

# Lesson 4

## The Beatitudes - Part 3

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 5:9-12

### Summary

- “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matthew 5:9). The peace that Jesus speaks of here is not world peace. It is not peace from wars and battles between the kingdoms of men. Instead, it is a peace that comes to someone in fellowship with God.
  - Jesus was prophesied to be the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). Through His sacrifice on the cross, all people are provided an avenue to be at peace with God. Paul said, “Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him” (Romans 5:9).
  - After one receives peace with God, he can receive peace with other disciples (Romans 14:19). The death of Jesus broke down the racial and religious divisions that existed between the Jews and Gentiles. “For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall” (Ephesians 2:14).
  - The disciple also seeks to live in peace with the world. While he doesn’t compromise the gospel, he is not always seeking to fight and cause strife with others (Romans 12:18).
- “Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:10). This is a radical and shocking blessing offered by Jesus! It seems to deviate from the pattern in the list. It doesn’t describe the disciple’s character, but how those in the world often respond to that character.
  - Instead of being appreciated and praised for godly character, the disciple will be persecuted! He will suffer at the hands of those who oppose Jesus. Peter offers a similar warning in 1 Peter 4:12-16.
- “Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matthew 5:11-12).
  - These words are a continuation of the previous thought. After announcing that disciples will suffer for possessing righteous character, He specifies what the persecution will involve. Followers of Jesus will be mocked, insulted, and slandered. They will experience similar persecution as the prophets in the Old Testament.
  - They will suffer like the Master who suffered for them. Jesus further promised this when He said, “A slave is not greater than His master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you” (John 15:20a).

## Study Questions

1. What is your initial reaction to the peacemakers that Jesus speaks of in this sermon?
2. What often hinders us from being peacemakers? How do we overcome these obstacles?
3. What is your initial reaction to those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness?
4. What often hinders us from being willing to suffer for the cause of Christ? How do we overcome these obstacles?
5. How did Jesus establish the example of enduring for the sake of righteousness? In what ways can His example help us endure today?
6. What kinds of persecution do we endure today? In what ways can persecution help us grow as disciples?
7. What will the peacemakers and persecuted for the cause of Christ receive from God? Give the meaning of these blessings.