

CHALLENGED TO RAISE OUR SPIRITUAL LEVEL

¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. ² And He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying...

MATTHEW 5:1-2 NASB

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5:3 NASB

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5:10 NASB

The Beatitudes are not conditions for entering the Kingdom, but descriptions of the character God produces in those who are already citizens of the Kingdom.

- John MacArthur

JESUS INVITES ME TO RAISE MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL BY:

1. Breaking with self-sufficiency and fully depending on Him

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

MATTHEW 5:3 NASB

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

MATTHEW 5:4 NASB

APPLICATION FOR RAISING MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL:

- In what situations do I trust my experience, my character, or my resources more than I trust Him?
- What things in my life should grieve me spiritually... but no longer do?
- What would happen if this year I stopped pretending spiritual strength and began to live from a place of genuine need for Jesus?

JESUS INVITES ME TO RAISE MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL BY:

2. Living with spiritual hunger

Blessed are the gentle, for they will inherit the earth.

MATTHEW 5:5 NASB

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

MATTHEW 5:6 NASB

Jesus answered them and said, Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate some of the loaves and were filled.

JOHN 6:26 NASB

APPLICATION FOR RAISING MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL:

- In what situations am I reacting with control, anger, or force instead of meekness and trust in God?
- Am I trying to 'win' by my own strength what God has promised to give me in His time?
- When I look at my decisions, my time, and my priorities, do they reflect real spiritual hunger or just occasional interest in God?

JESUS INVITES ME TO RAISE MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL BY:

3. No longer reacting the way the world does

Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

MATTHEW 5:7 NASB

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

MATTHEW 5:9 NASB

APPLICATION FOR RAISING MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL:

- Who am I demanding justice from when God is calling me to show mercy?
- Is there someone in my life whom I still treat according to their failure and not according to the grace I myself have received?
- How would my relationships change if I began to respond more from God's mercy than from my natural reactions?

JESUS INVITES ME TO RAISE MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL BY:

4. Allowing Him to continually cleanse my heart and transform the way I live

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

MATTHEW 5:8 NASB

APPLICATION FOR RAISING MY SPIRITUAL LEVEL:

- What things am I allowing in my heart that are preventing me from enjoying a deeper relationship with God?
- Am I taking more care of my outward spiritual appearance than of the true cleansing of my inner life?
- If God were to examine my heart today, would He find a place prepared for His presence, or areas that I still need to surrender to Him?

¹⁰ Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in this same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

MATTHEW 5:10-12 NASB