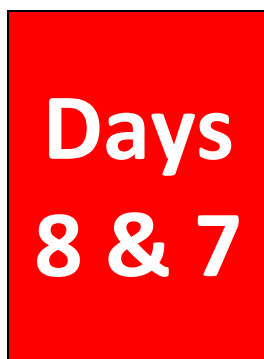


Third Wednesday in Advent – 2024

Wednesday, 12/18 at 11 am & 7 pm



Text: Matthew 5:3-10; Romans 12:6-8 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: This is **Part 3** of a **6-Part Series** on **The 12 Days of Christmas**. We are counting down from **Day 12 to 1**, and plan to arrive on **Day 1** on the **First Day of Christmas**, which is **Christmas Day, 12/25**.

The poem, **The 12 Days of Christmas**, was written in **1558**, and then turned into a song in **1909** (see parts 1 and 2 for more historical information).

What is the song about? It is about **God the Father** giving **12 Bible Gifts** to people who **trust in Jesus as their Savior**.

What are those gifts? So far in this series we have covered these days of The 12 Days of Christmas:

- **Day 12 – Twelve Drummers Drumming**, which point to **The 12 points of belief in the Apostles' Creed**.
- **Day 11 – Eleven Pipers Piping**, which point to **The 11 faithful disciples**.
- **Day 10 – Ten Lords A-Leaping**, which point to **The 10 Commandments**.

- **Day 9 – Nine Ladies Dancing**, which point to **The 9 Parts of the Fruit of the Spirit**.

Today we focus on days 8 and 7, as we continue to countdown to day 1 – A Partridge in a Pear Tree, which points to **Jesus, the Christ, our Savior and our Lord!**

1. **Day 8 – Eight Maids A-Milking: The Eight Beatitudes**, which begin the Sermon on the Mount. They tell us
 - ➔ what we are / how we live **as disciples of Jesus** and
 - ➔ identify eight *eternal* blessings.
 - a. **Matthew 5:3-10** Blessed are **the poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. // Aware of their spiritual helplessness, they ➔ *are trusting in Jesus* and ➔ *have God's gift of heaven!*
 - b. ⁴ Blessed are **those who mourn**, for they shall be comforted. // Aware that their sins separated themselves from God, they are ➔ *trusting in Jesus* and ➔ *comforted with forgiveness!*
 - c. ⁵ Blessed are **the gentle** [*considerate*], for they shall inherit the earth. // As followers of Jesus, they ➔ *show consideration to others* and ➔ *have an amazing inheritance!*
 - d. ⁶ Blessed are **those who hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied. // As followers of Jesus, they ➔ *are righteous in God's sight* and ➔ *desire to live righteous lives!*
 - e. ⁷ Blessed are **the merciful**, for they shall receive mercy. // As followers of Jesus, they ➔ *have received God's mercy* and ➔ *extend it to others!*

- f. ⁸ Blessed are **the pure in heart**, for they shall see God. // As followers of Jesus, *▶they are clean on the inside, and ▶it shows on the outside!*
- g. ⁹ Blessed are **the peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God. // As followers of Jesus, they *▶are at peace with God and ▶seek the same for others – by sharing God’s truth and praying!*
- h. ¹⁰ Blessed are **those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. // As followers of Jesus, *they live for Jesus, which results in persecution. Such people have their citizenship in heaven!*

Application: On the **Eighth Day of Christmas**, compare your life with the eight beatitudes!

2. **Day 7 – Seven Swans A-Swimming: The Seven Gifts of the Spirit**. These are seven gifts given to Christians to enable them to serve in God’s kingdom. **Romans 12:6-8** Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly: [As I go through the list, let us try to identify our gift or gifts. Then, let us gladly use them to serve the Lord!]*
- a. if **prophecy**, according to the proportion of his faith; // Prophecy is sharing God’s word in a way that is **accurate** and **beneficial**. On a scale of 1 to 10, where is our faith? ... *▶Our faith and ▶our sharing of God’s word should be in harmony!*
 - b. ⁷ if **service, in his serving**; // Many at Bethlehem are in positions to **serve** within our congregation – **TY!** Whatever our position is, let us serve gladly, well, in harmony with others, and to God’s glory!

- c. **he who teaches, in his teaching;** // We are blessed at Bethlehem to have **13** people who teach others. Let us follow the pattern of Ezra by ♦knowing the Bible is true, ♦studying the Bible, and ♦living the Bible, ***then we will be ready to teach the Bible!***
- d. ⁸ **he who exhorts, in his exhortation;** // Some have the gift of **inviting, begging, urging** others in a particular direction. If you have that gift, ***then use it to be a blessing in God's kingdom!***
- e. **he who gives, with liberality;** // Our **giving** should be based on our **receiving**. We have all received, ***so let us give***. For those with this gift, let them do so ♦***generously*** and ♦***with no strings attached!***
- f. **he who leads, with diligence;** // Since most of our lives influence others, we are leaders to some extent. ***So let us lead in God-honoring ways!***
- g. **he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.** // Mercy is helping someone in need. Whenever we do so, let us ♦***be positive*** and ♦***express Christ-like love!***

Application: On the Seventh Day of Christmas,
 ♦identify your gift(s), ♦give thanks, and ♦be diligent in using it/them to be a blessing!

Let Us Pray: Dear Father in heaven, even though The 12 Days of Christmas is a silly song, help us to ♦understand Your 12 precious gifts and ♦make use of them according to Your will!

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube** and **Podcast:** "Benefit from the Bible"
Facebook: "Bethlehem Parma" / **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com; 440-292-5915
 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134 / 440-845-2230