

Happiness is Humility

Introduction:

This week we enter into the first portion of the Sermon on the Mount!
THE BEATITUDES!!!!

A few thoughts in our intro as we begin this portion of the Sermon on the Mount and look into the first of these Beatitudes:

*JESUS IS SHARING THE ETHOS AND THE MINDSET OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ALL THROUGHOUT THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT!

Nowhere is this in such sharp focus as in the Beatitudes!!!

HE SHARES WITH US IN THE BEATITUDES - WHAT THE TRUE VALUES OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD REALLY ARE!!!

And as we are about to study into them what we are about to find out is that they are the complete opposite of the values, ethos and ideas of the kingdom of this world!!!

THEY GO SHARPLY AGAINST ALL THAT THIS WORLD TRIES TO TELL US!
ALL IT TRIES TO PROMOTE
ALL IT TRIES TO ENCOURAGE
ALL IT TRIES TO SHARE WITH US THROUGH - TV, ADVERTISEMENTS ETC ETC ETC

Jesus Christ is going to share with us some incredibly important, yet incredibly different truths and ways to approach living - AS WE STRIVE TO LIVE FOR GOD AND HIS KINGDOM RATHER THAN FASHIONING OUR LIVES AFTER THE WAYS OF THIS WORLD!!!

We come firstly to the beatitudes and Jesus begins this sermon on the mount - or what _____ calls 'The Manifesto of the King' with a series of phrases starting with the word:

BLESSED!!!

It is important as we enter into the beatitudes this next number of weeks that we understand what that word means!!!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN IT TALKS ABOUT THE PERSON WHO IS 'BLESSED'?

The word 'blessed' used here in Matthew 5 simply means - 'Happy'

JESUS IS GOING TO SHARE WITH US WHAT TRUE, MEANINGFUL, PERMANENT, SETTLED - HAPPINESS LOOKS LIKE - FROM THE VERY PERSPECTIVE OF GOD AND HIS KINGDOM!!!!

John Phillips writes:

'Here is the Lord's recipe for a happy life. His words strike at the roots of all human philosophy. The unregenerate person is unable to understand how the truths expressed in these beatitudes can be the basis of happiness'

What Phillips is saying is:

JESUS WORDS SEEM SHOCKING TO THOSE LIVING FOR THE KINGDOM OF THE WORLD
JESUS WORDS ARE COUNT-CULTURAL, AND OTHER WORLDLY!
JESUS WORDS TURNS THE WAYS OF OUR WORLD AND THE IDEAS OF OUR WORLD ON THEIR HEAD!
JESUS FLIPS THE PICTURE UPSIDE DOWN!

THEY ARE POLAR OPPOSITE TO WHAT OUR WORLD PROMOTES AS THE DEFINITION AND EXAMPLE OF 'HAPPINESS'

Think about this for a minute - I am going to give you the start of a sentence and I want you to think about how you would finish the sentence.

THEN I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT THE WAY OUR WORLD TRIES TO HAVE US FINISH THIS SENTENCE!

And then we are going to look at how Jesus finishes the sentence!

HERE GOES:
'Happiness is.....'

How would you finish that sentence?
What would you fill in the blank with?
Where do we find happiness and our satisfaction?

Family
Friends
Love

Maybe for you:
Happiness is:
A stable lifestyle
A nice family
A good house
Having nice things
A smile on your face

WHAT IS HAPPINESS TO YOU?
How would you finish that sentence?

In the eyes of our world - they try many times and in many ways to tell us that happiness - is tangible!

That is it something that you can attach to something that you can see and touch and possess!!
THAT IS WHY WE HAVE ADVERTISEMENTS
THAT IS WHY COMPANIES PUBLISH MAGAZINES AND NEWSPAPERS
THAT IS WHY YOU HAVE TV PROGRAMMES, MOVIES, ADVERTS ETC
THAT IS WHY YOU HAVE BILLBOARDS

All of them - is someone promoting their message and their ideal about what this life is all about!
What is good
What is important
What can make you happy!!

AND IN MANY CASES, HERE ARE SOME OF THE EXAMPLES THE WORLD WOULD USE TO ANSWER THIS SENTENCE:

Happiness is:
Having plenty of money
Wealth and riches
The new iPhone
That beach body
That gym membership
Those designer clothes
That new model of the newest car you like

That person house
That season ticket to your favourite sports team
The latest games consoles and games
THE LIST IS ENDLESS AND THE LIST COULD GO ON

And it does impact us whether we like to admit it or not!!
We have all played the 'If and Then' game before!

YOU SAY - WHAT IS THE 'IF AND THEN' GAME?

WHO HERE HAS SAID THIS BEFORE:
'If I just had _____, then I'd be happy'

We have all said or thought that at some point or other!
If I just had that phone, then I'd be happy
If i just had that car, then I'd be happy
If I just had that girl, then I'd be happy
If I just had that house, then I'd be happy
If I just had that money, then I'd be happy
And that is a game that you can never win - because there is always something bigger, better,
faster, greater that will come along!
THE CONSTANT PURSUIT FOR HAPPINESS IN STUFF!

I want to quote an article from a secular website, and a secular journalist - the article was entitled:

'7 Life Misconceptions Portrayed in Popular TV Advertisements'

Number one on the list of misconceptions - HAPPINESS IS FOR SALE!
That caught my attention!

That is exactly the point I have been making!
The world around us is promoting that very message:
On many billboards
In many TV advertisements
In many magazines
HAPPINESS IS FOR SALE!!

Listen to this quote from the article:

*'Marketers often seek to convince us their products will increase our happiness. From soda and alcohol to fashion and automobiles, happiness is offered to us in our very next purchase. I was surprised at the level of boldness some products used in promoting this misconception. **Coca-Cola** ("Open happiness") and **Volkswagen** ("Get in. Get happy.") stand out significantly. The truth of life is that happiness cannot be purchased no matter how hard we search for it in material possessions. And advertisers do a great disservice to their audience by promising it in temporal packages.'*

COCA COLA - Open Happiness - Their tagline from 2009 - 2016 until finally their creative management team changed the slogan to 'Taste the Feeling'

VW - Get In. Get Happy

Fiat - In 2014 played the song 'Happy' by Pharell in their TV advert

Vodafone - Show a crying child finding happiness in making 'mobile data connectivity'

Koodo Mobile - A Canadian Mobile Network provider brought out an advert stating 'Happiness is not a contest, but if it was, we'd totally win that contest!'

Esso (1964): "Happiness is a quick-starting car."

Lucky Strike (cigarettes): "Be happy, go Lucky."

All that being said - MANY PLACES WE LOOK IN THIS WORLD - TRY TO CONVINCING US THAT HAPPINESS CAN BE BOUGHT!

That happiness is about possessions

Happiness is about wealth

Happiness is about amassing stuff

Happiness is about tangible things you can have and touch!!

BUT AS WE COME TO THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT AND STUDY INTO THE BEATITUDES JESUS TURNS THE WHOLE PICTURE ON IT'S HEAD!

Jesus shares with us the Kingdom recipe for a happy life!

WHAT TRUE HAPPINESS LOOKS LIKE!

What the truly blessed person is like!!!

And let me share with you as we begin this series Jesus answers to the sentence 'Happiness is':

Happiness is being poor

Happiness is mourning/weeping

Happiness is being meek

Happiness is hungering and thirsting after righteousness

Happiness is being merciful

Happiness is purity

Happiness is making peace

Happiness being persecuted

WHO HERE WOULD SAY THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THEIR FIRST ANSWER TO THE SENTENCE 'HAPPINESS IS....'?

Being poor? Broken? Bankrupt?

Weeping and mourning?

Being persecuted? Being reviled? Being falsely accused?

IF WE ARE HONESTLY THOSE WOULDN'T BE ANYWHERE NEAR OUR LIST OF ANSWERS - LET ALONE OUR TOP 10!!!!

Yet Jesus turns our idea and ideals of what true god-like happiness looks like - AS HE SHARES WITH US THE BEATITUDES!!!

I am going to pray and we are going to spend a little bit of time this morning looking at:

'Happiness is Humility'

As we come to the first of the Beatitudes that Jesus shares with us regarding how we can have a 'happy life' we find His first statement in Matthew 5:3:

Matthew 5:3 - *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

I WANT YOU TO IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT THAT YOU ARE THERE IN THE AUDIENCE! YOU ARE HEARING THE WORDS OF JESUS, AS THEY WERE SPOKEN FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME!!!

Jesus has gathered you to Him as one of His disciples to hear His teachings! THE KING IS SHARING WITH YOU THE IDEALS, MORALS AND THE VALUES OF HIS KINGDOM!!!

And He is going to begin by touching on the importance and the values of being happy!!!

AND NOTICE HIS FIRST STATEMENT ON HOW WE CAN HAVE A HAPPY LIFE:
Blessed/happy are the....POOR IN SPIRIT!

Immediately - we realise that the values and the teachings of Jesus go against everything that the world around us cries out!!

VERY FEW OF US WOULD LINK UP THE WORDS - POOR AND HAPPY!!!!

But for us to understand exactly what Jesus is speaking about here we must understand first the meaning of the word 'poor' that Jesus has used here in Matthew 5:3!!

The greek word used here for poor is 'ptochos':

Ptochos = absolute and abject poverty

The root word behind Ptochos is '**Ptossein**' - which means 'to crouch' or 'to cower'

SO WE LITERALLY HAVE A PICTURE HERE OF SOMEONE THAT, OUT OF POVERTY, HAS BEEN FORCED TO THEIR KNEES TO BEG!

It describes a person that has absolutely nothing!

So what Jesus is saying here is:

Blessed are those that are absolutely destitute

Blessed are those who are completely poverty stricken

Blessed are those who are bankrupt

Blessed are those who are broken!!!

AND YOU SAY TO ME - THAT DOESN'T SOUND FUN TO ME?
THAT DOESN'T SOUND HAPPY TO ME?

And you're right - in the world's eye - there is no way we would link those words to happiness!
In our own minds - there is no way that we would have linked those words to happiness!!!

BUT THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT JESUS SAYS HERE!!!

Blessed are the poor in spirit

Blessed are those that are bankrupt spiritually

Blessed are those who are broke spiritually

Blessed are those who are completely poverty stricken in spirit!!!

WHAT JESUS IS LITERALLY SPEAKING ABOUT WHENEVER HE IS LINKING IN THESE DESCRIPTIONS TO THE IDEA AND IDEAL OF A HAPPY LIFE - **IS THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMILITY!!!**

The world encourages us to be prideful

The world encourages us to be self-focused

The world encourages us to build our own self-worth, self-estimation and self-esteem

The world encourages us to live a me-centred life

To look after no.1 first, and above everything and anything else

To talk yourself up

To think highly of ourselves

AND JESUS SHARES WITH US THAT IT IS ACTUALLY THE TOTAL OPPOSITE THAT IS SO VITALLY IMPORTANT TO FINDING HAPPINESS IN OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE!!!

TO FINDING HAPPINESS IN GOD'S KINGDOM VIEW!!!

Jesus says:

For those who realise they are broken
For those who realise that they are destitute in spirit
For those who realise they are bankrupt spiritually
For those who realise they are completely poverty stricken in Spirit
BLESSED ARE THEY!!!
BECAUSE THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!!!!

Whenever Jesus is speaking of the person who is 'poor in spirit' Jesus is speaking of the person that is living a life of humility!!!
THAT HAS NO PRIDEFULNESS IN THEIR OWN SPIRIT!

And instead of being prideful and reliant on themselves - THEY HAVE THROWN THEMSELVES UPON HIM, AND ARE COMPLETELY RELIANT UPON GOD!!!

Instead of seeking to govern their own lives and do things their way - they are willing to be governed by Him, submitted wholly to the King!!!

The 'poor in spirit' is the one who has a correct estimation of himself!
A RIGHT VIEW OF WHO HE IS
AND A RIGHT VIEW OF WHO GOD IS!!!

The whole time the world is trying to promote happiness through:
Self-praise
Self-assertion
Self-affirmation
Self-focused living
The Me-Centred Life

JESUS IS SHARING WITH US THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE!!!

Happiness comes from humility!
Happiness comes from seeing myself as I really am - AND SEEING GOD FOR WHO HE REALLY IS!
Happiness comes from a God-governed life - not a self-governed life
It comes from a God-praising and honouring life - not a self-praising life
It comes from a Christ-centred life - not a me-centred life
It comes from a Christ-focused life - not a me-focused life
It comes from a Christ-affirming life - not a self-affirming way of life!!!

What Jesus is sharing with us here is the importance of:
UTTER HUMILITY!!!
REALISING OUR COMPLETE BROKENNESS IN SPIRIT BEFORE GOD!!!!
REALISING OUR OWN UTTER HELPLESSNESS!!!

The world is constantly encouraging us to:
LOWER OUR VIEW OF GOD
RAISE OUR VIEW OF OURSELVES

MINIMISE GOD
MAXIMISE SELF

SUPPRESS GOD
SUPERSIZE OURSELVES

And there is nothing in this world that is more wrong than that!!!
THAT IS PRIDE AT IT'S VERY CORE!!!

Having a wrong view of self
AND A WRONG VIEW OF GOD!!!

Having things completely the wrong way round!!!

The world tries to tell us:
You can make it on your own
You can do it in your own strength
You don't need anyone's help
You are a strong person

BUT FOR US AS CHRISTIANS LIVING WITH HIS KINGDOM VIEW, AND LIVING LIFE THE WAY
JESUS WANTS US TO - WE REALISE THAT THOSE THINGS SIMPLY AREN'T TRUE!!!

And they certainly can't and won't lead to happiness in this life!!!!
As a child of God this morning - I must maintain that 'poor in spirit' mentality:

Realising:

I can't make it on my own - BUT WITH JESUS I CAN

**I can't do it in my own strength - BUT WITH JESUS I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH
CHRIST WHO STRENGTHENS ME**

I need His help - BECAUSE I KNOW THAT I WITHOUT JESUS I AM HELPLESS ON MY OWN!

I am not strong in and of myself - BUT IN CHRIST I FIND MY STRENGTH!!!

As christians we acknowledge this morning -
I MUST KEEP A RIGHT VIEW OF MYSELF
AND A RIGHT VIEW OF GOD!!!!

I must strive to be 'poor in spirit'
Demonstrating humility in my christian life!
Realising that He is big!
AND I AM SMALL!!!

Realising:
He is everything
And without Him I am nothing

He is all powerful
And Without Him I don't have the strength to get through the things of this life

He Can
And Without Him I can't!!!

Barclay puts Matthew 5:3 this way which I think is very helpful:

**'Blessed are they that have realized their own utter helplessness, and have put their whole
trust in God'**

BARCLAY LOOKS THROUGH THE MEANINGS BEHIND THE ROOT WORDS USED IN
MATTHEW 5:3 AND THAT IS A LITERAL DEFINITION OF WHAT JESUS IS TELLING US TO
DO!!!!

**To realise our own helplessness
To put our whole trust in God!!**

I WONDER THIS MORNING IS THAT THE MANNER THAT WE TRULY APPROACH LIFE?
IS THAT WHAT WE TRULY ARE DOING TO HAVE A HAPPY LIFE?

It seems back to front to think that it is only in recognising our own helplessness and weakness that we can find happiness!!!

BUT IT IS IN OUR OWN HELPLESSNESS AND WEAKNESS THAT WE TRULY FIND OURSELVES TRUSTING AND LEANING WHOLLY UPON GOD AND GOD ALONE!!!

And in that very action - there is true happiness!!!

I FIND THAT SOME OF THE HARDEST, MOST DIFFICULT MOMENTS IN MY LIFE HAVE BEEN THE TIMES WHENEVER I HAVE WENT THROUGH LIFE LEANING ON MYSELF!!! **AND IN MY OWN PRIDEFULNESS I FIND MYSELF:**

*Trusting myself

*Believing in myself

*Looking to my own understanding

*Trusting in my own strength

*Pushing ahead in my own wisdom

THOSE ARE THE TIMES WHEN I HAVE SUFFERED REAL HURT AND HARDSHIP!!!

And there is certainly no such thing as 'happy life' in those moments!!!

BUT WHENEVER I AM FULLY LEANING, FULL TRUSTING, FULL RELYING ON GOD - Even in the highs and lows that life brings my way - I FIND HAPPINESS IN HIM!!!

I can know true happiness in a life that has a right view of God, and a right view of myself!

SEEING HIM AS BIG

AND ME AS SMALL

REALISING I AM INSUFFICIENT

AND HE IS THE ALL SUFFICIENT ONE

REALISING I LACK UNDERSTANDING

AND HE IS THE OMNISCIENT ONE

REALISING I LACK STRENGTH

AND HE IS THE OMNIPOTENT ONE

REALISING I CAN'T DO IT ON MY OWN

AND THEN FINDING THAT I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENS ME!!!

REALISING THAT I AM NOTHING ON MY OWN

BUT THAT HE IS EVERYTHING, AND EVERYTHING I HAVE AND NEED - I CAN FIND IN HIM!!!!

That is the idea behind this beatitude!

THAT IS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE POOR IN SPIRIT!!!

Blessed are they that have realised their own utter helplessness, and have put their whole trust in God'

Barclay goes on to state a few things about that person:

'They will become completely detached from material things which they know cannot offer happiness or security'

'They will become completely attached to God from whom they know they can find happiness, hope, security and strength'

AS WE GO THROUGH LIFE IN OUR OWN STRENGTH, AND LIVE THROUGH OUR SELF-WORTH - WE END UP LOOKING TO OTHER THINGS TO TRY AND BRING US THAT HAPPINESS!!!

And the world will give you plenty of avenues to pursue and try and find happiness:

Money
Possessions
Other people
Material things

And there is nothing wrong with stuff and material possessions in and of themselves - **but whenever we are looking for something in those things that we can only find in God Himself - THERE IS A BIG PROBLEM!!!**

Material possessions can't bring us true happiness
Money can't bring us happiness
We can't find it in the things this world has to offer!!!

WE CAN ONLY FIND IT IN GOD!!!!

Like I mentioned at the beginning:

In TV advertisements

In billboards

In magazines

In movies and programmes

THEY ALL TRY TO SHOW US WHERE WE CAN FIND HAPPINESS!

They try and tell us that we need them to be satisfied, happy and settled!!!

BUT THEY ONLY EVER OFFER A PALE IMITATION OF THESE THINGS!

Any little happiness and satisfaction found in material things - is merely fleeting, temporary and passing!!

IT IS BUT FOR A MOMENT!

FOR A STAGE AND TIME IN LIFE, WHERE WE FIND TEMPORARY HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION BUT FOR A MOMENT IN THAT MATERIAL THING/POSSESSION!!!

You don't believe me - look around your house?

You get the newest phone that they say you need - brings temporary fulfilment, satisfaction and happiness - UNTIL THE NEXT ONE COMES ALONG!

You get the newest laptop

Games Console

Gadget

Car

House

And the world will always offer you something that is bigger, better, faster, greatest that you will then strive to pursue to find a semblance of happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment!!!

HERE'S THE DEAL FRIENDS - ITS OK FOR US TO HAVE 'STUFF'!

It's not wrong to have stuff!!!

But they should never, ever be the source of our happiness, satisfaction and fulfilment!!!

TRUE, LASTING, PERMANENT, SETTLED HAPPINESS CAN ONLY COME FROM GOD HIMSELF!!!!

It can only be realised in our own lives when we shift our pursuit for happiness from:

Stuff to the Saviour

Goods and gold - to GOD!

From possessions and things - to Jesus Himself!

THIS IS THE ATTITUDE OF THE POOR IN SPIRIT!!!

Someone who realises that without Jesus we are completely broke, poor and bankrupt spiritually!!!
AND WE FIND TRUE HAPPINESS AND SATISFACTION IN HIM AND HIM ALONE!!!

We trust fully and lean wholly on Jesus and Jesus Christ alone!!!

MAY I ASK THIS MORNING:

What are you trusting Him?

What are you leaning on?

What are looking to for happiness?

SELF? Are you leaning on yourself, trusting yourself living a self-focused life in your pursuit for true happiness?

STUFF? Are you trying to chase after all that life has to offer - hoping that along the way - you will find happiness?

OR ARE YOU LOOKING TO THE SAVIOUR?

LEANING ON THE SAVIOUR?

TRUSTING IN THE SAVIOUR?

Jesus teaches us in Matthew 5:3:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven!

LITERALLY STATED:

Blessed/happy are they that have realised their own utter helplessness and have put their whole trust in God!!!

FRIENDS - THAT IS THE FIRST BEATITUDE JESUS SHARES!!

The gateway to a happy life is humility!

The gateway to a happy life is spiritual brokenness

The gateway to a happy life is realising our helplessness and trusting completely in the sufficiency we can only find in Christ!!!

MAY WE TODAY CHOOSE AS GOD'S DISCIPLES:

To humble ourselves!

To submit ourself to the authority of King Jesus!!!

Instead of living our lives in our own strength and our own way - MAY WE REALISE THAT WE ARE NOTHING AND HE IS EVERYTHING!!!

May we be willing to let Him govern our lives!

May we be willing to let Him rule and lead!

May we realise that without Him we have nothing - BUT THAT HE IS EVERYTHING THAT WE HAVE, EVERYTHING THAT WE NEED IN THIS LIFE!!!

CONCLUSION:

As we come to a close - let's zone in on how important humility is in the eyes of God!!!

TIME AND TIME AGAIN IN GOD'S WORD HE MAKES IT ABUNDANTLY CLEAR HOW MUCH HE VALUES HUMILITY AND HOW MUCH HE HATES PRIDE!!!

One of the clearest verses that shares the picture of how God approaches pride and humility is found in:

James 4:6 - *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

FRIENDS - MAY WE STRIVE TO BE PEOPLE OF HUMILITY!!!

As Jesus says - '*poor in spirit*'

HAVING A CORRECT VIEW OF OURSELVES - completely broke in spirit, destitute and bankrupt in Spirit, helpless in and of ourselves and fully reliant upon God!!!

AND HAVING A CORRECT VIEW OF GOD:

Realising His power

His wisdom

His strength

His glory!!!

And if you think about it - that is what our theme is all about this year as a church:

HE MUST INCREASE

I MUST DECREASE

As I strive to live a lifestyle of humility -

I DECREASE IN MY OWN ESTIMATION - In Humility

I INCREASE MY PERCEPTION OF GOD - GIVING HIM HIS RIGHTFUL PLACE IN MY LIFE!!!!

That is our goal

That is our aim!

FREINDS IT IS WHENEVER WE THINK OF OURSELVES AS HIGHER THAN WE OUGHT

WHENEVER I INCREASE, AND GOD DECREASES

WHENEVER I HAVE A WRONG VIEW OF MYSELF AND A WRONG VIEW OF GOD

That is when I know i have everything the wrong way around in my life!

IT IS THEN THAT I REALISE I HAVE A PRIDE ISSUE!!

And worse than that - according to James 4:6 - it is then that God 'resists' us!!

A stiff arm

Holding us at a distance

Withholding that closeness and intimacy in our relationship with Him

BECAUSE HE DOESN'T WANT US CLOSE TO HIM IN OUR PRIDEFULNESS!!!

He seeks those of humility!

He wants those that are 'poor in spirit'!!!

AND TELLS US CLEARLY THROUGH THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS - '*Blessed are the poor in spirit*'!!!

Happiness is humility

Sorrow, distance and pain - ultimately come through pride!!!!

WE MUST CHOOSE TO LIVE A LIFESTYLE OF HUMILITY!!!

Knowing that God draws those of a humble mind close to Himself!

And He gives grace to the humble!!!

As we close I want to share the passage in the Bible that completely contrasts the Beatitudes!!

THIS PASSAGE SHARES WITH US THE COMPLETE OPPOSITE OF THE KEYS TO A 'HAPPY LIFE'!!!

In fact this list that I am going to share is a list of the 'abominable life' in the eyes of God!!!

TURN WITH ME TO PROVERBS 6 AS WE CLOSE:

Proverbs 6:16-19 - *These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

What I want you to notice is that every single one of these things mentioned in Proverbs 6:16-19 are the polar opposite of the 'happy life'!!!

The Beatitudes of the blessed in Matthew 5
The Abominations of the unblessed in Proverbs 16!!!

Notice the first in the list of the Beatitudes:
Poor in Spirit - HUMILITY!!!!

Note the first in the list of the abominations:
A Proud Look = PRIDE!

I find that incredibly interesting!

And as we go through these beatitudes week by week - you are going to see that in many of the Beatitudes - you find the complete opposite of the 'Blessed' in Matthew 5 - IN THE LIST OF ABOMINATIONS LISTED IN PROVERBS 16!!!!

For us today - we must decide:

**WHICH LIST DEFINES US?
WHAT LIFESTYLE ARE WE LIVING?**

The Happy life?

Or:

The Abominable life?

ARE WE LIVING A LIFE OF PRIDE?
OR A LIFE OF HUMILITY?

Do we see ourselves as we truly are? Bankrupt in spirit, Broke in spirit, Helpless in need of Christ!
Or do we think of ourselves too highly?

FRIENDS - THE GATEWAY TO A HAPPY LIFE ACCORDING TO JESUS IN MATTHEW 5 - Is Humility!!!!

HUMILITY IS PROMOTED ALL THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE!!

And as we think about our series for this year - The Beatitudes promotes a lifestyle of happy humility!!!

As we think about our theme verse for the year - John 3:30 promotes the importance of humbling ourselves, and raising up Jesus!!!

MAY WE STRIVE IN OUR LIVES TO SEE:
JESUS INCREASE
US DECREASE!

And find true, godly, lastly, settled happiness - IN HUMILITY!
BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT FOR THEIRS IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN!