

Sermon on the Mount – The Beatitudes

As for the Sermon on the Mount, which Mrs. Eddy calls the *diamond sermon* and *our Master's greatest utterance (Ret 91:3)*, how well are we living it? Mrs. Eddy has made some very strong and enlivening remarks concerning this sermon.

Our Master said, “But the Comforter ... shall teach you all things.” When the Science of Christianity appears, it will lead you into all truth. The Sermon on the Mount is the essence of this Science, and the eternal life, not the death of Jesus, is its outcome. (S&H 271)

The general theme of the Sermon on the Mount is the life of a disciple. The Beatitudes, derived from the word *beautify – to make happy* means, according to the early Webster, *the declaration of blessedness made by our Savior to particular virtues.*

They fall into three groups:

- 1) the individuals most likely to accept the teaching of Christianity are the lowly in spirit, those that hunger and thirst in respect to righteousness,
- 2) the three traits of character which the disciple must foster – mercifulness, purity of heart and peaceableness.
- 3) comfort for the disciple's hardships.

Then the remaining sermon emphasizes the rigor of Jesus' requirements in persecution, followed by counseling and admonition. Actually, as one studies the sermon, he finds it to be the *description of the life of a Christian* or the *meaning of Christianity*. As Mrs. Eddy says

To my sense the Sermon on the Mount, read each Sunday without comment and obeyed throughout the week, would be enough for Christian practice. The Word of God is a powerful preacher, and it is not too spiritual to be practical, nor too transcendental to be heard and understood. (Mess '01 11-16)

While I cannot go into the whole of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 – 7), I should like to indicate to you how we should more thoroughly study it by paraphrasing for you the Beatitudes.

Blessed are the poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Happy is he who sees his need of mental enrichment, for that very attitude reveals the kingdom of heaven to him as himself.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Happy is he who mourns the inadequacy of material living to satisfy thought, for that very open door of thinking reveals the assurance of spiritual existence, and so is comforted.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Happy is he who willingly works out his problems, understanding that his necessity is to know God's law in operation, and in this knowing he does inherit the earth, for Life is thereby divinely discerned. As the Bible says, *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.*

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Happy is he who recognizes his hunger and thirst after righteous thinking or knowing, for this knowing reveals the inadequacy of matter to satisfy and the eternality of spiritual substance. A statement of Mrs. Eddy clearly defines this reality

... under the deific law that supply invariably meets demand, this Science is effectual. (Mis 45:15)

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Happy is he who has demonstrated a merciful attitude toward the difficult propositions which may face him, constituted of persons, places, and things, for in this attitude of merciful thought, he wins his own mercy. One definition of '*merciful*' in the old dictionary is the *disposition that tempers justice*. Mrs. Eddy defines the importance of both mercy and justice in the following statements,

Justice requires reformation of the sinner. Mercy cancels the debt only when justice approves. (S&H 22:30)

Escape from punishment is not in accordance with God's government, since justice is the handmaid of mercy (S&H 36)

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. One definition of the word 'peacemaker' is *one who makes peace by reconciling parties that are at variance*. But according to the understanding of peacemaker in Christian Science, he is more than that. Through his ability to see man as the Son of God, he arrives on the scene before the variance has taken place, and because of this clear vision of man, Jesus said, "They shall be called the children of God."

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Happy is he who is willing to stand for Truth in any, and all, avenues of his being, in spite of the opposition which Truth seems to have. In demonstrating this he is proving the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets, which were before you. Happy is he who can joyfully take the false reviling and persecuting for the sake of his understanding of the life and works of Christ Jesus. He can rejoice and be exceeding glad of this, for in knowing that the prophets before him had this experience, this shows the individual that he is working out of the material sense of existence, which does demonstrate *heaven*, or the reward.

I believe Mrs. Eddy summarizes the importance of the spirit of the Beatitudes when she says,

Resisting evil, you overcome it and prove its nothingness. Not human platitudes, but divine beatitudes, reflect the spiritual light and might which heal the sick. (S&H 446:24)

Mrs. Eddy says in her article on Christian Healing,

The genius of Christianity is works more than words. (Hea 2:1)

The Christliness of consciousness is more important than just reasoning. Mrs. Eddy stressed the genius of Christianity, and not the genius of words. By demonstrating Christliness and Christianity, we heal; through Science we may explain these healings to ourselves and others.

The primitive privilege of Christianity was to make men better, to cast out error, and to heal the sick. It was proof, more than profession thereof; a demonstration more than a doctrine. It was the foundation of right thinking and right acting, and must be reestablished on its former basis. (Hea 3:1)

The thunder of Sinai and the Sermon on the Mount are pursuing and will overtake the ages, rebuking in their course all error and proclaiming the kingdom of heaven on earth. Truth is revealed. It needs only to be practiced. (S&H 174:17)