



The PARAKLETE

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Barnabas Ministries will have a new Director effective January 1, 2025 – See page 2

THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Are you sure the Holy Spirit is active in your life? This question should prompt self-examination. We can believe the Scriptures and have introspection at the same times, and we should.

Is He to be felt, or simply believe what the Bible says? If we have been granted to Holy Spirit by obeying (Acts 5:32) what can we expect? He is referred to as the "Counselor" (Gr. Parakletos) by Jesus in John 14:26 *"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."*

This was spoken to the Apostles letting them know that they would have help in recalling things Jesus taught. It seems to be a problem with some to read what Jesus spoke to Apostles and other individuals and apply those words to everyone, all Christians.

If we have obeyed the Gospel, 2 Thess. 1:18, we are granted forgiveness for our sins and as Peter stated we receive the gift of the Spirit, Acts 2:38.

The question is: "If He is in us as an indwelling entity of God (the third Person of the Trinity) what should we expect?" The answer is, as He was given to aid the Apostles in remembering Jesus' teaching, He is the aid us in comprehending those teachings. Jesus' main point was and is to plant the Word of God in our heart (mind), Luke 8:11ff.

In 2nd Timothy 3:16-17 we are told the Holy Spirit is actually the author of the Bible. The Word of God is to guide our thinking. As a new Christian I learned quickly that my thoughts are not His thoughts. He told me that in Isaiah 55:8-9. But when I surrendered to the Lord, I was open to learn. Just as he guided the Apostles to recall, He guides us in understanding their words and learning.

Our dear departed brother, Don Dewelt had a great reply to a lady who asked "What is the Holy Spirit doing in us?" He replied, "He is doing anything



you and He can both agree on. " If we are saying, or doing anything that is contrary to the revealed word, the Bible, He will not be involved because He doesn't agree. And If we ignore the Scriptural admonitions in our activities, we are not involving ourselves in His will and we're all alone in the final outcome.

Romans 8:28 states *"...we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose."*

The good outcome depends on living "according to his purpose." Not all things are good, but God uses both the good and the bad for our good. This is called "living by the Spirit." Gal 5:16-17 states it this way, *"So I say, live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want."*

It is important to know every Christian has the Spirit, but it sad to say they don't always allow Him to lead. There are those who believe that if we have the Spirit we must have powers to do things beyond our natural powers, or we must jump a pew, and babble in some static utterance. The Bible teaches no such thing. One fruit of the Spirit is "self-control," Gal. 5:23.

When we fail to do as the Spirit teaches us in the Word He guided the Prophets and Apostles to write, 2 Peter 1:20-21. Nowhere in the Bible are we told to "ask Jesus into our heart." When we obey the Gospel by confessing, repenting and being baptized God in response forgives our sins and GIVES us the gift of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

There are those have asked or even prayed that God would give them more of the Spirit. However, the Holy Spirit does not come in pints, quarts, and gallons. We receive all of Him. The problem is that we don't give Him all of ourselves.

INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT

While it is true that every Christian receives the Holy Spirit at conversion it is possible to cause His presence to lay dormant because we may ignore Him and thus grieve Him. Eph. 4:29-30 warns, "*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*"

In fact we can not only insult Him even in His presence, we can actually put out His fire altogether. 1 Thess. 5:19 states "*Do not put out the Spirit's fire.*" The Greek word for "fire" is PYRE. The fire of the Holy Spirit is His passion, enthusiasm, power, illumination and purity. The fact of God's presence exists in every Christian. When one says, "I am a born again Christian," they seem to miss the point that every Christian is born again. I don't know if they are trying to suggest that they are more spiritual or not, but if you are born again, you are Christian and if you are a Christian you were born again...there is no difference.

So how do we know if the Spirit of God is at work in our lives? Gal. 5:2-23 has the answer. "*The evidence (fruit) is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.*"

Are we expected to be on top of the mountain all the time? No! One could keep all points of the Law of the Old Testament and no one can fully be perfect in the New Testament even with the Holy Spirit. However, with surrendering to the guidance of the Spirit we can be better and it can be seen.

If I were to ask you, "Which way does the Mississippi River flow, north, south, east or west?" The answer would be "yes, it does." The river flows in all those directions at times. But if I were to ask "In which way is it headed?" The answer would be "South."

It is the same with us Christians. It should be obvious to others that the Holy Spirit is working in our lives. It will be if we allow the Word, the Spirit-guided men to write is our Helper, our Counsellor, and our Guide.

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness," 2 Cor. 3:17-18.

We have all of Him, does He have all of us?

Denny Coburn - Gallipolis, OH 740/446-6929

Dec. 1 and 29 - Preach at - Central Christian Church, Gallipolis, OH, Derek Stump, Evangelist

Danny Evans, Associate. - Huntington, WV 304/633-5908. Danny preaches often at congregations in his area as a supply preacher. He is available when needed.

BARNABAS HAS A NEW DIRECTOR - Jan. 1, 2025

Effective January 1st 2025 Denny Dawes will become the new Director of Barnabas Ministries. Denny was born July 31, 1950 in Greenfield, OH. He graduated from W. Portsmouth High School, Portsmouth, OH and from Kentucky Christian University, Grayson, KY in 1972. He married Joan Kamer in 1971.

Their son Andrew, a sergeant on the Portsmouth Police Department, son Daryn, is a preacher in Centerburg, OH Church of Christ, and son Steven is Associate Minister of Music at Capri Christian Church, in Naples FL.

Denny has held two successful ministries in Ohio as well as two other successful ministries, one each in Kentucky and West Virginia.

Since retiring from the located ministry he has worked and is working with Ralph F. Scott Funeral Home in Portsmouth, OH.

He has served and continues to serve KYOWVA Evangelistic Assoc. as a Director and has served them as Vice-President and President. He has served for 30 years as Camp Dean at both Butler Springs Christian, Hillsboro, OH and Howell's Mill Christian Assembly, Ona, WV.

He has served as President of Kentucky Christian University Alumni Association.

Denny is personable, very approachable, sound in his doctrinal beliefs and we believe he will make a very effective Director of Barnabas Ministries.

Denny's address is 1146 Kent Street, Portsmouth, OH 45662, his email address is preacherman1971@twc.com and his phone number is 1-740-250-4937

WHAT IF

...the disciples were told to call people to repent and be baptised for salvation, (which they were) but Peter on the day of Pentecost had said, "Repeat this prayer and you will be saved." Would they have been? Or what if he said, "Just ask Jesus into your heart for salvation," would they have been saved? Just asking.

Seems many believe it doesn't matter, I doubt God does.

PAUSE WITH DAWES

By the time you read this, we will be quickly approaching the season of Thanksgiving. I have so many wonderful memories of our family Thanksgiving celebrations. Our gatherings were always a time for expressing our thanks to our Father for His rich bounty bestowed on us. We each would take turns sharing with the others at least one thing for which we were especially thankful.

You can do a quick check for yourself and find that the word 'thankful' is found 71 times in the Bible. The word 'thanks' appears 139 times. 'Gratitude' is found 39 times. There are more than 100 verses that encourage us to be grateful. 'Give thanks' is mentioned 73 times, and the word 'thanksgiving' is used 28 times in the Bible. You can see a pattern showing us that we need to be thankful.

Are you one who freely expresses your thankfulness to and for other people for what they do for you? I read a little story that will illustrate what I'm talking about.

Perhaps you are familiar with the name Patrick Mahomes. He is the quarterback for the Kansas City Chiefs football team.

Patrick Mahomes had just limped his way through a last-minute, game-winning drive in the 2023 AFC Championship when he gave the credit for his performance to someone that even the biggest Kansas City Chiefs fans had never heard of. "Julie WAS the reason I was the guy I was on the field today!", Mahomes wrote to his millions of followers on Twitter that night. Her full name is Julie Frymyer.

Who is she and why is she so important to the team? She's the assistant athletic trainer. Frymyer had one of the NFL's most important jobs in the 2022-2023 season: She was in charge of putting Mahomes through rehab for his injured ankle and getting the star

quarterback ready to play for a spot in the Super Bowl.

Hobbling through a nasty sprain that often requires weeks of recovery, Mahomes wasn't just able to play against the Cincinnati Bengals. He was fantastic. He was clearly gimpy, grimacing through several plays, but he was mobile enough to make several key plays, including a crucial run setting up the last-second field goal that sent the Chiefs to the Super Bowl to face the Philadelphia Eagles.

Mahomes going out of his way to praise her was the first time most people in Arrowhead Stadium had ever heard the name Julie Frymyer, but the Chiefs knew her value long before the guy with a contract worth nearly half a billion dollars, might as well have given her the game ball.

I remember watching that game and I was rooting for the Cincinnati Bengals. They had the lead with just a few seconds remaining in the game. And then Patrick Mahomes made that incredible run putting his team in a position on the field to kick the winning field goal. And he publicly expressed his thankfulness to and for the one who had worked to help him be on the field for that game.

Who is there in your life for whom you can be thankful? Have you expressed your thankfulness to that person. Be an encourager for them. Follow the Biblical teaching and give thanks.

SCHOOL'S SILENT PRAYER

Now I lay me down in school where prayer is against the rule. Under God, yet finds the mention of His name odd. Scripture is not in class recites, it violates the Bill of Rights. Anytime my head I bow becomes a federal matter now. The law is specific the law is precise. Praying out loud is no longer nice. Praying in Public might upset those who believe nothing at all. Have you ever wondered why we have more guns an foolishness in our schools? Why wonder?

Rewritten from a prayer whose author is unknown.

DOTS AND DASHES FROM DANNY

Something Light Hearted:

Something you will never hear said in church:

*****I want to be part of the calling committee who will go out and call on people who do not go to worship each week***

*****Personally, I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf, fishing or shopping.***

In my years of ministry I have seen a lot of changes in the body of Christ. I have to watch that I don't live in the past and try to make everything as it was when I entered the ministry. I realize that things change and many changes have made life much easier. I remember my mom doing laundry each week on a ringer washer. Each Monday she would roll that washer across the kitchen floor, fill it with warm water and then roll a double rinse tub next to it and she would commence to washing clothes and then putting them through the ringer and in the rinse tub and then back through the ringer. I do ask, "have you seen a wringer washer lately?" We have changed.

Now, getting back to changes in the church. I am not saying change is wrong because things change and that is life. What I am considering are changes that have happened and we don't know they have changed. These have been very subtle over several years and the world has convinced us that what we are doing now is really okay.

Consider two terms ***EVANGELISM VS. OUTREACH.*** Are they the same thing? Has outreach taken the place of evangelism. Do we need both or are these words interchangeable? Lets look at the definition of each of these words:

1. **Evangelism:** the spreading of the Christian gospel by public preaching or personal witness.

Evangelism is the term we use to refer to the preaching of the Gospel. It comes from the same Greek word for gospel (euangelion) and means, literally, "gospeling." When we evangelize we are "gospeling" — we are spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to proclaim the good news of the victory of God's salvation.

2. **Outreach:** the extending of services or assistance beyond current or usual limits.

"Outreach" is the act of actively reaching out to a specific group of people to provide information, services, or support, often targeting those who might not otherwise have access to them, usually by going to where they are located and engaging with them directly; essentially, it means extending services beyond the usual limits to connect with a wider audience.

The actual word "outreach" is not in scripture but the concept of the word definitely is. Outreach implies action more than message. Perhaps it is best defined as a business term: an act of reaching out, bringing an organization's services or products out into the community. When a church engages in outreach, it is going out to the community in order to meet needs or to let people know of its existence.

Both Outreach and Evangelism are needed. Jesus told us in the Sermon on the Mount to *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."* I believe that is a good scripture for outreach. He also told us: *"And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19.) Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20.) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."(Matthew 28: 18 – 20)* This is a passage telling us to evangelize and to make disciples. It is my opinion we can't have outreach without evangelism.

The change that concerns me is that we have put more emphasis on outreach than evangelism. Perhaps we have begun to think that outreach is evangelism. Helping people in times of need is commendable but if we never tell them about Jesus we have not fulfilled the Great Commission that Jesus gave us.

**Danny Evans is an associate and trustee with
Barnabas Ministries**

BARN-a-book (a Barnabas Ministries study series)

A series of studies in encouragement by Denny Coburn Study Number One Hundred Thirty-Seven – Encouragement from Being Loved by God

God loves you. We need to let those words sink into our spirit. They are three of the most encouraging words that you can ever hear or speak. Many people in our world today are starving for God's love. Most people receive very little affirmation in their lives and very little love. I have heard many people say, with tears in their eyes, "My father never told me he loved me." I, myself never heard those words from my father. I don't blame him or feel he didn't love me, because he came out of an era where men didn't express their love well. I could tell he did, but I don't remember his ever saying those words to me. However, many never hear those words, nor even sense their father's love for them.

Some have never sensed a father's love because they lost their father when they were very young, perhaps even before they developed a memory of their father at all. Some have had fathers that were harsh and critical, and some had had step-fathers that did not relate to them in a loving way and did not receive any affection or personal concern. This can create loneliness in their lives and for some it has a negative effect upon their lives in many ways and for many years.

Because of these things some have never "felt" the love of God in their hearts. They may know that God loves them on the basis of His Word, but never have the "feeling" that He loves them. I use the word "feeling" to mean they never sensed an internal reality of his love, only the intellectual understanding of the words.

One preacher said that he had ministered for many years before he had an experience in which he truly felt the love of God filling his heart. He said that it was an experience that he wished every person could have, stating "There's nothing as glorious this side of heaven as knowing that God loves you with an infinite, unconditional love and that it is out of His love that He has created you, forgiven you, and received you fully as his beloved child." It may help us all to look at a few of the wonderful truths about God's love for us.

- **GOD LOVES EACH ONE OF US UNCONDITIONALLY AND ABSOLUTELY.** God's love is absolute, and it does not change over time or according to your behavior. Consequences of bad behavior can rob you of the joy of that truth, as King David experienced. After he sinned he cried out "*Have mercy on me, O God according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions,*" Psalm 51:1. He then requests of God "*Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me,*" verse 12. This request had to be made because of his sin against God, but God still loved him absolutely. God's love is not influenced by circumstances, and it cannot be diminished.

God can never love you more than He loves you today, and neither can He love you less. He loves you because He created you and because He chooses to love you, now and every moment of your life. Nothing can separate you from God's love. "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written*"

*"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."*

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who love us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, not any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creations, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Romans 8:35-39.

- **GOD LOVES US FIRST.** God does not wait for us to come to Him with an expression love before he extends love to us. On the contrary, God loves us first. John said it simply and eloquently: "*We love Him because He first loved us,*" 1 John 4:19. God is always waiting with open arms, ready to receive those who turn to Him, and to bless us as His children.

In Jesus conversation with Nicodemus He stated, *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son,”* John 3:16-18. It should be noted that God loves the whole world and sent His Son to express His love before love was expressed to Him. God loved us first. We can be secure in God’s love that was expressed to us first and the goodness of God should lead to repentance. God loves us unconditionally and absolutely and that love was expressed to us before we thought of loving Him.

- **GOD’S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER.** I suppose every preacher has heard someone say: “I think God’s love has left me, I don’t feel loved by Him anymore,” or words to that effect. However, the Bible could not be clearer about the fact that God’s love endures forever. In Psalm 136 those very words: *“His love endures forever,”* is stated twenty-six times. Imagine, in one Psalm twenty-six times! Here are a few phrases that are followed by those words:

- ❖ *“For He is good, his love endures forever.” – verse 1*
- ❖ *“Who alone does great wonders, his love endures forever.” – verse 4*
- ❖ *“His understanding made the heavens, his love endures forever.” – verse 5*
- ❖ *“Who divided the Red Sea, his love endures forever” – verse 13*
- ❖ *“Who gave their land as an inheritance, his love endures forever.” – verse 21*
- ❖ *“Who give food to every creature, his love endures forever.” – verse 25*

Each of these statements and twenty others are followed by the words *“His love endures forever.”* God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He does not change and His love never fails.

Every person I know could use more encouragement and not just a little more encouragement, but a lot more encouragement. For the most part, our world is experiencing a drought of encouraging words, uplifting examples, genuine heroes, “good news” stories and genuine expressions of appreciation. We hear far more negative words of criticism, blame, and ridicule on a daily basis than we hear positive words of praise, recognition, and thankfulness.

Why is it that each of us has a deep need for encouragement, and yet so little encouragement is to be found? I believe the foremost reason is that so few people feel encouraged in their own spirits. It is very difficult to share with others something that you do not feel yourself. I believe that there is nothing more encouraging than knowing that God loves us.

Knowing His love, that is really sensing it, gives us dignity because we belong to Him and He has designed us as we are and after we have sinned He sent His Son to pay the price for that sin and gives us a down payment of His Holy Spirit. There is a hymn written by Mrs. Frank A. Breck titled “When Love Shines In” that expresses the results when one comprehends God’s love.

Jesus comes with power to gladden, when love shines in,
Every life that woe can sadden, when love shines in.
Love will teach us how to pray, love will drive the gloom away,
Turn our darkness into day, when love shines in.
How the world will grow with beauty, when love shines in
And the heart rejoice in duty, when love shines in
Trials may be sanctified, and the soul in peace abide,
life will all be glorified, when love shines in.
We may have unfading splendor, when love shines in,
And a friendship true and tender, when love shines in.
When earth victories shall be won and our love in heaven begun,
There will be no need for sun, when love shines in.

God’s love is unconditional, absolute, first, and forever. That is real encouragement. Have a great day!

LEARNING with Larry

LIFE IS HARD

Have you ever felt something is missing in your life as a child of God? I have discovered through the years that I cannot live a life that brings glory to God on my own. Someone once said that life is hard. It's hard when you're stupid. I know life is hard, but it gets easier the more I involve God in it. As a Child of God and a preacher I often seem to be out of my league when it comes to serving the Lord. I've tried serving the Lord with my own wisdom and strength, but I fall short. I have discovered that if I seek God's wisdom life becomes a little easier. In the Greek there are two words for "wisdom," SOPHIA meaning insight, making good use of knowledge. The other is PHRONESIS and is defined as the ability to discern how to use wisdom.

The Lord appeared to King Solomon and asked what he wanted from God. Solomon's reply was "Give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and distinguish between right and wrong who is able to govern this great people of yours," 1 Kings 3:10-13. Solomon had not asked for long life, nor had he asked for riches or the life of his enemies. He asked for discernment to understand justice. Because he asked correctly the Lord also gave him the discerning heart he asked for but he gave him riches and honor that none would be like him among the kings.

At this time in my life, I desire this more every day. At the top of my person prayer list are three things, wisdom, understanding and boldness. I need His wisdom because life is difficult but easier when I seek His wisdom.

In the book of James 1:5-7 is recorded "*If any of you lack wisdom (SOPHIA), you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea blown and tossed by the wind. The man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.*"

There is a difference between knowledge and wisdom. James 3:13-18 tells us "*Who is wise in understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such wisdom does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; and peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.*"

So like Solomon we must seek God's wisdom and discernment. He wrote an entire book about wisdom called Proverbs, however along the way Solomon got off track with his life. Wisdom is something we must continually be seeking. In Proverbs he wrote three times "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*" A deep reverence for God and obedience to His word is essential. Psalm 112:1 states "*Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who finds great delight in his commands.*" If we try to serve God with a know-it-all mindset we're bound to fail.

Solomon prized wisdom but allowed things in life to cloud his vision. We must know the limits of our human understanding and trust God for the wisdom we need daily. Proverbs 3:5-7 states, "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil.*"

UNTIL NEXT TIME...LARRY

GREAT QUOTES

"Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself"

-Mark Twain

"Talk is cheap, except when Congress does it."

-Anonymous

APPROVED BY GOD IN THE COMING YEAR
Sermon by Denny Coburn

TEXT: Matthew 5:3-12

INTRO: The first public discourse by Jesus is called the "Sermon on the Mount." The word "blessed" is used quite often and is from the Latin "beatus." Some have translated it "happy," but it means more. The best translation would be "to find approval," meaning, "approved by God."

In some states rather than pay a fine for speeding, you can go to driving school. They already know how to drive, but they have allowed their minds to wonder and didn't properly obey. We Christians can do that as well. Let us read the Sermon on the Mount to say "Approved is the man/woman who..." If this year we live in a manner approved by God, not for salvation, that was settled at baptism, but for the blessed effects, we will develop a right attitude.

- I. **ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD AND SELF**
 - A. **SEE SELF AS GOD SEES US (3)**
 - 1. No Pride - But not "poor spirited" either.
 - 2. Dependence - Jesus: "I can, of own do nothing," Publican: "Be merciful to me, a sinner."
 - 3. Know weaknesses, Paul: "In my flesh dwells no good thing"
 - B. **SEE OWN SINS AS GOD SEES THEM (4)**
 - 1. "Mourn" - over sins
 - 2. Not morbid but honestly see sin as sin.
 - C. **SEE GOD'S AWESOMENESS (5)**
 - 1. "Meek" - Not spineless
 - 2. Anger at right time, place and at right things
 - 3. Meekness is the same word used for taming a horse. Both Moses and Jesus possessed it.
 - D. **SEE GOD'S GOALS FOR US (6)**
 - 1. All are capable of desiring righteousness
 - 2. Not genitive but accusative - wanting the whole
 - 3. See our need, our sin, our place and His goodness
- II. **ATTITUDE TOWARD OTHERS**
 - 1. **COMPASSIONATE SPIRIT (7)**
 - 1. Not legalistic - but merciful
 - 2. Mercy can only be given to the undeserving
 - 3. As Christ has dealt with us
 - B. **PURE HEARTED (8)**
 - 1. Not intellect, or piety but pure (no motive)
 - 2. Old proverb: "Unless the vessel is clean, whatever you put into it turns sour."
 - C. **CONCILIATORY IN MINISTRY (9)**
 - 1. Peacemakers, not just peace lovers
 - 2. Sometimes must break your own peace to help others
- III. **ATTITUDES TOWARD YOU MAY CHANGE**
 - A. **PERSECUTED FOR DOING RIGHT (10)**
 - 1. Mistreated as a Christian - His approval
 - 2. John 15:18-20 - Hates you, hated Him first
 - B. **USUALLY LIED ABOUT (11)**
 - 1. Foxes Book of Martyrs - all did good, but hated
 - 2. 2 Corinthians 4:17 - gives weight in glory.
- IV. **GOD'S ATTITUDE TOWARD YOU (12)**
 - A. **PROMISES GREAT REWARD**
 - 1. Rejoicing and gladness
 - 2. Heavenly reward
 - B. **IDENTIFICATION WITH GOD'S PEOPLE**
 - 1. Prophets before us
 - 2. Begins and ends with "The Kingdom" (v3, v10)

CONCLUSION: If we dedicate ourselves to "seek first the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 6:33) we will experience an attitude change within and without. The attitude within relates to God, ourselves, sin, and our ministries to others. From without it relates to what others think and say, which at times is not comforting. However, a change in the form of blessings from God will manifest itself in the joy He bestows now and giving us His eternal home as our own.

The wonderful thing about the beatitudes is that they teach us how to enjoy life, bless others, and please God all at the same time. Who but the Creator could have devised such a plan for your New Year?

MINI THOUGHTS

Experience is a good teacher,
you can fail the course but you can't drop out.

~
Wise men appear ridiculous in the eyes of a fool

~
Some people would rather be wrong than silent.

WHAT IS LUCK?

It was reported in the July - August issue of AARP magazine that \$48.8 billion was spent in 2004 by Americans on lottery tickets. That's \$183 for every human in the USA. 99% of Americans were just unlucky, I guess.

Was it really "bad luck" when Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer, shouted "Hurrah! Custer's luck!" upon seeing the size of Sitting Bull's camp at Little Bighorn, June 25, 1876, or could we call it "dumb luck?" It might also be considered "bad luck" if you are the only winner in a room full of bad losers.

It has been said, "The harder I work the luckier I get." There is some truth in that, but I'd prefer God's providence to luck anytime. I'm speaking of the kind of providence predicted in Romans 8:28, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord and are called according to His purpose."

Yep, I like the thought of all things working for my good. With God even the bad things work for the good of one who finds himself following God's plan for life.

LESSONS FROM BIRD'S KNEES

Birds go to sleep on their perches, but they never fall off. This is because the tendons in the bird's legs. They are so constructed that when the leg is bent at the knee, the claws contract and grip like a steel trap. The claws refuse to let go until the knees are unbent. The bended knee gives the bird the ability to hold on to his perch so tightly.

Isn't this also the secret of the holding power of the Christian? Daniel found this to be true. Surrounded by a pagan environment, tempted to compromise with evil, urged to weaken his grip on God, he refused to let go. He held firm when others faltered because he was a man of prayer. He knew the power of the bended knee.

From sleeping birds we can learn the secret of holding things which are most precious to us - honesty, purity, thoughtfulness, honor, character, etc. That secret is the bent knee in prayer, seeking to get a firmer grip on those values which make life worth living. When we hold firmly to God in prayer, we can rest assured He will hold tightly to us.

-Rollin S. Burhans

DAFFINITIONS

PIONEERS - What you get in a dessert food fight

INTESTINE - Behind closed doors, taking a test

ANTIBODIES - Skeletal remains after you bug spray the kitchen

MISTY - How golfers create divots