

MATTHEW 5:3-12

- In this passage of scripture, Jesus is describing one person, that has these character traits.
- Jesus is essentially saying that a person is happy, if they have these traits.
- This is Jesus, teaching us how to be, “happy”.
- It would be safe to replace the word **blessed** with the word **happy**.
- *Recap from sermon 7: We looked at 5 characteristics of a peacemaker:*
 1. Peacemakers go out of their way to restore relationships
 2. Peacemakers have the Kingdom of God in mind when dealing with relationships
 3. Peacemakers have peace within, about themselves, knowing they’re redeemed, justified and who they are in Christ Jesus.
 4. Peacemakers engage the spiritual battle with fervent relentless intercession.
 5. Peacemakers exercise the mind of Christ to bring about peace for others.
- This week we’ll be looking at **MATTHEW 5: 10-12** “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” “Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you”
- I’m not talking about the kind of persecution early Christians faced: (see Heavenly Man extract)
- Persecution we face may involve exclusion from family and circles of “friends”
- Persecution may involve a daily onslaught on your soul by satan, trying to get you to grow weary in doing good and to compromise on scriptural principles:

GALATIANS 6:9-10 “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in **due season** we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, **as we have opportunity**, let us **do good to all, especially** to those who are of the **household of faith**”

(NLT2nd) “So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up. Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.”

- Due season: This will take time
- Opportunity: NOW in RSA is there perfect opportunity
- Good to ALL: including enemies: **LUKE 6:27** “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you
- Household of faith: our family/community of believers
- Persecution from satan to get us to hate:

IF SATAN CAN GET YOU TO HATE ANOTHER HUMAN BEING, SATAN HAS GOT YOU!!!

- Persecution will come when we believe and apply the word of God in our lives:

MARK 4:17 and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time.

Afterward, when tribulation or **persecution arises for the word's sake**, immediately they stumble

- We can take courage from Jesus' promise in this verse:

JOHN 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

CARE GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Discuss what the term "persecution" means to you
2. If God has promised to protect us from the devil's onslaughts, how do you think this verse in **2 TIMOTHY 3:12** **Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution**, is relevant to us as Christians?
3. In what ways can we keep our faith strong, during times of persecution?
4. What role does the Holy Spirit play, in keeping us strong?