

04 October

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: The Beatitudes

 Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you experienced persecution, because of your relationship with Jesus Christ?
2. According to Matt. 5:10 what does Jesus promise to those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake? (**Theirs is the kingdom of heaven**).
3. According to 1 Peter 2:20 (NLT); what pleases God? (**If you suffer for doing good and endure it patiently**).
4. What are some of the ways mentioned to be persecuted in v.11? (**to revile, mock and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake**).

 Let's go deeper

5. What does Jesus say in v.12; how must we respond to v.11? (**Rejoice and be exceedingly glad**).
6. What other reward awaits us according to Jesus? (**For great is your reward in heaven**).
7. Who else were persecuted in like manner according to Jesus? (**For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you**)
8. Which famous chapter in the book of Hebrews give testimonies of old testament prophets that were persecuted? (**Hebrews 11**).

 Let's apply this

9. Today's choice is called the **sharing choice**; when we turn outwardly and help others grow in their relationship and revelation of God. Nothing is more contagious than the life-changing power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
 1. Share how God revealed Himself to you this past week?
 2. Share how you helped a friend, or family member connect with God?
 3. Share how you trust God for breakthrough in a specific area in your life or relationships?

SUMMARY:

Read: Matthew 5:10 – 11; 1 Peter 2:20; Hebrews 11.

- **The Beatitudes:**

Matthew 5:10 – 11; Jesus' Sermon on the Mount begins with the Beatitudes, a list of blessings that describe the character of those who are true servants of God and the kingdom of heaven. This teaching was part of Jesus Christ's intensive discipleship training for His twelve chosen apostles.

v.10; How can being persecuted be "blessed"? Persecution is never pleasant but involves suffering and often severe pain. The key is Jesus' words that the blessed persecution comes "for righteousness' sake."

Some people suffer for doing evil, but that is punishment, not persecution. And some are persecuted for reasons unrelated to righteousness. But Jesus wasn't offering a general blessing to all victims of persecution for any cause. No, He offered it only to those who were persecuted for actively pursuing the kingdom of righteousness and because of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Righteousness means more than just "being a good person." It refers to a complete surrendered life toward God and His will. This kind of righteousness is highly visible: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

To endure persecution for the sake of righteousness requires uncompromising faithfulness to God despite every threat and pressure.

v.11; "Rejoice and be glad" when you are persecuted, when you suffer. How can Jesus say this? He can say it because He knows, beyond any doubt, that the reward of heaven will be more than enough for any suffering we must endure in service of Christ. "Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

Jesus want His disciples to desire the reward of heaven more than they desire the reward of the world. Jesus wants for us to have our treasure in heaven, not on earth. Jesus wants our hearts set on heaven that to leave this earth is a cause of rejoicing. Jesus wants us to have our hearts, hopes, longings, joy in heaven.

Application:

Today's choice is the **sharing choice**; when I turn outwardly and help others take these same steps. Nothing is more contagious than the life-changing power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.