

Sermon Notes for September 26, 1999

The Sermon on the Mount
The Be-Attitudes
Jesus' Recipe for Happiness
“Our Attitude Toward Our Fellowman”
Matthew 5:1-12
Text 5:9-12

Introduction

A. Man Continues to Strive - To “FIND” Happiness

1. “The Formula” for Happiness

Duke University did a study on “peace of mind.” Factors found to contribute greatly to emotional and mental stability are: **1) the absence of suspicion and resentment. 2) Not living in the past. 3) Not wasting time and energy fighting conditions you cannot change. 4) Force yourself to stay involved with the living world. 5) Refuse to indulge in self-pity when life hands you a raw deal. 6) Cultivate the old-fashioned virtues—love, humor, compassion and loyalty. 7) Do not expect too much of yourself. 8) Find something bigger than yourself to believe in.**

2. Stories of “successful” people

- a. His initials were **W.W.**, and in the 1930s and 1940s they were enough to identify him to most of America. He was widely considered the creator of **modern gossip writing**, and in his heyday this rude, abrasive, egotistical and witty man was the country's best known and most **widely read journalist and one of its most influential**. In 1943, when there were 140 million people in the United States, more than **50 million of them read his gossip column every day in more than 1000 newspapers, including his flagship, The New York Daily Mirror**. Even more people listened to his **weekly radio broadcast**. Hated, feared and revered, he presided over Table 50 of the Stork Club in New York, creating and destroying celebrities at the drop of his trademark gray snap-brim fedora. **Yet when he died in 1972, at age 74, he was practically forgotten. Only two people attended his funeral; his daughter, Walda, and the rabbi who officiated at his service**. Today, not many people under 40 even know the name of **Walter Winchell**.
- b. The boxer **Muhammad Ali** was known as “the champ,” arguably the most famous athlete of his generation. He was on top, and his entourage of trainers and various helpers shared the adulation with him. But the party ended, leaving many of Ali's loyal followers disillusioned—and in some cases, destitute. Ali himself, now halting

in speech and uncertain in movement, says **“I had the world, and it wasn’t nothin’.”**

3. **Our lives have not proven successful.**

- a. **Soap operas**—long the staple of daytime TV—are fading in popularity. **Since 1985, the serial dramas have lost 31 percent of their prime viewers, women between ages 18 and 49.** Bill Bell, creator of *The Young and the Restless*, blames the decline on the O.J. Simpson trial. “O.J. was like a narcotic,” he complains. “It was its own serial.” Other observers point out how the public’s taste for watching mixed-up people’s entangled relationships is now being satisfied by real-life talk shows. **“Suddenly,”** observes Rick Schindler, an editor at TV Guide, **“you could watch Ricki Lake and see characters far more outrageous than Erica on All My Children.”** In other words, soap operas are declining because real life is becoming a soap opera.
- b. **Tom Brokaw** was wandering through Bloomingdale’s in New York one day, shortly after he was promoted to cohost on the Today Show. The Today Show was a pinnacle of sorts for Brokaw after years of work, first in Omaha, then for NBC in Los Angeles and Washington, and he was feeling good about himself. He noticed a man watching him closely. The man kept staring at him and finally, when the man approached him, Brokaw was sure he was about to reap the first fruits of being a New York television celebrity. **The man pointed his finger and said, “Tom Brokaw, right?” “Right,” said Brokaw. “You used to do the morning news on KMTV in Omaha, right?” “That’s right,” said Brokaw, getting set for the accolades to follow. “I knew it the minute I spotted you,” the fellow said. Then he paused and added, “Whatever happened to you?”**

B. **Man Continues To “MISS” The Way To Happiness**

1. **Genesis 1:1** - “In the beginning, **God** created the heavens and the earth.”
 - a. If God made us
 - b. then God must know what we need to be happy.
 - c. Henry Ford illustration
2. Jesus gives us the recipe for happiness in the Beatitudes
 - a. Not a “finding” of oneself - but a losing of oneself.
 - b. Not an emphasis on building myself up, but in building up others.
 - c. Not becoming my own god, but submitting to the true God.
 - d. A review of the first six Beatitudes.

I. **Happy Are The PEACEMAKERS**

Vs. 9 - “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”

A. **The MEANING of peace**

1. The **WORLD’S** definition
 - a. The world **REALLY** has no right to even venture toward a definition of peace;
 1. A former president of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and historians from England, Egypt, Germany,

and India have come up with some startling information: **Since 3600 B.C. the world has known only 292 years of peace! During this period there have been 14,351 wars, large and small, in which 3.64 billion people have been killed. The value of the property destroyed would pay for a golden belt around the world 97.2 miles wide and 33 feet thick.**

2. A few years ago a Dutch professor took time to calculate the **cost of an enemy soldier's death at different epochs in history**. He estimated that during the reign of **Julius Caesar, to kill an enemy soldier cost less than one dollar**. At the time of **Napoleon**, it had considerably inflated—to more than **\$2,000**. At the end of the **First World War**, it had multiplied several times to reach the figure of some **\$17,000**. During the **Second World War**, it was about **\$40,000**. And in **Vietnam**, in 1970, to kill an enemy soldier cost the United States **\$200,000**.
 3. Global **military expenditure** is now running well over **\$1 million per minute**, according to New Internationalist magazine. **One in every five scientists worldwide**, says the magazine, **is now engaged in military work**, and the **average military product is 20 times as research-intensive as a civilian product**.
 4. The world was concerned in the aftermath of WWII and decided to develop an agency for world peace in 1945 - **The United Nations**. Their motto - **“to have succeeding generations free from the scourge of war.”** SINCE THAT DAY, there has NOT BEEN ONE DAY of peace on earth, NOT ONE!
- b. The world does not understand peace.
1. Governments:
 - a. Governments and nations think that when there is a truce that there is peace.
 1. Israel and the surrounding nations have a truce, but they are not at peace. They exist in a continual state of readiness (Allanby bridge with machine guns pointed)
 2. “All right Ethel, we won't talk about that anymore especially on the way to church. We're supposed to be worshipping this morning.” That's not peace, that's a cold war.
 - b. from government - does not know peace
 2. Individuals

- a. Nor is peace the ABSENCE of conflict or problem
 - b. Illustration of bird on branch/waterfall
- 2. The **BIBLE'S** definition
 - a. The Bible uses the term peace some 400 times.
 - b. In some ways, you could say that the Bible is a book about peace.
 - 1. There was peace in the Garden of Eden before the fall.
 - 2. The prophesy of the coming of Jesus is that there will be "peace on earth, good will toward men."
 - 3. Jesus is called the "Prince of Peace."
 - 4. There will be peace in heaven.
 - c. **The word peace**
 - 1. The **Hebrew** word shalom
 - a. It is NOT, may you NOT have war or conflict
 - b. **But may you have all the goodness that God can give.**
 - c. May you receive your highest good.
 - 2. The **Greek** - word peacemaker
 - a. NOT:
 - 1. The peaceful
 - 2. The peaceable
 - 3. Peacelovers
 - b. IS:
 - 1. **Peace-MAKER**
 - 2. Jesus wants us to be "makers of peace"
 - 3. This "peace" is NOT something that we pursue ourselves, but something that we pursue FOR AND IN OTHERS!

B. The **MINISTRY** of Peace

- 1. We must **FIRST be at peace with God**
 - a. BEFORE we can assist others in finding peace, we must have no inner conflict or war ourselves.
 - 1. **James 4:1-3:** "What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."
 - 2. **Matthew 5:23-24:** "Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."

- b. The disobedient, self-indulgent Christian is not suited to be an ambassador of peace.
 - c. How do you know if you are at peace?
 - 1. You **love** peace and hate it when you lose it. Def - A lover of peace you run to find it.
 - 2. You are not contentious or argumentative.
 - 3. You use peaceful language.
 - 4. You hate it when there is a lack of peace around you.
2. We must **SECONDLY** desire to help others **find that same peace with God.**
- a. If you are filled with peace, you will have a burden that others find that same peace.
 - 1. As D.L. Moody walked down a Chicago street one day, he saw a man leaning against a lamppost. The evangelist gently put his hand on the man's shoulder and asked him if he was a Christian. The fellow raised his fists and angrily exclaimed, "Mind your own business!" **"I'm sorry if I've offended you," said Moody, "but to be very frank, that IS my business!"**
 - 2. I wonder how many of us REALLY are EXPERIENCING God's peace, because there are so few of us who share with others about that peace - **a 1980 Gallup poll indicated that out of all evangelical American believers, only 2 percent had ever introduced another person to Christ.**
 - b. We want others to have that peace.
3. We must **THIRD** desire to help others **make peace with their fellow man.**
- a. Now, we find ourselves struggling here because we believe that we are meddling in other people's business.
 - b. But realize this:
 - 1. Biblical peace is not an absence of war or conflict
 - 2. But instead is a "maker" of peace; to helping create solutions that others may know peace.
 - a. Shalom- we want EVERYTHING that makes for a man's highest good.
 - b. Look at what Jesus did - would you say that He was PRO-ACTIVE to share peace with the world.
 - 1. THAT'S why He came!
 - 2. THAT'S what He did!
 - 3. Blessed are those who make the world a better place for all men to live.

C. The MERIT of Peace

"for they will be called Sons of God"

- 1. The word sons show the love of God

- a. In Scripture, God calls His children the “apple of His eye”
 - 1. The Hebrew looked at the pupil as the most important part of the eye.
 - 2. This is the part that we should want to protect.
 - 3. When God’s children are attacked, someone has stuck his finger in the eyes of God and **THAT UPSETS HIM.**
 - b. It shows the preciousness of God’s own children doing the ministry of peace.
2. The Greek words shows a particular relationship with God
- a. Teknos not used
 - 1. small children
 - 2. children dependent on their parents
 - b. Huios is used
 - 1. A word establishing the relationship
 - 2. It speaks of dignity
 - 3. It **SHOWS** and **PROVES** that one is indeed a son **BY HIS DESIRE TO BRING PEACE** - Newspaper this week: David Leaverton and Tee Martin.
 - c. But most of all, being “called” sons of God indicates that we are indeed His children.
 - 1. The Hebrew sense of son plus an abstract noun means a son of . . .
 - 2. Here it means that we are a “son of peace,” not just a peaceful man.
 - a. Therefore, we are seen as a Son of God, because He is a God of peace.
 - b. Blessed are the peacemakers because they are doing a God-like work - engaged in **THE VERY WORK** that their Father is involved in.

II. **Happy Are The PERSECUTED**

A. **The REALITY of Persecution**

- 1. The **SEGUE** to persecution
 - a. We **HAVE** to ask ourselves why persecution is **EVEN** on the list and why **HERE**?
 - 1. Because the **LAST THING** any one of us want to experience is **PERSECUTION!**
 - 2. Illustration
 - a. Most, if not all of us have been raised **NOT** to offend anyone.
 - b. And we certainly do this as Christians.
 - c. One has said: Years ago I was praying with one of my children at bedtime, and I asked him if he had any problems we should pray about. He couldn’t think of any, even though I could think of a number! Rather unwisely, I pressed the point and asked, “**Don’t you have any**

problems at school?” “No,” he replied quite firmly. “**Don’t the kids give you a hard time because you’re a Christian?**” Again the answer was “No.” Thinking back to my own traumatic school days, I said, “**But kids always give you a hard time if you let them know you’re a Christian.**” His reply was frank beyond belief: “**All the more reason you don’t let them know!**” And quite happily he turned over to sleep. With the refreshing candor of the very young, he had put into words the practical reasons why many Christians don’t witness. They don’t want to take the consequences.

- b. Well, the reason that persecution follows peacemakers is this:
 1. Those who desire to be pro-active in the Christian life and bring peace to other people will not always have a recipient audience.
 - a. “It’s none of your business.”
 - b. “Leave me alone.”
 2. And despite everything that you attempt to do, you will not be well received.
2. The **DEFINITION** of Persecution
- a. **The Greek word**
 1. to follow after
 2. to make to run or flee
 3. to drive away
 4. to hunt you down
 5. to pursue to the end
 6. to harass
 - b. **The Greek tense**
 1. A perfect passive tense
 2. This tense means:
 - a. Passive - it is done to you by others
 - b. Perfect - it is almost a way of life.
 1. It may not happen every day
 2. but it will happen most of your life.
 3. Jesus and Paul were not persecuted EVERY DAY but it was a continual occurrence.
3. The **VARIETIES** of persecution
- a. **Insults** - (verbal to your face)
 1. to cast into one’s teeth
 2. to throw abrasive words in the face of an opponent
 - b. **Persecution**
 1. to harass
 2. to hunt down

3. to oppress
- c. **Falsely say all kinds of evil against you** (verbal behind your face)
 1. Abusive words
 2. Words that you can't defend.
 3. Illustrations
 - a. The early Christians were called:
 1. **Cannibals** - because they "ate" the body and blood of Christ.
 2. **Immoral** - because they experienced the love feast at communion.
 3. **Insurrectionists and traitors** - because they would not pledge allegiance to Caesar.
 - b. McArthur - This perhaps is the most difficult, because you can't defend yourself.
 - c. Me - Philos Demos - word quickly spread all over campus.

B. The REASON For Persecution

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness."

1. Notice that Christians should be persecuted **for RIGHTEOUSNESS!**
 - a. Integrity
 - b. Virtue
 - c. Purity of life
 - d. Correctness of thinking
2. **NOT FOR BEING DIFFICULT.**
 - a. **I Peter 4:14-15:** "If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. **If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.**"
 - b. We are never to consider ourselves persecuted because of:
 1. **Mixing politics and our faith**
 - a. Judging people as to their particular stand
 - b. Bombing abortion clinics
 2. **Being difficult or objectionable**
 - a. ALWAYS talking of spiritual matters
 - b. **Colossians 4:5-6:** "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. **Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.**"
 3. **Being fanatical**
 - a. Me - college (room/music/coffin)
 - b. M.L. Jones - "Fanaticism is never commanded in the New Testament."

- c. IN FACT - See **I Thess. 4:11-12**: “**Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.**”
3. If you are persecuted, let it be BECAUSE of your Godly life.
 - a. The world will love the good and successful man, but will persecute a Godly man.
 1. How do you feel when you are around someone who is truly Godly?
 2. How do you think the WORLD feels when it is around someone Godly?
 - a. Godly people are DIFFERENT!
 - b. **I Corinthians 2:14**: “The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, **for they are foolishness to him**, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.”
 - c. **Romans 8:7**: “the sinful mind is **hostile** to God. It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.”
 - d. **II Timothy 3:12**: “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted.**”
 - b. So make sure that it is not YOU they are persecuting, but your Godly life.
 1. In 1994 a book was published entitled: **How To Win: A Practical Guide to Defeating the Radical Right in Your Community.** The 252-page manual details strategy for opposing creationism and prayer in public schools. The book targets hated “fundamentalist missionaries” to guard against, listing the following respected Christian organizations among others: **Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Campus Crusade for Christ, Focus on the Family.** On the other hand, the publishers give special thanks to the groups that helped with funding the project: People for the American Way, Planned Parenthood, Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, National Abortion Federation, Penthouse International, and others.
 2. **A mass grave unearthed in Russia’s northern Karelia region held the bodies of almost 40 Christian martyrs executed by the Soviets.** Four Russian Orthodox bishops, 31 Roman Catholic priests, two nuns, and a Protestant church leader have been

identified from records stored at the Moscow archives of the secret police, or KGB. The remains were discovered in a forest at Sandormoch, about 240 kilometers north of St. Petersburg, according to Ecumenical News International. The bodies were probably shipped there from labor camps located on the Solovetskiye Islands in the White Sea. All of the victims had been shot in the back of the head. **A 1995 report released by the Russian government revealed that more than 200,000 priests and nuns of various denominations were killed and more than 500,000 deported or sent to labor camps in the 1920s and 1930s.** “Discoveries like this testify that the church of Christ never abandoned its witnesses and has shone with many martyrs during this century of oppression,” a Russian Orthodox spokesman said.

3. State and national authorities in **India** are cracking down on Hindus who become Christians. In Orissa, where conversions are illegal, the government has directed revenue inspectors to visit homes. **If the inspectors see a cross, Bible, or picture of Jesus they are to immediately cancel basic citizenship privileges for those who live there,** according to India Intercessors newsletter. Some Christians have already been notified that they have lost their basic rights because they have converted from Hinduism. A member of the Indian parliament has introduced a bill requiring people who convert to register with the government. **The Compulsory Registration of Religious Conversion Bill** says that a person “desirous of conversion will be required to register 60 days before public affirmation of the conversion.” The person must state the reasons for their desire to convert as well as provide details of the ceremony, including when it will take place, who will perform it, and where.
4. In **Saudi Arabia** the underground church has about 2,800 members. About 40,000 police work undercover in the country to catch people breaking Sharia law (i.e., regulations against Christianity). **Anyone who turns in a Christian for having a Bible in their home or holding church meetings is given a \$6,000 reward,** Snyder said. A Westerner caught worshipping or having a Bible would probably be deported, but Christians from Third World countries are usually beheaded, Snyder said. Earlier this year, two Filipino Christian evangelists were beheaded for preaching in

their prison. Another prisoner may face the same fate. Renee Camahort, also a Filipino Christian, has been active in organizing worship and evangelistic activities in his prison.

C. The REACTION Of Persecution

1. Jesus says to **REJOICE!**
 - a. Great is your **JOY**
 1. Two words are actually used in Verse 12
 - a. Rejoice
 1. The meaning
 - a. be exceedingly glad
 - b. Shout it out; as in a greeting; hail; salutations!; be well.
 2. The tense
 - a. A present active imperative
 1. It is an order, a command
 2. EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE.
 - b. It is how we view our life here, despite the persecution.
 - b. Be glad
 1. The meaning
 - a. Greatly rejoice, exhalt yourself in the Lord
 - b. To skip and shout for joy
 2. The tense
 - a. Present imperative
 - b. Another duration verb - a way of life
 2. Notice that BOTH are duration verbs
 - b. Great is your **TREASURE**
 1. Great - many, large
 2. Treasure
 - a. Dues paid for work
 - b. Wages; fruit
 - c. Matthew 6:19-22: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.”
 - c. Great is your **HERITAGE**

“for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

1. Biblical saints
 - a. Isaiah sawn in two
 - b. Jeremiah stoned by his own people
 - c. Ezekiel
 - d. Amos - told to leave; people wanted someone else
 - e. Moses, Samuel, Elijah
 - f. Jesus, John the Baptist, Paul
 - g. Every single disciple died a martyr's death
2. **Foxes Book of Martyrs**
3. Don Richardson - Lords of the Earth
 - a. Stan and Pat Dale who pioneered a work with the Yali tribe in the Snow Mountains of Irian Jaya
 1. Naked cannibals who called themselves “lords of the earth”
 2. who worship woman-hating, child-despising gods
 3. who oppress their wives so much that many Yali women choose suicide in the mountain rivers.
 - b. Joined by Phil and Phyllis Masters, 16 years younger than Stan.

“All of you, turn around and go home!” he commanded.

A priest of Kembu named Bereway slipped around behind Stan and—at point blank range—shot an arrow in under his upraised right arm. Another priest, Bunu, shot a bamboo-bladed shaft into Stan's back, just below his right shoulder.

Yemu was crying now and shouting at them to stop. As the arrows entered his flesh, Stan pulled them out, one by one, broke them and cast them away. Dozens of them were coming at him from all directions. He kept pulling them out, breaking them and dropping them at his feet until he could not keep ahead of them. Nalimo reached the scene after some 30 arrows had found their mark in Stan's body.

How can he stand there so long? Nalimo gasped. Why doesn't he fall? Any one of us would have fallen long ago! A different kind of shaft pierced Nalimo's own flesh—fear! Perhaps he is

immortal! Nalimo's normally impassive face melted with sudden emotion. Because of that emotion, Nalimo said later, he did not shoot an arrow into Stan's body.

Stan faced his enemies, steady and unwavering except for the jolt of each new strike. Yemu ran to where Phil stood alone. Together they watched in anguish at Stan's agony. As some 50 or more warriors detached from the main force and came toward them, Phil pushed Yemu behind him and gestured speechlessly—*run!* Phil seemed hardly to notice the warriors encircling him,. His eyes were fixed upon Stan.

Fifty arrows—sixty! Red ribbons of blood trailed from the many wounds, but still Stan stood his ground. Nalimo saw that he was not alone in his fear. The attack had begun with hilarity, but now the warriors shot their arrows with desperation, bordering on panic because Stan refused to fall. *Perhaps Kusaho was right!* Perhaps they were committing a monstrous crime against the supernatural world instead of defending it as they intended.

"Fall!" they screamed at Stan. "Die!" It was almost a plea—*please die!*

Yemu did not hear Phil say anything to the warriors as they aimed their arrows at him. Phil made no attempt to flee or struggle. He had faced danger many times but never certain death. But Stan had shown him how to face it, if he needed an example. That example could hardly have been followed with greater courage.

Conclusion: Jesus

THIS is recipe for happiness

1. Not in finding yourself
2. But in giving your life away for the cause of Christ.
3. If we consider the greatness and the glory of the life we shall have when we have risen from the dead, it would not be difficult at all for us to bear the concerns of this world. If I believe the Word, I shall on the Last Day, after the sentence has been pronounced, not only gladly have suffered ordinary temptations, insults, and imprisonment, but I shall also say: **"O, that I did not throw myself under the feet of all the godless for the sake of the great glory which I now see revealed and which has come to me through the merit of Christ!** Martin Luther
4. **"Do not be worn out by the labors which you have undertaken for My sake, and do not let tribulations ever cast you down. Instead, let My**

promise strengthen and comfort you under every circumstance. I am well able to reward you above all measure and degree. You shall not toil here long nor always be oppressed with griefs. A time will come when all labor and trouble will cease. Labor faithfully in My vineyard; I will be thy recompense. Life everlasting is worth all these conflicts, and greater than these. Are not all plentiful labors to be endured for the sake of life eternal? Lift your face therefore to heaven; behold I and all My saints with me—who in this world had great conflicts—are now comforted, now rejoicing, now secure, now at rest, and shall remain with Me everlastingly in the kingdom of My father.” Thomas a Kempis