

07-06-14

Scripture: Matthew 5:10-12

Title: Persecution

Matthew 5:3-12

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 gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.*

6 *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

7 *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive 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 have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

11 *"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

Matthew 5:10-11

Saying same thing twice – more personal 2nd time

Blessed are you...

Very likely these 2 should be taken together

Same beatitude – stated twice

Interesting when you consider what was missing from Phil's plaques... 😊

Persecution

Let's think about this persecution for a bit today...

As believers we will be persecuted, falsely accused, insulted, spoken evil of...

What do we see in the world today...

Aren't Christians supposed to be rich and famous?

The healthy, the wealthy...

Persecution? In America???

What about those "Christians" on TV...

Fancy clothes, fancy cars, fancy houses

Isn't that what we're supposed to be?

All things work together for good, right

Everything's going to be good in my life, right?

Persecution? Say what?

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness...

Aren't we supposed to get along w/ everyone?

Be merciful, peacemakers

Kind and gentle to the world???

Be like the old-time saints...

Get churches named after you...

St. Paul's Cathedral...

St. Peter's

St. John's...

All of these "saints" were martyred, persecuted for righteousness sake, except John – he was just exiled...

For believers our "credentials" shouldn't be based on our pocketbook, on our shiny clothes or "big" name

It should come from how poor in spirit we are

It should come from the persecution we endure

Listen to Paul's "credentials"

2 Corinthians 11:23-27

Where's the glamor? Where's the prosperity?

Where's all the "blessing?"

Paul had great blessing – happiness – contentment

But it wasn't found in this world

The word used for persecute here means

To pursue, to drive, to chase away

To harass, to treat evilly

And it is going to keep happening

The happy life, the blessed life, following the beatitudes will be persecuted – we need to be willing to continue to be persecuted in this life

That's rough...being willing
Willing to be persecuted...

...when people insult you...

Insult, sometimes translated revile

Literally means – cast in one's teeth

Throw something in your face...

Used when Jesus was on the cross

Onlookers mocked/reviled Him

Abuse someone with vile, vicious, mocking words

Not only are we going to be chased out of the group

They're going to say bad things about us

... and falsely say all kinds of evil against you...

Not only are they going to kick you out of “the group”

Not only are they going to insult you

They're going to make up lies about you

They did it to Jesus

They will to us

Arthur Pink said: “it is a strong proof of human depravity that men's curses and Christ's blessings should meet on the same person.”

Jesus' blessing and the curses of people

Fall on the same person

The people God blesses

Are the people the world curses

Again remember our context

First sermon Jesus preached

First things out of His mouth to the crowd

Tells them they have to be poor in spirit

And, at the end of the list we have...

They're going to be persecuted

If we live the way He wants you to live

We will be persecuted

...chased out of your jobs and your homes

When we are living a lifestyle transformed by Jesus

The world doesn't like that – confronts them

Makes them uncomfortable

The fruit of this life, a life following the beatitudes, a life following Jesus

The fruit of this kind of life is eternal

When you lose everything of this world

You've lost nothing

They can't touch our real treasure

Persecuted for righteousness

Matthew 5:10-11

...persecuted for the sake of righteousness

*...insult you and persecute you, and falsely say
all kinds of evil against you because of Me*

John 15:18-19

How does the world feel about righteousness?

Ever heard the term – “goody two shoes?”

Not sure where it came from

Isn't looked on very highly

Usually intended as an insult when used

The world doesn't like righteousness...

The world loves darkness and Jesus is light

What was the world's response to Jesus?

What did they do to Him?

They killed Him...

If we were of the world – they would accept us

But we confront the world

Our lives confront the world

Or at least they should

If we do verses 3-9...

It's not really us they resent, it's the life we live

A life being changed to the image of Jesus

Becoming more like Him...

Why is Jesus such a problem?

Many reasons...interesting thought...

One I hadn't thought about

Up until Jesus the world had never seen a perfect man

When you're around others like yourself, worse than you, how do you start feeling?

It is easy for us to feel pretty good about ourselves

What happens when someone is better than us?

When we are faced w/ perfection?

I can play baseball w/ a bunch of kids (5-6yr olds)

If asked to play w/ adults – grown men/women

I break out in a cold sweat

Begin to feel sick

That's before I come to bat

Before a ball is hit to me

Before Jesus came we felt pretty good about ourselves

Jesus came – the perfect standard

We realize how bad we are

We don't like to see that

We don't like to feel like that

We don't like to know that we're that bad

As we let Jesus live in us, change us, transform us...

Jesus' standard confronts them again

They see a standard they can't reach

They want to get rid of that

Discount it, revile it, abuse it

Say bad things about it

Our lives should confront the standard of the world...

I've known some people w/ a chip on their
shoulder

They go looking for persecution
Actually bring it on themselves b/c of
their actions

That isn't what this is talking about

Persecuted for righteousness – what's right...

Our lives must back up our words

And all should focus on the truth

Standing for the truth, living for the truth

Our poverty of spirit...

Our meekness/gentleness...

Our hunger and thirst for righteousness

The mercy we show

Our peacemaking – sharing the truth

This is real happiness...

Way different from the world's definition

Persecution will come b/c of the truth we are speaking

Persecution will come b/c of the life we live

We will be insulted, misunderstood and falsely
accused

We will be blessed, happy...

Greater happiness than the world offers

We will be glad – our reward is not here

Our reward is in heaven

When we live by the first 7 beatitudes – persecution
will come

Beatitude living

This should be the character of every man and woman
who is in the kingdom

Feel a bit inadequate...

Can we ever live up to this?

This is for those people in stained glass windows

Those saints...

No one could do this in everyday life...

God doesn't work in stained glass people

He works in real live flesh and blood

These verses are a picture of what a believer should be
– what a real Christian should look like

Of course it is the ideal

God never lowers His standard for our sin

This is the description of a person who is truly happy,
truly blessed

There should be a progress, a growing toward
these things in our lives

As we begin to grow in the kingdom

As these attributes grow stronger in our lives
There will be pain and suffering involved
We will be peacemakers
We will also be troublemakers

James said we are to consider it all joy...

1 Peter 5:10

10 After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.

As we live out the character of the beatitudes
There will be a reaction from the world
And... It won't always be positive
These virtues are intolerable to an evil world

This who live out the beatitudes will be persecuted
The more we become like Jesus, the more the
world is going to react to us and react negatively

2 Timothy 3:12

12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

There was never anyone more loving than Jesus
There was never a greater peacemaker than Jesus
And yet, everywhere He went there was a
problem? Why?

Because He is truth, He stood for truth

The world didn't like Him
The world system didn't like Him

Even today we read of people killed b/c of their walk
w/ Jesus

Philippians 1:28-30

Persecution actually proves non-believers are headed
for destruction

It also shows that we are redeemed

When we live the righteous life God asks us to...

Live by the beatitudes...

The world will hate us

We stand for everything it dislikes

The world will resent us

We won't all be burned at the stake

Or persecuted all the time

Persecution will come

The intensity will vary – but persecution will be there

The frequency will vary...

Verse 11 actually says...

*...blessed are you **whenever** people persecute you*

Whenever is actually better translation here than when

Persecution isn't s. we look for or want

It will come

And when it does, we should be willing
We shouldn't run from it or compromise b/c of it

There are many ways we can be persecuted..

It may mean not getting a promotion

Dealing w/ silence from neighbors

Ostracized from family members...

Not "fitting in" like everyone else

The world is set against the things of God

As we live them out – there will be struggle

Believers at this time were confronted w/ a culture
against God – coming to Him could cause problems

What do you do about feasts to false gods...

Everyone else is going

Everyone else is having a good time...

Christians were thrown to the lions, burned at
the stake, boiled in oil...

...theirs is the kingdom of heaven

We need to remember the promise...

Matthew 5:10

...for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

God's kingdom is ours

Whatever we forfeit in this world

Whatever we give up in this world

Is gained a million-fold in God's kingdom

Whatever physical thing we lose
The eternal reward is far greater

Romans 8:18

How many of us live for the moment...
I want it now, I can't wait
I want it my way and that means now!
Living by God's standard is not living for now
It is living for the future
A future that is sure and secure

What was the promise for the 1st Beatitude?
Blessed are the poor in spirit for...
And now
Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the
sake of righteousness for...
Both are the same
Most interesting...

The major promise in all of these is that we become
part of God's kingdom – here on earth now, and in the
future in heaven
No matter what happens in this world
No matter what this world may do
Nothing can affect eternity
I have a future in heaven for sure...

When we repent and trust Jesus
Heaven is ours, we are part of God's kingdom
The kingdom of heaven is ours

Conclusion:

What reaction does your life bring from the world?

Are we willing to stand for the truth and face the
consequences – or – compromise and fit in...

Are we willing to not join in what we used to do...
Be part of the things we used to be part of
Certain things we just can't do anymore

We just don't fit in anymore – and we shouldn't fit in

Benediction:

2 Corinthians 4:17-18

*17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us
an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison,
18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but
at the things which are not seen; for the things which
are seen are temporal, but the things which are not
seen are eternal.*

Sermon outline

07-06-14

Matthew 5:10-12

P_____

Persecuted for r_____

B_____ living

Persecution will c_____

...theirs is the kingdom of h_____