**HOLY SAVIOUR, BITTERNE BIBLE STUDY – WEEK BEGINNING JULY 5th (Beatitudes 9)**

*This is the last of our studies on the Beatitudes. We are going to look at all the Beatitudes this week in order to round off and sum up what has been discovered through the studies.* ***As usual you may find it helpful to jot down your thoughts about the questions in the spaces provided*** *–* ***and it would be really good to share them with others.*** *Phone, Skype, email some members of your homegroup or a friend and/or email me your thoughts (* brianparfitt@btinternet.com *).* ***Brian Parfitt***

Think of a Christian who has made a real impression on you. What words would you use to describe them?

As we seek to sum up the Beatitudes we are going to look at the character of the people Jesus calls ‘blessed; or ‘happy’.  **Read Matthew 5.3-12.** Jesus says blessed are:

**the poor in spirit,**

**those who mourn,**

**the meek,**

**those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,**

**the merciful,
the pure in heart,
the peacemakers,
those who are persecuted because of righteousness.**

Another description of Christian character is Paul’s list of the ‘fruit of the Spirit’, which, like the Beatitudes are attitudes which all Christians should portray. Paul says, **‘the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.’ (Galatians 5.22-23)** Look again at the Beatitudes listed – which aspects of the fruit of the Spirit might be linked to each?

In several studies we noted how the Beatitudes are exemplified in Jesus. Look at the list above. Can you think of examples from Jesus’ life which show how he demonstrated these characteristics? How many of those characteristics are true of the Christian you thought of earlier? What have you discovered from the Beatitudes about what it means for us to be Christ-like?

**Read Matthew 5.13-16.** It is often said that being salt relates to our impact on society by adding good flavour and preserving it from what is wrong, while being light is about the witness we bear to Christ, drawing people to God. **Look at the Beatitudes again.** Which might you link to being ‘salt’ and which to being ‘light’? How do they portray a Christian ‘counter-culture’ which is different from the values of the world around us? What are the challenges for you in how you live your life ‘before people’?

**Look at the list of ‘blessings’ below which Jesus links to the Beatitudes.
they will be comforted,
they will inherit the earth,
they will be filled,
they will be shown mercy.
they will see God,
they will be called children of God,
theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

How can those promises encourage us? How do we see them become a reality?

What key things have you learnt from the Beatitudes about Christian character and what it means to be ‘blessed’?