

Follow Jesus: He Outranks All

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“He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all” (John 3:31).

John the Immerser deliberately made a play on the word “above” in this passage. The first “above” pertains to heaven being “above” the earth directionally. But the second “above” is a reference to rank. Jesus is “above” everyone else in rank. The Lord Himself said, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth”* (Matthew 28:18).

Why does Jesus outrank all others? The place from which He came partially answers that question. John and all the prophets before him were earthly men; but Jesus had come from Heaven where He had been eternally co-existent with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

The point is not that John, Moses, Elijah, or the other prophets were wrong or evil. In fact, there was a time when God spoke through such men. But as Hebrews 1:2 says, God *“has in these last days spoken to us by His Son.”* On the Mount of Transfiguration, when Moses and Elijah appeared alongside Jesus, God’s voice commanded: *“This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!”* (Mark 9:7).

In ancient times, kings led their armies on the battle field. Loyal soldiers understood the importance of following their king. Even the captain of the army knew the king outranked him. Jesus is our King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). As His loyal soldiers (2 Timothy 2:3), let us honor His supreme rank with our careful obedience!

BEATITUDES FOR THE SELF-OBSESSED

✓ Blessed are the self-obsessed, for theirs is the kingdom of personal fulfillment.

✓ Blessed are they who seek their own happiness at any cost, even at the expense of others, for they shall enjoy a life of euphoric contentment.

✓ Blessed are the cynical and untrusting, for they shall inherit an environment of security.

✓ Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after entertainment, for they shall be perpetually amused.

✓ Blessed are they who demand to be served, for they shall bask in pleasure.

✓ Blessed are they who avoid commitment and responsibility, for they shall enjoy a paradise of independence.

✓ Blessed are the revenge-seekers, for they shall be called the heroes and role models for our children.

✓ Blessed are those willing to compromise their convictions in a relentless pursuit of popularity, for theirs is a life of endless bliss.

✓ Blessed are you when everyone knows your name, when you star in your own TV sit-com, and when you have more money than a superstar in professional sports.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward here on earth, for this has been the true path of happiness and personal enrichment for those of all generations in love with themselves.

THE PROBLEM? THESE BEATITUDES ARE UNTRUTHFUL, UNWORKABLE, AND UNSCRIPTURAL!

TEN REASONS WHY I NEVER WASH

1. I was forced to wash as a child.
2. People who wash are hypocrites -- they think they are cleaner than everybody else.
3. There are so many different kinds of soap, I can't decide which is best.
4. I used to wash, but I got bored and stopped.
5. I wash only on special occasions, like Christmas and Easter.
6. None of my friends wash.
7. I'll start washing when I get older and dirtier.
8. I can't spare the time.
9. The bathroom is never warm enough in winter or cool enough in summer.
10. People who make soap are only after your money.

--Author Unknown

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| will not step on your toes

If you'll keep them where they belong.

| am preaching to your head

And your heart.

--R. L. Whiteside (Anvil Sparks)