



“Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled”

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:1-3)

Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled

This was never meant to be, hearts broken, tragedies, suicides, drugs, babies dying, broken homes, broken marriages, betrayals, school shootings, and killings of all sorts, wars, pandemics, and calamities caused by natural disasters. Folks crying, grieving, hopeless, confused and don't know where to go, or know the reasons why. How can a loving God allow this? Where is He? Where is the justice as tears fall? Are we left alone without knowing the reason to all of this? Is God not watching? The answer is, he is watching, and He hurts when we hurt inside. This is not what he wanted when he made us. God is love and he created us all, because of His love. So why has this happened? ...And Jesus answered: "An enemy hath done this". **Matt 13:28**

There is a wonderful "Love Letter" going around the internet and it is amazingly put together by 50 verses of the Bible. If you are hurting or know someone who is hurting, then please share this "Love Letter" with them, it will tell of "God's Love" for them.



Father's **Love** Letter

My Child,

You may not know me, but I know everything about you. (1) I know when you sit down and when you rise up. (2) I am

familiar with all your ways. (3) Even the very hairs on your head are numbered. (4) For you were made in my image. (5) In me you live and move and have your being. For you are my offspring. (6) I knew you even before you were conceived. (7) I chose you when I planned creation. (8) You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book. (9) I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live. (10) You are fearfully and wonderfully made. (11) I knit you together in your mother's womb. (12) And brought you forth on the day you were born. (13) I have been misrepresented by those who don't know me. (14) I am not distant and angry but am the complete expression of love. (15) And it is my desire to lavish my love on you. Simply because you are my child and I am your Father. (16) I offer you more than your earthly father ever could. (17) For I am the perfect father. (18) Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand. (19) For I am your provider and I meet all your needs. (20) My plan for your future has always been filled with hope. (21) Because I love you with an everlasting love. (22) My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore. (23) And I rejoice over you with singing. (24) I will never stop doing good to you. (25) For you are my treasured possession. (26) I desire to establish you with all my heart and all my soul. (27) And I want to show you great and marvelous things. (28) If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. (29) Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart. (30) For it is I who gave you those desires. (31) I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine. (32) For I am your greatest encourager. (33) I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles. (34) When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you. (35) As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart. (36) One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes. And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth. (37) I am your Father, and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus. (38) For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed. (39) He is the exact representation of my being. (40) He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you. (41) And to tell you that I am not counting your

sins. Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled. (42) His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you. (43) I gave up everything I loved that I might gain your love. (44) If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me. (45) And nothing will ever separate you from my love again. (46) Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen. (47) I have always been Father and will always be Father. (48) My question is...Will you be my child? (49) I am waiting for you. (50)

Love, Your Dad, Almighty God

(Father's Love Letter is a compilation of the above paraphrased Bible verses presented in the form of a love letter from God to you.

1) Psalm 139:1; (2) Psalm 139:2; (3) Psalm 139:3; (4) Matthew 10:29-31; (5) Genesis 1:27; (6) Acts 17:28; (7) Jeremiah 1:4-5; (8) Ephesians 1:11-12; (9) Psalm 139:15-16; (10) Acts 17:26 (11) Psalm 139:14; (12) Psalm 139:13; (13) Psalm 71:6; (14) John 8:41-44; (15) 1 John 4:16; (16) 1 John 3:1; (17) Matthew 7:11; (18) Matthew 5:48; (19) James 1:17; (20) Matthew 6:31 -33 (21) Jeremiah 29:11; (22) Jeremiah 31:3; (23) Psalm 139:17-18; (24) Zephaniah 3:17; (25) Jeremiah 32:40; (26) Exodus 19:5; (27) Jeremiah 32:41; (28) Jeremiah 33:3; (29) Deuteronomy 4:29 (30) Psalm 37:4; (31) Philippians 2:13; (32) Ephesians 3:20; (33) 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17; (34) 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; (35) Psalm 34:18; (36) Isaiah 40:11; (37) Revelation 21:3-4; (38) John 17:23 (39) John 17:26; (40) Hebrews 1:3; (41) Romans 8:31;(42) 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; (43) 1 John 4:10; (44) Romans 8:31-32; (45) 1 John 2:23; (46) Romans 8:38-39 (47) Luke 15:7 (48) Ephesians 3:14-15; (49) John 1:12-13; (50) Luke 15:11-32.

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A Time to Trust God & A Time for Every Purpose

There are sorrows that words cannot heal, only trusting in a loving God who said he will wipe away all our tears **Revelation 21:3-4**. Are you willing to trust God to do the right thing? If so, then bring your heart's desire to Him in prayer. He wants you to have that trust. Says Jesus: **Matt 11:28-30** ...28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon

you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. ...**John 6:37-40** ...37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

It is said that life is unfair, but life has its own way. Says the wise man: **Ecc 3:1-8** ...3 To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: 2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; 3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; 7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. ...And yet, He hath made everything beautiful in his time: **Ecc 3:11**

God Understands Our Sorrows

You may ask, "Does God understand my pain"? More so, than you think! For He was a man of sorrows Himself.

Isa 53 ... Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness;

and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

4 Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

11 He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Treated Unfairly

John 1:1-14

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he, power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Phil 2:8

And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Here we see the love of God. **John 3:16-17** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the

world; but that the world through him might be saved. And yet, what have we done? We crucified Him! Talk about being unfair, God is our Father and the Father of His son Jesus. Though God still loves us, He had to endure the cries of His son and watched him nailed to a cross on our behalf:

The Cries of Jesus

Psalms 22... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? 2 O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season and am not silent. 3 But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. 4 Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. 5 They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded. 6 But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. 7 All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head saying, 8 He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. 9 But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. 10 I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art my God from my mother's belly. 11 Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. 12 Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. 13 They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. 14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. 15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. 16 For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. 17 I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. 18 They part my garments among them and cast lots upon my vesture. 19 But be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me. 20 Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. 21 Save me from the lion's mouth:

for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. 22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. 23 Ye that fear the Lord, praise him; all ye the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel. 24 For he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard. 25 My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him. 26 The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live forever. 27 All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. 28 For the kingdom is the Lord's: and he is the governor among the nations. 29 All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him: and none can keep alive his own soul. 30 A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. 31 They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.

Jesus knew His mission and the reason for coming to this earth, to ransom us from the power of the evil one. His final words were: **Luke 23:34** ...Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. A prayer of power He left us.

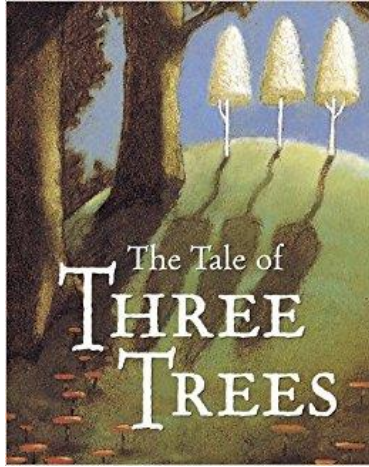
Facing the Shadows of Death **A Psalm (23) Of David.**

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Let this prayer give you hope and courage as you walk in the shadow of uncertainties. Let not your heart be troubled, God is not far from you, only a prayer away.

What About Our Dreams And Plans?

Allow the “Tale of Three Trees” to explain this:



The Three Trees

Once upon a mountain top, three little trees stood and dreamed of what they wanted to become when they grew up. The first little tree looked up at the stars and said: “I want to hold treasure. I want to be covered with gold and filled with precious stones. I’ll be the most beautiful treasure chest in the world!” The second little tree looked out at the small stream trickling by on its way to the ocean. “I want to be traveling mighty waters and carrying powerful kings. I’ll be the strongest ship in the world!” The third little tree looked down into the valley below where busy men and women worked in a busy town. “I don’t want to leave the mountain top at all. I want to grow so tall that when people stop to look at me they’ll raise their eyes to heaven and think of God. I will be the tallest tree in the world.”

Years, passed. The rain came, the sun shone, and the little trees grew tall. One day three wood cutters climbed the mountain. The first wood cutter looked at the first tree and said, "This tree is beautiful. It is perfect for me." With a swoop of his shining ax, the first tree fell. "Now I shall make a beautiful chest, I shall hold wonderful treasure!" the first tree said.

The second wood cutter looked at the second tree and said, "This tree is strong. It's perfect for me." With a swoop of his shining ax, the second tree fell. "Now I shall sail mighty waters!" thought the second tree. "I shall be a strong ship for mighty kings!"

The third tree felt her heart sink when the last wood cutter looked her way. She stood straight and tall and pointed bravely to heaven. But the wood cutter never even looked up. "Any kind of tree will do for me." He muttered. With a swoop of his shining ax, the third tree fell.

The first tree rejoiced when the wood cutter brought her to a carpenter's shop. But the carpenter fashioned the tree into a feed box for animals. The once beautiful tree was not covered with gold, or treasure. She was coated with saw dust and filled with hay for hungry farm animals. The second tree smiled when the wood cutter took her to a shipyard, but no mighty sailing ship was made that day. Instead the once strong tree was hammered and awed into a simple fishing boat. She was too small and too weak to sail to an ocean, or even a river, instead she was taken to a little lake. The third tree was confused when the wood cutter cut her into strong beams and left her in a lumberyard. "What happened?" The once tall tree wondered. "All I ever wanted was to stay on the mountain top and point to God..."

Many days and nights passed. The three trees nearly forgot their dreams. But one-night, golden starlight poured over the first tree as a young woman placed her newborn baby in the feed box. "I wish I could make a cradle for him." Her

husband whispered. The mother squeezed his hand and smiled as the starlight shone on the smooth and sturdy wood. "This manger is beautiful." She said. And suddenly the first tree knew he was holding the greatest treasure in the world.

One evening a tired traveler and his friends crowded into the old fishing boat. The traveler fell asleep as the second tree quietly sailed out into the lake. Soon a thundering and a thrashing storm arose. The little tree shuddered. She knew she did not have the strength to carry so many passengers safely through the wind and the rain. The tired man awoke. He stood up, stretched out his hand, and said, "Peace." The storm stopped as quickly as it had begun. And suddenly the second tree knew he was carrying the king of heaven and earth.

One Friday morning, the third tree was startled when her beams were yanked from the forgotten wood pile. She flinched as she was carried through an angry jeering crowd. She shuddered when soldiers nailed a man's hand to her. She felt ugly and harsh and cruel. But on Sunday morning, when the sun rose and the earth trembled with joy beneath her, the third tree knew that God's love had changed everything. It had made the third tree strong. And every time people thought of the third tree, they would think of God. That was better than being the tallest tree in the world.

Jeremiah 29: 11 - "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

God has a plan for each of us. There may be times we lose sight of our dreams, and we may not understand things that take place in our lives. We must remember though that God loves us, has a plan for us, and is in control; therefore, we can trust Him.

Romans 8:28 - "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."

He Said unto Them, An Enemy Hath Done This

Matt 13:28

The hardest part of comforting a person sometimes, is telling the truth. This is one of those times where truth can crush a person, that's not being comforting! So, what do you say? Not everything that happens is for the good. There are consequences we must face when we do not live right. Some are forgivable, and some are not. How do we accept "the some not"? The only answer to that question is to put your trust in the God that loves us. He will do the right thing, even if we don't understand why He will. **Matt 19:26** ...With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Matt 13:24-30 Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matt 13:37-50 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world;

and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so, shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. 44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. 45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: 46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. 47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: 48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. 49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. **John 14:1-3** Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. **John 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. **John 14: 21** He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

John 14:23 If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

So Why All This Pain & Suffering?

The Bible says: **Hos 4:6** ...My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: **Isa 53:6** All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all ... Again, let's be honest with each other, there are consequences to our actions, some are of our own fault and there are some that are not. Though all sin can be forgiven, and we can heal from them, the consequences of some of those sins or actions can be for a life time. God deals with us justly. Try to understand the following scriptures and hear what God is trying to say to us. There is hope for all of us if we have an ear to listen.

Ezek 18:20-32 The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

21 But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

22 All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

23 Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live?

24 But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be

mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.

25 Yet ye say, the way of the Lord is not equal. Hear now, O house of Israel; Is not my way equal? are not your ways unequal?

26 When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die.

27 Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.

28 Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.

29 Yet saith the house of Israel, the way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel, are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?

30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, everyone according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.

31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye.

Jesus Our Only Hope

Jesus is our Saviour, our Redeemer, our wisdom, our sanctification, our righteousness. Let mothers make it their first interest to teach their children of the great love wherewith God has loved us, that led Him to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have everlasting life. It is the first duty of parents to make the precious truths of salvation very plain and simple and attractive to their children. They should ever seek for the best way in which to lead their children to trust in Jesus as their personal Saviour, to love Him, to deny self for his sake, and to do good to those around them in his name. The first precept from their earliest years should be, give your heart to Jesus; live to please Him. Do not live simply to amuse and gratify yourself; but live to honor Jesus, who has loved you, and given Himself for you. Were parents in earnest in thus educating their little ones, there would be a great company of children in the army of the Lord. They would then make sacrifices for Jesus' sake, and desire to give, not only their little gifts of love, but their whole hearts to Jesus. {BEcho, December 15, 1892 par. 8}

Every day that you remain in sin, you are in Satan's ranks; and should you sicken and die without repentance, you would be lost. No one can force you to give your heart to Jesus, no one can compel you to throw off the yoke of Satan. You may choose to do his bidding, to be children of the wicked one; you may rob God of your time, you may refuse to serve him, because the infatuation of sin, the service of Satan, is acceptable to you. But can you afford this? Can you afford to rob God by withholding that which he has purchased for himself? Would you choose to please the Lord's worst enemy? Would you have Christ make all that sacrifice on Calvary's cross for you in vain? Jesus has given every evidence that he loves you, in that he died to make you happy through the treasures of his grace in this life, and to make you happy in the future immortal life. {RH, December 24, 1889 par. 8}

Righteousness by Faith in the Beatitudes

Many people read the beatitudes in Matthew 5 and they see them as individual bullet points, but what Christ is really doing in the beatitudes is mapping out and showing us a

step-by-step Christian character development that will lead to righteousness by faith.

But let us read and ponder on each one, let us look and see how very clearly in these beatitudes of Jesus we can see righteousness by faith. As we read through these, we will see how they are all interconnected, Jesus is spelling it out, He's illustrating, clearly showing what the righteousness by faith experience must be if we are going to make sure that we are not caught up in the great falling away and find our self in trouble during the coming famine of the Word of God.

Matthew 5:3: Jesus gives us that first great beatitude, **blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** Interesting, what does Jesus mean by this, what does he mean blessed are the poor in spirit? When the pharisees heard this, you could just imagine their mouths drop open, what did He just say, because all they probably heard was blessed are the poor, because back in their day if you were poor and you weren't rich then you were cursed by God. If you were rich and had an abundance of worldly goods, then you must be blessed by God because He's given you all these wonderful things and He's prospered you. Probably the pharisees off to the side hearing Jesus say these words said, what did He just said blessed are the poor, but that's not what Jesus said, He didn't say blessed are the poor, He said **blessed are the poor in spirit.** What in the world does that mean?

You see Jesus is giving us the very first step that we must experience in order to have a genuine experience with him when he says blessed are the poor in spirit what He's saying is blessed are you when you realise your spiritual poverty, blessed are you when you come to the point in your life where you realize you have hit rock bottom and there's nothing else for you, He is saying blessed are you when you come to the realisation in which you see your condition and you recognize that you are spiritually bankrupt and that only Jesus Christ our Saviour can get you out.

Matthew 5:4: Now notice the next beatitude in verse 4, He says **blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted.** That's interesting, blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, now blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. Is Jesus saying people who are mourning are blessed? Well, some people would probably disagree with that, they would probably not feel very blessed if they were mourning. But again, this is in connection to the previous beatitude. You see the natural response when you realise your spiritual depravity is that you will mourn, but yet you will be comforted. You see when you realize that your sins nailed Jesus the Son of God to a cross and that because of your sins He had to die, when you really comprehend that and it settles into your mind it brings about a natural response of mourning for what you have done. In fact it's talked about in Zechariah 12:10 10.....
and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

Mourning is the natural response when you fully realise that Jesus died for you and for me. I deserved that death, I deserved to die on a cross not Jesus, He was perfect, He had never sinned, He did not deserve my punishment, and yet, Jesus did it out of love, love for us even before we loved Him, and when you comprehend that you will mourn, but yet, Jesus says you will be comforted.

Matthew 5:5: Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. This is in connection to the previous two beatitudes, you see after you are broken by the love of Jesus, you adopt an attitude of meekness. Meekness has been defined several ways: righteous, humble, teachable, and patient under suffering, long suffering, willing to follow gospel teachings; an attribute of a true disciple, and that brings us to our next beatitude.

Matthew 5:6: Blessed are those who do hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be filled.

Notice, Jesus is taking us from one level of Christian character development to the next. Before you became meek, you were broken by the love of Jesus and you adopted an attitude of meekness and when you adopt an attitude of meekness true genuine Christ-like meekness you begin to hunger and thirst for His righteousness, that's powerful, Jesus is taking us step by step, He's mapping it out.

Matthew 5:7: Blessed are the merciful. Now, there is a difference between human mercy and Godly mercy, because once you accept the righteousness of Christ in your life you become merciful, that's just the natural response. To be merciful is to treat people with kindness and forgiveness: not cruel or harsh: having or showing mercy. Jesus is shaping and moulding us into the person He wants us to be, vessels of honour for His kingdom. So, when you hunger and thirst for righteousness you begin to receive His righteousness on your behalf, and when you accept the righteousness of Christ in your life you become merciful, but it's not just any old kind of mercy, we will see what that is in just a moment, but let's go to the next beatitude.

Matthew 5:8: Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Pure in heart, how does that connect to the previous beatitude, very simple. Once you are merciful with true Godly mercy and you begin to treat others the way God treats us, then and only then do you become pure in heart. Now, will we ever feel that way? I don't think any of us are going to wake up one day and think I just feel so pure in heart today, I just feel so perfect, none of us are going to feel that way because when you look at Christ's righteousness and you see your own, you will have the Isaiah 6 experience, **5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.** That's how Paul felt, like the chief of sinners, (1 Timothy 1:15) but yet God sees us, He sees that when we begin to show true Godly mercy we begin to treat others the way He treats us, and then through His eyes we are pure in heart, but it doesn't stop there.

Matthew 5:9: Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. Now, what in the world does that have to do with the previous beatitudes? Well, we are on a journey, Christ is changing us. So, once we are pure in heart we begin to live and share the message of the Prince of Peace. Christ has taken us on a journey from one level of Christian character development to the next, we are pure in heart, we have received the peace of God in our life, we have accepted the Prince of Peace and His righteousness, and now we begin to live out and share that message of peace, the message of Jesus with others.

We don't do it because we are prompted to, we don't do it because we tell ourselves, well, I am a Christian and that's what I am supposed to do, you see it's a natural response. It's like when someone burns their finger or burns their hand in a hot fire, they don't leave it there and say, oh that burns, that's hot, no, there's a natural response to pull back because you have been hurt.

While that may not be the greatest illustration, nonetheless in a positive sense, when you have a relationship with Jesus Christ, a true genuine daily experience with Jesus, the natural response of living out and declaring the message of the Prince of Peace is that you just have to do it, it's a part of your life, it's a lifestyle, and because God has bestowed His love upon you can't help but tell people about Him, which leads us to the last beatitude.

Matthew 5:10: Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Wait a second Jesus, you're supposed to end on a good note you're supposed to end with something positive Jesus.

Persecution, how can that be a blessing? You see we are in that mind frame where everything leads to this big happy ending and in reality, this is a happy ending, but the words don't necessarily resonate well with us, **blessed are those who are persecuted.** Is Jesus telling us that that we are

going to be persecuted, is where we are being led? It's not in God's plan for us to be persecuted but nonetheless there's an enemy and as long as that enemy exists the kingdom agenda of God flies in the face of the dark agenda of the enemy. You see once you are living, genuinely living, and sharing the message of the Prince of Peace Jesus Christ you will receive persecution, not you might, you will. That's why Jesus says those who receive him shall be persecuted for his name's sake. Let's just recap these beatitudes again.

Blessed are you when you realise your spiritual poverty it starts there and once you realize your spiritual depravity and that you are bankrupt, you are going to mourn because you recognize that Jesus has bestowed his love upon you, He wants to change you, He has taken your penalty and therefore you will mourn, but He will come and lift you up and He will comfort you after you have been broken by the love of God and adopt an attitude of meekness and of course when you adopt an attitude of meekness you hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Once you accept the righteousness of Christ in your life you become merciful, true Godly mercy and of course once you are merciful and begin to treat others the way God treats you then you become pure in heart, once you are pure in heart you begin to live and share the message of the Prince of Peace, and then of course once you are living and sharing the message of the Prince of Peace you will then receive persecution. Why doesn't it seem like there's more persecution in the church today that's an interesting thought? Let's read a quote from Great Controversy page 48.

The apostle Paul declares that “all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.” Why is it, then, that persecution seems in a great degree to slumber? The only reason is, that the church has conformed to the world's standard, and therefore awakens no opposition. The religion which is current in our day is not of the pure and holy character that marked the Christian faith in the days

of Christ and His apostles. It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the Word of God are so indifferently regarded, because there is so little vital godliness in the church, that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Let there be a revival of faith and power of the early church, and the spirit of persecution will be revived, and the fires of persecution will be rekindled.

It is only because of the spirit of compromise with sin, because the great truths of the word of God are so indifferently regarded because there is so little vital Godliness in the church that Christianity is apparently so popular with the world. Notice she says let there be a revival of the faith and power of the early church and the spirit of persecution will be revived and the fires of persecution will be rekindled. So why is there no persecution, because we have people that are not living out and declaring the message of the Prince of Peace, we have people that have pressed the pause button somewhere along that journey. Perhaps maybe they've accepted Jesus, maybe they have had that mournful experience but somewhere along the way they failed to become meek they failed to become humble they failed to become merciful perhaps they're not hungering and thirsting for righteousness, that daily righteousness by faith experience.

You see Acts chapter 1 verse 8 gives us some insight of what the natural response is of a person who is genuinely led by the Holy Spirit of God. If you are genuinely led by the Holy Spirit of God there's a natural response, there's an automatic response. Notice what it says Acts chapter 1 verse 8 **But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses.....**

You see when the Holy Spirit has come upon us we want, we desire, we need to become a witness for Jesus because you we are being led by the true genuine Spirit of God. But many of us are quenching the Holy Spirit we're no longer listening

to the work of the Holy Spirit in our life, we are going our own way. All we like sheep have gone astray, the work cannot be finished and we cannot go home until the body of Christ wakes up, there's a famine because many of us are not doing what we should for the Lord. Have you heard the story about the four people named everybody, somebody, anybody, and nobody? Well, the story goes that there was an important job to be done and everybody was sure that somebody would do it, anybody, could have done it, but nobody did it. Somebody got angry about this because it was everybody's job, everybody thought anybody could do it but nobody realised that everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that everybody blamed somebody when nobody did what anybody could have done, and that right there sums up the condition for most Christians today. We need the fire of the Holy Spirit in our lives, not only just to wake us up, but to give us the power to declare the truth of God's word and to live it out among the world so that we can prepare for the coming of our Lord and help others to be ready also. May we wake up and listen to the Holy Spirit and by God's grace live out the beatitudes given by our Lord.



Give Your Heart to Jesus, And Let Not Your
Heart Be Troubled

God Loves You

Vg

