

Be-attitudes Vs Me-attitudes

The word “beatitude” means “blessedness” in a double sense: both enjoying God’s favor and enjoying true or supreme happiness. Beatitudes reveal God’s plan for our eternal happiness in the life to come. A person learns to live the beatitudes by practicing, with the aid of God’s grace and by being empowered by the Holy Spirit bears worthy fruits. Matthew’s Gospel has the first beatitude as “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (5:3). It's the poverty of spirit that leads us to the right relationship with God. The one who is poor in spirit knows that God exists. That person desires, thirsts, depends on God and absolutely knows that one cannot exist and do anything without God.

Where does true happiness come from? Wealth, health, power, and influence are not the sources of true happiness. Prophet Jeremiah says, “Cursed is the one who trusts in mere mortals” (17:5). It would mean, one trusts in self, money, possession and powerful people. Simply said, one says, there is No Need of God in my life. I call it **Me-attitudes** that says I, Me and Mine (other examples as seven deadly sins; pride, greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath, and sloth). Me-attitudes trust in self than in God and live in false self-knowledge that acquired possession can make one happy. It’s an attitude that absolutely denies the need of God and the other.

True happiness comes from the right relationship with God. It lies in the awareness that we are all children of a loving Heavenly Father and that we will be happy only when we share our blessings with our brothers and sisters in need. Prophet Jeremiah says, “Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, the Lord is what a river is for a tree planted on its bank, source of their life and fruitfulness” (17:7). Jeremiah tells us that true happiness consists in placing our trust in God and in His promises. It is far safer to trust God than to trust ourselves. Jesus trusted His Father at all times.

To lack the necessities of life, to be poor, to be hungry, to be afflicted, to be persecuted and so on, are not good things. God never meant these things for us; sin brought them into the world. Yet, these evils can be turned into stepping stones to enter the kingdom of God. What makes one blessed is not simply poverty or hunger or sadness or suffering for the Faith, but living these in the context of one’s commitment to Jesus and spirit of sharing. Beatitudes consist in humble selflessness and compassionate, generous sharing of our blessings with the needy.

It is not easy to keep a right relationship with God and keep trusting Him in times of pain, misery, crises, and Covid-19 pandemic. During these times instead of trusting God and living the **Be-attitudes**, very easily we can give into **Me-attitudes**. Me-attitudes not only weaken but destroy our relationship with God and neighbour. As we are at the threshold of the holy season of Lent, let us examine our life, be aware of Me-attitudes if we have any and then through the help of Lenten observance of prayer, fasting almsgiving uproot them from our life.