

The Forgotten Beatitude

Matthew 11:6¹

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FOCAL Read Together Matthew 11:6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.

One of the greatest words in the Scripture is **whosoever**. Jesus used this word quite a bit. For instance, Jesus used **WHOSOEVER** as a promise of future reward or loss of reward.

Matthew 5:19 **WHOSOEVER** therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but **WHOSOEVER** shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

WHOSOEVER shall hear the Word of God and **DO** it shall be called **GREAT** in the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who don't will occupy the lesser seat in glory. Jesus used **WHOSOEVER** to warn of judgment toward those who hate others. He said:

Matthew 5:22 ... **WHOSOEVER** is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and **WHOSOEVER** shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but **WHOSOEVER** shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

God is love. **WHOSOEVER** does not love has not God, and is in danger of eternal damnation. If we took this **WHOSOEVER** seriously then we would purge many from the membership rolls of the Church. Hateful and hate inspired people need not expect to go to Heaven.

¹ Inspired by a Vance Havner sermon of the same name. All texts are King James Version unless otherwise noted

God has a little warmer place set aside for the hotheads.

Matthew 5:28 WHOSOEVER looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Those Jesus addressed this WHOSOEVER to men, it applies to women too. I wish women were a little more careful in how they dressed nowadays. I've seen women walking through the local stores dressed in their pajamas. Ladies, help us to avoid breaking this WHOSOEVER by being careful how you dress. **Women should dress up in modest apparel (1 Timothy 2:9)**, especially if you are children of God.

Some WHOSOEVERS help us to realize we are to forgive everyone - whether they deserve it or not. We read:

Matthew 5:39 ... resist not evil: but WHOSOEVER shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

One of the most hated jobs I ever had was working with a roofer. I despised carrying shingles up a rickety ladder to the roof of the house! It was not only dangerous, but a terrible strain. A greater strain on the human soul is to carry around a grudge. At least with shingles, you could put them down before you went home at night. A grudge wears on you even as you lay in bed. Believe me, I know!

One of the greatest WHOSOEVER statements is found

in

John 3:16 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.

Here is the promise of eternal life to all who will believe in Jesus. Yet so few learn to cling to this promise. They are **offended in Christ**. They don't mind having a Christ as long as they can have a sin. I see this all the time.

Dear friends, salvation comes when you - WHOSOEVER you are - surrender your life to Jesus. When you call upon the promise of God in Christ God's Holy Spirit comes to you and does a work in you. You are saved by being focused on Christ. Furthermore, you are BLESSED in this life by REMAINING focused on Christ. This is what Jesus meant when He said:

FOCAL Matthew 11:6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.

Christ offends the sensibility of the unbeliever. He should never offend His believers. The Gospel requires a surrender to the Lordship of Christ. It requires that we follow Him above all else. Jesus did not come to save society. He didn't come to this earth to make us "green". He didn't come to bless us IN our sins. As that old time Baptist preacher **Vance Havner** once said,

“If they had a social gospel in the days of the prodigal son, somebody would have given him a bed and a sandwich and he never would have gone home.”

Christ came to save sinners. He came to save us from our sins. He came to be Lord of our lives so that we could live as lords in this life. Someone has said that the Cross is no more than an "I" that has been marked out. Christianity is not about "I". It is about JESUS. And **whosoever is not offended in Him** shall find true happiness in this life - and in the life to come.

What Is A Beatitude?

We are all familiar (I hope) with the Beatitudes or our Lord's "**Sermon On The Mount**" of **Matthew chapter 5**. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus proclaimed *nine* **blessings** for His followers. Each blessing was contrary to what the world would consider "blessing".

A Beatitude is a truth of God that is contrary to the wisdom of this world.

The Bible says:

1 Corinthians 1:18-20 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. {19} For it is written, **I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. {20} Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?**

The wisdom of the world says "**he who promotes himself will in the end triumph. He who capitalizes**

"I" but always lower cases "you" will be the winner". What does Jesus say?

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are the humble. When Jesus was attack He humbled Himself. His disciples are called to humble themselves. We are to do as Jesus did - to focus on our God and Him alone. Focus on His Word, and honestly do exactly what it says.

There are many local Churches where the loud and forceful seem to hold the rest of the congregation as hostages. There are many local Churches where those without love and without God get their way because they are the loudest and the meanest. Jesus said, **blessed are the meek – the humble – the mild**. One of the characteristics of a true Christian is that he is humble and teachable. As the Scripture says:

James 4:6 ... God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

The Beatitude always teaches us that God uses the willing, the broken, the submitted.

God uses the broken vessel. He can not nor will not use the proud and arrogant, the self righteous or the self sufficient. Our Lord Jesus Himself – very God of very God – was led by the command of the Father to be baptized. **John the Baptist** was in the wilderness

preaching the Coming of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. John – with a simple camel hair coat and a simple diet of locusts and wild honey – preached the message that God gave him to preach.

“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. I am the messenger of the Coming Messiah, of whom Isaiah prophesied (Isaiah 40:3). The Lord is coming. It is He Who will baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. It is He Who will judge, and will burn up the chaff – the unbelieving – and bring forth the believing.” (Matthew 3:1-12).

The King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus Christ, came to John the Baptist to be baptized in water. Jesus meekly surrendered to the will of God as He allowed John to lower Him into the waters of the Jordan. Though Almighty God in flesh, Jesus submitted. God will not use the unbroken nor those who refuse to submit. Following His baptism the Bible says:

Matthew 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

If Jesus was led of the Spirit, I must be led of the Spirit. If Jesus was tempted by Satan, then I must be tempted by Satan. If Jesus battled Satan by using the Word of God, then I must battle Satan by using the Word of God.

Jesus was led up of – or by the Spirit. He submitted to the leading of God. He was led into the wilderness to be

tempted of the devil. Jesus was tried. His soul was tested, and He combated the devil using – and submitting to – the Holy Word of God. Jesus Christ – God the Son – humbled Himself to the Word of God and the Spirit of God. As He will one day rule on the earth, so will those who are His rule on this earth. **The meek – the humble – shall inherit the earth.**

And what of our focal text, this *tenth* Beatitude? This Beatitude - unlike the other nine - was given in response to a question that John the Baptist asked. John had always lived his life submitted to God no matter what the cost. As a result he now lay imprisoned in the dungeon of Herod Antipas. As he lay in that dark and dank place John began to think about Jesus. John had preached from the beginning that **Jesus was the Lamb of God, come to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29)**. John had also preached that **Jesus would be the Baptizer with fire, burning up the chaff – the unbeliever – while blessing the believer**. He believed these things. He preached these things. But now, in the dank dungeon, in the darkness reinforced by the smell of death and rot, the doubts began to roll in. “Is He really the Messiah? If He is, why am I in this dungeon? Why isn't Jesus overthrowing the wicked. Why is Herod Antipas able to get away with unjustly imprisoning me? The questions kept tormenting him unto John, calling his few remaining disciples, sent them to Jesus with a simple question.

Matthew 11:3 ... Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?

Are You the One?

Jesus didn't answer right away. In Luke's account we see that Jesus ...

Luke 7:21 in that same hour cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

After an hour of miraculous healing Jesus told the disciples of John:

Matthew 11:4-6 Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: {5} The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. {6} And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

The Lord did not rebuke John for his stumble, but encouraged him to keep on looking at Christ.

Dear friends, we all get discouraged at times. But we must always remember that **God is in control**. When you can't trust yourselves you can trust Him. **Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Christ**. God is at work - and so is Satan and the world of evil in which we live. Keep your eyes on Jesus!

2. We Cannot Stand In Our Own Power

FOCAL Matthew 11:6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.

Who are the two great Elijah's of the Scripture?

There are two great prophets in the Bible, two great Elijah's. The Old Testament Elijah stood up for God against the prophets of Baal, the false god of the Canaanites. Jesus identified John the Baptist as the New Testament Elijah when He said:

CONTEXT Matthew 11:13-14 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. {14} And if ye will receive it, this is Elijah, which was for to come.

Robertson (in his **Word Pictures in the Greek New Testament**) said:

"... Jesus affirms that John is the Elijah of promise who has come already (Matthew 17:12). He emphasizes the point: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

The New Testament Elijah, John the Baptist, stood up against the Pharisees of the Temple, the false religion of that day. Both Old and New Testament Elijah's stood up against the **false state religions** of their day.

Oh, how powerful both men were! I get excited when I read how the old time saints stood up for the Lord. The Old Testament Elijah stood up against Ahab, the New Testament Elijah against Herod Antipas. The Old

Testament Elijah grew discouraged when the King's wife, **Jezebel**, threatened to take his life. The New Testament Elijah, John the Baptist, was discouraged because the King's wife **Herodias** had him thrown into prison.

Both of these men were powerful in the Lord. When both men prayed the Lord heard - and answered - their prayers. The Bible says that:

James 5:17-18 **Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. {18} And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.**

These were great men who did great things, but they stumbled when they got their eyes off of the Lord. **"Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me"**, saith the Lord.

Dear friends, every believer has three great enemies that stand against them.

The Bible teaches us that **the world** is our enemy. We cannot stand against Satan or the world in our own strength.

The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ

Galatians 1:4-5 ... gave himself for our sins, that he

might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: {5} To whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

The believer is someone who is *called out* of the world. The world is offended in Christ. Jesus said **"blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me"**. That word **"offended"** is a Greek word (σκανδαλιζω, **pronounced skan-dal-id'-zo**) which means **"to scandalize, to cause to stumble"**. The world and the worldly love to sin. If people could have a Jesus that would give them a free ticket to Heaven but not require that they submit to His Lordship, this is the Jesus they would love to follow. And this is the made up Jesus that the world itself follows.

ILLUSTRATE Just the other day I received two packets in the mail written by "a concerned Christian". There was no return address on the envelope, and no signature on the letter. The world was doing its best to sneak into the Church, but it found its way not into the Church but into the trash can.

And that's where the world belongs.

Why anybody would write a letter and then cloak their identity is beyond me. Christ made it clear that we are the **light of the world, a city set on a hill (Matthew 5:14)**. His people should identify themselves clearly with Jesus. What does God tell His people?

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 **Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath**

righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? {15} And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? {16} And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. {17} Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. {18} And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

If you are a Christian you are called out of the world. If you're called out - the Church - then you're going to get attacked by darkness.

The Old Testament Elijah got attacked by Jezebel, who said:

1 Kings 19:2 ... So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.

“You're dead, Elijah! Just as you did to my prophets, so shall I do to you – and that right early!”

The Old Testament Elijah collapsed beneath the juniper tree (1 Kings 19:4-6), and the New

Testament Elijah collapsed in Herod's dungeon.

The world, along with Satan, will do everything it can do to cause you to collapse. What is God's remedy against collapse?

3. We Must Keep Our Focus On Jesus

I find it interesting that Jesus never rebuked either the Old or the New Testament Elijahs for their breakdown. The Lord actually praised John the Baptist - though in the midst of the praise He gave a great promise. Jesus said:

CONTEXT Matthew 11:7-11 And as {the disciples of John} departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind? {8} But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. {9} But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. {10} For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. {11} Verily I say unto you, **Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.**

Though at John's lowest moment he said the least he had ever said about Jesus. John said "are you the Messiah,

or should we look for another". Jesus, on the other hand, said the greatest thing He could say about John. He said "**John is not only a Prophet, but he is MORE than a Prophet. There has NEVER been born of women any prophet greater than John the Baptist**". What a compliment! What a wonderful thing to say. But notice also what Jesus says. He said, "**he that is LEAST in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he**".

The Christian's power does not reside in his own abilities, but in his surrender to God. The more we surrender to the Lordship of Christ the greater God can use us.

We live in a day where people *undervalue* the Word of God and *overvalue* everything else. Jesus said:

FOCAL Matthew 11:6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me.

We *forget* Jesus. We *forget* to be like Jesus. We *forget* to read His Holy Word. We *forget* to obey Him. We live in a day where people spend hours in front of the television but minutes in a local Church service. We feed our faces, but forget to feed our souls. A warped view of Jesus is preached.

People - even Christians - are **scandalized** by Christ.

Jesus did not rebuke John, but He did remind John that he needed to keep his focus on the Lord Jesus

Christ.

Elijah lost his joy in the Lord - and his power - when he languished underneath the juniper tree feeling sorry for himself. John the Baptist lost his joy in the Lord - and his power - while he suffered in Herod's prison feeling sorry for himself. When the valleys of life come do as you did - Elijah - when you were on the mountaintop. Look to Jesus. Heed His Word. Let the world and Satan strike at you all that it wants. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Pray to Him daily. Read and meditate on His Word daily. Speak highly of Him. While you can, serve Him wholeheartedly.

It is a shame that many who proclaim themselves to be "Christian" will not come to Church nor participate in Church unless there is a fellowship meal, a Vacation Bible School, or some other special event. Pastors are resorting to tricks - purpose driven and otherwise - to try and entice people to Church. Dear friends, the only trick I can give you - and its not a trick - is to **not be offended in Christ**. The Bible tells us that if we have believed in Jesus then the Spirit of God has:

Colossians 1:13 ... delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

Look to your King. Look at your King. This is what will give you strength through the hard times, looking to Jesus. The Apostle Paul, imprisoned in dungeons and headed toward a sure beheading said:

2 Corinthians 4:8-10 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; {9} Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; {10} Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

Old Paul was saying **these are desperate times, but we are not desperate.** Why could he be that way? Because he looked to Jesus. We take our assurance today in medicine, in doctors, in lawyers, and in banks.

As someone once said, "The only stocks and bonds the Apostle Paul knew kept him a prisoner. He had stocks on his feet and bonds on his hands - but Jesus in his heart. Because Jesus was in his heart he had more than most of us have today.

A great old song that we rarely sing anymore is called "**Blessed Assurance**". Do you remember that song? It didn't say, "**Blessed assurance, riches are mine**". It didn't say, "**Blessed assurance, good health is mine**". It didn't say "**Blessed assurance, a nice home is mine.**" It didn't say "**Blessed assurance, a nice spouse is mine**". What did it say?

**Blessed assurance, JESUS is mine!
Oh what a foretaste of glory Divine.
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of HIS Spirit, washed in HIS blood!
This is my story, this is my song.**

**Praising my Savior all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song.
Praising my Savior all the day long.²**

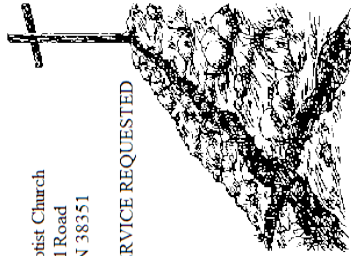
Do you know who wrote that song? **Fanny J. Crosby**, a young lady who was born blind. Her happiness - and ours - is found only in Christ. **Blessed - happy - is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Christ.**

May God touch your hearts with His love.

² Blessed Assurance by Fanny J. Crosby, tune by Mrs J.F. Knapp. #156 in the Heavenly Highway Hymnal Book

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



FOCAL Read Together Matthew 11:6
**And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be
offended in Me.**

**Matthew 5:19; Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:28; 1
Timothy 2:9; Matthew 5:39; John 3:16; Matthew 11:6**

1. What Is A Beatitude?

- A Beatitude is a _____ that is
contrary to the wisdom of this world. **(1 Corinthians
1:18-20; Matthew 5:5; James 4:6)**

- The Beatitude always teaches us that _____

(Matthew 3:1-12)

- If Jesus was _____ of the Spirit, I must be _____ of
the Spirit. If Jesus was tempted by _____, then I must
be tempted by Satan. If Jesus battled Satan by
_____, then I must battle Satan by
_____. **(Matthew 4:1)**

- The Lord did not rebuke John for his stumble, but
encouraged him to _____
(Matthew 11:3; Luke 7:21; Matthew 11:4-6)

2. We Cannot Stand In Our Own Power

- Who are the two great Elijah's of the Scripture?

(Matthew 11:13-14; Matthew 17:12; James 5:17-18)

- The Bible teaches us that _____ is our enemy.
We cannot stand against _____
(Galatians 1:4-5)

- If you are a Christian you are _____.
If you're called out - the Church - then you're going to
get attacked by darkness. **(2 Corinthians 6:14-18)**

- The Old Testament Elijah collapsed _____,
and the New Testament Elijah _____
(1 Kings 19:4-6)

3. We Must Keep Our Focus On Jesus

- The Christian's power does not reside in his own
abilities, but in his _____ to God. _____

- Jesus did not rebuke John, but He did remind John that

(Colossians 1:13; 2 Corinthians 4:8-10)

