

Study Guide for Matthew: Lesson 44
"THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT-Happy Are the Harassed"
October 26, 2025

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the information presented in the source material.

1. What is the meaning and origin of the word "Ebenezer" as explained in the introduction?
2. According to Britney, what is the primary purpose of the Operation Christmas Child program?
3. What is the title of Lesson 44 in the Sermon on the Mount series, and what was its previous title?
4. How does Jesus's definition of a happy person contrast with the world's philosophy of happiness?
5. Why does the pastor state that Christians who live according to the first seven Beatitudes will inevitably be persecuted?
6. Who was Savonarola, and what was the outcome of his ministry?
7. Based on John 15, what is the fundamental problem the world has, and what is the Christian's role in addressing it?
8. The pastor says Christians are called to be *martus*. What does this Greek word mean, and what is its significance?
9. According to the sermon, why should Christians not retreat from the world into monasteries?
10. What is the two-part promise and reward for those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake?

Answer Key

1. Ebenezer means "stone and help." It comes from a stone erected by the prophet Samuel in 1 Samuel 7:12 after the Israelites, having repented, defeated the Philistines, to signify that "the Lord has helped us."
2. The primary purpose of Operation Christmas Child, a partnership with Samaritan's Purse, is to deliver the message of Jesus in every shoebox filled with supplies. While the boxes contain school supplies, hygiene items, and toys, the ultimate goal is to reach children who would otherwise never hear the Christian gospel, leading many to be saved.
3. The title for Lesson 44 is "Happy Are the Harassed." Its previous title was "Happy Are the Persecuted."
4. Jesus defines a happy person as one who is meek, mourns over their sinfulness, is aware of their own inability, and is self-sacrificing. The world's philosophy, in contrast, defines happiness on its own terms, often related to possessions ("look at what I got") and self-confidence, leading to an inevitable conflict with divine truth.
5. The pastor states that if you function within the first seven principles taught in the Beatitudes, persecution will happen automatically. This lifestyle results in being confronted by a hostile, godless world, which will inevitably lead to a negative reaction from that world.
6. Savonarola was a great reformer and preacher in the 15th century who denounced the sins of the people and the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church, preparing the way for the Reformation. The people of his time could not handle his preaching, and he was burned at the stake for attempting to reform the church.
7. The fundamental problem with the world, according to John 15, is that "they do not know God." The Christian's role is to act as a witness and introduce people to Jesus Christ, exposing their sin so it can be forgiven.
8. The Greek word *martus*, which is translated as "witness" in Acts 1:8, means "martyrs." Its significance is to highlight that there has always been a price to pay for being a Christian, and believers are called to be witnesses for Christ even to the point of martyrdom.
9. Christians should not retreat from the world because Jesus calls them to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-14). Their role is to engage with the world, illuminate it with the truth about sin and salvation, and put their light on a lampstand for all to see.
10. The promise is that "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The reward is twofold: first, the happiness and bliss of obedience to Jesus Christ on earth, and second, the blessedness of being

part of God's eternal kingdom, which will infinitely compensate for any suffering forfeited in this world.

Essay Questions

Reflect on the core themes of the sermon to construct a detailed response to the following prompts. Do not provide answers.

1. The pastor argues that the modern church is "hardly ever persecuted" because it "looks so much like the world." Using specific points from the sermon, explain this argument and analyze the relationship he draws between living out the Beatitudes and experiencing hostility from the world.
 2. Discuss the sermon's central theme, "Happy Are the Harassed." How does the pastor reconcile the seemingly contradictory concepts of "blessedness" (happiness) and persecution? In your analysis, include his interpretation of Matthew 5:10-12 and the Apostle Paul's words in Romans 8:18.
 3. Analyze the role of a Christian as a "witness" (*martus*) as presented in the sermon. Explain why the pastor insists Christians must not retreat from a hostile world and how they are meant to function as "salt and light."
 4. Trace the pastor's definition of a "happy person" as described by Jesus through the Beatitudes. Explain how this definition fundamentally conflicts with the world's definition of happiness and why this conflict is identified as the root cause of persecution.
 5. The sermon describes church fellowship as a "fuel stop." Elaborate on this metaphor. How does the gathering of believers prepare them for their interactions with the "unsaved world," and what specific actions are they called to take after they leave the church walls?
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Glossary

Term	Definition
Altar Call	An invitation at the end of a church service for people to come forward for salvation, baptism, prayer, or membership. The pastor notes that many churches no longer do them because they can be "inconvenient" or cause "discomfort."
Beatitudes	The series of blessings recounted by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5). The sermon focuses on the eighth beatitude (persecution) as the automatic result of living by the first seven.
Charlie Kirk	An individual mentioned as an example of someone who understands that the hostility and loss experienced in the world for Christian beliefs cannot be compared to the gain of God's kingdom.
Ebenezer	A Hebrew term meaning "stone and help." It references a stone set up by the prophet Samuel after a victory over the Philistines to commemorate God's help.
Lupe Diaz	A Republican candidate for state representative in the district of the church. The pastor offered nomination documents for the congregation to sign in support of him.
Makarios	The Greek word for "blessed" used at the beginning of the Beatitudes. It is defined in the sermon as meaning "happy."
Martus	The Greek word from which "witness" and "martyr" are derived. The sermon uses this term from Acts 1:8 (<i>martus</i>) to emphasize that Christians are called to be witnesses, even at the cost of their lives.
Millennial Kingdom	The future thousand-year reign of Christ on Earth, which is referenced as part of the future bliss and reward for believers.
Operation Christmas Child (OC)	A program run in partnership with Samaritan's Purse where shoeboxes are filled with school supplies, hygiene items, and toys. The most important part of the program is ensuring that "the message of Jesus" is included in every box.
Paraclete	A term for the Holy Spirit, mentioned from John 15. It is defined as "the helper" or "the one who comes along beside you."

Reformation, The	A historical movement in the church that set Protestantism apart from the Roman Catholic Church. The preacher Savonarola is described as having prepared the way for it.
Samaritan's Purse	The organization that partners with the church for the Operation Christmas Child program.
Savonarola	A 15th-century Italian reformer and preacher known for his powerful denunciations of sin and corruption within the Roman Catholic Church. He was ultimately burned at the stake for his reform efforts.
Sermon on the Mount	The first of five great discourses of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, which begins with the Beatitudes. This lesson (44) focuses on Matthew 5:10-12.