

Beatitudes for the Workplace

One of Jesus' most famous teachings is The Beatitudes (Matthew, chapter 5; Luke, chapter 6). Jesus encourages us by explaining how God is present in our daily lives. Following is an interpretation of how Jesus' Beatitudes apply in the workplace. May it help us recognize how God is with us as we work.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. When we are over-stressed, and feel as though we have nothing more to give, Jesus stands with us to help us. In our weakness, Jesus' strength is perfected. As we recognize our limits, we can appreciate Jesus' unlimited power, which he eagerly shares with us.

Blessed are those who mourn. As we experience losses or disappointments, Jesus stands with us to help us. We are never alone in life; ultimately, life and work do not depend solely on us. Jesus wants to cope with our burdens, and help us recover from them.

Blessed are the meek. Meekness is closely tied to humility. Meekness recognizes our strengths and weaknesses, and tempers them with gentleness. The meek person accepts other people openly and confidently. S/he neither threatens nor negatively challenges people. To be meek is to be like Jesus.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Righteousness means being in right relationship with God. It means trying to center our lives in God and God's values. As we seek God's person and values, God will give us what we seek!

Blessed are the merciful. To be merciful is to treat our customers, suppliers, publics and co-workers as we want to be treated. Mercy begins with respecting the dignity and worth of every human being, and that everyone makes mistakes. Merciful people help others to grow and learn. Mercy does not judge or retaliate.

Blessed are the pure in heart. If we seek God, we will find God. This is so because God is always longing to be with us! God wants to be with and bless us; to help us experience life as it only can be with God. God lovingly and creatively changes our human nature, as we seek and work with God.

Blessed are the peacemakers. There is so much conflict in the workplace! Indeed, many industries experience adversarial relationships and conflict as normative. People who are willing to make peace are much needed. To make peace, one must be relentless and committed to achieving 'win-win,' where everyone's needs are met. Is this naïve or too high a standard to achieve? Not as we go with God and practice God's values.

Blessed are those who are persecuted. To be centered in Christ's person and values is to invite rejection and scorn. Jesus knows this from experience. We are not immune from persecution. But, Christ equips us never to be dominated or defeated by it.

Blessed are you when people persecute you because of me. This teaching relates to what it means to be a child of God. We know what it means to love our children, and how we feel when something or someone hurts them. So, when we are persecuted, so is Christ, our heavenly Parent. Central to the Good News of Jesus Christ is how he confronted evil in all of its forms, defeated it, and shares his victorious power with us.

The Beatitudes is Jesus' summary of Good News. May this workplace-interpretation help us recognize how Jesus is with us as we work, and what his work is with us. Alleluia!

D. Browning
May, 2007