

Sermon on the Mount: Happy Are the Holy" Lesson 31-FAQ

July 13, 2025

What is the central theme of the "Sermon on the Mount: Happy Are the Holy" Lesson 31?

The central theme is the importance of a "pure heart" as the ultimate pathway to seeing God and entering His kingdom. The sermon emphasizes that true righteousness comes from an internal transformation rather than external acts or human achievements.

How does the sermon distinguish between "human achievement" and "divine accomplishment" in religion?

The sermon posits that there are only two fundamental types of religions. "Human achievement" encompasses all beliefs where individuals attempt to earn their way to heaven through their own works, deeds, or efforts. In contrast, "Divine accomplishment" refers solely to Christianity, where salvation and purity of heart are achieved not by human effort, but through the sacrificial work of Christ.

Why is a "pure heart" considered the "sum bonum" or highest good?

The "sum bonum" refers to the highest or ultimate goal of all things. The sermon states that a pure heart is the ultimate good because it is the prerequisite for seeing God. This is a profound spiritual achievement, surpassing any worldly gain or external religious observance.

How do the Beatitudes, particularly Matthew 5:8-10, connect to the concept of a "pure heart"?

The sermon explains that the Beatitudes (Blessed are the pure in heart, peacemakers, and those persecuted for righteousness) are interconnected and flow in a perfect, divine sequence. A "pure heart" is presented as a foundational beatitude that enables the others. It is achieved after understanding one's spiritual poverty, mourning sin, being meek, hungering for righteousness, and receiving mercy, which then allows one to be merciful and ultimately a peacemaker who may face persecution.

What is the significance of the "Old Rugged Cross" and the "River of Life" in the context of the sermon?

The "Old Rugged Cross" symbolizes Jesus' sacrifice and the suffering He endured to redeem lost sinners. Cherishing it signifies an embrace of His atonement, which leads to a spiritual "crown." The "River of Life" represents the transformative and cleansing power of salvation through Jesus. Coming to this "river" signifies shedding burdens, finding healing, and experiencing a profound change that washes away sin and guilt, leading to a new life.

Both images highlight the concept of divine accomplishment and the redemptive power of Christ.

How does the sermon address the historical and contemporary issue of "legalism"?

The sermon directly challenges legalism, identifying it with the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes of Jesus' time, and modern-day practices within Christianity. Legalists believe salvation is earned through external obedience and works, rather than an internal, heart-based transformation. The sermon asserts that such a belief system, focused on superficial acts, is a "Satan's lie" and ultimately leads away from God.

What is the ultimate exchange offered through Christ, according to the sermon?

The sermon emphasizes a "magnificent exchange" where Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross, took the sins of humanity and, in return, gave His righteousness. This means that when God looks at a believer, He sees a "pure heart" because they are "covered by the blood of His son," effectively making them as "dear" and "near" to God as Christ himself.

What is the call to action presented in the sermon for those who have strayed or are seeking?

The sermon issues a strong call to action, urging individuals to choose "divine accomplishment" over "human achievement." It encourages those who have "strayed away" or are "lost" to come to Christ "just as you are," open their hearts, and accept the "purity of heart" offered through His sacrifice. The call includes receiving baptism as a public display of obedience and partaking in communion as a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice, all while actively seeking a pure heart through submission to God.