

Steps of Progression

by Wayne Goff

Sometimes I *teasingly* ask my Bible class [which](#) of the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:1-11), or Christian Virtues (2 Pet. 1:5-7), or Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) they would choose to **complete** their spiritual journey!

To my relief, someone in the class always points out that each of those lists are intended to be followed point by point, in a progression to greater spiritual growth! Fortunately, nobody has yet said, “Well, let’s see, of the Beatitudes I kind of like that ‘*hunger and thirst*’ thing, so I’ll choose that. The ‘*poor in spirit*’ beatitude seems a bit overbearing, don’t you think?”

So at least we seem to realize that the Beatitudes are “kingdom pointers” to prepare souls for the coming of the kingdom, which John the Baptist and Jesus foretold during their earthly ministries. In other words, these *spiritual qualities* are the things required by God of those who would enter His kingdom. So are you a child of God? Are you in the Lord’s kingdom? If so, have you fulfilled the Beatitudes, the Christian virtues, and the fruit of the Spirit? Yes, we are all a “work in progress,” but don’t get side tracked. Those who have obeyed the gospel are indeed (1) humble, (2) grieved over their sin, (3) self-controlled, (4) interested in righteousness, (5) merciful to others, (6) pure in heart, (7) peacemakers with God and men, and (8) persecuted for righteousness’ sake. It’s not a multiple choice question! God wants us to be all of these things.

So be sure you are being “*led by the Spirit*” of God and not by the “*spirit*” of this world (Rom. 8:14 versus Eph. 2:2). The world has a tremendous grasp on people. If you think not, just consider all the “current trends” that influence your thinking – what you wear, where you go, and what you do. Many of them are harmless in and of themselves. But don’t let the **worldly, carnal attitudes** become a part of you!

*“Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and **reaching forward** to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13-14).*

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