

## **"The True People of God: II"**

**Parker 876 B**

**May 19, 2013**

**Today I'm going to be preaching from Matthew chapter 5. I'm preaching on the first verses of the sermon on the mount called the Beatitudes, and the title of this message is "The True People of God: Part 2". I started last week with the first part, The True People of God, and I dealt with these first few pronouncements of blessing where the Lord said in Matthew 5:3-4 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth."* I urge you to get the message from last week. I want to continue on with talking about the true people of God, and I'll repeat just a little bit just to backtrack and bring you up-to-date if you didn't hear last week's message. This sermon on the Mount, you know many people are confused in**

that they misinterpret the sermon on the Mount and they misunderstand it. A lot of people say, well it is a roadmap for Christian living. There are things in the sermon on the Mount by which Christians should and do live by, no doubt about it, but that's not the purpose of the sermon on the mount. This is the first recorded sermon of the Lord in his public ministry to the nation Israel, to the people of Israel, under the old covenant. You have to understand that the people to whom the Lord is preaching here are people who had been led astray concerning the reality, the truth, and the purpose of the old covenant law. They had been led astray by their spiritual leaders mainly known as the Pharisees, there were others, but he says there in Matthew 5:20 "*Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees you shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*". And so he's talking here in this passage about the true people of God, who are

**citizens of the kingdom of heaven. As I said last week, the Jews imagined and boasted and claimed to be the people of God based on three things: number one their physical connection with Abraham and number two to their physical circumcision, that's the circumcision of the males, representative of the whole family and number three, their keeping of the law of Moses. Those those three grounds are not evidences of the true people of God. Well what are? He said "*Blessed are the poor in spirit:*" (those who know their sinfulness and their need of Christ) "*theirs is the kingdom of heaven*" (their the true citizens of the kingdom of heaven, that's the the kingdom of God, that's the people of God, that's his church, that's his Nation, Spiritual Israel) verse four "*Blessed are they that mourn:* (that's godly sorrow over sin that drives the sinner to Christ) "*for they shall be comforted*". If you truly know your sin, if you've been convicted by the Holy Spirit of sin, then your going**

to find relief nowhere but in Christ and him crucified and risen again. ***"Blessed are the meek"***, that's humility, but it's humility that brings submission to God's way, to God's will, to God's word, ***"for they shall inherit the earth"***, that's the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

But now look at verse six, this is where I'm going to pick up today on the true people of God. And I want you to listen to this, it says, ***"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled"***. Now what he's talking about is those who have been brought by the spirit under conviction of sin and righteousness and judgment to be hungry and to be thirsty for righteousness. Not man's righteousness, not man's view of righteousness, but true righteousness. And he says, ***"they shall be filled"***. Now, the symbolism here is so beautiful. Now think about it this way, **hungering after righteousness,**

**thirsting after righteousness. When I see those terms, I think about our Lord and his statements in the book of John. John chapter 4 for example, where he was talking to a Samaritan woman, an adulterous, a great sinner, a woman of ill repute. And he talked to her about the water of life and he told her, he said, if you only knew the gift of God, you'd receive this water, this water that will be springing up inside of you like a spring bursting forth, never ending. And your thirst would be quenched forever. You'd never thirst again. What's he talking about? He's talking about himself as the water of life. He's talking about the gospel message that brings out and communicates by the power of the Spirit, the salvation of a sinner, a sinner who cannot save himself. A sinner dwelling in a dry thirsty land, the desert of this world, the desert of false religion, the dry dead desert of human works. Oh, if you just come to Christ and bow to him and rest in him there's the water of life.**

**And then in John chapter 6, he reached back into the Old Testament, when the children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness and they were hungry. God gave them manna from heaven through Moses, the mediator of that covenant. And he said, now Moses gave your fathers that bread and they ate it and they were filled but they died. He said I am here to give you bread that will fill you up and you'll never get hungry again and you'll never die, the bread of life. What was he talking about? He was talking about himself, the sustainer of eternal life. Here he says, "*Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness.*" Now the first thing you have to understand here is what is it to be hungry and thirsty after righteousness? Well, some people would say well that's the desire to live a better life; I want to be better. Well the true people of God should always want to do better in every way that God commands: I want to be a better pastor, a better**

preacher. I want to be a better husband, a better father. I want to be a better friend. I want to do better in all of these things, but now here's what you have to understand and here's what I need to understand. That all of my desire to do better in all of those areas, which should be my goal, but if I would attain to be better in every way of those areas it would still not make me righteous before God. He says "*Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.*" You see with all my efforts to be better and all my efforts to do better, and even in my progress and successes, in certain areas, to do better it still will not fill me with true righteousness. That's what we have to understand. So if you're hungering and thirsting after just a better life, then you will not ever be filled truly. Now you may think you're filled. You know, the heart is deceitful, desperately wicked above all things, who can know it. You may think you're filled, but I'm going to tell you

something, it won't last. Well the only way that I can know the truth of this and understand what the true people of God are here, is to understand what righteousness is. What is righteousness? "*Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness.*" What is righteousness in God's standard of judgment, in God's sight? Well the word righteous and righteousness is the same as the word just and justified.

Over here, as I read before in Matthew 5:20: "*For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" What is he saying there? You've got to have a righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees, or you cannot get into heaven. You see, the true people of God are the citizens of the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God. And these people had been led astray by their



**spiritual leaders. Many people today have been led astray by their pastors and preachers, their spiritual leaders. And so he says unless your righteousness exceeds theirs, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. Well, how righteous must I be? What kind of righteousness do I need to have? Well, he goes on and in Matthew 5:21 he tells them well it's not the righteousness of works, because your best efforts to be righteous by your works will not get it. And here's the proof of it. He says "*Ye have heard it said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:*" ... "*But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgement:*" It's not only a sin to commit the physical act of murder it's a sin to think it, to desire it, to imagine it in the mind and in the heart. He goes on and he says, "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit***

***adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looked upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.***" So it's not only a sin to commit the physical act of adultery, it is a sin to think it, to imagine it in the heart. Now where's that leave me under the law? Right here, "***for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, the wages of sin is death***". I'm guilty under the law. And so what does that mean? What that means, as Paul wrote in Romans 3:20, "***That by deeds of law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.***" So when you read this, in Matthew chapter 5 when he says "***Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled,***" How am I going to receive and realize the filling of righteousness? Well first of all, I've got to have a hunger for it and a thirst for it and secondly, I've got to know what righteousness is.

I read this last week, but I'll read it

again. Over here in Romans chapter 9. I want you to see this in it's context, he says in Romans 9:31, now listen to this, he says "*Israel* (and that's the ones whom the Lord's preaching sermon on the Mount to) *Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, (now they were hungering and thirsting after righteousness, they followed after the law of righteousness) hath not attained to the law of righteousness*". They didn't make it. They were not filled. He says verse 32: "*Wherefore* (that means why? why did they not make it? why did they not attain it?) *Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*" They were trying to be filled by their works. They were trying to be righteous by their works. They were trying to be accepted before God by their works and not by faith. Now before you say, "Ah by faith, now I believe!" It's not faith that makes the sinner righteous, but those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and who are filled, they

**seek righteousness by faith. That is, by means of faith. Now that faith as you know is the gift of God, the Bible says that. Ephesians 2:8-9 "*For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*" What is it to seek righteousness by faith? Look at Romans 9:32 "*Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone.*" Now what does that mean? Well, he's going back to the Old Testament. He's making reference to Isaiah's prophecy, in Isaiah chapter 8 and Isaiah chapter 28 and he goes on in verse 33 "*As it is written, Behold I lay in Sion, (Sion is a symbol of the church) a stumbling stone and rock of offense; and whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed.*" So, this stumblingstone, this rock of offense is a person, well who is it? Romans 10:1-2 "*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is,***

***that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."*** They have a hunger and thirst for righteousness but they're ignorant of what true righteousness is. How do you know that? Romans 10:3 ***"for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."*** Now what is that? Romans 10:4: ***"For Christ is the end (the fulfillment, the finishing) of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."***

My friend listen to me, back here in Matthew 5:6 to ***"hunger and thirst after righteousness"*** before God is to hunger and thirst after Christ. And if your hungering and thirsting settles for anything or anyone less than Christ and him crucified and risen again you cannot be filled by the Holy Spirit. You can not be satisfied, that's what that means, to be filled. When you eat, your supposed

to eat until you are satisfied, most of us eat more, but that's what that's talking about they shall be filled, they shall be satisfied. In other words, those who truly hunger and thirst after righteousness as the Holy Spirit has made them hungry and thirsty, when they find Christ they're satisfied. They don't need anything more. They don't need their obedience under law to make them righteous, for if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain. There are so many people who preach a subtle heresy which in essence is a Christ *plus* religion. In other words, salvation and righteousness and justification before God is not by Christ alone but is Christ plus this, Christ plus that, Christ plus something else. It may be Christ plus obedience, Christ plus baptism, or Christ plus circumcision. Well that's a denial of Christ. You see, if I'm truly hungering and thirsting after righteousness, it's Christ and him alone. And the Gospel message tells us that. Paul wrote in

**Romans 1:16-17 "For I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." They live by looking to Christ, they live by feeding on Christ, they live by finding their comfort, their peace in Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21 "For God hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."**

**Colossians 2:9-10 "For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And you are complete in him...." I'm satisfied that Christ is all the righteousness I need to enter heaven. Now, are there fruits of that righteousness? Yes, there's being poor in spirit, there's mourning over sin and there's submission to God, there's being pure in heart, we'll see that in just a moment. There's the work of the Holy Spirit in us that drives us to Christ. We**

**must be born again. It's necessary that we're born again. We must be given a new heart and a new spirit, but our righteousness is Christ and him crucified alone. It's his righteousness imputed, charged, and accounted to me and I receive it by faith. It's necessary that I receive him by faith, but my receiving him by faith does not make me righteous before God. He did that all by himself, Hebrews 10:14" *For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.*"**

**Over in the book of Matthew chapter 6 when he's talking about treasures in heaven and all of this, he says in verse 33, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things will be added unto you.*" That's what the kingdom of God is all about. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. Now there are fruits to that. There are things that come from that as the necessary product and fruit of that. You**



**see, to say that salvation is by the imputed righteousness of Christ alone, which gives me a complete eternal perfect standing before a holy God, I'm just because God has justified this old sinner, based on the righteousness of Christ imputed to me and I'm satisfied with that. To say that it's Christ alone does not deny or diminish the necessity of the new birth, or the necessity of obedience, or the necessity of repentance or the necessity of perseverance. All of those things are the fruit and effect of what Christ by himself accomplished for his people on the cross of calvary, to make us righteous before God. But you see every bit of obedience, repentance, every bit of perseverance, that God the Holy Spirit who indwells us from from giving us the life of Christ, he drives us continually to Christ. And we continually find satisfaction there.**

**Look at Matthew 5:7. He says  
*"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall***

***obtain mercy.***" Now false religion, legalistic works religion, the religion of the Pharisees, makes men and women hypocritical, it makes them hard and judgmental, in many ways. But the grace of God in Christ makes a sinner merciful. Now that's compassion. And he says "***Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.***" If God the Holy Spirit has entered in and done his sovereign powerful work in the new birth and given you a new heart and a new spirit. That along with that, would be evidenced by compassion toward sinners, mercy. I'm a recipient of mercy. How could I not show mercy? And I'm not saying we do it perfectly because we don't and I'm not saying it's not a struggle because it is. There are times people do things to me, that my old flesh comes up and just wants to get right back at them. But that's wrong and I know it's wrong. Because let me tell you something, Christ loved me and died for me even when I was his enemy. You see, Christ

**doesn't save those who are qualified to be saved and do you know why? Because there are none of us who are qualified to be saved. We're sinners. Mercy is undeserved and so the mercy that I show you should be undeserved. Blessed are the merciful and compassionate. See, that's what he's talking about and we show that mercy in many ways. We show that mercy in witnessing, in preaching the gospel of salvation to sinners. I know this right now. Whoever you are, whatever you are, the only way that you're going to be saved, the only way that you're going to be forgiven, the only way that you're going to be righteous in God's sight and enter glory, is by the grace and mercy of God in Christ just like me. I don't earn it and I didn't deserve it and you don't either. Oh, you need mercy. Be like that publican, God be merciful to me the sinner. And so we show mercy in telling you the truth. Listen, I don't care how religious you are. I don't care how good**

**you think you are. I don't care how many times you've been baptized or how many times you've walked an aisle. In fact, I really get sick of hearing people talk about these experiences that they've had when they were teenagers. Who are you looking to today? The greatest show of mercy that I can show you is to tell you of Christ, who is the mercy seat. Then the compassion can be shown in helping people helping a brother or sister in Christ, helping anybody, somebody who's hungry, give him something to eat if you can. Now listen, the purpose of the church here on earth is not to be a soup kitchen. But now listen, we are to help anybody and everybody we can who's in need of help if we can, if we have the ability out of our abundance. Give a thirsty man a drink of water. We show mercy unto each other when we help each other in these ways. But I want you to understand this now, we show no mercy to anybody if we tell them a lie, concerning salvation, concerning how**

**God justifies the ungodly. If I preach or teach or lead you to believe that salvation is in any way conditioned on you or based on your work, my friend that's not mercy, that is not compassion. I may think it is but it's not, it's deadly, that's a false gospel. You need Christ, and that's the greatest show of mercy that I can show you. "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*" They don't earn mercy, they obtain it, it is a gift. Mercy is a gift from God. Mercy is God not giving me what I deserve. Grace is God giving me what I don't deserve: that's salvation in Christ.**