

DEEP IN SCRIPTURE

Verses & Notes May 31, 2006

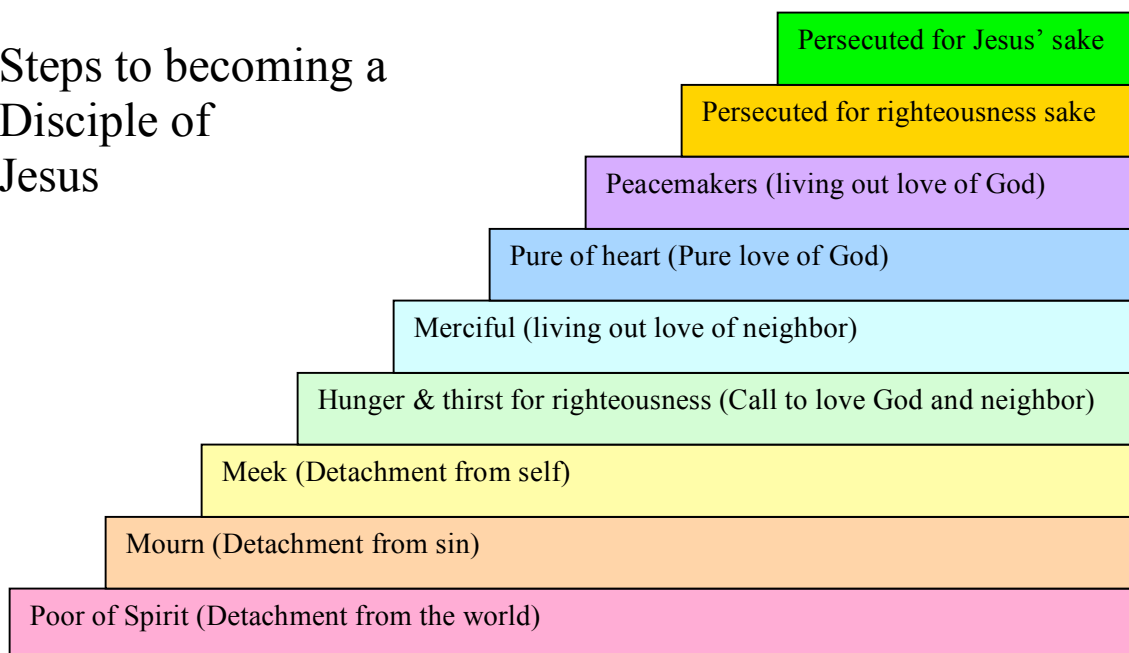
The Beatitudes IV

Matthew 5:1-12

- 1: Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain,
and when he sat down his disciples came to him.
- 2: And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:
- 3: "Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4: Blessed are those who mourn,
for they shall be comforted.
- 5: Blessed are the meek,
for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be satisfied.
- 7: Blessed are the merciful,
for they shall obtain mercy.
- 8: Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they shall see God.
- 9: Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they shall be called sons of God.
- 10: Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11: Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
- 12: Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,
for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Discussion Notes:

Steps to becoming a
Disciple of
Jesus



Further discussion & application:

1: Like a road map:

- Can trace the route / steps, but may not see dips, hills, and valleys.
 - TS Elliot in his intro to his poem, *The Four Quartets*:
 - “The way up and the way down are one and the same.”
 - The way to heaven is both up and down: the way up is through sacrifice.
 - The first three beatitudes involve going down; emptying of self;
 - The fourth Beatitude is the turning point;
 - The last five are the way up, ascending, yet each requiring sacrifice.
2. Since each of us is different, we each have different weak areas, barriers to conversion.
3. In a practical way, these are the essential steps to Reconciliation:
- A. When we experience a broken relationship, these provide a step by step path to move towards reconciliation:

The way down:

- 1st. Recognize that everything you have is a gift of God (gratitude);*
- 2nd. Recognize guilt for sins & misuse of God's gifts (remorse);*
- 3rd. Recognize pride that exacerbates the relationship (humility);*

The Turn upward:

- 4th. Desire to do what is right in the eyes of God: Love*

The Way Up:

- 5th. Turn the other cheek; relinquish right to justice;*
- 6th. Desire purity of soul, grace to stand without blemish before God!*
- 7th. Take action to restore Peace, in imitation of God.*
- 8th. Accept whatever rejection may come for your actions,*
- 9th. ... and accept without retaliation ridicule for your faith in Christ.*

- B. This may seem idealistic, even insurmountable, but like conversion, it is a process.

Reconciliation begins with ourselves

by setting our hearts & minds in the direction of reconciliation,
it then shapes our prayer,
until it sets our convictions and our wills,
until we step out and make peace with family, friends, and neighbors.

4. Provides a perfect model for meditative prayer.

- Use the first 3 Beatitudes (the Way Down) for Recollection.
- Use the Fourth Beatitude to set Heart in God's direction (Lift up your hearts!)
- Prayer (Liturgy of the Hours; Rosary; Lectoria Devina; etc.)
- Use the last five Beatitudes (the Way Up) for intercessory prayer.
- Also provides good model for reflective prayer before Mass / Worship.

[If there's time ...]

5. What about those “rewards”?

- Not “salvation” per se: not earning or working our way to heaven (1 Cor 3);
- Yet, this Path is what it means to believe / to have faith; grace enables us to obey.
- The rewards:

1. First: Blessed!

2. Second: The continuous response of God's grace to grace (Jn 1:16)

- 1. ... theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 2. ... they shall be comforted.*
- 3. ... they shall inherit the earth.*
- 4. ... they shall be satisfied.*
- 5. ... they shall obtain mercy.*
- 6. ... they shall see God.*
- 7. ... they shall be called sons of God.*
- 8. ... theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 9. ... your reward is great in heaven...”*