

DIVINE PARADOX | Life in God's Kingdom

WEEK 8 - "Marks of Kingdom People (Part 3)"

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

- Matthew 5:10-12

Self-actualization vs. God-actualization

The sermon on the mount is Jesus' description of what it looks like to live as a citizen of the Kingdom.

- What has primarily shaped your understanding of the Gospel and what Jesus came to accomplish? How does simply seeing the Gospel as the "means to salvation" reflect an incomplete view?
- Is following Jesus primarily about what we receive from Him, or primarily about what God is seeking to accomplish?
- How are citizens of the Kingdom of God fundamentally different from those who are not?

Marks of Kingdom People - the Reaction

At some point, citizens of the Kingdom will find themselves at odds with the surrounding culture - and the reaction we face will often take the form of persecution.

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
-Matthew 5:10*

- What does it mean that we are living in an "age of authenticity?"
- What is it about our conformity to Christ that the world often does not understand?
- Has there been a moment in your life where choosing to align with Christ could have resulted, or did result in, the potential loss of something dear to you (a job, a relationship, an opportunity, etc)? How did you respond?



"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account."

-Matthew 5:11

- What "kinds of evil" are currently being spoken in our culture of those who identify with Christ?
- What does it look like to live in such a way that our actions must be explained "on account of Christ" rather than on our own account?

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

-Matthew 5:12

- What does rejoicing in the midst of persecution look like for citizens of the Kingdom?
- How do the Beatitudes speak to the tone and demeanor Christians should have when facing persecution?
- What is the reward for citizens of the Kingdom who faithfully endure persecution?
- What are some of the biggest obstacles to our ability to rejoice when confronted with great loss on account of Christ?
- How did Jesus model rejoicing in the midst of affliction? How does He enable us to do this in our life?

Scripture for further study:

- 2 Timothy 3:12

