

THE BLESSED LIFE, PART 3

Matthew 5:9-12

I. INTRODUCTION-

- a. In the Beatitudes...Jesus tells us how we can find...true and lasting happiness.
- b. The world says that happiness is found in earthly things like...riches...fame...entertainment...accomplishment...sinful pleasures.
- c. But the happiness that comes from these things is not lasting...Hebrews 11:25 refers to them as *"passing pleasures."*
- d. Jesus said that true and lasting happiness...can only be found in a right relationship with God...through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- e. In John 6:35 Jesus said...*"He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."*
- f. In the Beatitudes that we have looked at so far...Jesus said happy is the one...who realizes their desperate need of God...who is broken over their sin...who surrenders themselves to God's control...who hungers and thirsts for God...who is merciful and forgiving....who is committed to moral purity...and undivided in their devotion to God.
- g. In the Beatitudes we look at today...Jesus says the road to happiness is not free of conflict...in a world full of conflict Christians are to be peacemakers...and in a world controlled by satan and sin ... believers can expect to be persecuted.

II. BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS-

- a. *Matthew 5:9 (KJV) "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."*
- b. The Bible (Romans 5:10) says that every person...who refuses to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior...is at war with God.
- c. This is true of those who say they hate God...it is true of those who ignore God and leave Him out of their life...it is true of those who follow the false religions of the world...and it is true of those who profess to believe in God and love Him ... and yet they refuse to receive Jesus Christ...the Son of God...as the Lord and Savior of their life.
- d. This was also true of you and me before we were saved...before we gave our life to Christ we were in rebellion against God and His laws...but when we gave our life to Christ...we found peace with God.

- e. *Romans 5:1 (KJV) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*
- f. Those who are saved are no longer at war with God...and He is no longer at war with us...we have been reconciled to God.
- g. Jesus said having found peace with God...believers are to be peacemakers...we are to be lovers and promoters of peace in our families...homes...churches...in the world...and in our relationships.
- h. As peacemakers we are to proclaim the gospel...and urge estranged sinners to find peace with God...we are to promote peace and oneness among the people of God...we are to pray for peace and promote peace in all human relations.
- i. When a person finds peace with God...they will find peace with themselves and with others...something is not right when a person...who claims to have peace with God...is a constant source of needless contention, conflict and strife.
- j. Only when we are standing for what is true, right and holy...should we be willing to sacrifice peace.

III. BLESSED ARE THE PERSECUTED-

- a. *Matthew 5:10-12 (KJV) "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."*
- b. Jesus Christ lived the most beautiful life ever lived...He was the fairest person who ever walked on the face of the earth...yet He was vilified...hated... reviled...despised...spit upon...beaten and killed.
- c. Jesus gave this warning those who would follow Him...*John 15:20 "...if they have persecuted me, they will persecute you." ...in 2 Tim 3:12 Paul said "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."*
- d. The more the lost world sees the Lord Jesus Christ in you...the more it will treat you like it did Him.
- e. Why was the lost world so hostile to Christ...and why is it so hostile to Christians?
- f. Because of satan's influence in the world...and because Christ and the committed Christian life and message...clashes with the ungodly world...our life and our

message exposes sin and condemns unrighteousness...and warns of the judgment to come.

- g. The Bible says we are not to look for persecution...but when persecution comes ... we are not to compromise...and we are not to be surprised.
- h. Don't be surprised when you are slandered...made fun of...ridiculed...spoken evil of...left out...rejected...lose a job or promotion...are denied your rights...or persecuted in some other way...for living a loyal, godly and committed Christian life.
- i. From the prophets unto now...the lost world has always persecuted God's people.
- j. Jesus said look beyond this world and the suffering it may bring...there is a great reward awaiting those who stand true and remain faithful to Christ... *Romans 8:18 (NKJV) "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*

IV. CONCLUSION-

- a. Jesus did not pull any punches...He made it clear that those who followed Him would suffer for it in this world...some will suffer more...and some will suffer less...but all would suffer in some way.
- b. Why follow Christ if it will cause you to suffer?...Isn't it safer not to be a Christian?
- c. Which is safer...to accept Christ and suffer persecution in this world now...or to reject Christ and suffer in hell for all eternity...separated from God and all that is good?
- d. Jesus said whatever a person suffers and loses for following Him...is nothing compared to what they gain!
- e. *Mark 10:29-30 (NKJV) "So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, 30 who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time--houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions--and in the age to come, eternal life."*
- f. *Phil 3:8 "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ..."*