

## THE LORD'S TEN BLESSINGS

Adapted from a family talk by Rev. Geoffrey S. Childs III

*Reading: Matthew 5:3-12*

At the time of the Sermon on the Mount, there were many people following the Lord, wanting to hear Him talk and to learn from Him. So the Lord went to the top of a small hill. He stood there with His disciples in a circle below Him and all the rest of the people below them. Then the Lord began to speak the famous Sermon on the Mount. He started with the Ten Blessings.

Do you know what the word, blessing, means? To be blessed means to be happy. So these are ten statements about what will make us happy. I am going to read each blessing to you and explain a little bit about what it means.

1. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). To be poor in spirit means that we are willing to learn from the Lord. This is the only way to get to heaven, for if someone thinks they know everything, then the Lord cannot teach them.

2. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). This may sound confusing. Usually when we think of being blessed we think of being happy. Yet to mourn means to be sad. But the Lord does not want us to be miserable. Mourning here means being sorry for the wrong things we think and do.

3. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). The meek are people who are willing to be led by the Lord. They choose to follow Him and go to heaven, rather than insisting on doing things in their own way.

4. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6). By hunger and thirst the Lord means that we should want to find out the truth and apply it to our lives. We should want goodness and truth, as much as if we were hungry and thirsty for them.

5. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy" (Matthew 5:7). You have probably heard of the Golden Rule, which says, "Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them" (Matthew 7:12). All the angels live by this rule. They both give and receive good. So, if we want to get to heaven we must try to do good and be merciful.

6. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). It is fairly easy for us to act like a good person externally. It is much harder for us to really be good internally. But it is what is in our hearts that counts. The only way to get to heaven is to have a pure heart internally. So, we must drive out the evil spirits from our hearts and make room for the good.

7. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9). True peacemakers know what is right, and if need be they will fight for what they

believe in. In the same way, we must conquer our wrong ideas by trying to fight the evil spirits. This is what will bring true peace to our lives.

8. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:10). To persecute is to try to destroy something. Evil spirits hate people who are trying to be good, and attack or persecute them with temptations. But if we sincerely try to do what is right, the Lord and His angels will be with us and will protect us.

9. “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake” (Matthew 5:11). If we try to do our best for the Lord, and to spread His Word, then even though we may be attacked and reviled, we will be serving the Lord and so we will be blessed.

10. “Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5:12). This last blessing tells us of the final reward of a good life. If we can resist evil for the short time we are on earth, then we can have the greatest reward of all—heaven to eternity!

When the Lord gave the Sermon on the Mount, He was teaching people the steps that lead to a heavenly life. The words He spoke then can still teach us how to follow Him. Let us try to live by them, so that we may receive happiness from the Lord.

Amen.