



**BE DIFFERENT**  
**LIVE DIFFERENT**

Matthew 5-7



**ID**



# The Blessings of Persecution

Matthew 5:10



## **Matthew 5:10**

Blessed are those who have been  
persecuted on account of righteousness,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



## **Matthew 5:10-12**

Blessed are those who have been persecuted on account of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you, on account of Me.

Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



# The reality of persecution:

Governmental or strong social persecution occurs in more than 60 countries.

600 million Christians were prevented from practicing their faith.

215 million experienced significant persecution.

Last year 90,000 Christians were killed around the world because of their faith.

23 Christian leaders were killed in Mexico, and dozens of evangelicals have been banished.



**Why are we surprised  
by persecution?**



# **We are tempted to be surprised.**

**Matthew 5:10**

Blessed are those who have been  
persecuted on account of righteousness...

*This Beatitude, like the others, is a  
corrective to the way we are  
inclined to think.*



**1 Peter 4:12**

Beloved, **do not be surprised** at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you.



# Why are we surprised by persecution?

Because we overestimate the  
goodness of people.



# How do we see ourselves?

**Luke 18:18-21**

And a certain ruler questioned Him, saying,  
"Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit  
eternal life?"

And Jesus said to him,  
"Why do you call Me good? No one is good  
except God alone."



*We see Jesus as the ideal  
good guy and ourselves as  
basically good people who  
can learn to follow  
his example.*



# But what's God's assessment?

Psalm 14:2-3

The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.



*God does not assess  
goodness on the basis of  
behavior but by the  
orientation of the heart.*



## Psalm 14:2-3

The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, **who seek after God.** They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.



**Psalm 14:2-3**

The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God.

**They have all turned aside;** together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.



# Why are we surprised by persecution?

Because we overestimate the goodness of people.

Because we underestimate  
the power of sin.



**John 8:34**

Jesus answered them,  
"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who  
commits sin is the slave of sin."



*Sin is not just a  
nuisance neighbor;  
it is a merciless master.*



**Proverbs 5:22**

The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him,  
and he is held fast in the cords of his sin.

*We are surprised by persecution  
because we underestimate the  
controlling power of sin.*



# Why are we surprised by persecution?

Because we overestimate the goodness of people.

Because we underestimate the power of sin.

Because we underestimate  
the power of Satan.



## **Ephesians 6:11-12**

Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

*We are surprised by persecution because we forget who we're fighting.*



**Why shouldn't we be surprised by persecution?**



1 Peter 4:12

Beloved, **don't be surprised...**



**Why shouldn't we be surprised by persecution?**

**Because people love sin.**



# Psalm 50:16-21

But to the wicked God says,  
"What right have you to tell of My statutes,  
And to take My covenant in your mouth?  
For you hate discipline, And you cast My  
words behind you. When you see a thief,  
you are pleased with him,  
And you associate with adulterers.



# Psalm 50:16-21

You let your mouth loose in evil,  
And your tongue frames deceit.

You sit and speak against your brother;  
You slander your own mother's son.

These things you have done, and I kept silent;  
You thought that I was just like you;  
I will reprove you, and state the case  
in order before your eyes.



*God's righteousness, when  
displayed in the lives of His  
people, reproves the  
world of its sin.*



**Matthew 5:10**

Blessed are those who have been  
persecuted **because of righteousness**,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

*It is the light of righteousness  
that provokes persecution.*



# Why?

John 3:19-20

And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and **men loved the darkness** rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.



*The world is provoked to  
rage because righteousness  
reproves its lover.*



*Does your lifestyle  
reprove the darkness?*



# Why shouldn't we be surprised by persecution?

Because people love sin.

Because people hate Jesus.



**Matthew 5:11**

Blessed are you when people insult you,  
and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds  
of evil against you, **on account of Me.**

*Ultimately, people will hate us  
because they hate Jesus.*



**John 15:18**

If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.



*People hate Jesus because  
He exposes their sin.*



**John 7:7**

The world...hates Me because I testify of it,  
that its deeds are evil.

*If the goal is to get people to like Jesus,  
we will need to change who He is.*



*Does your life look  
enough like Jesus to earn  
the ire of a sinful world?*



# Why shouldn't we be surprised by persecution?

Because people love sin.

Because people hate Jesus.

Because people serve Satan.



**Acts 26:17-18**

“...I am sending you to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and **from the dominion of Satan to God...**”



*People hate Jesus  
because He seeks to  
dethrone their master.*



**Matthew 6:24**

No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other.

*Human autonomy is an illusion;  
either Jesus or Satan is  
on the throne.*



*Who's on your throne?*



**Why should you rejoice  
when persecuted?**



**Matthew 5:12**

**Rejoice, and be glad,** for your reward in heaven is great, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



**Why should you rejoice  
when persecuted?**

Because persecution confirms  
your identity.



**Matthew 5:10-12**

Blessed are those who have been  
persecuted on account of righteousness,  
**for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

*Persecution identifies you as a  
citizen of Jesus' kingdom.*



**Matthew 5:10-12**

Rejoice, and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great, **for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

*Persecution identifies you as a faithful follower.*



**John 15:19**

If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

*Persecution identifies you  
as belonging to Christ.*



# Why should you rejoice when persecuted?

Because persecution confirms your identity.

Because persecution connects  
you to Christ.



**Matthew 5:11**

Blessed are you when people insult you,  
and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds  
of evil against you, **on account of Me.**



**John 15:20**

Remember the word that I said to you,  
A slave is not greater than his master.

If they persecuted Me,  
they will also persecute you...

*True persecution connects you to  
your master.*



## **1 Peter 4:13**

...but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.



*We rejoice in persecution  
because it allows us to  
share in both the suffering  
and hope of our Savior.*



# Why should you rejoice when persecuted?

Because persecution confirms your identity.

Because persecution connects you to Christ.

Because persecution corrals  
your heart.



**Matthew 5:10**

Blessed are those who have been  
persecuted on account of righteousness,  
**for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

*Persecution reminds us that this  
is not our home.*



**Matthew 5:12**

Rejoice, and be glad, **for your reward in heaven is great**, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

*Persecution weans us from the stuff of this world and turns our hearts to heaven.*



*How about you...?*



# The Blessings of Persecution

Matthew 5:10

## 1. Why are we surprised by persecution?

- a. Because we overestimate the \_\_\_\_\_ of people.
- b. Because we underestimate the power of \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Because we underestimate the power of \_\_\_\_\_.

## 2. Why shouldn't we be surprised by persecution?

- a. Because people love \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Because people hate \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Because people serve \_\_\_\_\_.

## 3. Why should you rejoice when persecuted?

- a. Because persecution confirms your \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Because persecution connects you to \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. Because persecution corrals your \_\_\_\_\_.