

Assurance of Salvation

Matthew 5:1-5

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Sometime when you're in an airport as I am on many occasions due to my mission work around the world, observe the difference between passengers who hold confirmed tickets and those who are on standby. The ones with confirmed tickets read newspapers, chat with their friends or sleep. The ones on standby hang around the ticket counter, pace and smoke, smoke and pace.

The difference is caused by the confidence factor. If you knew that in fifteen minutes you would have to stand in judgment before the Holy God and learn your eternal destiny, what would your reaction be? Would you smoke and pace? Would you say to yourself, "I don't know what God's going to say--will it be 'Welcome home, child,' or will it be 'Depart from me; I never knew you'?"



Do you doubt, or are you unsure of your salvation? Why? Is it because you continue to make mistakes?

We can self examine ourselves to determine our relationship with God and to know with certainty whether we are saved or not by displaying Three Attitudes that Jesus Himself gives us. In fact we call them Beatitudes.

Attitude 1--- We must display an attitude of humility.

Matthew 5:1-3 (KJV)

¹ And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

² And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

³ Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Now the first thing is first in this study. May I say, and I say it boldly, there are only two groups of people here that this is in reference to. The *blessed* and the *not blessed*. The blessed are the ones going to heaven, i.e. saved, and the not blessed, well, they are headed for hell, they are the unsaved.

Blessed, (GREEK. - Makarios - MAK-AR-EE-OS) The word literally means happy, it's where we get our word bliss or blissful. Jesus is describing the divinely-bestowed well being that only belongs to the faithful. Blessed "Happy" are the poor in spirit. "emphasize Happy". This seems opposite of what it should be to us, we would seem to think that it should say "Happy are the rich in spirit" not poor in spirit.

Poor in spirit-- Jesus is saying that this is the opposite of self-sufficiency. It speaks of those who realize their total helplessness and lost state apart from God.

When we think we are OK because we are a “GOOD PERSON”, work hard, go to Church--don’t steal, don’t drink, don’t chew and don’t date those that do. This is self-righteousness, and it won’t get you into the Kingdom of heaven. Apart from God we are totally lost and going to hell, it is by His Grace and His grace ALONE that we are saved.

Luke 18:10-14 (KJV)

¹⁰ Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

¹² I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess.

¹³ And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

Isaiah 64:6 (KJV)

⁶ But we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

Take the word **CHRISTIAN**, and remove **CHRIST**, all you have left is **IAN**, which means without **CHRIST I AM NOTHING**.

STORY OF SHEEP

In the Highlands of Scotland, sheep would often wander off into the rocks and get into places that they couldn’t get out of. The grass on these mountains is very sweet and the sheep like it, and they will jump down ten or twelve feet, and then they can’t jump back again, and the shepherd hears them bleating in distress. They may be there for days, until they have eaten all the grass. The shepherd will wait until they are so faint they cannot stand, and then they will put a rope around him, and he will go over and pull that sheep up out of the jaws of death. "Why doesn’t the shepherd go down there when the sheep first gets there? You see they are so very foolish they would dash right over the high edge and be killed if they did!" And that is the way with us, when we try to save ourselves thinking that we are a good person, kind, generous, honest, we are foolish and deceive ourselves, which leads to our eternal destruction.

If we are truly saved we will display an attitude of humility.

Attitude 2--- We must display an attitude of repentance.

Matthew 5:4 (KJV)

⁴ Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed “Happy” are those who mourn. This also seems opposite of what we would think it should say. We would think it should say “Happy are those who rejoice or laugh”. Those who

mourn, -- Jesus here speaks of mourning over sin, i.e. -- the Godly sorrow that produces repentance leading to salvation.

This doesn't mean the superficial remorse that comes from misconduct because of the fear that God is going to punish you. This is the true sorrow that one has because he or she has disobeyed the one that has paid the price of their sin by dying for them, and this sorrow comes not from fear but from pure love, love for Christ. This is the true sorrow that is agreement with God that they do indeed deserve punishment.

A part of King David's Psalm after a horrible sin:

Psalm 51:4 (KJV)

⁴Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." This speaks of the comfort of forgiveness and of salvation. There is nothing more comforting than knowing that you are forgiven and that you are saved and going to heaven.

Look at **Psalm 51:17 (KJV)**

¹⁷The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

I would like to make something clear at this point. There are two things that you need to distinguish between, and that is (1) The Conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit and (2) Of Condemnation, which is guilt from sin, and that is from Satan.

Satan is the accuser; he hates us and wants to destroy us.

Zechariah 3:1-2 (NIV)

¹Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.

²The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?"

That is us; God has literally SNATCHED us from the fire. And Satan is right there accusing us of all our wrong doings, causing us guilt and reminding us of our past. "Illustration: How can you be a Christian?--look what you've done."

Zechariah 3:3-4 (NIV)

³Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel.

⁴The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you."

When a stick is snatched from a fire it is charred, so are we, our garments are soiled just like Joshua, but God removes our sin and clothes us in His righteousness.

Condemnation is guilt and shame and is right from the accuser, Satan literally means adversary or accuser, he hates us and wants to keep us in doubt. But **conviction** is sweet, when and I mean when not if, we sin, God the Holy Spirit brings conviction, which in turn brings repentance which leads to salvation and that is sweet.

In his retirement, Thomas Jefferson founded the University of Virginia. Because Jefferson trusted that students would take their studies seriously, the code of discipline was lax. Unfortunately, his trust proved misplaced when the misbehavior of students led to a riot in which professors who tried to restore order were attacked. The following day a meeting was held between the university's board, of which Jefferson was a member, and defiant students. Jefferson began by saying, "This is one of the most painful events of my life," suddenly he was overcome by emotion, and burst into tears. Another board member asked the rioters to come forward and give their names. Nearly every one did. Later, one of them said, "It was not Mr. Jefferson's words, but his tears." Just like the student was moved by Jefferson's brokenness, so is God moved by ours. When we are truly broken and sorry for our sins, this leads to repentance.
If we are truly saved we will display an attitude of repentance

Attitude 3-- We must display an attitude of obedient submission.

Matthew 5:5 (NIV)

⁵ Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Again, Blessed means Happy, "Happy are the meek?" This also seems opposite of what we think it should say, we think it should say "Happy are the Strong for they will inherit the earth. But meekness is not lack of strength, it is not weakness or wimpy-ness, what it is, is supreme self control empowered by the Holy Spirit, i.e., power under control in submissive obedience to God.

The meek are submissive to the divine will of God; not proud, self sufficient or stubborn and unmanageable, not ill tempered and apt to complain of divine dispensations.

Jesus Himself was meek

Matthew 11:29 (NIV)

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Jesus was meek, and look what he did to the money changers at the Temple.

John 2:15-16 (NIV)

¹⁵ So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.

¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!"

This was righteous anger, and He was in complete control, "He took the time to go and make a whip". Had He been out of control He could have simply wiped them out instantly, (remember He was and is God). The greatest example of meekness is the obedience of Christ's sufferings and death on the cross, and yes I said obedience.

Philippians 2:8 (NIV)

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

Talk about power under control!!!!

Matthew 26:53 (NIV)

⁵³ **Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?** Twelve legions, that's 72,000 angels. In **2 Kings 19:35 (NIV)**

³⁵ **That night the angel of the LORD went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning--there were all the dead bodies!** Can you imagine 185,00 people were killed by only one angel.

Going to the cross was true meekness. (Power under control) Imagine the way He must have felt, knowing that at anytime He could have called down more than 72,000 angels and destroyed them all. But He chose to be obedient to the Father's will and suffer a horrible death to defeat Satan, and so that the very people that were doing it may be saved. (Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do)

I don't know about you, but personally I would have made believers out of them in a whole different way. Aren't you glad that I am not Jesus!

Meekness is a fruit, Jesus talks about bearing fruit. ***"We must bear fruit or be cut off"***

Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

²² **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**
²³ **gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.**

Here is the deal. You may have a confrontation, maybe someone has called you names,(stupid Christian, Jerk or sworn at you), maybe someone has cheated you or hurt you with gossip, at that time you have a choice, you can deck or floor that person or rebuke them with harsh and hurtful words, or you can be obedient to God and turn away your wrath with a soft answer.

So, ***"Blessed are the Meek for they will inherit the Earth."*** This inheritance is after Jesus comes back and the Earth is transformed into a New Heaven and Earth, and those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will be the occupants, and those whose names are not will be thrown into the lake of fire.

A. W. Tozer wrote in his book ***The Pursuit of God***: "The meek man is not a human mouse afflicted with a sense of his own inferiority. Rather he may be in his moral life as bold as a lion and as strong as Samson; but he has stopped being fooled about himself. He has accepted God's estimate of his own life. He knows he is as weak and helpless as God declared him to be, but paradoxically, he knows at the same time that he is in the sight of God of more importance than angels. In himself, nothing; in God, everything. That is his motto."

If we are truly saved we will have the attitudes of humility, repentance and obedience, these attitudes are the products of salvation which come from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and not from ourselves. They are from God.

We can examine ourselves to see if we display these attitudes and be sure of our salvation, or we can be like the people in the airport terminal with standby tickets, nervous, not knowing for sure if they will make their destination. **YOU DECIDE!**