

is revolutionary, it is contradictory to man's manner of living and so if we assume that men were basically upright, then the world would popularly accept the godly life and the Christian. But as long as Satan is loose and dominates the hearts of men with evil passions, they will always look upon the Christian as a peculiar people. I Peter 2:9-11 tells us that we are a peculiar people. We are aliens and we are rarely shown the welcome that by the world. Our life is not of the world, our citizenship is not of this world but is in heaven. Our interests primarily are not in this world. Our hope is not in this world. And so people will persecute you and accuse you of trying to upset everything because of your Christian life.

Second, they will say that you are a counterfeiter. This is another in which Christians are persecuted. The eye of suspicion will be upon you. They cannot conceive anyone living such a life, an unselfish life and unbelievers will look at you and say, well, now, he is just putting on. They do not know the motive for being righteous. They will say it is sort of a game and so He is not sincere, he is just a counterfeiter and so the world and the flesh and the devil, your enemies will herd this kind of persecution at you.

Third, your persecution will be in the form of a struggle. There is a nature of things. Your physical bodies. Right in your body there is a struggle going on between the red and the

Matt. 5:10-12

**INTRODUCTION:** The preceding Beautitudes have dealt with the character. Now we come to this one which deals with the conditions. The others were incarnal qualities of the Christian soul. Now this one comes to the external relationship. He seems to have been sketching His own life. The Beautitudes tell the story of our Saviour's personal life. It is a story of His life as developed step by step in the believer's heart. When we consider these qualities of poor in spirit, of meekness, of thirsting for righteousness, of peacemaking, all of these qualities were found in our Saviour's experience. Last week we discussed the one on peacemaking and there was a statement in Home Life magazine this week and Tuesday's reading that was on that subject of peacemaking.

Now all of these things are true of us if we are Christians. Jesus here predicts the effects which these qualities will have upon the world. Now he says it is impossible for you to be thus without incurring a great deal of hate.

What a picture this is of the true subjects as He described them as they move among men and angels and He gives them added touch to this picture when He says, what the world will do for them and do to them. What are to be your wages now for this good work. As a peacebringer, what are to be your wages?



for us to want to be at good will with our neighbors as a rule and it is difficult for us to see that this blessedness could be such a difference when we think of emity with one's fellow man.

Off hand it would seem to me that Christians would bring admiration and acclaim by his kindness and his honesty and his unselfishness. But Jesus says such is not the case. No wonder often we are puzzled and we sit down, we ask ourselves different questions. Why is this? Why do things have to be thus? And yet we know that the spiritual law is unchangeable and all who live Godly in Jesus Christ will suffer persecution. II Tim. 3:12.

### I. There are two ways of settling this.

First we can either bring the world up and everyone become Christian in character or second, we can let them Christian character down on the level with the world. But it seems to me that He is pointing out here that we are aliens because our habits are not like irreligious men. Our principles are different from their principles and a true Christian is a standing rebuke to the world and his sinful conscience. We know that darkness hates light and because of this the only way to settle it is to make everything dark or everything light.

### II. Why Christians are persecuted.

When we think about the practice of the religious of life that

in the eyes of the world and it will sort of be distasteful to them, because he is going against the conventional way of life and that everything that he does is just the opposite. So first, of all, we see Christians are persecuted because they turn the world upside down. Men hate when they should love, men quarrel when they should be friendly, men fight when they should be peaceful, men steal when they should share, I used to have a little magic trick, a bottle that would always flop upright, but it was round on the bottom regardless of what position you put it in but providing you had a little short metal piece to slip in the mouth of it, then you could get it to lie down flat and to do other tricks with it. But if you did not have that little ~~piece~~ metal piece to operate regardless of the position it would always flip back and so that is the thing about men in an unregenerated state. They just don't like to be upright and you do what you may to them and they will always go back to their own positions and they disciples of Jesus by turning the world upside down and yet the disciples of Jesus are trying to get the world right side up. A sinner we know is abnormal. We know that a Christian's goodness is a rebuke to wickedness. Christ's disciples immediately went out to preach and to teach and in Acts 17:6, these that have turned the world up side down are come hither also. We know that Christ's righteousness



men and women. Well, they desire to have admiration and they want to be thought of as being all right, but such a life my friends, and a man pays the price to live for Jesus will do away with envy and jealousy. As it is said of one lay Christian he was hated because he was always called the just. And we also know that Christians are persecuted for My sake because the spirit of Jesus was always aggressive. Jesus was always going out and pointing out the evils and the wrongs and showing them up. The Lord Jesus never contemplated that His children should go quietly through this world, exerting only a negative influence. He expected that there would be a constant positive effect proceeding from his church. It would be like salt, it would sting, you see. When the receipts fall off, you see, and the worldly income is hurt, naturally, there is indignation and the search light of God's love through Christ upon a diseased conscience will stimulate persecution. So, you see, the real source of hatred is really deeper than on the surface. The eternal of hatred exists between Satan, and Jesus Christ and the armies of heaven and this great battle rages throughout the universe.

### III. What is persecution?

Now when we consider what persecution is and the forms it takes we know that it takes on the form words. There is the hiss of the serpent. We will suffer more or less from the

white corpuscles in a effort to maintain life. So in your heart there is a raging battle in the spiritual realm. For we wrestle against flesh and blood but against powers and against rulers of the darkness and against things in this world, wickedness in high places. So there is a darkness which hates the light and so your life will be a struggle against these rulers of darkness. And your life will be constantly struggling against sin. This will formulate a type of persecution. For a dog had rather go up and dig up a moldy bone and chew on it than to have some of the finest clean meat. Well, you can't help that because it is in his nature and so man has in his heart that about him which causes him to struggle and to be persecuted. Fourth, I believe there will be a cross or a burden that will prove to be persecution for you. He that taketh not his cross and followeth not after me is not worthy of me, Jesus said in Matt. 10:38. Now a man does not put this on his lapel of his coat. He does not literally put a sign off it or he wouldn't pick up a wooden cross and put it over his shoulder. No it means that a man is going to suffer reproach because of Christ's cross, because the cross is at cross purposes with the world and the Christian life is not of the world. We are in Christ and people are going heap persecution upon you because you are in Christ. Paul said, God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom the world



is crucified unto me, and I unto the world, Gal. 6:14. In the fifth place, you may be persecuted because of your own fault. I think sometimes that Christians may bring persecution on upon themselves that is unnecessary that because of the Christian's bad dispositions ~~xxx~~ or his snap judgments ~~or~~ his poor manner, he may think that he is being opposed in that ~~his~~ he is being persecuted but all of this is not for righteousness sake, you see. It is not because of his goodness but it is because of his lack of it. You see, a person may behave offensively, he may address offensively. Now when people are shunned or offended because of those reasons they cannot blame it on the cross. You see, our personal offensiveness is not credit to the gospel we preach and shabby Christians are poor advertisement for Christianity. Paul says we suffer reproach because we ~~suffer~~ trust in a living God. So we ought to be sure that the thing that we are being persecuted for is not the fault of our own temper and our own character. Let us be sure that we are not persecutors ourselves, because this is so inherent in the human nature. The spirit of hard judgment of fierce hate of impatience and of intolerance, these have often disgraced Christian men. In the sixth place, we are going to be persecuted because of righteousness sake. Jesus says here. Now this is due because we are servants of God. This is ~~xxx~~ a distinction

that He makes and it is easy for us to suffer for Him for a just cause, for truth, are wonderful things to suffer for but how much better it is to suffer for righteousness sake. Whatever there is right in the world for which men suffer but how wonderful it is that Jesus says for righteous sake a man may be persecuted, you see. The Scotch martyrs who died as they were putting the thagots to his feet, he said, I think they are casting roses before me. Another martyr died saying, I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, for he knew that soon he would be with God. The great Argyle when about to be put to death, the physician felt his pulse as he laid his head upon the block. He could not detect a fluttering but the quiet steady beat of health and peace. Now this is the type ~~xxx~~ of suffering for righteousness that Jesus is talking about here. In the seventh place, for my sake, He said. Jesus said now you are going to be persecuted for my sake. And blessed is the man who suffers for my sake. Why? Because the Christ-like life condemns the world. There is nothing the ungodly man so dislikes as a search light of Christ's life upon his heart. And the influence of a godly character upon the hearts and lives of sinful men causes them to shrink away and causes pain in their hearts. In the second place, such a life suffering for Jesus's sake offends the pride of



after the converted prize fighter tore open his clothes and wiped off the hot soup, he said, This is what I expected when I became a Christian. Now the great reason why professing Christians know so little about persecution, is because they know so little about the living of the Christian life. If we were of the world, the world would love his own and so the reason why men in the church are not persecuted today is because they do not follow Jesus as closely as they ought.

**VI. Promised blessings**

Now we come to the blessedness of those who have been persecuted. He promises that they will be blessed. It is not implied that this promise, that a Christian's man's blessedness depends on the accident of somebody else's behaviour. It does not depend upon the fact that others have died at the stake and it does not depend upon the fact that you have to die at a stake to receive this blessedness. You see, here is a twofold fulfillment because it seems to say that here in this present time this persecution as a result of character will bring Christians into the kingdom of God. Here is a consciousness, a vividness of joy which will come even though we live in a hostile world. As Thomas Fuller said, that churches during days of persecution seem to build high, they build high like men in their cities where there is little room to expand, they build high buildings. And so he said, persecution

unkind words that people say about us and to us. We will also suffer persecution from the stories that are passed around and around that seek to bring harm to us.

~~We know that~~ This persecution also is in the form of the acts or deeds. We know that during the reign of Charles II that men suffered. 800 quakers suffered for their religion and the 100,000 lbs. extracted from that body in payment for fines of conscience. Well, there have been countless numbers of other people who have suffered because of such deeds.

This persecution is in the form of imputation of evil. I do not think that any of us should shrink from it. We are all very conscious about our character but if we live close to Jesus men will impute to us all manner of evil. They will question our motives. They will misrepresent our actions, they will circulate malicious stories about us. The nearer that you live to Jesus Christ, the more certain it is that some will do this in reference to your life. Now if some men call Jesus "Beelzebub" think of what they will call you. They will call you the same.

I think the only time that we need to defend our character is when there is some injury to the cause of Christ. Otherwise we may just be content to lose our character and our respects when these reports are circulated and these stories are being told and these unkind words are being hurled, we should even



immediately turn to our Master and tell Him we are content to suffer with Him and for Him, and ask Him to intercede and to vindicate us.

We are too ignorant to stand well, you see. We are so sorry if the least thing is said against us, we are so irritated if we are misunderstood and misrepresented and many times we are so anxious to write an explanation to some individual but we can leave that to God and in the meanwhile we can clod along doing our work for Christ day by day, doing the tender and thoughtful and the careful things that He would have us to do regardless of how others may wrong us. That seems to me to be the true Christian spirit. Now there is something else when we think about what His persecution. Persecution may not be always in the same form in every age. I think at different times different periods of history there have been different kinds of persecution that have been meted out to Christ's followers. For example, there was a time when a Christian was persecuted by being put in an arena with lions and with wild beasts. Now there was another time when Christians were burned at the stakes. They were tied to a stake and burned. That was a different kind of persecution. Another times there are Christians who have been slandered by the poisonous words by the press and still at other times we know that the Christians have been treated indifferent other ways and to this persecution

may be a negative persecution, it may be prided persecution, it may be public persecution, it may be slander, it may be ridicule, Persecution fundamentally is an abuse of power employed to harm another with something of eagerness and pursuit and perseverance. No mortal is so weak or destitute of power but that somewhere within his reach there is in some way can be offensive, he can be a persecutor. So there is some way that an individual is capable of becoming a persecutor when we think of what persecution is, we think of a man in a government who may try to do his job for the public, welfare to good, may be designed in a good fashion and yet it will be directly opposed. He will be frustrated, he will be persecuted. A judge who sits upon the bench and passes out judgments may try his best to weigh the scales of justice and to give a verdict and yet there are powers that would persecute and would seem to score against his judgments.

**IV. Why do Christians suffer little?**  
Now here is another question that you may ponder. I'll just give it to you. I will not go into detail with it but why is it that Christians suffer little persecution today. I read this true story of a soldier who following his salvation that some of his buddies began to ridicule him and they poured some hot soup on him one day. The whole company stood breathlessly silent, expecting to see the offender mercilessly beaten, but



for my sake. To be identified with Him, you see. Paul said he reckoned that sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, Romans 8:18-19. If we suffered all of our lives it would be just a short time as compared with eternity. We shall be heirs of a great estate and our endurance shall be for but a few days. Think of the free Hebrew children who identified themselves with God and they walked in the burning fire furnace and the old king locked in as recorded in Daniel 3:25 and he said, I see 4 men loosed walking in the midst of the fires and he said the form of the 4th is like the Son of God. Does this not speak to our hearts that if we suffer these persecutions that Jesus Christ is going to walk with us. In the third and last place, we are being processed for heaven. When we suffer these persecutions the consequences of Christians living and life is like a growing child. He suffers pain and development and so we as Christians do the same. I remember reading a story somewhere of a man doing a job on a building and a fellow came up to him who was just walking along, happened to be by, this man had lost his job, lost during the depression, he had lost a fortune of money. He had lost his wife, he had lost a home, but he had continued to hold fast to his faith and he was walking by and watching a group of men doing some work on a church building.

brightens and brings about great hope.

So we know that when men have been persecuted it has been a real blessing to their hearts and lives. Why is it that we are blessed and how ~~it is that~~ does the blessedness come? Well, we begin with the stout case and we climb higher and higher and we build a great wall and He said, Blessed are ye when men shall revile.

First, we see that we are promised a satisfactory evidence of the sincerity of our religion.

Second, we are blessed because there is the consolation that we are following Christ when persecutions come.

Third, we share the sympathies of the children of God.

Fourth, we are encircled. We are a great group of good associates because we join with the prophets of God.

Next, there is great reward in heaven because of this.

So you see, you are associated with the noblest sympathies. That is, righteousness sake. The reason why you

suffer, Romans 5:3, James 1:2. The noblest sympathies because of Christ's sake. For my sake, not simply for righteousness

sake, but because of Jesus sake alone you are doing this suffering and when we consider this act from which we forsake

everything else, is for the sake of something and at the root of life we live because of reason, because of motives, and

there are things that cause us to drive and so this persecuti



Because we are associated with the best company when we consider the prophets such as, Jeremiah and Daviel, Acts 57:2. When we take our places with the apostles who suffered, when we stand beside the martyrs who died and we think of Stephen who died because of his faith, we consider also Paul and Silas, who made the prison walls ring with their praises while their backs were bloody and stained because of the beating and the persecution, they had gone through.

And we know that we are blessed because we are associated with the great reward that this blessedness there shall be the kingdom of heaven.

#### VII. What does this persecution for you us?

First, of all, it forms a backdrop for the radiant Christian life, for when you go into a jewelry store and a man shows you a diamond, he pulls out a little black cloth and he uses that as a backdrop and usually jewels are displayed with some backdrop. They do not just put them out on clear glass but they have a little backdrop to show you the beauty and so it is with all of these persecutions as Fanny Crosby ~~with~~ with her spirit aglow, even without eyes she was able to see more than the average person when we consider the great gospel songs.

When we think about the black backdrop of the prison

children should not be in despair. Thornton Wilder said, "With out your wounds where would your power be that sends your low voice trembling into the hearts of men. The very angels of God in heaven cannot persuade the wretched and blundering children of earth as can one human being broken on the wheel of living. When we consider what Saunders, the martyr had to say, Welcome, the cross of Christ. I feel no more pain in the fire than if I were on a bed of down. Listen to what another martyr had to say, the ringing of my chains has been music in my ears. O, what a comfort of a good conscience. The kissing of the stake, he said, I should not lose my life, but change it for better. Instead of cold, I shall have perils of fire. So Jesus said men shall revile you and say all manner of evil against you for my sake and you may feel that because you are not being persecuted at the present you are not living a Godly life. That is not necessarily so for we know that many countries vary in their treatment and the environment and the age in which we live and yet we know that it is not always popular to stand up for Christ. We may be persecuted but we must know how to be abased in whatsoever state we are. This persecution lets us know that we are identified with Christ. The enmity of the world in tangible proof that we are on the right side. That is, when men shall hate you



the men was ~~stripping~~ chiseling a triangular piece of stone. He asked what are you going to do ~~with~~ with that? Well, the workman said, you see that little opening way up there on the spire on top of the church. Well, I'm shaping this down here, so it will fit in up there. Tears filled this man's eyes as he walked away for it seemed that God had spoken through the workman to explain his sufferings that he was passing through. I am shaping you down here so you will fit ~~in~~ up there. You see, after you have suffered awhile, God is going to make you perfect and fit, he says, for up there.

**MARCH 12 SATURDAY**  
 Morning Reading Exodus 18 Isaiah 41  
 Evening Reading Job 39 1 Corinthians 12

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. John 15:20.

He was a terror to his regiment, but God saved him. Some of his buddies began to ridicule him, and one of them went so far as to throw hot soup over him. The whole company gazed in almost breathless silence, expecting to see the offender mercilessly beaten. But after the converted prize fighter tore open his clothes and wiped his scalded breast, he said, "This is what I expected when I became a Christian!"

And though here on earth rejected,  
 'Tis but fellowship with Thee;  
 Should we not with joy expect it—  
 Here, like Thee, our Lord to be?

To My - Nov 1 10 P.M.



OUR LORD HERE is giving to us an application to His disciples and a positive description of the Christian. He is persecuted because he is a certain type of a person because he behaves in a certain manner and this we know that the description before has been a direct one, this one is indirect. That is to say what is going to happen to you because you are a Christian, says Christ. Our Lord starts out and He concludes with a particular promise.



I. Why Christians are Persecuted

He does not say that you are blessed are those that are persecuted because they subject themselves, He does not say blessed are ye because you have a hard time in your Christian life, He does not say, Blessed are they that are being persecuted because they lack wisdom and rely on foolishness He does not say that blessed are the persecuted because they are fanatical, that is, over zealous and there are many temptations that tend to lead one on until he becomes a nuisance and at times he gets into trouble by his own doing, by his own grievous faults and mistakes. Now let us be careful that we do not bring unnecessary suffering upon our selves. We are to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. We are not told blessed are they who are persecuted because they are doing something wrong. Peter said Let none of you suffer

for Jesus. II. What Does Persecution Do for Us? His thoughts and life are controlled by heaven, and ~~xxx~~ by the world to come. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad. What was their secret, the secret of the heroes of faith lifted in the Old Testament and in the book of Hebrews. It was that they were seeking for a continuing city. That is the obvious difference between the Christian and the non-Christian. The non-Christian does everything that he can not to ~~xxxxxx~~ think about the world beyond. He thinks only of today. He hates to think about death and eternity, but the Christian on the other hand is a man who thinks a great deal about these things and dwells upon them and it is the greatest controlling factor in his life. How should a Christian face persecution? It may be violent, it may be imprisoned, it may mean conscription camps, it may mean losing his position, it may mean suffering, In the negative the Christian must not retaliate. Now it is difficult not to do this but our Lord did not do so and so we must stay the same word. We must not reply. To retaliate is just to be like the natural man who always does reply. Second, he must also not feel resentment. This is more difficult. When we control our actions to not actually reply, we must go beyond that ~~xxx~~ and not even resent the persecution that comes to us.



other men's matters. He does not say blessed are they who are persecuted for a cause. There are a lot of people who are in prison or in concentration camps because of political causes or some reason that they fear that is worth standing up for.

3. We know that this persecution is because of righteousness sake. This is clear from the beginning to the end that it is not persecution that we bring upon ourselves but it is persecution that comes by being righteous. What then does this beatitude pertain to. It really means being like the Lord Jesus Christ therefore they are blessed who are persecuted for being like Him. Jesus put it this way, if the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own, but because we are not of the world but I have chosen you out of the world therefore the world hateth you. John 15:18-20. Paul in writing to Timothy said, Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution. Daniel in the story we remember of him, was persecuted and he was persecuted because he was a righteous man.

4. By whom are the righteous persecuted? This is an interesting thought. Persecution is not confined to the world the most grievous persecution that men have suffered many

hands of religious people. It has often come from nominal Christians. Take our Lord Himslef who were His chief persecutors? The Pharisees, the Scribes, the Doctors of the law. The Jews put Him to death. Look at the Roman Catholic church in the middle ages. They persecuted those who seemed to live according to the pure truth. So the opposition that often comes to a convert may not always be from the world. Some of his stiffest competition may come from people within the church.

7. Why are the righteous thus persecuted? Why is this so? Why they were persecuted more than just the man that is good and noble. Well, they say that they are capable of doing good themselves. But the righteous people are different and that is why the Pharisees and the Scribes hated our Lord, not because He was just good, but He was different. They knew that He believed in being a Christian and that was just too much for them and that was going too far. The only way for us to be righteous is through the new birth, we must be changed entirely changed. He is unlike everybody else. The gospel of Jesus Christ is diffinitely as different. The Christians life is controlled and dominated by Jesus Christ. Why are they persecuted? Because they are living for Christ's sake. They are living for Christ, no longer to live for their own sake but this persecution comes because they are living



In the third place, we must never be depressed by persecution. We must never get this feeling of unhappiness, this depression or oppression which covers your soul and spirit and spreads to other people. Many times we say, Well, why am I being treated this way? So a feeling of depression in our spiritual life seems to settle down upon us and we lose control of our Christian living. On the position side we must rejoice and be exceedingly glad. Why is the Christian to rejoice like this and how is it possible for him to do so. Why then does he rejoice in it? Well, great is your reward in heaven. This is proof of where he is going for this is the greatest reward that he can have and it produces happiness. It labels us as to what our destiny is. Some people say that they do not believe in rewards. The people that say this are not interested in heaven or hell. But we know that the reward that we count upon as the Bible tells us we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. How is this reward possible? It is possible through grace of God. It is as God treats us as the Father, the father tells the children that there are certain things that he wants them to do and that it is his duty to do them. He also tells him that if he does them he will give him a reward. It is not that the child merits a reward it is given of grace and it is the expression of the father's love. The Christian is a man who should a



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always thinking of the end. He does look at the things which ~~show~~ are seen but at the things that are not seen. And that is the secret of the men listed in Hebrews. Moses looked to the future and others did likewise. They did not stop their thoughts with this life, but they looked beyond death and they looked out into eternity. What is this reward? It is a glorious and wonderful reward that no human language can truly describe. It is to be with Him to worship in His glorius, a body will be changed and glorified, no sickness no sorrow, no sighing, no tears, unmingled joy and glory and holiness and purity, and wonder, that is what is waiting for us. When we think about this unhappy wretched world how can we fail to think and meditate upon the reward that awaits us. Many people are unhappy today because they are unhappy they can use others to be unhappy. How often do you think of heaven and rejoice as you think of it. Perhaps the reason some never think of heaven very often is they are living too low a level. The thoughts of heaven ought to make us rejoice and be exceeding glad because it means to be with Christ which is far better.