

Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!

the PURSUIT of
HAPPINESS

the BEATITUDES of
JESUS

Sunday, January 27, 2019

Fault Lines
The Pursuit of Happiness, Part 3
A Study of Matthew 5:7-8

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Make a short list of ancient or modern engineering marvels. (First one: the pyramids. Now name a few more.)

One of the modern engineering marvels happened in 1887. The Illinois General Assembly decided to reverse the flow of the Chicago River. The project was completed in 1900. Our moral evaluation tends to flow in the direction of being merciful on ourselves and strict on others. In Matthew 5:7-8, Jesus expected us to reverse that flow. He told us to be ***big-hearted*** and ***pure-hearted***.

First Point: Be Big-Hearted

Read Matthew 5:7.

We are to be “merciful” in two areas:

First, being merciful means being *compassionate* to someone’s plight, even when caused by their poor choices.

Name some examples of the hard times others face, including hard times caused by their own poor choices. (Example: a crisis pregnancy. Now name some more.)

After you’ve made the list, go back through the list and explain how we can express practical *mercy* in those situations.

Second, being merciful means being *forgiving* when someone's faults impact you personally.

Name some examples of how one person's faults can impact another person. (Example: wrecking a borrowed car. Now name some more.)

After you've made the list, go back through the list and explain how we can express practical *mercy* in those situations.

It's important to show mercy to others without becoming codependent. Define "codependency."

How can we show mercy to those who fail without being codependent?

Psalm 85:10 (NKJV) says, "Mercy and truth have met together." Answer the following:

- ❖ Give some examples where people have been *merciful* without being *truthful*.
- ❖ Give some examples where people have been *truthful* without being *merciful*.
- ❖ How can we present *truth* and *mercy* at the same time to those who fail?

Second Point: Be Pure-Hearted

Read Matthew 5:8, Ezekiel 11:19, and Psalm 86:11.

- ❖ How can the phrase "undivided heart" help us understand the phrase "pure in heart"?
- ❖ What should be the one priority an "undivided heart" focuses on?
- ❖ Make a short list of the loves and desires that often divide our heart.

Read Galatians 6:1. There are two sentences in this verse. Identify the sentence that tells us to be *big-hearted*. Identify the sentence that tells us to be *pure-hearted*.

In Galatians 6:1 Paul wants us to take responsibility for each other's spiritual growth. Answer the following:

- ❖ Do we tend to ignore this in modern Christianity?
How? Why?
- ❖ Have we fulfilled the command to be “merciful” (Matthew 5:7) if we just refrain from judging them and yet leave them alone in their rebellion?
- ❖ How can we start taking a more active role in each other's spiritual growth?



Close with praise reports and prayer requests