

## Lesson 15

# THE EVANGELICAL COUNSELS



The Gospels deal with the life of Christ in detail. His words and deeds are described in the four gospels. The gist of these teachings is contained in the Sermon on the Mount. Here Jesus teaches in detail who a true disciple of Christ is, how he must live and what the blessings he may receive. Jesus also taught that the basis of all law and prophecy is to do to others what you would have them do unto you. We read the Sermon on the Mount, containing the teachings of Jesus, in the Gospel according to St. Mathew, Chapters five to seven.

### **The Blessing of the Disciples of Christ**

The most important part of Sermon on the Mount are the evangelical counsels or the eight beatitudes. Here Jesus speaks of eights blessings which his disciple will obtain. They are the following:

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.
2. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
3. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:3-10).

## **The External Signs of a Disciple of Christ**

Jesus also taught, along with the beatitudes or blessings, what a Christian disciple should be. He stated that the disciples of Christ are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt. 5:13-14). He said that salt should have saltiness and the light is to be placed on the lampstand. This means that Christians must give light and taste to the whole world. Jesus also said, "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Mt. 5:16).

Jesus also insisted that we must obey the commandments of God if we are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Till heaven and earth disappear, not one dot, not one little stroke, shall disappear from the Law until its purpose is achieved. Therefore the man who infringes even one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be considered the least in the kingdom of God; but the man who keeps them and teaches them will be considered great in the kingdom of God.

A disciple of Christ is one who lives trusting in the providence of God. Jesus taught on the necessity of Trusting in divine providence thus. Do not be worried about food and clothes. He doesn't mean that we don't need them. Jesus said that the heavenly Father will provide His children all this. Jesus said: "But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Mt. 6:33).

True disciples of Christ are those who hear the Word of God and live accordingly. Jesus taught. "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn. 13:35).

## **To Become A True Disciple of Christ**

Jesus taught in the sermon on the Mount the characteristic of a true Christian disciple. Jesus said to those who paid attention only to external rules and did not grow in faith-life, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord'. will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Mt. 7:21).

Jesus ends the Sermon on the Mount with a beautiful Parable. “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell-and great was its fall!” (Mt. 7:24-27).

As the rock in the parable, the word of God should give strength and firmness in our life because Jesus taught that even if heaven and earth pass away, His words will not pass away. Hence those who base their lives on the word of God will be strong. In addition to that, they will be able to face and overcome all adverse circumstances in their lives.

It is not enough that we believe in Jesus to become true disciples of Christ. On the contrary, Jesus desires that we know or seek the will of God and act accordingly. God's will is manifested to us now in the word of God. Let us try to accept the word of God with open minds, live accordingly, and thus become true disciples of Christ and inherit heaven and eternal life.

### **Let us Pray**

O' Lord, who taught us the way of salvation, help us to listen to your word, live accordingly and inherit heaven.

### **Read the Word of God and Narrate**

Mt. 7:21-28

## **Word of God for our Guidance**

“Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven (Mt. 7:21).

## **Let us Do**

Learn by heart the beatitudes.

## **My Resolution**

I will live by the word of God.

## **Find out the Answer**

1. What are the beatitudes that a disciple of Christ can have?
2. According to the teachings of Jesus who is a disciple of Christ?
3. What must we do to become a true disciple of Christ?
4. What are the fruits of living a life based on the word of God?
5. What must we do not to be broken and shattered by the adverse circumstances of life?