

Providence Reformed Baptist Church - Sunday, February 14, 2021

Sermon Series: The Gospel of the Kingdom – Matthew

Message 24. The Persecuted – Matthew 5:10

Pastor Phillip M Way

Intro: In this be-attitude we find not a character quality we are possess, or something we are to be in the inner man. Instead we learn what the world's reaction will be to us if we are a Christian, as exemplified by these be-attitudes. If we look like this, the kind of believer described and empowered by grace, blessed, then we will look like Jesus. And the hard truth found in Matthew 5:10 is this: If you are a believer, a follower of Jesus Christ, one who looks like Him, then you will be persecuted. There is no way around it. (Intro pg. 2)

- I. Defining the Terms – Matt. 5:10
 - A. Blessed - a recipient of divine favor, grace - desire and ability to please God
 - B. Persecuted – Acts 22:4; 24:25; Gal. 1:23
 1. To be pursued, chased out, put to flight
 2. The persecutors will not leave you alone until you are dead or gone
 3. “The only homage which wickedness can pay to righteousness is to persecute it.” – CHS
 - C. Righteousness Sake – Holiness
 1. Right, just, the culmination of God's justifying work – Gal. 5:5; Rom. 6:16; 1 Peter 2:24
 2. Not merely, “Blessed are the persecuted...”, but because they look like Jesus
 3. “Blessed by what looks like a curse – it is a gift from God to be allowed to suffer for His name.” – CHS – 1 Peter 3:14; 4:14
 - D. Yours in the Kingdom of Heaven – see Matt. 5:3
 1. If you start with the Kingdom, you will end with the Kingdom – Rom. 11:29; Phil. 1:6
 2. You have the kingdom now!
 - E. Definition – An evidence that you are a recipient of grace and a citizen of the kingdom of God is the change in your life that will attract the hatred of the world and those opposed to the gospel of grace and our Savior – John 16:33; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Thess. 3:3-4
- II. Pseudo-Persecution – Boice Quote #1
 - A. This is Not Suffering for Sin – Iniquity – 1 Peter 4:15
 - B. Not Suffering for Selfishness – Idolatry or a martyr complex
 - C. Not Suffering for Stupidity – Ignorance or Idiocy – being a nuisance, insulting, difficult – (the village idiot)
 - D. Not Suffering for Zealousness – being a fanatic – persecution is not a provoked response
 - E. Not Suffering for Religio-Political Reasons – prejudice is not principle – MLJ Quote #2
 - F. Not Suffering for Being “Saintly”
 1. Doing good, self-sacrificing – if the world loves it, can it be righteousness? – John 15:19; Luke 6:26
 2. Jesus was perfect – look how the world treated Him! – Summary Quote #3
- III. Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake – Holiness – John 3:20
 - A. By the World – the natural man's mind put him at enmity with God – it hates God
 - B. By the Religious – who persecuted Jesus? Chief Priests and Pharisees
 - C. By the Church – is the perfect Christian one who is nice, popular, and never offends?
- IV. The Kingdom
 - A. Citizenship Requires New Birth
 - B. Citizenship Results in Being Light – John 15:19-23; Eph. 5:13
 - C. Citizenship is Exemplified by Walking by Faith – 2 Cor. 5:7; Phil. 1:29
 1. What if it comes down to our livelihood?
 2. The Bible does not say we have to live – it says we must be holy! Where is your faith?

Intro: If we are poor in spirit, we will be persecuted, because the world things we have everything within ourselves to make our life what it ought to be.

If we mourn over sin, we will be persecuted, because the world would rather excuse sin, justify it, or explain it away.

If we are meek, we will be persecuted, because the world wants tolerance, not meekness.

If we hunger and thirst after righteousness, we will be persecuted, because the world hates righteousness.

If we are merciful, we will be persecuted, because the world does not want actual mercy, but the freedom to sin and enjoy it.

If we are pure in heart, we will be persecuted, because the world wants acceptance, approval, and endorsements in their pursuit of wickedness and depravity.

If we are peacemakers, we will be persecuted especially, because the world hates being told that they need to be made right with God and reconciled to Him because of their sin.

“This is how the world reacts to a be-attitude Christian.” – MLJ

Quotes

Boice #1 – “There is very little persecution in America today. Persecution today is racial or political, but rarely religious. The world has become tolerant of us because we have become tolerant of the world. Yet an absence of persecution should drive a believer quickly to his knees. As a believer we will not be persecuted for everything, but persecution is inevitable – if you live like this you will be persecuted.”

MLJ #2 – “I say that there is a difference between being persecuted for righteousness’ sake and being persecuted for a cause. I know that the two things often become one, and many great martyrs and confessors were at one and the same time suffering for righteousness’ sake and for a cause. But it does not follow that the two are always identical. There have been men who have suffered and have even been put in prison for religion. But they have not been suffering for righteousness’ sake. Some people seem anxious for martyrdom, they almost court it. That is not the thing about which our Lord is talking.”

Summary #3 – We can bring endless suffering upon ourselves. We can create difficulties. We can be stubbornly self-righteous. We can provoke persecution. None of this qualifies as being persecuted for righteousness sake.

Cross References

Acts 22:4

4 I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women,

Acts 24:25

25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, "Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you."

Galatians 1:23

23 But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy."

Galatians 5:5

5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Romans 6:16

16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

1 Peter 2:24

24 who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed.

1 Peter 3:14

14 But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. "And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled."

1 Peter 4:14

14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

Matthew 5:3

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Romans 11:29

29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

Philippians 1:6

6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

John 16:33

33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

2 Timothy 3:12

12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

1 Thessalonians 3:3-4

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.
4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

1 Peter 4:15

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters.

John 15:19

19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Luke 6:26

26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

John 3:20

For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

John 15:18-23

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. 20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. 21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. 22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23 He who hates Me hates My Father also.

Ephesians 5:13

But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

2 Corinthians 5:7

7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.

Philippians 1:29

29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

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