

Matthew 5:1–12

¹ And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him.

² Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:

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

⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Beatitudes – Part 7 **Matthew 5:10-12**

INTRO:

We have been seeking to understand the beatitudes with which our Lord Jesus introduces His famous *Sermon on the Mount* in **Matthew chapters 5-7**. We observed that these beatitudes are the character traits of those who will inherit the kingdom of heaven. Today, we will take on the last beatitude which has two parts. It is first stated in the traditional third person form. He then follows it with a restatement and expansion in second person.

I. THE CONCISE BEATITUDE (v. 10)

II. THE EXPANDED BEATITUDE (v. 11-12)

I. THE CONCISE BEATITUDE (v. 10)

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:10.

A. This last beatitude is much more important than the attention we usually give it. This is the other end of the bookends of these qualities which mark those who belong to the Kingdom of Heaven and those who possess the Kingdom. Do you remember the **“because”** statement of the first beatitude? In **verse 3** we read, ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”***

Look at **verse 11** again.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Like the first beatitude this last beatitude marks clearly the life of those who possess the Kingdom of Heaven. Let me say it in another way. If you want to know if you really are a part of the kingdom, make sure you recognize the grace of God in your life and the great sign of the Father’s blessing because He allows you to go through persecution.

B. We need to notice that all persecution is not under this blessing, only persecution for righteousness sake.

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.”

What does this mean?

1. The Apostle Peter showed us in **1 Peter 1:6-9**.

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, [in order] that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, receiving the end of your faith—the salvation of your souls.”

Being a Christian who wants to have Christ first in the life can lead to suffering.

This is not suffering because we stir up opposition thinking we gain by this kind of suffering. Rather this is suffering because we choose to follow Christ.

2. Second, what Jesus was saying is clearly stated in the expansion in **verses 11-12**. We read there in **verse 11**,

“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely [because of Me].”

The phrases are parallel in the Greek. In **verse 10** it says literally, you endure persecution **“because of Righteousness.”** It appears both statements mean the same thing.

C. If suffer in this way it is a strong indication that we have experienced the grace of God in salvation by faith, and that Christ lives and reigns in our lives.

“For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

II. THE EXPANDED BEATITUDE (v. 11-12)

Matthew 5:11-12

“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely [because of Me]. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

A. To make us realize how important this last beatitude is, the Lord Jesus changed from the third person, ***“Blessed is the one who is. . .”*** to the second person, ***“Blessed are you.”*** He then expanded on what He said in the beatitude. He said, you and I must recognize we enjoy God’s special favor and joy when we endure verbal insults, physical suffering, and slander. But this is not all kinds of insults, sufferings, and slander. Only those which are false and are because of Christ qualify for this blessing.

B. Do Christians actually act like this? Do you remember the struggles of the early church? In **Acts 5:40-41**, we read,

“And [the Sanhedrin] agreed with [Gamaliel] and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So [the Apostles] departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”

The Apostle Paul wrote to the **Philippians 1:29**.

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

C. The Bible does not expect us to approach the troubles that unbelievers and even insincere believers can bring to us with some kind of stoicism. We need to realize our Lord often taught us that some will hate us because they hated Him.

“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 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. 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.” John 15:18–20.

D. How do we respond to trouble with joy? The answer is again in **Philippians in 4:4**

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.”

We walk in the reality of our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Second, we live in the reality of the promise in **Matthew 5:12**.

“Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

E. We need to be always aware of the blessing our Lord provides for us when we suffer. This is not some meritorious reward to earn us brownie points with God. NO. Rather this is an awareness that the Lord will bless our every effort in serving Him. Here are two passages which underline this point.

1. First, **1 Corinthians 15:58**.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

We know this because this world is not all there is. We also know this because we who know He shall be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye and we shall go to heaven with Him.

2. Second, **2 Corinthians 6:16-18**

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

We do not earn this, however God does promise this kind of blessing for all those who know Him and suffer together with Him and because of Him. How then do we live so we can understand these realities? Here is the answer.

“We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:18

How Do We Then Live?

1. If we really want to serve the Lord Jesus and have Him reign in our lives, we should not be surprised that those who hate Christ will also hate us. We need to be aware that when they hate us because they hate Him, we are displaying the favor and blessing of God.

2. The reward that is waiting for us in heaven is not a reward we can readily understand. In one sense, just as we cannot understand the blessings of eternity with Christ in this life, we cannot wrap our minds around the ***“far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory”*** the Lord promises us if we are willing to endure persecution for Him.

3. Meanwhile we must live as Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:18. *“We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal”.*

It Will Be Worth It All