

The beatitudes are a prime example of how we get sidetracked with our mechanical approach to life while neglecting the emotional impact of what's being said.

Children in every Christian denomination has spent many hours trying to memorize the Beatitudes. There's great celebration for those who can recite the Beatitudes in order without any help.

But sometimes I think we really miss the point.

Why do we make the children memorize the Beatitudes? In fact, why do we make them memorize all the structured prayers and sayings within our churches? I've never been accused of being an intellectual, but to me memorizing anything is creating a foundation for becoming mechanical.

You memorize recipes so you can create the exact same dish over and over again. A chef is a mechanical cook. That's a good thing in a restaurant where you need to create the same dish over and over.

I could never be a chef because I am not a mechanical cook. I like to be creative. I like to live on the emotional side of life - what do I feel like cooking tonight?

It has long been my feeling that Jesus came to this planet to give us a message to STOP living our lives in a mechanical way and START living our life in a more emotional way.

Everything was mechanical back then. If you wanted to live in peace, you had to do everything in a mechanical nature. Even marriage was a transaction of mechanical rules.

With that in mind, I am not the one to memorize the Beatitudes. Instead, I'm going to look at what Jesus is saying with emotional eyes to get an emotional response to what he is saying.

When I look at the Beatitudes, I feel like Jesus is asking his followers, "What's your attitude about these people?" Because in Gods eyes, these people are looked at differently.

Blessed are the poor in spirit... How do YOU see those who are humble and soft spoken? They are weak, they don't have confidence because they aren't intellectually gifted. They are

afraid to stand up for what is right!

That's the mechanical response. God looks at them through emotional eyes and a heart of love. The humble are seen as compassionate, considerate and strong in their love. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn.... How do YOU see those who grieve? They are weak and lost in their pitty-party. They need to get over it and be strong. Life isn't always fair.

That's the mechanical response. God is LOVE and looks at those who mourn with emotional eyes of compassion. They will be comforted.

The Beatitudes are not some cute collection of sayings to be memorized. They are lessons about how each one of us should approach the many who struggle around us.

This is consistent throughout the four gospels. The message Jesus brought us is pretty simple: Stop living your life in a mechanical way and start living your life emotionally.

You don't give to the poor through a mechanical obedience to memorized rules.

You don't pray to God through a structured intellectual memorization lesson.

You never connect to God through intellectual prowess.

In nearly every church that believes in a single God, it would be agreed that the definition of who is God, the answer is LOVE.

God is Love.

God wants to connect with each and every one of us.

The Beatitudes is about our approach to those who struggle and have been dealt a difficult hand. How do YOU look at these people? What is YOUR attitude towards these people?

Is your response mechanical and intellectually driven?

Or is your response one of compassion from a heart of love?

God IS Love.

There is nothing mechanical about LOVE.