agony.]

They are *blessed*;
for it* is an honour to them (Act 5:41 ↓);

[* it: times of suffering for Christ]

[Acts 5:39b-41 TPT
“And you might discover
that you
were fighting God all along!”]

Gamaliel’s words
convinced the council.
40 So they brought
the apostles back in

and had them severely beaten.
They ordered them
never again to speak
in the name of Jesus
and then let them go.

41 The apostles
left there rejoicing,
thrilled that God
had considered them
worthy to suffer disgrace
for the name of Jesus.]

it* is an opportunity

[* it: times of suffering for Christ]

of glorifying Christ,
of doing good,
and of experiencing
special comforts
and visits of grace
and tokens of his presence,
2Co 1:5; Dan 3:25; Rom 8:29.

[2 Cor. 1:5 KJV & TPT

5 KJV
For as the sufferings of Christ
abound in us,
so our consolation
also aboundeth by Christ.

5 TPT And just as we
experience the abundance
of Christ’s own sufferings,
even more of God’s comfort
will cascade upon us
through our union with Christ.]

[Daniel 3:25 KJV

25 He answered and said,
Lo, I see four men loose,
walking in the midst of the fire,
and they have no hurt;
and the form of the fourth
is like the Son of God.]

(2.) They* shall be recompensed**;
Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[* they; “they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake”

** recompensed: make amends to (someone) for loss or harm suffered; compensate.
synonyms: repay, reimburse,]

They have at present a sure title to it,
and sweet foretastes of it;
and shall ere long be in possession of it.

Though there be nothing in those sufferings
than can, in strictness,
merit of God
(for the sins of the best deserve the
worst),
yet this is here promised as a reward (Mat 5:12);
Great is your reward in heaven:
so great,
as far to transcend the service.

It is in heaven,
future, and out of sight;
but well secured,
out of the reach of
chance, fraud, and violence.

Note,
God will provide that those
who lose for him,
though it be life itself,
shall not lose by him in the end.

Heaven, at last,
will be an abundant recompense
for all the difficulties we meet with in our way.
This is that which has borne up
the suffering saints
in all ages
- this joy set before them.

(3.) “So persecuted they the prophets that were before you, Mat 5:12.

They were before you in excellency,
above what you are yet arrived at;
they were before you in time,
that they might be examples to you
of suffering affliction
and of patience, Jas 5:10.

[10 Take, my brethren,
the prophets,
who have spoken
in the name of the Lord,
for an example of
suffering affliction,
and of patience.]

They were in like manner
persecuted and abused;
and can you expect to go to heaven in a way by yourself?
Was not Isaiah mocked for his *line upon line*?

[“line upon line” occurs twice
in Isaiah 28 (:10 & :13)]

Elisha for his bald head?

[2 Kings 2:23
And he (Elisha)
went up from thence
unto Bethel:
and as he was
going up by the way,
there came forth little
children out of the city,
and mocked him,
and said unto him,
Go up, thou bald head;
go up, thou bald head.

(LC - Don’t mess with the
prophets. It didn’t end well
for these mockers)

Were not all the prophets thus treated?
Therefore marvel not at it
as a strange thing,
murmur not at it as a hard thing;
it is a comfort to see the way of suffering
a beaten road,

and an honour to follow such leaders.

*by the direction of angels
and have not kept it.”]*

That grace

which was *sufficient for them*,
to carry them through their sufferings,
shall not be *deficient to you*.

Those who are your enemies

are the seed and successors
of them who of old
mocked the messengers of the Lord,”

2Ch 36:16; ch. 23:31; **Act 7:52.**

[2Ch 36:16

*15 And the Lord God
of their fathers
sent warnings to them
by His messengers,
rising up early and sending them,
because He had compassion
on His people
and on His dwelling place.*

*16 But they mocked
the messengers of God,
despised His words,
and scoffed at His prophets,
until the wrath of the Lord
arose against His people,
till there was no remedy.]*

[Acts 7:52

*51 “You stiff-necked and
uncircumcised in heart and ears!
You always resist the Holy Spirit;
as your fathers did,
so do you.*

*52 Which of the prophets
did your fathers not persecute?
And they killed those
who foretold the coming
of the Just One,
of whom you now have become
the betrayers and murderers,*

53 who have received the law