

The Beatitudes and Mental Health

Jesus, in his sermon on the mount, gave the people eight lessons on life. For us today, the beatitudes may seem like a paradox because we live in a society that implies our success and happiness depends upon materialistic wealth, physical attractiveness and self-sufficiency.

Interestingly, the research on what constitutes a mentally healthy person does seem to parallel what Jesus taught over 2,000 years ago. I wonder if people like Dr. Abraham Maslow, Dr. Victor Frankl and Dr. Karl Menniger based their theory of a healthy personality from the beatitudes!

"Blessed are the Poor in Spirit"

- Humility is the capacity to ask for help. These people are willing to admit they do not have all the answers and they can benefit from the expertise of others.

"Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted"

- Vulnerability is the acceptance of human limitations. These people are able to receive support and blessings from others.

"Blessed are the meek"

- Empowerment allows for the freedom to live life authentically without trying to measure up to standards that conflict with true sense of self.

"Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness"

- Constantly searching for wisdom and enlightenment to hear God's voice. These people recognize that regardless of changing circumstances, life never ceases to have meaning.

"Blessed are the merciful"

- Forgiveness is the ability to accept our own insecurities and resentments which allow us to be more compassionate toward others.

"Blessed are the clean of heart"

- A pure heart allows us to live congruently with who we are and what we do without needing to hide or keep secrets that cause us shame.

"Blessed are the Peacemakers"

- Respect self and others. These people are secure with themselves and can allow others to be different without feeling threatened.

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"Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness"

- Personal boundaries give us a foundation for standing up for our truth without compromise.

For me, the beatitudes give us a direction on how to live our life more authentically and calls us to be the "light of the world."

*"Be Somebody for Someone"
Mother Theresa*