

Excerpt from Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount by D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“There are certain general lessons, I suggest, to be drawn from the Beatitudes. **First, all Christians are to be like this.** Read the Beatitudes, and there you have a description of what every Christian is meant to be. It is not merely the description of some exceptional Christians. Our Lord does not say here that He is going to paint a picture of what certain outstanding characters are going to be and can be in this world. It is His description of every single Christian.

The **Second** principle I would put in this form: ***all Christians are meant to manifest all of these characteristics.*** Not only are they meant for all Christians, but of necessity, therefore, all Christians are meant to manifest all of them. In other words it is not that some are to manifest one characteristic and others to manifest another. It is not right to say some are meant to be ‘*poor in spirit*’, and some meant to ‘*mourn*’, and some are meant to be ‘*meek*’, and some meant to be ‘*peacemakers*’, and so on. No; every Christian is meant to be all of them, and to manifest all of them, at the same time. Now I think it is true and right to say that in some Christians some will be more manifest than others; but that is not because it is *meant* to be so. It is just due to the imperfections that still remain in us. When Christians are finally perfect, they will all manifest all these characteristics fully; but here in this world, and in time, there is a variation to be seen. I am not justifying it; I am simply recognising it. I think we can even go further and say that the character of this detailed description is such, that it becomes quite obvious, the moment we analyse each Beatitude, that each one of necessity implies the other. For instance, you cannot be ‘*poor in spirit*’ without ‘*hungering and thirsting after righteousness*’; and you cannot do that without being one who is ‘*meek*’ and a ‘*peacemaker*’. The Beatitudes are a complete whole and you cannot divide them; so that, whereas one of them may be more manifest perhaps in one person than in another, all of them are there. The relative proportions may vary, but they are all present, and they are all meant to be present at the same time.

That is a vitally important principle. But the **Third** is perhaps even more important. ***None of these descriptions refers to what we may call a natural tendency.*** Each of them is wholly a disposition which is produced by grace alone and the operation of the Holy Spirit upon us. I cannot emphasise this too strongly. No man naturally conforms to the descriptions here given in the

Beatitudes, and we must be very careful to draw a sharp distinction between the spiritual qualities that are here described and material ones which appear to be like them. These are not natural qualities; nobody by birth and by nature is like this.

The glory of the Gospel is that when the Church is absolutely different from the world, she invariably attracts it. It is then that the world is made to listen to her message, though it may hate it at first. That is how revival comes. That must also be true of us as individuals. It should not be our ambition to be as much like everybody else as we can, though we happen to be Christian, but rather to be as different from everybody who is not a Christian as we can possibly be. Our ambition should be to be like Christ, the more like Him the better, and the more like Him we become, the more we shall be unlike everybody who is not a Christian.

The world believes in self-confidence, self-expression and in the mastery of life; the Christian believes in being '*poor in spirit*'. Take the newspapers and see the kind of person the world admires. You will never find anything that is further removed from the Beatitudes than that which appeals to the natural man and the man of the world.

Then, obviously, they must be different in what they seek. '*Blessed are they which hunger and thirst*'. After what? Wealth, money, status, position, publicity? Not at all. '*Righteousness.*' And righteousness is being right with God.

Do you see how essentially different he is from the non-Christian? The vital question which we therefore ask ourselves are these:

- Do we belong to this kingdom?
- Are we ruled by Christ?
- Is He our King and our Lord?
- Are we truly blessed?
- Are we happy?
- Have we been filled?
- Have we got peace?

My immediate reaction to these Beatitudes proclaims exactly what I am. If I feel they are harsh and hard, if I feel that they are against the grain and depict a character and type of life which I dislike, I am afraid it just means I am not a Christian. If I do not want to be like this, (as expressed in these Beatitudes) I

must be '*dead in trespasses and sins*'; I can never have received new life. But if I feel that I am unworthy and yet I want to be like that (as expressed in these Beatitudes), well, however unworthy I may be, if this is my desire and my ambition, there must be new life in me, I must be a child of God, I must be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven and of God's dear Son.

Let every man (and woman) examine himself."

Reference: [Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. W.B Eerdmans 1959. Pages 32-41](#)