

Matthew 5:2-10 Beatitudes Sermon

New English Translation

2 Then {Jesus} began to teach them {the disciples} by saying:

3

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to them.

4

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5

“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

6

“Blessed are those who hunger^[g] and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

7

“Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

8

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.

10

“**Blessed** are those who are **persecuted for righteousness**, for the kingdom of heaven **belongs to them**.

 **Beulah**

R.Jones Easter 4.17.11 Series: Values of the Fortunate Matt 5:10

Values of the Fortunate

Jesus, the Master of Resurrections, states His Values

In the Beatitudes sermon, Jesus teaches that values have meaning. Values define a company's purpose & attitudes of its people. The beatitudes are conditional statements with promises of reward to Jesus' disciples. Values imply a condition of employment. Example: Starbucks core values

3 Parts to each value: a promise, a condition, a reward:

The Master of Resurrections Offers Commission Promises

The Master of Resurrections States Conditions Required

The Master of Resurrections Gives Consolation Rewards

What do you expect to receive when you see the Resurrected Jesus face-to-face?

[continued from front panel]

Jesus warned his followers that they would face persecution. He was deeply angered by the murder of John the Baptist by Herod:

Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town. (Matthew 23:34, ESV)

The Pharisees persecuted Jesus because he did not follow their man-made legalism. After Paul converted to Christianity and became a missionary, the Roman Empire began to terrorize Christians. Paul found himself on the receiving end of the persecution he had once doled out:

Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. (2 Corinthians 11:23-24, NIV)

Paul was beheaded by order of the emperor Nero, and the Apostle Peter was reported to have been crucified upside down in a Roman arena. Killing Christians turned into a form of entertainment in Rome, as believers were executed in the stadium by wild animals, torture, and being set on fire.

Persecution drove the early church underground and helped it spread into other parts of the world.

Systemic persecution against Christians ended in the Roman empire about 313 A.D., when the emperor Constantine I signed the Edict of Milan, guaranteeing freedom of religion to all people.

From that time forward, Christians have continued to be persecuted all over the world. Many early Protestants who broke from the Catholic Church were imprisoned and burned at the stake. Christian missionaries have been killed in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Christians were imprisoned and killed during the reigns of Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union.

Today, the nonprofit organization Voice of the Martyrs tracks Christian persecution in China, Muslim countries, and throughout the world. According to estimates, persecution of Christians claims more than 150,000 lives every year. However, the unintended result of persecution is that the true church of Jesus Christ continues to grow and spread.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus prophesied that his followers would be attacked:

"Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20, NIV)

Christ also promised rewards to those who endure persecution:

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:11-12, NIV)

Paul reminded that Jesus stands with us through all trials:

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?" (Romans 8:35, NIV)

"That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:10, NIV)

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (2 Timothy 3:12, ESV)

By Jack Zavada

Persecution is the act of harassing, oppressing, or killing people because of their difference from society. Christians are persecuted because their belief in Jesus Christ as Savior does not conform to the godlessness of a sinful world. The Bible records the persecution of God's people in both the Old and New Testaments. It began in Genesis 4:3-7 with the persecution of the righteous by the unrighteous when Cain murdered his brother Abel.

Neighboring tribes such as the Philistines and Amalekites constantly attacked the ancient Jews because they rejected idolatry and worshiped the one True God. When they were backsliding, the Jews persecuted their own prophets, who were trying to bring them back. Daniel's story of being thrown into a Lions' Den illustrates persecution of the Jews during captivity in Babylon. [...continued on back panel]



After the gruesome crucifixion
Jesus came up out of the grave to
continue
Everlasting Life