

THE BEATITUDES

THE LIFE OF CHRIST WITH SAINT LUKE



Beatitudes:
“Blessed” - Christ teaches us virtues we should strive to achieve



Virtues:
a righteous characteristic that we work hard to cultivate in ourselves



Passions:
desires that become a source of sin when not controlled

WORKING TO CULTIVATE THE VIRTUES

Read **Luke 6:17-26** (Matthew 5:1-12)

News is spreading quickly that Jesus is healing people of their ailments. The crowds are traveling from near and far to find Him. As Christ descends the mountain, He is once again greeted by a massive group of people waiting for Him. After healing them, Jesus begins to teach them, but he turns the common beliefs of the time upside down. People believed that if you were rich, it was

1

GOAL

What are virtues and why are they important?

2

AT CHURCH

We listen and learn about Christ’s teachings in the gospel readings & the priest’s sermon.

3

AT HOME

We read the lives of the saints with our children & teach the virtues through our example.

because God was pleased with you. If you were poor, sick or had a physical disability, it was because of your sins.

St. Luke has deep empathy and love for the poor and outcasts. This is reflected in his gospel, including in the Beatitudes.

Jesus begins:

“Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.”

The poor are those who are **humble**, for they rely on God for all of their needs.

“Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled.”

Those who hunger are people who insatiably long for God. **Righteous** people will seek to cultivate all of the virtues as they strive to grow closer to God.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.”

When we mourn the loss of a loved one, nothing else matters to us anymore. We don't care about food, shopping, watching tv...we just miss the



person who is gone. Those who “weep now” are people who are weeping for the loss of their union with God. Spiritual mourning is to be consumed with sorrow for our own sins to the point we shut out the passions and **repent**. We also fervently pray for the salvation of all.

“Blessed are you when men hate you, and when they exclude you, and revile you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, for in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.”

This was directed primarily at the disciples themselves because they would be ostracized by

EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Gospel of Luke: Good News for the Poor by Fr. Lawrence Farley
pages 128 - 149

God, Where is the Wound? Healing Remedies for Today's World by
Schemanun Siluana Vlad ~ *Lecture 3: Health, Illness, Healing and Salvation
Through Jesus Christ*

Search the Scriptures Live: The Beatitudes by Dr. Jeannie Constantinou

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Luke by Blessed
Theophylact pages 64 - 72



many as they preached throughout the lands about Christ. But...this also applies to each of us as well. The martyrs of the Church died proclaiming their devotion to Christ. We should never compromise our faith, holding firm to Christ when the world around us pushes to forsake Him.

Alternately, Jesus also warns us:

“Woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.”

The rich are those who rely on their own pride as they provide for their needs, as well as their comforts, through the riches they have stored up.

“Woe to you who are full, for you shall hunger.”

Those who are full greedily seek to fulfill their wants and desires to the exclusion of others. They will hunger and long for God’s blessings in the age to come.

“Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.”

Those who mock and ridicule the pious poor, they shall mourn and weep in the age to come.

“Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”

“For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.” Luke 16:15

DISCUSSION

Each time Christ proclaimed, “Blessed are...” - these are characteristics (virtues) that we should strive to achieve in our daily life. Keep in mind, to be like Christ, is to acquire His goodness and virtues.

Each time Christ warned, “Woe to...” - He is letting us know these are characteristics of our fallen, worldly mindset (passions) and we should avoid acting in these ways because they cause us to separate ourselves from God.

Man became ill when he separated himself from God. So, how do we reunite ourselves to God?

The Church is often referred to as a hospital because we view sin as an illness. The Church offers “therapies” for our healing, such as, Holy Confession and Holy Communion.

If you’ve ever gone to physical, occupational, or speech therapy, you know that you see the therapist regularly, they assess your needs, and then make a therapy plan for you. You do tasks at your personal level of ability and the therapist helps to consistently progress you forward until you achieve the end goal. It’s also important to do the homework they give you each day at home too in order to make progress and get better.

The Church takes a similar approach and our priest can help each one of us with our own specific needs as we work towards being reunited with God. Remember, we cannot compare ourselves to the person next to us. Our ailments and needs are different from one another and we are tended to individually. The Church also provides us with daily exercises to help us: fasting, prayer, almsgiving, reading the Bible, and encouraging us to continuously strive to cultivate the virtuous characteristics of Christ in ourselves, such as humility, patience, love, and self control. The saints lived this life!

Why is it beneficial for us to go to the same priest each time we go to Confession?

(The priest will be able to guide us with more accuracy because of how well he knows us.)

THE BEATITUDES

AT HOME

FOR PARENTS

Therefore, take heed: children are your mirror, their illnesses are your hidden illnesses, their behavior is the overt manifestation of what you are hiding. Read the books of St. Porphyrios who teaches us very clearly what parents need to do when they have problems. The visible problems of the children are the hidden illnesses of the parents.

Schemanun Siluana Vlad

God, Where is the Wound? Healing Remedies for Today's World, page 163

Our children learn an enormous amount from us, both directly and indirectly. They watch and listen as they see how we handle stress, grief, joy, exhaustion, how we care and show respect for one another, and whether we say sorry or seek forgiveness from each other after we've made a mistake or upset each other.

Our daily example of how we live our lives are all teaching moments for our children - and they tend to copy us. If we say "please" and "thank you" to them, they tend to say it to us as well. If we mock and criticize one another, they tend to do it as well.

We also need to remember to be patient and merciful with our children as they are learning the virtues as well. How can we expect our children to do something perfectly when we, ourselves, have yet to master it? *"A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher."* Luke 6:40

HOME ACTIVITY #10

- **Patron Saints Activity:** This week, each night gather together (during dinner, before bed) and read aloud the life of one person's patron saint in your family. Together, discuss the virtues that this saint had acquired. How did they go about doing it? How can we use our patron saint's example in our own life to help us cultivate the virtues in ourselves and our family?
- **For example: Symeon the God-Receiver**

Symeon was **obedient** when the angel gave him instructions. *What does it mean to be obedient? How can I be better at it and with whom?* Symeon waited **patiently** for the arrival of Christ. *What does it mean to be patient? When are some times I could have been more patient and what could I have done differently?*

