

Beatitudes Pt. 2: Matthew 5:7-12

- **Intro**
 - v.1-6 = Upward focus
 - v.7-12 = Outward Focus...Merciful, Pure, Peacemakers = CHRISTIAN CHARACTER
- **The Merciful—Act in Response to Need**
 - Comes first here b/c we receive mercy first! This is where Christ mercifully saves us!
 - **Mercy is NOT an emotion but a practical RESPONSE to need (Matt 15, 17 and 20)**
 - OPPOSITE OF...”be consumed in accomplishing and preserving your own ease.”
 - Call to SHARE in the afflictions of others—idea behind “bear one another’s burdens”
 - **World = INSULATION from others.....Following Jesus = IDENTIFICATION with others**
- **The Pure in Heart—Seek Total Devotion to Jesus**
 - Not about sexual/moral purity! This is about a complete love of God
 - **Deut 6:5—you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.**
 - Uncontaminated by Sin—we are pursuing righteousness
 - Unadulterated by other loyalties—we are in love with and following Jesus ALONE!
 - **Ps. 24:3-4a—Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart**
 - Promise behind this—those who come to Christ and experience his mercy are will be TOTALLY purified from sin and WILL SEE GOD one day—OT saints longed for this!
 - **1 John 3:2—when Christ appears...we shall see him as he is—FUTURE HOPE!**
 - Sincerity—there is a purity, a ONENESS to us, whether in public/private, ease/difficulty, spotlight/obscurity—we are transparent before God/others and are chasing faithfulness
 - Social purity—these are the honest, sincere, truthful, those who reject deceit/cunning
 - We are people of our word; we flee hypocrisy. YET, we all wear masks as hypocrites... only Jesus has ever truly been pure of heart!
- **The Peacemakers—Engage the Work of Redeeming Brokenness**
 - Jesus knew that the inevitable result of his coming would be conflict—conflict between our sin and his lordship, conflict between his authority and our other loyalties, conflict between the world’s value system and his perfect character.
 - **Not just a call to be peaceful people but to SEEK peace where unrest, antagonisms, etc is**
 - The world HATES our righteousness and it hates our Christ—therefore, we must seek peace
 - Peacemaker—these people aren’t just “preservers of peace” but MAKERS of peace.
 - This gets to the outward, social implications—we ENTER the places of rivalry, hatred, brokenness, disorder and, with the gospel, bring peace!
 - **Eph. 2:14—For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility.**
 - **Col. 1:19-20—For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross.**
 - **It is the job of all Christians is to be the redeemers of brokenness in the world.**
 - Peacemaking is COSTLY—it cost God his Son!
 - Peacemaking: evangelism, relational reconciliation, injustice fighting
- **The Persecuted—Endure Pain and Loss with Joy and Gladness for the sake of Christ**
 - **Transition from peacemaking to persecution, reconciliation to hostility**
 - v.11-12 shift from 3rd person (those who) to 2nd person (you)—pulls persecution from a general concept to something these people with SPECIFICALLY experience!

- **The Inevitability of Persecution**
 - John 15:20—Remember the word that I said to you: A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.
 - Persecution just as much a mark of faithful discipleship as mercy, purity and meekness! Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will SUFFER for the righteousness they crave!—Bonhoeffer
- **The Cause of Persecution:**
 - v.10—persecution because of RIGHTEOUSNESS
 - v.11—persecution because of ME
 - They aren't hated and resided because they are obnoxious, nuisances, rude, arrogant, etc...it is because they are becoming and living like Jesus and are hated for it, as he was!
 - PERSECUTION FOR LIVING LIKE JESUS!
 - The world HATES righteousness b/c righteousness EXPOSES them—minus righteousness, all of our hypocrisy, sinful gratification, deceit and pride can remain hidden in unchecked darkness.
 - BEWARE OF MOMENTS WHEN IT APPEARS YOU HAVE UNIVERSAL POPULARITY!
 - Our problem: America displays some good/Christianlike values AND we have watered down/lowered our standard of discipleship. The world has become tolerant of us and we of the world—the beatitudes has a problem with this!
- **The Rejoicing of Persecution:**
 - Because it joins us to the company of persecuted saints who have blazed the trail (v.12)
 - Persecution = a sign of authenticity/genuineness
 - Because we have a great eternal reward (v.12)
 - Because it identifies us with Christ—“on my account”—
 - 1 Peter 4:12-13—Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ”
 - It allows us to identify with and intercede for the persecuted believers around the world.
 - Acts 5:41—they left the presence of the council REJOICING that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name.”
 - We don't retaliate (unbeliever), sulk (child), lick our wounds (self-pity), grin and bear it (Stoic), pretend to enjoy it (masochist)
- **Conclusion:**
 - With every beatitude, Jesus is widening the gap between the CROWDS and the DISCIPLES. His call to true disciples to rise up becomes increasingly loud and clear!
 - The beatitudes remind us that Jesus, in the power of his gospel, EMPOWERS the blessed life of transformation here! May we look to his perfection and victory for power and hope!
 - May we march forward in this hope, as a new humanity being gradually transformed into the image of our King, as we seek to be bringers of the Kingdom to EARTH NOW as it is in heaven!
 - What is the hope of the earth? Not politics/ideology/workout plans—it is the power of the gospel, working through spiritually bankrupt people who have been comforted in the gospel who, in humble gentleness, live lives of mercy, peace and righteousness, even in the face of deep opposition and persecution, such that an onlooking world might get a glimpse at the beauty and glory of God and the Savior!
 - Bonhoeffer—the world dreams of progress, of power and of the future, but the disciples meditate on the end, the last judgment and the coming of the kingdom. To such heights the world cannot rise. And so the disciples are strangers in the world, unwelcome guests and disturbers of the peace. No wonder the world rejects them!