

I. Intro

A. Structure of the Beatitudes

1. Verses 3-5: lead to emptiness and a hunger for what God has for us - righteousness
2. Verses 7-9: lead to a fullness and a satisfying of that hunger
3. Verses 10-12: Therefore, those who find true satisfaction will be attacked by those who are unsatisfied.

B. Timeless truth: 2 Timothy 3:12

"Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,"

1. How can Paul make such a ginormous statement?
 - a. The conviction about the nature of Christianity and the nature of the sinfulness of man
 - b. This conflict is inevitable and will never cease in a fallen world.
2. The foundation of Matthew 5:10-12
 - a. We are fundamentally different from the world and have different attitudes.
 - 1) Outlook (verses 3-9) is radically different.
 - 2) The world values pride and sin.
 - 3) The world is at war with God Who is actually seeking not to defeat His enemies but to reconcile them and offer them sonship into His family!
 - b. Suffering is inevitable but we must live in a manner where our suffering is not due to our own foolishness or disobedience.

II. Humility and suffering because of Christ

A. Logic between verses 9 & 10

1. Why does peacemaking come before unavoidable unrest and battle?
2. Because personal persecution is the opportunity for transformational growth as sons and daughters of God - peacemakers.
 - a. We literally share the sufferings of Jesus.
 - b. Jesus defended others with rigorous passion, but sought the peace of the offenders when persecuted because of His Father's love.

B. A qualified blessing

1. Blessed
 - a. When persecuted "for righteousness sake" and "on my account."
 - b. True righteousness can only exist in a living connection with Jesus. The only blessed persecution is because of my connection with Jesus.
2. Why would good qualities invite attack?
 - a. If you cherish chastity, your life will be an attack on people's love for free sex.
 - b. If you embrace temperance, your life will be a statement against the love of alcohol.
 - c. If you pursue self-control, your life will indict excess eating.
 - d. If you live simply and happily, you will show the folly of the rat race.
 - e. If you walk humbly with your God, you will expose the evil of pride.
 - f. If you are punctual and thorough in your dealings, you will lay open the inferiority of laziness and negligence.

- g. If you speak with compassion you will throw callousness into sharp contrast.
- h. If you are earnest, you will make the flippant look flippant instead of clever.
- i. And if you are spiritually minded, you will expose the worldly-mindedness of those around you.

3. Explanation: John 3:20-21

"For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

- a. Two responses to a Jesus-centered life
 - 1) Persecution
 - 2) Conversion
- b. But what about the civil or polite?
 - 1) Your light is under a bushel
 - 2) Your light shines and those around you are moving toward persecution or conversion.

**That process can be at a Washington snail's pace.

**We will feed one of two hungers/appetites - an appetite for Heaven or an appetite for the world.

C. How to transform through persecution

- 1. Reward of/in Heaven - both/and

**In other words, rejoice and be glad in the midst of suffering for righteousness and for Jesus, because that very suffering will receive a very great compensation and a very great reward. And the greater the suffering your faith endures, the greater the reward you will receive in Heaven.

- 2. That great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 11:35-40)
 - a. If they can do it, you can do it!
 - b. The pathway to your greatest God-designed potential is straight through your greatest fear. If God has called me to it, He will transform me through it!

III. Humility take-home

A. Andrew Murray

"There may be the enthusiastic and active practice of Christianity while humility is still sadly lacking. External teaching and personal effort are powerless to conquer pride or create the meek and lowly heart of humility in a person."

- 1. Suffering because of my relationship with Jesus is the greatest opportunity for a transformation in humility - for both me and the aggressor.
- 2. It gives us a chance to be Jesus in both word and action.

**Remember, this suffering is on account of Jesus, not my foolish choices or lack of obedience.

B. Final question:

- 1. Are you living in a way that receiving an attack from the world because of your visible relationship with Jesus is even a possibility?
- 2. Jesus was persecuted because of His righteous humility - not His self-righteous arrogance or sin.

**Do you look like Jesus in your scars? His scars were evidence of His love, obedience and commitment to God. Are yours?