

The Ultimate Lifestyle Session Two

By Tim Timmons

Speaker 1:

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Tim Timmons:

How many converts do we have this morning that weren't here yesterday? I believe you believe. All right. Amen, what is the theme of this week for this session? Would you say it with me, please? Life is full of piles. How many believe that? All right, Amen? Thank you. We'll have an invitation toward Friday right in there, and everyone will be down front soon. Okay. We're not talking about the alternate lifestyle. I saw the program after I spoke to you yesterday morning. I've never spoken on the alternate lifestyle before. Sounds like a weirdo or something like that. This is supposed to be the ultimate lifestyle, ultimate, not alternate. And many of you went out yesterday saying this really is the alternate lifestyle. So I guess it's not a bad title. It's more accurate, but it might scare some people.

Yesterday we talked a little bit about the audience that's out there. And I'm not really trying to make a whole lot of sense this week. I'm trying to just open up some areas that I've been thinking about and that have been concerning me. And a lot of the stuff I'm talking about this week is out of my book, The Ultimate Lifestyle and not the alternate lifestyle. And I speak a lot on maximum lifestyle. And so many people who recommend my book say, well, get his book, Maximum Lifestyle, and it's not in print, of course, and so hadn't sold over three or four copies. It's kind of

sad. Well, anyway, I'm just moving through a lot of different things this week and hoping to challenge you toward a different kind of lifestyle.

Yes, but a lifestyle that relates to the world because I think any other kind of lifestyle is not accurate and any other kind of lifestyle is really not valid. And any other kind of lifestyle could be lived, much like many people's. Messages, a lot of messages that are given. I used to teach in undergraduate and graduate level on communications or psychology of persuasion, which is keeping people awake. About 40 minutes is all it is. And in teaching, I got so frustrated, especially as I taught at Dallas, at Dallas Seminary. I got so frustrated because most of the messages that were given in the classroom could have been given without an audience.

And I find that most messages that are given in the pulpit today could have been delivered without an audience present. They had some good gems and they burped them out very nicely, except that they didn't relate to anybody. They didn't break the barrier that's here. Okay. And I think this is true also in our evangelism and I'll be speaking tonight, contrary to the program, I'm just ripping the program completely up. Tonight I will be speaking on aren't we just talking to ourselves and evangelism. Because I think we're saying things and we're babbling and we're using all kinds of methods, the four laws and the five steps and the 15 hops and all the methods that we got.

But the question we've got to ask is who's listening? Who's listening? Who heard us? And in so many cases, nobody's listening because we're talking to ourselves. And so this week I want to deal with the lifestyle that will not talk to yourself, but you'll be able to relate it outwardly as

well as being a satisfying experience to you. So we talked about time bombs yesterday and how they affect our culture and how they affect us and keep us with our feet firmly planted in midair. Our head is swimming. We feel just a tad bit nauseated, and we wonder what's going on. And yet we've got this triplet of faith basis for right and wrong of love, which is a dynamic of relating together and to the world and then hope some place to go. Okay.

Now this morning I want to move into a different kind of question, and that is and still focusing on not majoring on the minors, but majoring on the majors and forgetting the minors for a while. We'll deal with those later. And those of you who are pretrip and were hurt yesterday, it'll be fine. Okay? You'll be all right. One guy nearly died on me yesterday and came up afterwards, and I thought we were going to have problems, but I think we're all right now. It's okay to be pretrib, but then after the tribulation, you're in trouble, you see? So you don't want to be too strong there. All right. Today I want to ask the question, what is a happy believer? What makes a believer really happy and excited? What would a happy believer look like? What's an excited on fire believer all about?

If you were going to draw a picture of a happy, excited on fire believer and you drew a stick figure of this particular believer, what would you draw? What would you draw? Think about it a second. What would you have him doing? What would you put in your picture? If you're going to draw a stick figure? Okay. Let's share some of those. Who is first? All right. Who's next? Yeah. He'd be fishing near water, I would assume. Yes. Get all that in the picture. It looked kind of funny, you see. Okay. What else? He'd have a guy leaning up against a tree with a fishing pole. Fishing? Yes. Reading a Bible with a smile on his face. Very nice. Big Bible, probably,

huh? Holy Bible. Right. And who else would have that's? Very good. What else? Yes. Listening to Tim Timmons. Amen. You are a believer, aren't you, son? Feed my sheep.

Okay. Who else? Yes. I'm sorry. Okay. How would you display that on the picture? Okay.

Maybe with Jesus on his heart or some people may have a big heart on there? What else? Yes.

Somebody stand there shining like a light bulb. Okay. Sometimes you get in trouble opening up to the audience. You just never know what's going to come back. I like what he was after. Just the image was a little rough there. Yes. Somebody reaching out to others. Okay. Very good.

What else? Anybody have anything different? You all had one of those. I'm overwhelmed. What else would you have? Anybody? How many would have somebody witnessing that'd be in your picture? All right. How many would have somebody praying? The old class right here. How many do that? I know you pray. How many put that in your picture? Right.

Anybody else? What else would you put in there? Somebody working. Somebody working.

Okay. Okay. Somebody just stepped on your toe, but you turn around and you're not angry about it. Not exactly smiling, but. Okay. What else? Anybody else have anything different? Yes. Okay.

And how would you just play an on fire believer now on that? Enjoying that? Yeah. Okay.

Enjoying that. All right. Yeah. Somebody having a good time with a bunch of people. Okay. All right. Any others? About 70% of those are wrong. About 70% of those are wrong. And it's very interesting that when we want to display and I kind of tipped you off of where we're going yesterday a little bit, so we didn't get as many wrong as we normally get wrong because many people, they go in deep things during this picture time.

But since I tipped you off and some things were in trouble today, but about 70% were wrong, because many times when we think of an on fire excited believer, we've got him in a certain building, we've got him carrying his big Bible, we've got him praying, we've got him witnessing, we've got him pulling people out of ditches and things like this. And all of these are very exciting. But you don't find Jesus emphasizing those things. When he gets down to describing a happy believer, his picture is much different than what our picture normally is. He emphasizes things that we don't normally emphasize. He goes right after the juggler, he goes right down to the gut, and he doesn't let go until he draws his picture very differently.

In Matthew, chapter five, if you'll turn there, please, Matthew chapter five, we have what is commonly known as the Beatitudes. The Beatitudes are a series of principles given in a very good description of what a happy believer is all about or should be all about. There are eight of them here, eight frames. And in these eight frames, he is drawing a picture of this blessed person. The word blessed means to be happy, to be congratulated. It's the idea of you're going to find some kind of fulfillment from what he's about ready to say. He gives eight of them. And I want to make two columns of four, first four and the second four. And according to Hebrew thought, it's very interesting to see how these are broken down and what is the predominant one of each one of these and the pattern of Hebrew thinking here, it's very interesting.

The first four are talking about one part of our lives and the second four are talking about another part of our lives. Let's look at them. The first is, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. The first one is poor in spirit. We'll just make two columns. Poor in spirit. What is poor in spirit? When I first read that, I really got depressed and I moved on quickly to

the next verse and found out it was worse and came back. Poor in spirit. The idea here of poor is the idea of a person who's gotta beg for a living. He's got to beg. He's that desperate, he's got to beg. It's that kind of poverty, and it's that kind of poverty in his spirit. Poor in spirit. I didn't need any more poverty when I read this verse, so I moved to another passage.

It's not talking about the kind of poverty of material stuff, but spiritual poverty. As you take it through the Scriptures, you find it's the opposite of pride, the opposite of a haughty spirit. The opposite of a haughty spirit. A poor in spirit. It's a right evaluation of yourself before God. It's a right evaluation of yourself before God is seeing God and all of his Holiness and seeing yourself and all of your weakness and sinfulness. And then you've got the proper perspective. A right evaluation of yourself before God. Poor in spirit is showing you or bringing about this perspective that you are nothing. Nothing. There's a wickedness about you. There's a wickedness about you. This wickedness is your sin nature. And if you look hard enough, you'll find it. It's usually right down around in this area.

Well, mine is anyway. And the sin nature, and it's out to pull you like a magnet toward its self-centered rebellion against God's game plan. And because of this wickedness before God, you are nothing. Now, some people take this too far and they start praying, Lord, make me nothing. I had a professor in seminary said, Take it by faith. You already are. You don't need to pray about it. Wickedness. It's the capability of doing anything, anytime, anyplace. That's what the sin nature is all about. Now, in this right evaluation of yourself, it's also important to realize there's another aspect of man's nature. It's not totally wicked. It's not as wicked as it could be. Total depravity doesn't mean that we're as bad as we could be, that we're not a nobody.

There's a wonder about man. There's a wickedness and there's a wonder. And the wonder is that man is not a plant. Man is not an animal. Man has been created in the image of God. He's something special, not divine, but special, unique and special creation of God. And so those who are trying to pray for God to make them more of nothing and only talk about that are out to lunch as far as the totality or the balance of what man's nature is. Yet wickedness yes. But there's also wonder about man. Many parents move to one side or the other. On one side, people believe that the child is totally wicked. So we've got to beat the devil out of it. On the other end of the spectrum, you find that people believe that he's only wonderful and so you never touch him. You wouldn't want to spank him at all.

Both are wrong in their extremes, but they're true in their balance. They're true in their balance. There's a wickedness and a wonder. There's something special about man. You find in James. In the book of James, it says there do not curse the nonbeliever. Don't curse the non-believer. Now, why? Well, we would say, because you shouldn't curse. That's how far we get. We go really deep out there, you see, because you shouldn't curse. That's the problem. No, James goes right on to say, because he's been created in the image of God. He's been created in the image of God, even the non-believer. That's why we can't have this feeling out there in the world that's them and us.

Here we are on the white horses and they're on the dark horses, or at least they're lame. We get this, them and us feeling. I grew up in a Church where the militancy was incredible about the nonbelievers and how the world was just out to get you at any moment and they're going to trip you up and they're going to do all kinds of wild things. Hey, they're just people like you are. They're in a heap of trouble just like you are. Only you've got grace that has been applied

because you accepted Jesus as your payment for sin. They have not. So when you get this, they and us business and we're on a white horse, they're on the lame horse. Then we're in a lot of trouble.

We all should be poor in spirit. It's the right evaluation of ourselves before God. We have not arrived because we've had some experience with God. We are not into some kind of new club. By the way, many people are making all kinds of exciting things about this. The second experience you got to have, I mean, it gets to be exciting. I'm going to talk about this tomorrow on Who Lives the Christian Life. It all came out of a perfectionist movement years ago. This is all free right now. It came out of a perfectionist movement years ago in the 1800s. They said you've got to be perfect. When you accept Jesus Christ, you're perfect. You know what happened? The movement didn't last very long. You know why? Their leadership sinned.

It's hard to move perfection's movement without somebody perfect running the show. So then another group came along and said, no, it's not perfect when you accept Christ. What happens is after you accept Christ, you need a second blessing. That's what it is. Then you're more perfect. Not perfect, but more perfect. So another group came along and said, hey, it isn't a second blessing, you dingalings. What it is. It's the baptism. What you need is the baptism. Haven't you ever read Acts? I mean, look at it. It's even in the English. And there you see it's the baptism, the baptism. That's the second blessing you're talking about.

And now you move into a new experience with God. Another group comes along and says, hey, you guys didn't read far enough. Haven't you read the epistles? It's the filling, the filling of the

Spirit. That's the second blessing you crazy guys have been talking about. And the baptism and perfection. It doesn't move into perfection. But now you're more into a new camp. You have just now been promoted into a new camp because you pushed the right button and you are now into that area. I find it difficult to find that the Bible teaches any of the above as a second experience to move into some kind of new club with God. There is no first class compartment in the body. When I fly on an airplane, I fly first class. Love it. It's the only way to fly. There is no other way to fly. I don't even look in the back anymore.

I mean, I go first class all the way. And yet in the Christian life, there is no such thing as the first class compartment. And then all of you other people that haven't found it yet. I'm sorry, my friend, you can get it. But if you don't got it now, you may not ever get it. We'll talk about that tomorrow. It gets very exciting. We're going to blow a lot of bubbles out and the whole series may end tomorrow. Poor in spirit. It's the right evaluation of yourself before God. It's seeing God and all of his Holiness and seeing yourself in all of your sinfulness and really being overwhelmed with that. And you know what happens when pride sets in, this flees very quickly because it's just the opposite of pride.

And you'll find a couple of throughout the whole Bible, you'll find the same kind of couplet of fearing God, being the best action step against pride. Fearing God meaning being overwhelmed with the fact that God is who he is. And I am just his creation, but I am his creation. Let's go on. It gets much worse. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. How can a person who mourns be blessed? As

you move into John 16 and verse 20, Jesus tells his disciples, I'm going to go away. And as I go away, you are going to mourn and weep and be very sorrowful, but the world is going to rejoice.

They're going to be excited. But I'm going to send you another. What? Comforter bless are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Paul picks up the same kind of theme in 2 Corinthians, four and five. And there he says that we live in this Earth and tabernacle, this tabernacle of clay that's disintegrating and falling apart and decaying, and in this sinful body, this old sinful body that's falling apart, we have this heavenly treasure on the inside and that heavenly treasure as I realize, I've got that heavenly treasure, that newborn spirit, even the Holy Spirit, living in my newborn spirit who has created it. Then I realized that I begin to groan and mourn over the fact that I can't be just like Christ right now. I mourn over the fact that I can't have my total new body now. I still got the old sinful nature pulling me away, and I mourn over that. That's what Paul is talking about. They're mourning over that.

In James four and five. It says there sometimes when you sin, you ought to weep and howl and mourn. What's mourning? I think mourning is a sensitivity to that which keeps you from God. It's a sensitivity to that which keeps you from God. We know that there are three major areas of problem in our lives. One is the world system out there and all of its values, not the people out there, the world system, the whole system, the value system, the ethics system, that which is luring us away from God. Then you've got that magnet on the inside. The old sin nature luring us away from God's game plan. And then Satan's in the middle trying to lure us away from God's game plan.

What he's saying is take those into the specifics and begin to mourn or be sensitive to that which keeps you from God and mourn over that. But you know what many Christians do? They mourn over themselves. They're singing the third and fourth verse of Woe Is Me. It's okay to sing at once, but never verse two. Don't ever sing verse two of Woe is Me. You got to get back up. Never do you see it in Scripture? Song? More than one verse. You just never see more than one verse. Song. We'll see one here in a moment. Isaiah started the song, but, woe, with me, that's okay to sing at once, but now you've got to bounce back.

And many people get shocked that they sin. I had more people say to me, I just can't believe I did that. Why can't you believe you did it? Well, here I am, a believer. Now what they say, what they're saying is I'm supposed to be perfect. I'm supposed to have already been in the first class cabin and I'm acting like I'm a coach. That's what many people are saying. And they're shocked that they sinned. Don't be shocked when you sin. Good night. Let me give you a shocker right now. You're going to sin. Plan on it. I don't believe in plan, sin. I'm just saying plan on the fact that you're going to don't get bowled over by it. Bounce back. That's part of the deal. You haven't gotten there yet. When you get in heaven and you sin, you should be shocked, but not here. We're in trouble here. It's a battle. It's a struggle.

As a matter of fact, the spiritual warfare is called a hand to hand combat there in Ephesians six. It's a struggle. It's a battle. It's a tough one. It's down in the trenches. It's not easy. Life is full of piles and the piles are there. But you mourn over that which keeps you from God. Don't mourn over you. Don't say, oh, woe is me. I can't believe I did that. Oh, wow. They go deep in depression. I like me. I'm big on me. I really like me. I like me more than anybody I know in this

room likes me. I like me a lot. It's okay to like you. That's all right. Jesus already made that statement. He said, what you have to do is love your neighbor as yourself. And if you don't love yourself, your neighbor is in a heap of trouble.

It's okay to love you. That's all right. You see, we've confused something out there in the Christianity. We've confused love of self and selfishness. They're two different things. They're two different things. Selfishness and loving self. They're two very different things. There's a good book coming out on that in May called Have You Ever Had a Mental. Outstanding book. Now, as we look at this mourning, it's mourning over that which keeps me from God. When I sin, I mourn over that which has pulled me away, not taking responsibility and throwing it out the door. I sinned. I did it. I yielded to it. But I mourn over the sin nature that pulled me into it. I hate it.

I remember when I was dealing with a gal who had been involved in satan worship for many years. Wild, wild story. She used to lead a Bible study one time a week, and she also went to satan worship another time during the week. She was a believer. Incredible experience as I was meeting with her and talking to her about her problems and some of the demonic forces manifested themselves as a wild, wild experience. I walked out of that office building, got in the elevator, and I was so upset with satan that I just got in the elevator all by myself and I just yelled out, satan, I hate you. It's that kind of mourning over those elements that keep us from God. Not mourning over you. Not mourning over people. Mourning over that which keeps us from God. Mourning over the fact that we can't be with the Lord Jesus right now and get out of

this mess. Mourning over the fact and torn between the fact that I could be with him now or stay here and minister for him. That was the struggle Paul had.

And he mourned over the fact that he had to continue struggling through the piles of life. But he wasn't mourning over him. He was mourning over the fact that of those things that keep him from God, the next one is, Blessed are the meek. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the Earth. Meekness is not weakness. It's a quiet, controlled confidence. A quiet, controlled strength. It's a strength or a confidence which comes from the fact that you know who you are and you know your relationship with God.

Therefore, who in the world can bother me, who can hurt me? Why do I need to react? You see these three poor in spirit, mourning and meekness found in Isaiah, chapter six, where Isaiah had his vision. He sees God in all of his Holiness and sees himself and all of his sinfulness. And then he mourns on one verse, Woe is me, for I am undone. I am unclean. I dwell amongst people who are unclean. He stopped singing right there. That was the end of that song. He didn't even move into the chorus. He just stopped right there. And then he realized what had happened.

First of all, poor in spirit, who God is, who he is poor in spirit. Then he heard the Trinity talking. We need someone to go over here. Whom shall we send? What did Isaiah say? Hey, gosh, I wish I could go, but I'm down over here under the pile. I'm under a pile of depression. I mean, look, I can't do that. Look what I just did. I mean, I'm dirty, I'm sinful, I'm wiped out. There's no way in the world I could go. Gosh. God, I'd like to go for you, but you know me. He didn't do that. What do you do? He said, Here am I. Send me. Is that pride coming out? No. It's meekness coming

out. A quiet, controlled confidence. Because he'd already been through the process of poor in spirit and mourning. Now he can have meekness through this relationship with God.

A quiet, controlled confidence of saying, hey, I'll go. These first three nobody likes and I've been watching, you know, none of you liked it because each one of these is talking about where we lack it's just yuck. And no one wants to talk about it yuck. If we'd announced today, I was going to talk about yuck nobody's been here. I wouldn't have come. No one. You wouldn't have come. We moved to the fourth when it picks us right back up. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. This word, satisfy, was a word that was used for fattening up cattle to feed them until they couldn't eat anymore. Just keep feeding them, feeding them, feeding them. He says, you can have that kind of satisfaction if you hunger and thirst for righteousness.

A righteousness is a word that should be interpreted here as walking consistently with God's standard. Jesus was the righteous one. He walked most consistently with God's standard. Righteousness is walking consistently with God's standard or walking consistently with being Christ like. It's hungering and thirsting to be like Christ. It's hungering and thirsting to walk consistently with God's game plan for life. That's what righteousness is all about. Now, why did you say hunger and thirst? I think he knew me because I'd get around that any other word was used if he'd say, Blessed are those who desire to be like Jesus Christ. I remember when I first read this, I was reading seriously, and I came to that verse and I said, Timmons, are you hungry and thirsting for righteousness?

And I answered myself, certainly. I mean, I desire to be. I desire to be like Jesus Christ. That wasn't the question, Are you hungry and thirsting for righteousness to walk consistently with God's game plan? Well, it's pretty high on my list. That's not the question. The question is, are you hungering and thirsting for it? It's a much different deal. I'm a tabaholic and being a tabaholic, I get the shakes if I don't have a tab. Periodically, it's hard for me to go by 711 knowing there's tab on the inside.

I remember one evening, my wife and I put the kids to bed. Her job is to keep tab there underneath the sink. It was raining very hard outside. And I went in after we put the kids to bed, after the pit area, there very desperate time of day. And I was shaking just a tad. And I went underneath the kitchen sink and looked under there and there wasn't any tab. I went to my wife and I said, there's no tab in there. She said, no tab. No tab. She knows that's serious. She said, you're not going to go out in the rain. I said, I've got to go and look at it. Look at it. So I went out in the rain. Just horrible rainstorm. I went out and got a tab. I can't tell you how much they cost. It doesn't make any difference to me how much they cost. I got to have a tab. I got to have a tab now, instantly. Now, we talked about yesterday because I'm not sure they're going to keep making it, and I want to get it all right now.

A Canadian study nearly killed me there when they were starting to ban everything. I nearly had to move, but I'm not shooting it up. I'm still taking it orally. But you see the principal? When I'm thirsty for a tab, I go get it. It doesn't make any difference what it costs. That's what he's talking about here. Blessed those who hunger and thirst for it doesn't make any difference how much it

costs. I'm going after it. That's what he's talking about. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst to walk consistently with God's game plan, for they shall be satisfied.

Are you hungry and thirsting to be like Jesus Christ? Are you hungry and thirsting for it? They and they only shall find satisfaction. The second series of four, he starts with, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Another word for merciful or for mercy is compassion. Or to be compassionate, it's to show compassion for somebody who's in need, and you can meet that need. One of the greatest things we can do, obviously, is to share our faith in Jesus Christ, not by putting a hammer lock on people, but by sharing our faith in Jesus Christ.

I'll talk more about that this evening. But basically, when I first became a believer, I wanted to tell everybody. I mean, I turned off half my friends and most of my enemies first week. I didn't know what to do, didn't know what to say, and I was killing them all. I was so frustrated, though, that I didn't know how to witness. I pray one day, Lord, I want to talk to Richard. And I went to study hall first period in high school, and there was Richard sitting right next to me. You know what Richard said to me that morning? He said, Tim, do you believe in the Bible? I said, Richard, I do. Then I asked him about chemistry or math or something else. I was scared to death. I didn't know what else to do. I mean, that was too quick to have an answer. I just prayed that morning.

So that bothered me a lot. And I just felt guilty about that all through those years. And I got into College and finally to graduate school, and wow, I still didn't know how to witness. And finally

somebody said, if you can read, you can witness. Well, I could read. So I took this little booklet and they said, what you do is you find somebody alone. You sneak up on them. I'll straighten that out tonight. But anyway, that's where we started, and you find them alone. And so I went to the cafeteria and I sat down. I found this guy all by himself. And I said, do you mind if I talk to you? And he said, no, I don't mind. I said, well, just run around talking to people and tell him about this little booklet. He said, really? I said, do you mind if I read this little booklet to you? He said, no, I don't mind. So I read this booklet to him.

I said, now, you wouldn't want to accept Christ, would you? He said, no, I think I would. I said, you would? He said, yes, I've been thinking about this. I said, really? He said, yes. I said, you know, I don't think you understood exactly what the book was said, because I've never had anybody act like this before. I was scared to death. I couldn't believe that I knew he misunderstood. So I read through the booklet all over again. I told him I've only read the thing twice myself. So I read through the booklet again and I said, now, certainly you wouldn't want to do anything like that, would you? And he said, yes, I would. I said, Here? He said, Well, I don't know where else to go to you. I said, I've never been on this campus before. I don't know where to go. He said, well, here as good as any. I said, okay. And I hand him a booklet, and he bowed his head and prayed. And I looked all over like this.

Guy's asleep. I was so excited I couldn't stand. I took the booklet, left the guy, I don't know whatever happened to him. He died in the pile someplace, I'm sure. I took the booklet and went on, looked for another guy all by himself. Found another guy sitting all by himself saying, hey, how are you doing? He said, I'm great. And I said, well, you mind if I sit and talk with you? No,

I don't mind. You mind if I read you this booklet? No I don't mind, I read the booklet at the end. I said, you wouldn't want to do that, would you? He said, you know, my grandmother used to talk about things like that. I've been thinking a lot about that. So you have? He said, yes. I said, well, you probably want to think about it. He said, no, I really like to do that. I said, Here. He said, yeah, you know anywhere else? I said, I don't know anywhere else. So he prayed right there. Right there in front of God and everybody. This guy bowed his head and prayed. And I used the eyebrow method this time. Got really really bold on them. I geared up.

I went home bump in heaven. I couldn't believe it. I got home and I told my wife, you can't believe what happened. Two for two today. Two for two. I hadn't had one for any before. So I started passing out booklets and tracks everything that moved, if they were breathing or if you could take their paws, I just handed it to them all the time. And then I caught myself. I caught myself sharing the gospel. Not because I had compassion anymore, but because I had a good method and God wasn't impressed. God is not nearly as impressed about your method as he is about the compassion of the heart behind the method.

That's what Jesus is looking for here. He's looking for the merciful. He's not looking for your method. The method may vary. It doesn't make any difference what the method is. We got to get back to the basics. Major in the majors rather than the minors. And he goes on and says, Blessed are the pure in heart. Let me go back up here to merciful for a second. Unless you're poor in spirit, it's impossible to be merciful to somebody else. Unless you're poor in spirit, you've got a right evaluation of yourself before God. You know who God is and who you are. You don't have

the problem that the pride is taken over your whole life. Then you can reach out to somebody else.

But when you're sitting on top of your own problem and you're saying, hey, everything revolves around me, I'm controlling this deal and just hanging up for everybody else. You have no capacity to reach down and help somebody else out of the ditch. You have no capacity to lift somebody else up. You have no capacity to be merciful or compassionate, basically because you're not poor in spirit. If you have a difficulty being compassionate toward other people, you better check out the poor in spirit.

Then he says, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. This phrase, pure in heart is a phrase that really is talking about right motives, honesty, one that you can trust, one who is loyal. Matter of fact, I think it's Proverbs 22:11, where it says, the King's friend is pure in heart. He's one who could be trusted, and the King could not trust anyone else, otherwise they might be trying to dethrone him. So it has to be one who could be trusted. And you notice something? Unless you're mourning, a sensitivity to that which keeps you from God is very difficult to be pure in heart in your relationships outwardly. Then he goes on to bless the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. A peacemaker is one who makes peace where there is no peace, makes peace where there is no peace.

Jesus was the great peacemaker between God and man. Making peace, we're to be peacemakers and all kinds of relationships that we're out and involved in. We're to make peace where there is no peace. Not war, but peace to keep things smoothly, moving along. Making peace where there

is no peace. This is not talking about somebody holding up a sign, make love, not war. It's talking about a peacemaker in a committee meeting, in a class, on the dorm floor, wherever you may be. It's making peace where there is no peace. A peacemaker and notice again, to be a peacemaker, you've got to have meekness. A quiet, controlled confidence. Otherwise you'll get caught up in reacting against everything everybody's saying. You'll be a reactionary rather than actionery.

What we need is activists, people who are creatively activating things, making things happen, not watching things happen. Peacemaker, not a reactionary. And then finally it says, Blessed are those who have been persecuted for sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely on account of me. Rejoice and be glad for your reward in heaven is great for so they persecute the prophets who are before you. Here he says, rejoice in persecution. Rejoice in persecution. What's the reason for persecution here? What's the reason for persecution here? Verse ten. For righteousness. Exactly. They're being persecuted. He's talking about persecution.

And what kind of persecution? What are they doing to them? Are they beating them up? Are they shooting at them, drawing swords? What are they doing? Saying things. It's verbal persecution. I've heard more people take this passage and say, now I'll tell you what, not long from now, we're going to get it. The believers in this country are going to get persecuted. I've heard people pray Lord need persecution in this country to sharpen up the believers, and they use this passage. This passage is not talking about people getting thrown into. There are other

passages for that. This passage is a very calm passage. This passage is talking about verbal persecution, which we all receive. But you notice the verbal persecution is for righteousness.

It's like the person who's been hungry and thirsting to walk consistently with God's game plan is becoming righteous in his walk. He's already righteous in his standing. Now he's becoming righteous in his walk. And as he's living out this game plan, it makes people uncomfortable around him. Why? Because he's got a game plan. It's not allowed to have a game plan. It makes people very uncomfortable. I've got to find out dirt if you've got a game plan and I don't. I want to find out dirt on this and show inconsistencies in it and shoot holes through it so I can feel better about the fact that I don't have one. That's where the verbal persecution comes. That's what happened to Jesus. He walked on the scene. The Pharisees thought they had the only game plan in town.

He blew their game plan out. Blew it out. And so they had to find out some way to get dirt on him while they were going after it. I mean, he's the guy that came on the scene and says, hey, look, guys, you've heard it said that you should not commit adultery. I got a new one for you. If you've thought about it, you've already committed it. They all died in the pile right there. Can you imagine if death, if it were instant death, the moment you thought about any kind of adultery or fornication the moment the thought came in your mind, it was death. Everybody in this room would be dead. Hungry and thirsting for righteousness. That moves into place of verbal persecution for the sake of righteousness. There are five guys in green coats that went into Southern Methodist University one day, and they had Bibles under their arms.

They'd stick a Bible in a guy's stomach and say, do you know you're going to hell? And are you saved? And some really exciting questions. And the guy didn't know he was going to hell, of course. And he didn't set it from what he wasn't sure. And these guys were thrown out of the student center. And I was there when they were there. As they were thrown out, they quoted this verse, Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness. They weren't persecuted for the sake of righteousness. They were persecuted for being dumb. That's what they were persecuted for. And being untaxful and being very much of a persecutor themselves. They were being persecuted for being persecuted. They were killing people in there. And if I wasn't who I was, I'd have thrown them out.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness. And notice he says, rejoice, when you get persecuted. Rejoice? I think what he's saying is rejoice over the fact that you're following some kind of testimony, giving out some kind of testimony that you've got some kind of game plan according to God's standard. And they're noticing it. Rejoice. But now he goes a little further. He goes to preaching to meddling right here. He says, rejoice and be glad. Now the rejoice doesn't bother me. It's to be glad that makes me nervous. It's the words that we get celebrate, throw a party. Can't you just imagine this? You just got persecuted. And so you call everybody up and say, hey, guess what? They just got persecuted. We're going to have a party, rejoice and celebrate. Somebody noticed their game plan.

When I was in Washington, DC, I was in a campus ministry and I helped start a campus work there in DC and we went on American University, a small Methodist school with a 70% Jewish population. And there I had the privilege of speaking to the Jewish Defense League, which I'll

tell you about this evening. And I spoke to the national officers of the Jewish Defense League on why I believe Jesus is the Messiah. And it wasn't one of the better topics for the JDL. I'll tell you that, because they can kill your body right there. And they tried. And so what happened is a couple of weeks later, this guy came up on the dorm. The elevator opened, he walked out. I was talking to a friend of mine, the Rabbi of the 6th floor of the dormitory, and he caught himself, the Rabbi, and I call himself because he was very big. And I was talking to him and this guy came and just stared at me. And I looked. I said, Hi.

And the guy just stood there. I thought, he needs to warm up a little bit or something. And so I'll go back to my conversation. So I went back to this guy and he's still staring. And I came back and said, Did I do something wrong? He said, well, let me put it this way. There are quite a few of us on the campus that are willing to die to get you off the campus. And we want you off the campus within a week or there's going to be a lot of bloodshed. There's going to be a lot of problems. Hm. The elevator opened and he went out just like a movie. It was incredible. The elevator opened right back up. He went back out and he went down. I said, who was he? He said he was one of the JDL.

I said, well, he communicated very clearly since that's my area. I was impressed with his message. I never will forget it. Unbelievable experience. Now, what if I would go to get my staff team and call them up and say, hey, Saturday night, we're having a party. Going to have a party. Why somebody's birthday? Now we may be dead by Sunday morning. Something strange about that. But do you notice all of these? Each one of these is strange. Each one of these is so

different. It's so different from what we would do or how we would choose an attack or a strategy to be happy. Jesus goes right to the gut level and he doesn't let go.

This first group is talking more about you and your relationship to God. The second group is talking about you and your relationship to other people. And really, you can almost make another correlation here we'll read further. Look at verse 13. You are the salt of the Earth. But if the salt has become tasteless, and that's not a good translation, tasteless. If the salt has become ineffective, if the salt has become ineffective, how will it be made salty again? It is good for nothing anymore except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by man. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do men light a lamp and put it under the peck measure but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father, who is in heaven.

This side is salt and this side is light. Salt is the quality of life, the quality of your relationship with God. It's a preservative effect against decay. Tonight I'll talk more about salt and how its effect must be on the world. But salt is a preservative effect. It was used as a preservative against the decay in meat so that the meat would not decay. It's a preservative effect. It's a quality and effective quality of life. And that's what these are talking about. Light is talking about outwardly, toward the people outside, toward the people other than your relationship with God. All others around you, you see. Salt and light. You see.

Happy believers move to a different drumbeat than the world because their salt to counteract the decay and their light to counteract the darkness. Happy believers move to a different drumbeat than the world because there's salt to counteract the decay and light to counteract the darkness. Are you a happy believer? According to Jesus' picture makes a big difference. Tomorrow we're going to get into who lives the Christian life, God or man. We're going to start in Genesis and go to revelation and we're going to go fast. We're going to have a good time because I think there's some exciting things in there to help us out.

Also. We're going to deal a little bit the next day, I believe on some of the things about priorities and putting your own priorities in order. Then finally I think on the last day I'm not sure yet, but I think I'm going to speak on Friday on the disintegration of a minister and how it's really the basis for a book I'm writing next spring called The minister's ex wife. And the idea of it is this that many people in ministry should not be in ministry. And a lot of you are feeling the guilties and feeling the pressure to go into the ministry full time. I'm talking about and you don't have any more business being in there than anything in the world, many of you. And so we're going to talk about that on Friday. When I go to ministers conferences my goal is to get people out of the ministry that shouldn't be there. That's my goal. I don't say that flippantly. I say that very seriously.

That when I go after a minister's conference I'm going to get as many as I can out of the ministry that shouldn't be there because a lot of people accept the mystical call and had heartburn instead. And there they are. Okay. Let's pray together before you leave. Father, thank you again for our time. I just pray that you'll take these words and even though they're mumbled and some may be

out of balance I pray that you might balance them out book you might clear them up you might help us to understand more than anything I pray that you'll burn these truths into our hearts that we might be different people because we've been here we pray these things in Jesus the Messiah's name Amen.