

Follow Me **Part 3: "The Happy Meal!"**

By Cere Muscarella

Jesus first words... "Turn around, for the kingdom of heaven that you've been waiting for is here... **Matthew 4.17** All encompassing "step up" lifestyle changes for a new kingdom model! **Is 55.8** "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men..." **Matthew 4.18** We *follow* where He leads us... And we "*follow*" in service because we "get Him!" "Go and tell the great things God has done for you, and the love He showed you!" **Mk 5.1-20** "And, I'll need you to speak up..."

And then came the big reveal! Matthew 5.1 "And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him..."

This 'Hebraism' indicates a set will and purpose, a frank and Divine message... Not just a casual get together for conversation! The Sermon on the Mount is the believers "Constitution!" The Founding Charter... Sets the tone, principles, benefits, purposes and expectations of His new kingdom! *And multitudes came and wanted to hear!*

Matthew 5.2 "Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying..."

Important to understand the "teaching" and the setting! The discourse that follows was directed specifically to teaching His disciples... People who had already made decisions to follow Him... But the teaching was done publicly, in mixed, undecided company! **7.28** The setting was (outdoor) theater style! The Christ-followers model for "church!"

The Opener... Unlike Moses w/the 10 commandments... Unlike the religious leaders with their burdens... Jesus opens with the "exclamations of the beatitudes..."

Not '*fulfillments galore*' in the future if... "Blessed are those that mourn (now) for they *shall be* comforted (later)..." But *rewards now* for entering in! "O, the blessedness of those who mourn over the fallen condition of mankind; in his sorrow *he will find the joy of God!*"

Matthew 5.3-8 "O' the blessedness of the 'poor' in spirit, *for this kingdom of heaven is theirs!* O' the blessedness of those who mourn, *for they will be called near!* O' the blessedness of the meek, *for they will inherit the earth!* O' the blessedness of those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, *for they will be filled!* O' the blessedness of the merciful, *for they will obtain mercy!* O' the blessedness of the pure in heart, *for they will see God!*

Matthew 5.9-12 O' the blessedness of the peacemakers, *for they will be called sons of God!* Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!* Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. *Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven,* for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Beatitudes... Individually, seven prerequisites for our personal blessing and happiness... Happy will you be when you have: clarity, compassion, humility, purposeful pursuit, mercy, purity, bridging... Two more "be" attitudes directed at our connection with the world! Happy will you be when you find yourself following, still, in the face of adversity! (solid, enduring, convinced) Happy will you be when you follow while others reject you! (freedom, ascendancy)

Taken together... an astonishing set of fundamentals for a whole new way! None of those 'articles' were expected! They were waiting for a Conqueror! They were ready to draw swords! They were ready to rule! This was the time of vengeance toward the oppressors! This was a needed orientation for Jesus' new inverted kingdom! "Higher ways, higher thoughts..." Right side up from our upside down!

The Inverted Kingdom! We save our lives by losing them! We die to live and live to die! We give away to gain! We humble ourselves to be lifted! We want control, God wants us free! We look for the strong, God looks for those who know they are weak! We look at the outward appearance, God looks at our hearts! We look for talent, God looks for willingness! The Inverted Kingdom! We look for ability, God looks for humility! We look for the wise, God looks for the simple! We look for goal-getters, God looks for enthusiasts! We look for success, God looks for completion! We look for short term gratification, God deals with eternal satisfaction! We want leaders, God wants servants!

This was Orientation Day! a. An adjustment or adaptation to a new environment, situation, custom, or set of ideas. b. Introductory instruction concerning a new situation: orientation for incoming students. The direction followed in the course of a trend, movement, or development. ***No one will get His kingdom, realize fullness, discover satisfaction without 'getting' the orientation!***

The Kingdom of Heaven... A kingdom of discovery! **Mt 5** A kingdom of light! We stand exposed for all to see, shining with forgiveness and showing the way! A kingdom where love overflows the minimum's of the law! Anger management, reconciliation, purity of eye, language, temperament, equality! "Love does no wrong to anyone!" A kingdom of benevolence, prayer, self-discipline, forgiveness and focus! **Mt 6** A kingdom of observation and encouragement! **Mt 7** No one's "judge and jury" but we do check the fruit of each others lives! A kingdom with a "small door," that leads to the expanses of eternity! Versus the broad way that leads to "straits" that precede destruction! A kingdom where we do what we say and more than we say! We build on the bedrock of hearing and doing His words! And He was asking them to "follow!"

Following... Will we follow Him, on the same pathway because we get, 'this is our life?' Clear-eyed because we see there is no one like our God to put our trust in? Compassionate because we have received His love! Humble because He "condescended" to us! Mercy-full for we are forgiven "all!" In the process of purity to be like Him! Reaching to reconcile men with God! Pursuing "wholeness" with God and man as the "whole thing" of life!

The Fourth for Last... "O' the bliss of the one who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, for they will be filled!" Interesting background to the Jewish ear! Not an ancient version of "I need a snack or drink to get me through..." Starving for food, will die w/o water... Interesting Greek construction! The usual verbs for hunger/thirst. "I am hungry for bread/I thirst for water" are replaced... by 'direct accusative' forms... "I hunger for bread" becomes "I want the whole loaf/the whole pitcher of water..."

Not part of "rightness with God and man!" There are mostly good people who have only few gaps... There are some bad people who would give the shirt off their back... Both are still only partially good! (dir. acc.) "O' the bliss of the one who hungers and thirsts for the whole thing; not just part, not merely enough, that one will be truly filled!" **HAPPY MEAL!**

"O' the bliss of the one who longs for total righteousness like the starving and dying one longs for food and water, for that one will be truly satisfied!" **Matt 5.6**

"Are you hungry and thirsty enough for rightness with God and man... to follow Jesus into His new kingdom?"