

# To Be or Not to Be

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[ 0 : 00 ] Good evening. How's everybody doing? Good, good. Well, before you get into your face stuffing for your Labor Day cookout and such, I just wanted to come by and just say God bless you and thank you for having me here.

I send you greetings from Revolution Church where I am the lead pastor and I'm blessed to be here to share with you today. Pastor Tommy is a buddy of mine and can we just give a round of applause for your pastor, Pastor Tommy, and also Pastor Dan and Deborah, everybody holding it down.

Today we're going to talk about something pretty cool. We're going to talk about attitudes. Can somebody say attitudes? As believers in Jesus Christ, we don't always have the right attitude. And so what I want to talk to you today about is to be or not to be.

That old saying, that old Shakespearean saying, Jesus told us how to be and he actually told us about it in the unique way that it has everything to do with our attitudes.

And so what we're going to do is take a moment to pray over the word and we're going to dig right in. Amen. Let's pray. Father God, in the name of Jesus Christ, would you just synchronize our hearts and our minds with yours? Lord, would you please remove every distraction, any and everything that wants to get in the way of you being exalted, in the way of you being glorified?

[ 1 : 29 ] God, we want you to totally, totally take control of our attention span and help us, Lord God, to walk out of here different than the way we came. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Well, I was blessed to go to Israel last year and I traveled on a nine day trip to Israel.

And while I was there, I had an opportunity to go to the Mount of Beatitudes. And you're going to see that picture come on the screen. I went to the Mount of Beatitudes and basically this is where Jesus gave his famous speech, the Beatitudes.

The second picture is a picture of me wearing a whitish kind of colorful shirt. But what I want you to focus on is the view. Imagine your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on that mountain speaking the words that we're going to read today.

And it has everything to do with our attitudes. The Latin word for blessed, if you take a look at the screen, is beatus.

Can everyone say beatus? Beatus. And from beatus comes the word beatitude. And so that basically means the attitudes that ought to be in our lives today.

[ 2 : 44 ] Now Jesus is going to break down how we're blessed with these different attitudes. But before we talk about blessings, I want to define righteousness just for a moment. One more look at the screen.

Righteousness is defined as the quality of being in right standing with God. The condition acceptable to God. So in the book of Genesis, the Bible talks about how God and man were one.

God and man were in a great, healthy relationship. But sin came and broke that relationship. So only through a relationship with Jesus Christ are we able to be friends with God.

Are we able to be sons and daughters of God? Are we able to be connected with God? Amen. And that's the right standing, the condition acceptable to God. So I'm kind of a one point kind of preacher.

I have a focus point. We're going to say over and over again and over and over again and over and over again. And as Pastor Dan said, I am a hip hop artist. And so my focus point does rhyme.

[ 3 : 46 ] So if you would indulge me in a little Dr. Seuss kind of preaching this evening, okay? It's going to rhyme. Our focus point for today is this. Being righteous is not just doing things the Bible says I should do.

It's having the attitude of my heart being like Christ in what I pursue. Did you catch the rhyme? You got it. Being righteous is not just doing things the Bible says I should.

That was like three of us. Being righteous is not just doing what the Bible says I should. It's having the attitude of my heart being like Christ in what I pursue.

You guys are rhyming. We're going to have fun today. Well, let's look in Matthew chapter 5, verse 20. I'm going to give you a spoiler to this passage. We're going to skip all the way down to verse 20 toward the end of the whole Beatitudes speech.

And Pastor Dan actually read it to us a few moments ago. But let's take a look at Matthew chapter 5, verse 20 one more time. Jesus says after he finishes this whole thing about attitudes and he tells people, man, make sure your attitude is like this.

[ 4 : 54 ] Yo, you're going to be blessed if your attitude is like that. Jesus says, hey, I got to warn you, Christians, people, the Advent, I must warn you, unless your righteousness, unless your condition with God, unless your relationship with God is better than the relationship of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Now, you got to understand this, Advent. The people who heard this were like, wait a minute, Jesus, hold up, time out. How in your name could my condition with God be cooler than the condition with all the Pharisees?

These religious guys study the Old Testament since they were babies, man. I just came to the faith. How can I be in a great relationship with you or dare I say, better relationship with you than these religious leaders?

And that's a question we have today, isn't it, church? We've seen religious leaders come and go. We've seen religious leaders who talk a good talk but don't walk a good walk.

It's hypocrisy. It's a hypocritical Christianity that we've seen a lot of leaders of the church embrace. And a lot of us, if we can be honest, we question ourselves and say, well, if these religious leaders are not living up to the measuring condition of God, then how could I?

[ 6 : 16 ] And so our focus point is going to direct us to the message that Jesus is describing in Matthew chapter 5. That it's not just about what you do externally. It's about what God has done internally in your heart.

Our focus point before we get into the scriptures in depth one more time. Being righteous is not just doing things the Bible says I should. It's having the attitude of my heart being like Christ in what I pursue.

Let's look into the scriptures. In Matthew chapter 5, let's start at verse 1. The Bible says, God blesses those who what, church?

Church, mourn for they will be comforted. God blesses those who are, for they will inherit the whole. God blesses those who and thirst for righteousness, which is also justice.

We're going to come back to that righteousness. For they will be what, church? Good. God blesses those who are, for they will be shown. God blesses those who are pure of, for they will see.

[ 7 : 43 ]     God blesses those who work for, for they will be called the children of. God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Look at 11. God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and talk about you on social media and make fun of you and run your name through the mud and they're your co-worker and they didn't deserve the promotion but they rubbed it in your face because you know you worked harder than they did.

God blesses you when people hate on you and talk about you and want to treat you like crap. God blesses you when you're a follower of him because they're doing it sometimes to get a rise out of you. They want to check your attitude.

Don't you hate, church, when you tell people at your job or in your school or your family, yeah, I'm a Christian, and they throw it in your face? Sometimes people at the job would say things to us that they know we're not cool with, that they know that it's not pleasing to God, but they want to get a rise out of us.

They want to get a reaction out of us to see if we're going to live up to this standard of godliness. And sometimes, if we can be honest, our attitudes are not always Christ-like. Amen? Okay, just me, huh?

[ 8 : 53 ]     Okay. We're going to tell Pastor Tommy about this guy. Let's be honest, right, church? Church, our attitudes are not always pleasing to God. Amen? Amen.

That was three of us in a cough. I'll take the cough. That's four of us. Come on, church. I need you to understand that a lot of religious people can talk the talk but not walk the walk.

And coming into this building or any church edifice on Sundays does not qualify you for having a righteousness with a good standing with Jesus. It's about the condition of your heart.

Because watch this, you can even serve in church and your heart not be in the right place. That's what the Pharisees were doing. And that's why Jesus told us in verse 20, your righteousness, your relationship with God has to be better than these so-called Christian leaders who just talk a good talk.

And they even serve, but they're serving with the wrong heart. Let's take a look at the word. Jesus says in verse 12, be happy about that. Be happy that you're going through these trials.

[ 9 : 54 ]     Be happy that people are talking about you. Be happy that people are trying to get a rise out of you. Be happy that people on social media are saying all this kind of stuff and they're saying negative things about you. Why? Because you're his followers.

For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way. Now Jesus gives us all this emphasis on these attitudes. He says you're blessed if you do this.

You're blessed if you do that. You're blessed. You're blessed. You're blessed. You're blessed. You're blessed. There's an old friend hymn and song that says we're blessed in the city. We're blessed in the field. We're blessed when we come. We're blessed when we go.

And a lot of times if we look at social media and we look at celebrities in the world, they'll say they're blessed. I'm in the hip-hop industry and so a lot of rappers talk about being blessed.

And oftentimes they're focusing on material external possessions. You're blessed if you got a hot wife. You're blessed if you got a nice car. You're blessed if your house is big. You're blessed if you're wearing a lot of jewelry.

[ 10 : 51 ] You're blessed if you're wearing fancy clothes. You're blessed if you work down on Capitol Hill. You're blessed if you got you a nice penthouse. But being blessed is not about stuff. Being blessed is about having the right attitude in your heart, in your relationship with God.

And Jesus is breaking down to us in these verses we just read in Matthew chapter 5 that there's four attitudes that we need to have, church. So we're going to go through four attitudes that Jesus breaks down for us so that we can check to make sure that our relationship with God is beyond the hypocritical religious people that talk about them but don't walk with them.

Amen? Amen? Let's look at the four attitudes to pursue. Number one, the attitude toward myself. Jesus said in verse 3 that, you know, blessed are the poor in spirit.

When the Bible says the poor in spirit, it means to be humble. It means to have a correct estimate of oneself. I just, I know I'm not the only person in here that sometimes thinks more highly of myself than I ought to.

That's called pride, everybody. And the Bible says that if you walk in pride, you will fall. Because the Bible says pride comes before fall. The Bible also says that pride kills.

[ 12 : 06 ] So the first attitude adjustment that needs to happen is the attitude toward my, what, church? Self. We need to have a right perspective of ourselves. That we're not doing God a favor by being saved.

We're not doing God a favor by serving him. Our posture should be, Lord, I am a sinner. I deserve the wrath and judgment of heaven. But by your grace, God, I'm saved.

That's a humble posture. That's being poor in spirit. Jesus says you're blessed if you first understand that you're nothing without God. As a matter of fact, everybody deserves to go to hell.

Including me. Including Pastor Dan. Including Pastor Tommy. We all deserve God's wrath. That's the bad news. But the good news is God loved us so much. He sent his only son to die on the cross for us.

That if we confess with our mouths that Jesus Christ is Lord. And we believe in our hearts that God raised Jesus from the dead. We can be saved and have access to his kingdom and to his blessings and to purpose on this earth.

[ 13 : 05 ] Arrogant Christians don't do any good. They just talk. And they might walk. But they're not walking willingly. We have to have the right attitudes in our heart, ladies and gentlemen.

Which is why our focus point for today is this. Let's look at it on the screen. Being righteous is not just doing things the Bible says I should what, church? You.

It's having the attitude of my heart being like Christ in what I pursue. Some of us can pursue things at the workplace. We can pursue promotions. We can pursue good grades in school.

We can pursue a relationship. We can pursue financial advancement. We can pursue all types of things. But if our hearts are not aligned with Jesus and it doesn't line up with his will. That's not the right move. We need an attitude adjustment.

Our first attitude adjustment. We just say it. We have to adjust the way that we view our what, church? Selves. Good. Our second attitude adjustment is this. My attitude toward my sins.

[ 14 : 08 ] And you can look at that at your own time again. Verses 4 through 6. Let's take a look at it, church. We should mourn sin. Like we shouldn't be happy about sin. Like, yes, man.

I just messed up. I just cursed out my wife. Yes. Man, I just looked at some pornography. Yes. No. We shouldn't have a joy about sin. But we need to understand that sin is not just something that we commit.

When we sin, if we are embracing sin, we have to be careful that we're not applauding what God is appalling. Because some of us, if we can be honest, we're around people that applaud our falls.

We surround ourselves with so-called friends who encourage us to commit acts of sin. To say things that we shouldn't say. To do things that we know we shouldn't do. And they don't ask us and hold us accountable to God's word.

And so we need to have a right perspective of sin in our lives, ladies and gentlemen. Because the little quiet sins you commit behind closed doors in the darkness of your privacy will come out in the public and expose you.

[ 15 : 10 ] Satan wants us to think that the little sins we commit when nobody's watching on the internet, the little sins we commit when nobody's looking, how we talk to our children, how we talk to our spouse, the things we do with our friends.

We're doing it low-key over here as if no one knows. But what God wants you to understand is that your heart is not in the right place because your heart is in a hidden place. And the Bible talks about a heart being calloused and hard before the Lord.

And the Bible says the Lord will take the trouble. He will take this tool. He uses the agricultural metaphor to break up the hard heart and soften the heart. And it's painful.

So whether you come willingly or you come with an attitude problem, God will get through and soften up your heart and use you for his glory one way or another. I've officiated many funerals of people who were resistant to the will of God.

But even at their funeral, people came to Christ while they were in the casket. God will get his glory out of your life. The question you need to ask yourself, church, is am I going to willingly, humbly submit to his will?

[ 16 : 14 ] Or am I going to be brought down to my knees in pain before the Lord? One way or another, I will submit and God will get his glory out of my life. Focus point for this afternoon.

Being righteous is not just doing the things the Bible says I should do. It's having the attitude of my heart being like Christ in the things I pursue.

What are you pursuing? A relationship? More money? Popularity? Status?

Fame? Success? Larger family? Whatever you're pursuing, you need to have the right perspective and the right attitude toward that thing.

That if God says don't pursue it, you can let that thing go and pursue what he wants you to pursue. Our first perspective for the attitude adjustment was my attitude towards myself.

[ 17 : 14 ] The second perspective of the attitude adjustment is my attitude towards my sins. There's two more. The third perspective is my attitude toward the Lord. Oh, yeah.

You know, we're being pretty quiet this evening, so I'm not going to ask you all to do any more call and response. Just think about this within yourselves. Since we're so quiet, I won't try to pull anything else out of you.

Not too much. Some of us just think about God like a holy ATM. Right? I mean, we come to the Advent, we give our tithes, our offerings, you know.

We repeat the liturgy, we say the words, right? But, I mean, when it boils down to it, I kind of only call on you, God, when I'm in trouble.

You know, like, next time I'm really in a bind, I mean, I might talk to you around grace time, but I talk to you when I'm really in need. And God becomes this panic button guy.

[ 18 : 21 ] Right? In case of emergency, break the glass and pick up the phone and call Jesus. And what we have to be careful of, ladies and gentlemen, is that God is more than just a genie in a bottle that we make our requests known to.

Yes, the Bible says make our requests known to him, but our requests have to be in line with his good, pleasing, and perfect will for our lives. Some of us will be praying some crazy stuff. Like, God, please, please, God, let his wife leave him so I can marry him.

Please, God. Some of us pray crazy stuff. We pray these things that are so selfishly driven, they have nothing to do with Jesus. So our third perspective that needs to be adjusted is our attitude toward the Lord.

Verses 7 through 9 said that blessed are the peacemakers. Because of our relationship with Jesus Christ in this troubled world, we become these channels and advocates of God's peace, purity.

That's why the Bible is talking about all these blessings. See, when you get saved, a good metaphor is like an agricultural metaphor, right? Let's break this down, right? Your heart is like soil.

[ 19 : 32 ] That's the parable of the sower, right? You all familiar with that? Y'all are so quiet. Are y'all hearing me? In the back, can you hear me? It's okay.

I'm just used to people talking to me. It's okay. So your heart is like soil, right? The Holy Spirit is like a seed. The seed of righteousness gets planted in the soil of your heart, and it produces what Galatians chapter 5 says, the fruit of the Spirit.

So when you're truly saved, the Holy Spirit of God is dwelling inside of you. He produces more love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

So the power of the Holy Spirit working within us gives us the proper perspective to say, God, you're not just giving me these abilities just so I can call on you whenever I'm in trouble. I want to do sins. You've given me more love and more patience.

So this is the thing I've learned, church. Whenever I ask God for more patience, he puts me in the most impatient situations. It's the day I go to McDonald's and I ask for ice cream and the ice cream machine is broken.

[ 20 : 35 ] It's when I'm in traffic and I'm behind a lady or a guy that slows down so much when the light starts turning yellow and they stop before the light turns red.

When I ask God to help me with patience, it shows me how much my attitude needs to be adjusted and how my perspective needs to be aligned with him. Because I can't just talk a good talk.

I got to walk a good what, church? Walk. Focus point for today. Let's get on the screen. Being righteous is not just doing things the Bible says I should what?

You. Thank you. Thank you, Pastor Dan. It's having the attitude of my heart being like Christ and what I what? Pursue. Pursue. Will Smith had a movie called The Pursuit of Happiness and there's a lot of things we could pursue.

But God wants us to make sure we're pursuing righteousness, not just happiness. Because when we're pursuing righteousness, we're pursuing being in a good relationship with him and he will give us everything we need. Last one. We talked about these three attitudes already.

[ 21 : 37 ] We said my attitude toward myself should be what I'm pursuing. That needs to be adjusted. My attitude toward my sins. That needs to be adjusted. My attitude toward the Lord needs to be adjusted. The last attitude is the attitude toward the world.

Some of us have this perspective of the world. Like we think the world, man, ah, man, they get everything. Man, they get so much stuff, man. They get to do so much stuff. I'm sitting over here with my little Christian party.

My pity party of a Christian. You know, my biological clock is ticking. I can't get any guy to come over here. Oh, my gosh, man. I just want to go out here and one night just have fun. I want to get hammered and make the Uber just drag me home, man.

Like we see the world having such a quote-unquote good time, and we kind of envy it a little bit sometimes. Like the purge. One night, you can commit whatever sin you want, and God will see nothing.

Okay, so if we can be honest, a lot of us would like to have a Christian purge, like one night of sin with no consequences. But the Bible says that we must understand that this world is broken.

[ 22 : 44 ] So, fellas, one of the things I had to do, fellas, is, you know, when I saw a lady that looked nice, you know, I asked God, Lord, please change my perspective of these beautiful women. This was even before I got married to my beautiful wife.

And even as a married man, I still have to pray this prayer. God, help me to see women that are attractive as beautiful creations, and you made them good. Bam. Okay, and I'm moving on.

Not with a lustful eye. And then when I'm in conversation with some women, I had to pray this prayer as a single man. And Lord, help me to view her with the proper perspective that if she doesn't know you, she's perishing and she's on her way to hell.

What's more important, me staring at her body or me leading her to you? And I taught myself that as a single man. And I share it with you all today because I think somebody in here needs to hear it.

You're flirting and playing with fire. And the reality is, ladies and gentlemen, we have to have a healthy perspective of the world that they need what we have. It's like people are dying of a disease all around us.

[ 23 : 41 ] And we have the cure, but we're selfishly holding on to it, wanting what the sick people have. If you have the power of life within you, share that with people who are perishing.

Amen? We'll close with this. You may say, Pastor Devin, how do I apply this message to my life? How do I take this one step further in my spiritual journey? Here's our next steps. Ask God to help you submit to his will, respond correctly to conviction, and share his love with others.

Let's stand to our feet and pray. Let's pray.