

SERMON *on the Mount*

BLESSED ARE THE PERSECUTED

v.10 - Persecuted for Righteousness Sake

Righteousness - is more than just 'being good'. It indicates a whole orientation of life towards God and his will. This is the godly character of Jesus' followers. See 1 Peter 3:14; 2:20.

v.11 - Persecuted, Reviled because of Jesus

Verbal persecution is still a _____ of persecution.

"If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you."
1 Peter 4:14

Why Persecution Happens:

"This is the judgment: The light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed" (John 3:19-20). **Jesus is the light that has come into the world and here we see why the world hates the light, because Jesus the light exposes the reality of their lives as sinful.**

"You are the light of the world...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:14,16). **If Jesus is the light coming into the world, and the world hates the light and we who follow Jesus are called the light in the world, do you not think we will also be hated?**

Two Reasons for Persecution:

Reason 1: Righteousness - _____ (Matthew 5:10).

This is the complete opposite of sinful living and it's offensive because it exposes sin.

"For there has already been enough time spent in doing what the Gentiles choose to do: carrying on in unrestrained behavior, evil desires, drunkenness, orgies, carousing, and lawless idolatry. They are surprised that you don't join them in the same flood of wild living—and they slander you." **1 Peter 4:3-4**

"In fact, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." **2 Timothy 3:12**

Reason 2: _____ (Matthew 5:11).

Jesus is offensive because He exposes sin.

Jesus said, *"it [the world] does hate me because I testify about it—that its works are evil."* **John 7:7**

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." **John 15:18-19**

v. 12 - Rejoice in Persecution

Rejoicing in persecution is an _____ not an _____, its recognizing our persecution is evidence of being in relationship with Jesus.

The Truth About Persecution:

Persecution _____ disciples; it's not about _____ it will happen, but _____ it will happen because we love and live for Jesus.

"Dear friends, don't be surprised when the fiery ordeal comes among you to test you, as if something unusual were happening to you. Instead, rejoice as you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may also rejoice with great joy when his glory is revealed." 1 Peter 4:12-13

"Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you." 1 John 3:13

What Persecution Means for the Believer:

Persecution for the disciple _____ he/she is a true follower of Christ (Matthew 5:10-12). We are promised the kingdom now and our reward of heaven (eternal life) awaits.

A Warning: "Woe to you, when all men speak well of you" Luke 6:26

If you are loved by the world, is it because they don't know you are a disciple or you are just part of the world?

A question we all need to ask: "If I am not being persecuted to some degree, am I acting or sounding like Jesus to the people around me?"