

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

(Part II)

References :

**Notes for Servants :**

**Objectives :**

**General:**

**Specific:**

**Instructions:**

1. Review last week's lesson.
- 2.
- 3.

**Bible Verse:**

*And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when He was set, His disciples came unto Him: and He opened His mouth and taught them saying@* [Mat 5:1,2]

**Lesson :**

*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.* [Mat 5:7]

+ Mercy is one of God's attributes. It was greatly manifested on the Cross, where justice and mercy were fulfilled. *The LORD is Merciful and Gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever. He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust.@* [Ps 103:8-14]

+ In His mercy, the Lord received the repentants without rebuking them and had

compassion on the scattered people [Mat 9:36]. He is the help of those who have no helper [Joh 5:7].

+ For God, mercy is more important than adoration: *AFor I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings@* [Hos 6:6, Mat 9:13]. God deals with us according to His mercy and not according to our sins as we pray in the Liturgy. Therefore, it is better to: *ALet us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for His mercies are great: and let me not fall into the hand of man@* [2Sam 24:14].

+ Mercy is essential because according to what we do to others it will be done to us: *Awith what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again@* [Mat 7:2, Mar 4:24]. Also in [Mat 25:42-45], those who do not show mercy to others will receive their judgment. Moreover, *ASo likewise shall My Heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses@* [Mat 18:35]. But *ABlessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble@* [Ps 41:1].

+ A merciful heart does not condemn other people but finds excuses for them (St Moses the Black). He also quick to forgive and does not hold bitterness against those who offended him (St Steven).

+ Cruelty. Cruelty can be against people: harsh treatment, no respect or regard to their feelings or situations, etc.. (opposite of all mentioned above). Cruelty can also be against God Himself: rejecting Him and refusing to respond to His voice within oneself: *ATo day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts@* [Heb 3:7].

+ To whom will God show mercy? To:

1. Those who ask for His mercy with all their hearts.

2. Those who show mercy to others.

3. The oppressed even though they do not ask Him: *AFor the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him@* [Ps 12:5] (Naboth the Jezreelite [1Kin: 21:19]).

4. The weak, the banished, the rejected, the crushed persons and those who have no one to deal with them compassionately. As with the man at the pool of Bethesda.

5. With us all, God deals with us mercifully and gradually. According to our capacity, He will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear. Even if we are tempted, He will also provide a way out [1Cor 10:13].

**Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.** [Mat 5:8]

+ A great reward is associated with this beatitude: seeing God! Therefore its virtue must be a great one. Seeing God is not only confined to the senses, but mostly on earth it means spiritual enjoyment. Feeling the presence of God all the time: *AI have set the LORD always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved@* [Ps 16:8].

+ Not everyone can see God. The simple and pure in heart only will be able to *Asee@* God (Ex: Samuel and Eli). Those who can see God have a mind that is simple that

- does not subject everything to analysis but gives way to faith and trust in God.
- + During tribulation, usually the heart becomes more pure than ever and then one can see God and strongly feel His presence. Christ used to appear to the martyrs and confessors during their sufferings and heal them and comfort them. They bared and even some of them enjoyed their suffering due to the vision of God during them.
  - + Everybody will see God in eternity and on judgment day, even the evil-doers. On the hope of seeing Him, Job said: *AFor I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me@* [Job 19:25-27]. Also St. Paul says: *AFor now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known@* [1Cor 13:12].
  - + The pure heart is not only the one devoid of sin but also that which is filled with God's love. *AMy son, give Me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe My ways@* [Pro 23:26]. *AKeep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life@* [Prov 4:23]. *AA good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh@* [Luk 6:45].
  - + The purity of heart begins with repentance: *ACreate in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me@* [Ps 51:10].
  - + The pure heart does not see evil: *AUnto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled@* [Tit 1:15]. We shall obtain this purity of heart in eternity when we will be like the angels in heaven [Mat 22:30].
  - + The pure heart does not the things that are in the world: *Alf any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him@* [1Joh 2:15].
  - + The pure heart is wide and can hold all. It cannot be annoyed by a word or a problem or by any one. Look at God Himself, how He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good! [Mat 5:45]. Moses too, the Bible describes him as: *ANow the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth@* [Num 12:3].

***Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.***

[Mat 5:9]

- + The peace-maker is one who makes peace between:
  1. God and man
  2. Among people
  3. Inside their own hearts with God and with others.
- + The first one to trouble the world's peace is Satan. By his beguiling, he deceived Adam and Eve and thus a barrier was erected between God and man because of sin. Christ is the One Who destroyed that barrier and Who reconciled the heavenly with the earthly: *ABut now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made*

*nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, Who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace@* [Eph 2:13-15]. Therefore, the Lord Jesus Christ is the only One Who made peace between God and man by atonement and redemption.

- + As for a peace-maker, he is someone who makes people know God, love Him and adhere to Him: "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" [Jam 5:20].
- + Peace among people was also established by Christ. He made peace between the Gentiles and the Jews, the Jews and the Samaritans in His body. Now, we are His children if we do the same: [Mat 5:38-44], *AREcompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men@* [Rom 12:17,18].
- + Christianity did its best to prevent wars and dissensions. St. Paul rebuked the Corinthians when he found discords and disputes among them [1Cor 1:10,11].
- + Avoiding gossip is one of the most important props of peace among people. A peace-maker does not talk about people behind their back and does not earn anybody's friendship by attacking his enemies. This ill-flattery leads to the loss of peace among people.
- + Of course the person who lives peacefully with both God and people enjoys internal peace. It is the peace of heart and mind. His conscience is always at ease. His life is full of faith and his heart is clam and secure. He is neither troubled nor afraid. He suffers no anxiety. He trusts in God's providence because the Lord promised: *ABe not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee@* [Act 18:9,10].
- + Indeed, if a man's faith becomes weak, he will lose his peace and become troubled, unlike the three children in the fiery furnace.

***Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness= sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*** [Mat 5:10-12]

- + Christ suffered for our sake, and whoever wants to follow Him will suffer and be persecuted. A prerequisite to follow Christ is: *Alf any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me@* [Mat 16:24]. Also in Joshua son of Sirach: *AMy son, if you render yourself to serve the Lord, be ready to face many temptations@*. The Lord Christ did not say these words for us only but He followed their way also: *AFor in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted@* [Heb 2:18].
- + Devils envy the sons of God for their righteousness therefore they trouble them and raise wars against them. Christ warned His disciples about the persecution they will endure: *AThey shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to*

*the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for My Name's sake@ [Luk 21:12]. AFor if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?@ [Luk 23:31].*

- + Undoubtedly, those who persecute you because of your righteousness are driven by the devil to do so. Thus, we must not direct our assault to them, but to the devil himself. *APray for those who persecute you@ [Mat 5:44].*
- + Even though your reward is great in heaven, you will get help from God on earth. Life with God is not mere persecution without sympathy or godly help. *ABehold, I have graven thee upon the palms of My hands; thy walls are continually before Me@ [Isa 49:16]. ABut the very hairs of your head are all numbered@ [Mat 10:30].*
- + Examples of people who suffered and God did not forsake them: David, Jeremiah, Micah, the Apostles and Disciples, St. Paul, St. Athanasius, Pope Discorus, Pope Benjamin and St. Severus of Antioch.
- + Rejoice! The Lord did not say about persecution *Aendure@* but *Arejoice@!* Rejoice for the crowns prepared for you. Rejoice because you have chosen the right way; the narrow road that leads to life [Mat 7:14]. You carried the Cross with your Master as the fathers and the prophets did. *AAnd they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name@ [Act 5:41].*

## **Conclusion**