

Happy are those who Suffer

Matthew 5.10-11

Overview

Cross Like Life:

A. Blessed (Life, Happy, Favor to...) are those that are persecuted...blessed are you when others revile you, persecute you, or say all sorts of evil about you falsely:

1. Persecuted means hostility, abuse, suffering
2. Christ blesses those who have suffering come to them
3. This is normal just as being poor in spirit, mourning, mercy, hungering and thirsting for righteousness, and being a peace maker should be normal
 - a. See John 15.20, 2 Timothy 3.12, 1 Peter 4.12, Acts 14.21-22 as examples
4. Our lives should be cross like:
 - a. Cross is the symbol of our faith
 - b. Meaning, our lives should be cross like as well (Matt. 16.24)

B. Christ blesses those that are persecuted *for righteousness sake* or *on my account*

1. The blessing comes when you are living righteously or in a manner that reflects Christlikeness
 - a. Anything that Jesus teaches for us to obey (Matt. 28.19-20) or anything that reflects the righteousness of God
2. We naturally will be prey to the City of Man upon our citizenship changing to the City of God because the world hates God (James 4.14, etc.)

Hope in Heaven:

A. ...for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven...Rejoice and be glad for your reward is great in heaven:

1. The encouragement Christ gives to His people in their persecution is a heavenly reward
 - a. There is something about heaven that Jesus is using to encourage people through their suffering
 - b. We see this throughout the Scriptures: Hebrews 11.26, 35, 12.2, 1 Peter 4.13, etc.

Questions

Discussion Starter: *When soldiers fight in ideological wars, why does the hope for a better home or the securing of that home make them willing to lay down so much? How can we learn from this as Christians? OR Why is persecution so abnormal to us but seems so common on the pages of Scripture?*

1. Read Matthew 5:3-12. How does this Beatitude tie to the previous ones? How can you see that being a peacemaker doesn't mean you give up on the Truth of Gods word from this passage?
2. Why would Jesus bless those who are persecuted for righteousness sake?
3. In what way can we say that it is "normal" for persecution to happen to believers who are living a righteous life? Why is this the case?
4. Where are the outlets where your group fears persecution? What types of things do they fear to stand for and why? Pray and encourage one another towards faithfulness.
5. How is the Hope of Heaven an antidote or fuel to suffer well?
6. Why would Jesus insert heavenly rewards with earthly sufferings?
7. Why don't we think much about Heaven? How would that fuel faithfulness today?

8. What are some ways others have found success in hope in Heaven?

Accountability Question: *What are some ways you are compromising righteousness out of a fear of persecution? Encourage those who have been faithful to stand for truth in hard places.*

Also,

What are some ways we can encourage each other and the church as a whole to hope in Heaven?