

## **The Path to Truly Being Happy!**

There are no more powerful words spoken "The Beatitudes" Jesus spoke in Matthew 5:3-10, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Truly unpacking these timeless truths will draw us closer to Christ and closer to lasting peace that no amount of money could ever secure. Marc Reklau in his book *Destination Happiness* ask "Who do you think is happier people who have won the lottery or people who have become paralyzed after an accident?" You may be surprised at the answer. "Yes, the lottery winners were very happy, but not for very long," Reklau continues. "After six months they went back to their previous levels of happiness." On the other hand, "the accident victims were sad, very sad, but surprisingly after six months, they also went back to their previous levels of happiness." Think about that for a moment. Six months later both had returned to their previous state of happiness. Our circumstances do not determine how satisfied we are with our lives. Something else much deeper makes the difference. Jesus talked about happiness in a way that was just as foreign then as it is to us now. In the Sermon on the Mount from the Gospel of Luke chapter 6 in the New Testament, Jesus made some unique and unusual statements about happiness which we know as the Beatitudes. "Happy are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Happy are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. Happy are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Happy are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven." We are more comfortable with the word "blessed" than the word "happy" in these circumstances - but the Greek word *makarios*, which most translators of the Bible translate as "blessed," is more appropriately translated as "happy or contented." We could see how Mother Teresa, working with dying people in the wretched slums of Calcutta, could be blessed--but happy? And yet people who knew her most intimately claimed that she radiated happiness and genuine contentment! The truth is the happiest people on earth are not those who pursue happiness, but those who Seek God & Serve Others! Happiness is not something that happens to you on the outside, but something that happens on the inside. Happiness is not found in wealth or power or pleasure or a full belly. Some of the happiest people on earth are some of the poorest people on earth. And some of the richest people on earth in terms of material goods are some of the most miserable people on earth. We can have the most desperate of circumstances and still be happy, according to Jesus. Happiness comes from a deeper source! Happiness is not dependent upon circumstances but on an Inner Certainty--that we are loved, accepted; that we belong to God. How sad it is to see so many people go through life without discovering this essential principle that happiness comes only from a right relationship with God and with others.

The teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount holds the complete answers to all of Life's restless and fruitless yearnings. It contains the blueprint for successful human life with optimism, mental health, and contentment. This is why so many people today are unhappy – miserable- wrestles and discontented! It is why suicides are growing among both young people and older people alike. We have bought into the lie that happiness comes from having or possessing; from being surrounded with pretty expensive things- trophies & plaques; from a perfect healthy body – and the list goes on and on! The path to true and lasting happiness is found in the teachings of Jesus! It is found when our lives have surrendered to the way of holiness! "Happy are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. (Where Eternal Riches Are Found!) Happy are you who hunger for now, for you will be satisfied. (With the Bread of Life!) Happy are you who weep now, for you will laugh. (In Eternal JOY) Happy are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. (The One Who Laid Down His Life For YOU!) Rejoice in that day & leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. True Happiness that last comes from living a holy and surrendered life! give your life to

Christ and look for people you can serve. You will find a secret to life very few people ever find. You will have found the road to happiness. Yes, it will lead to a cross, but it will also lead to a resurrection and an eternal life!