

## Pure Discipleship in a Corrupt World -The Sermon on the Mount.

### Part 3. **"Blessings to Endure Persecution"** Matthew 5:11-13

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Introduction: Jesus calls for "Pure Discipleship" in an era where the competition for devotion of faith is compromised with devotion to idols and the challenge of competing affections. More than ever, Christians are called by Jesus to love the Lord your God with all of who we are, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Persecution is claimed by some Christians who are more interested in their cause than they are in serving and glorifying God.

#### I. Blessings for the Truthful (11-12)

A. God's call to endure slander and evil (11) ***11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.***

B. God's plan to reward and redeem His children (12) ***12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.***

#### II. Identity and purpose for pure disciples of Jesus - Salt (13a)

***13 "You are the salt of the earth.***

- A. The Presence of God's Spirit in those reborn
- B. The Positive witness of God's grace
- C. The Preserving message of God's truth

#### III. Jesus Warns about Impure Discipleship (13b)

- A. Belief is endangered if watered down or compromised  
***But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?***
- B. Spiritual health is related to purity in discipleship  
***..It is no longer good for anything,***
- C. Without discernment, Christians can be "walked over"  
***except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.***

***11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.***

***12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.***

***13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.***

#### Questions:

1. When have you faced people who have insulted you or said something false against you? What did you say or do?
2. According to Jesus, if we stand firm in our faith in Him, then we are blessed. How do you experience God's blessing through enduring?
3. There are all kinds of evil, how do we keep our focus upon our reward in heaven and stay true and faithful? What Scripture verses have given you encouragement and deeper faith?
4. Who are modern day examples of persecution? Who are some people in the Black community who have demonstrated their faith to overcome racial hatred and profiling?
5. In what ways do those who keep their faith amidst persecution or deception provide an encouraging presence, positive witness, and preserving message of truth?
6. In what ways can Christians lose their effectiveness or "salt"?
7. How have Christians been "trampled", "manipulated", or "walked over"?