



# "It's not MY attitude ..."

It was a beautiful September afternoon. An old man was sat, on a park bench reading his newspaper, with his hat balanced on his knee. A younger man, with a dog walked past and as he did so, the dog got a whiff of an interesting smell - the hat! With a guick twist of its head and snap of its chops, the dog snatched the hat from the old man's knee and thrashed it about until it was battered and ruined.

"Oi" said the old man "did you see what your dog just did?" The dog owner protested that his dog had done nothing wrong and that if the old man had been careless enough to leave his hat on his knee in the first place, it was his own fault the hat was ruined! Enraged, the old man poked a finger into his young opponent's chest and said 'I don't like your attitude'! At this, the young chap looked his accuser square in the eye and cool as you like, pointed to the crumpled hat and replied, "Listen mate, It's not MY attitude it's your 'at he chewed!'

All that just to get you thinking about attitude and specifically our attitude towards others! Too often we point the finger at people and pass the blame. This week we start a series on The Beatitudes, 8 sayings of Jesus, all related to living life God's way that will lead to being truly contented, deeply satisfied or as Jesus himself puts it, being "blessed!"

The Beatitudes are part of a longer talk Jesus gave to his disciples which is known as **The Sermon on the Mount** (Matthew 5-7) which contains advice for living in community that challenges our attitude as an individual. how we consider others and how much, if at all, we might invite God into life as we know it! .

The Beatitudes - Matthew Chapter 5

(Jesus) went up on a mountain, and taught them, saying:

## 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

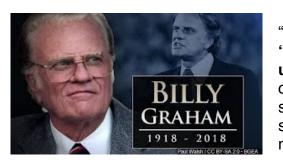
4 Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.5 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.7 Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.8 Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.10 Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

The word 'Beatitude' actually comes from the Latin word 'beati' meaning happy, rich or blessed nothing to do with





# Beatitude of the Week! #1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



Billy Graham explained this beatitude simply like this: "We must be humble in our spirits. **If you put the word** "humble" in place of the word "poor," you will understand what He meant. In other words, when we come to God, we must realize our own sin and our spiritual emptiness and poverty. We must not be selfsatisfied or proud in our hearts, thinking we don't really need God. If we are, God cannot bless us.

Being 'poor in spirit' may sound like a negative thing. After all, who likes to think of themselves as being poor? If you go to an event with your friends and after paying more than expected to get into the venue realise you don't have enough for snacks it's just awkward and embarrassing to admit you are 'poor' and then have to ask your mates to help out. So at first it seems to make no sense that a 'poor' person would be considered 'blessed''. However, Jesus' reference to being 'poor in spirit' is about having a humble attitude and LIVING SIMPLY being prepared to Fully Rely On God for what you may need.

#### So What does that mean for us this week?

What do you spend more time talking about with friends?People or possessions? It's all too easy to get caught up in the 'need' for the latest Xbox, i-Phone or such like. Think about how your attitude to these possessions might affect others. Are you proud to show off the expensive items you own? Do you share them easily? Perhaps you live with a 'spirit of poverty' and instead of boasting about things or **wanting what you don't have, practice being grateful for what you DO HAVE**. Being poor in spirit means living life simply with God. Jesus says that those who are 'poor in spirit' and are willing to seek God's help will be content, satisfied and blessed!"

What's Your attitude to this beatitude?

## CHAPLAIN'S CHALLENGE:

- 1. Write a list of positive and negative attitudes. Which ones describe you?
- 2. Describe a time when YOU needed help. How did the situation get sorted?
- 3. "Those with little tend to share a lot!" Would you agree or disagree? Give examples
- 4. Prepare a poster for the Prayer Board displaying this weeks Beatitude
- 5. The Bible says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble".(James 4:6) What do you think this means?

#### Read and Reflect: Psalm 139:23-24

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.

<u>PRAYER:</u> Dear God, sometimes we forget how much we have and get greedy for more. Forgive us for this selfish attitude. Help us instead this week to be more 'poor in spirit': humble in the way we speak to and treat others and to be grateful to you for the blessings you give to us. Amen.



Happy to chat about the blog, Christian faith, prayer requests and everything else (I am in Tue,Wed,Thu) May we know real life lived out in faith, as individuals and as a community. Joe the Chaplain - jmaggs@speters.org.uk