

“If you continue in My word,

then are you My Disciples InDeed...”



The Blessedness of the Persecuted

Matthew 5:10-12 “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.”

This beatitude is so contrary to our natural way of thinking that it seems Jesus felt the need to emphasize that it's really true by repeating it and amplifying the promised reward!

We've come down this progression from being poor in spirit, mourning over our sins, meekly yielding to God, hungering for His righteousness, giving & receiving mercy, having purity of heart, and helping others find peace. Now at the end of the line we find persecution awaits us.

Why would others want to hurt such nice people as those who are walking in these beatitudes? It's the same reason they killed and hated Jesus – the most loving, kind, wonderful Man who ever walked the earth. Look up the following verses and write down at least 4 answers they give to this question.

1 John 3:12,13 ■ John 15:18-21 ■ Rev. 12:17

Look up 2 Tim. 3:12 for the answer to this question: “Is persecution an optional part of the Christian life or is it required?” _____

What are some of the many ways that the persecution of believers takes place in our day?

What does the Apostle's response to the beating they received in Acts 5:40-41 reveal about the way they viewed persecution for Jesus' sake?

1 Pe. 4:12-16 encouraged us to not think it strange when we go through the fires of persecution but to be happy because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on us. What do you think that means?

In the parable of the sower in Matt 13:20, Jesus said that the reason the stony-ground-hearer failed to bring forth fruit was because he didn't have good roots and became offended when persecution came because of the Word. How does persecution reveal our roots to us? _____

Questions for Evaluation

1. Are you living a life that is so “Godly in Christ Jesus” (II Tim 3:12) that there are those around you who are opposing you and speaking evil of you?
2. When you are criticized for righteousness' sake do you shrink back or do you stand alone for God with joy, believing there is a reward for you in heaven?
3. Is the smile of God more important to you than the approval of your friends, co-workers, neighbors, etc.?

Further Study: Rev 12, John 15:18- 16:4, IICor 12:10, I Pe. 5:8-1

“...And you shall know The Truth, and The Truth shall **make you Free!**”

