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# **The Results of Persecution**

**(Part 1)**

**555-A**

**Series: The Beatitudes**

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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# The Results of Persecution

## (Part 1)

We will continue our study of the Beatitude, “Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake”. “Oh what bliss,” Jesus said, “to be harassed, ridiculed, jeered at, lied about or injured,” because Christ’s righteousness in you has offended the world. This, said Jesus, is the basis for sheer happiness. Jesus added, “You ought to be so excited if you suffer for righteousness sake that your supernatural response should be to leap for joy.”

This is the kind of response one would expect to have if he had found out that he had just been given a 50% raise. This is the kind of response you might have with a brand new baby. This is the kind of response you might have if you have just seen your favorite team win an important sporting event or a world championship. Jesus tells us that this is the kind of excitement the Christian should experience when he gets bombarded with bitterness for Jesus’ sake. We may think this is a strange response. Who wants to be persecuted? No one. That is, unless, through persecution God has something special for us. Something only cured in the fire. Something only cleansed in the flood.

The natural mind will cringe at the thought. But then, the natural mind rejects meekness. It rejects mercy. It rejects poverty of spirit. It rejects the price paid for purity of heart. The Beatitudes were not written for the natural mind. They were written for the spiritual mind, the mind that is inhabited by the Spirit of God. For this mind, the very denial of physical benefits often accrues spiritual prosperity. The very presence of pressure and problems often results in spiritual freedom, for the mind of Christ and the mind of the world are at enmity, the one with the other.

Certainly one such pressure is persecution. Persecution defined is the harassment, abuse or attempted destruction of the rights or happiness of one person or group by another. It means to put to flight through undue pressure.

Two lessons ago we talked about the reality of persecution. In every generation there has existed the conflict between Satan

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and God. It has manifested itself in two forms. The first is the persecution by the world of the church at large. When the church takes a stand for righteousness, persecution results. It is happening today in Cuba, in Russia, in China, in Iran and all over the world. The second is the persecution of individual Christians when their lives reflect the righteousness of God. The world cannot stand this.

In the last lesson, we looked at the reason for persecution. Paul said that persecution is a by-product and a natural result of preaching the cross of Jesus Christ. He said that if he was being persecuted, it proved he was preaching the cross plus nothing. Paul went on to say that those who added to or subtracted from the cross did so to prevent persecution.

The cross offends in two ways. First it offends because the death of Christ offends. It says Jesus plus nothing equals eternal life. Secondly, the cross offends because the life of Christ offends. It says the cross plus nothing equals the abundant life. The life of Christ offends.

We listened to the words of the cross in the last lesson. They said these things. The cross spoke of unqualified forgiveness. It said, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." The cross spoke of unselfish compassion when it said, "Woman, behold thy son. Disciple, behold thy mother." It spoke of uncompromising submission, "Into Thy hands I commit My spirit." It spoke of impartial acceptance, "Today, thou shalt be with Me in paradise.

We have examined thus far the reality of persecution and the reason for persecution. In this lesson, we will take a look at the third aspect of this study, the result of persecution. This is where we look into the mirror of God's Word and see what is reflected in the heart of God. As always, we find that what man or Satan means as evil unto us, Genesis 50:20 tells us that God means it unto good. In other words, it is blessed to be persecuted. Through persecution, we get blessed in at least 11 ways. The format for our study goes as follows. There at least 11 results of persecution. We will deal with some of them in this lesson.

- 1- Persecution results in identification with Jesus Christ.
- 2- Persecution results in spiritual transformation.
- 3- Persecution results in supernatural behavior.
- 4- Persecution results in treasures laid up in heaven.

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- 5- Persecution results in entering into the sufferings of Christ yourself.
- 6- Persecution results in greater glory to God.
- 7- Persecution results in being in company with God's grace.
- 8- Persecution results in unity in God's family.
- 9- Persecution results in equipping you for a ministry.
- 10- Persecution results in the ability to encourage others.
- 11- Persecution results in special protection and presence.

### I- IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST

Persecution results in our identification with Jesus Christ. Our outline lists but a few of the results of persecution. When we are persecuted for the name of Christ, God takes it very personal. Saul was persecuting Christians. When Jesus confronted Saul on the Damascus Road, Jesus was so totally identified with saints in their suffering, that His question to Saul in Acts 9:4,5 was "Saul, Saul why are You persecuting Me?" We read in the last lesson that Jesus acknowledged that when we have done something to the least of these, we have done it unto Him. Jesus, who is so identified with our suffering, desires that we likewise be identified with Him in our suffering.

This is perfect identification. Jesus understood this concept perfectly. He said, "I and the Father are one. When you have seen Me, you have seen the Father. I am so perfectly identified with the Father, and I do not let sin mar that identification so that when you look at Me and when you see Me in this human body, you have in essence seen God in the flesh. You cannot separate Us, We are One." He went on to say, "I am going to send the Spirit to you. The Spirit in you would afford that same level of identification with Me that I have with the Father." Jesus said of the Holy Spirit, "He will not speak concerning Himself, but what He sees Me do, He will do. He has come to testify of Me." When the Spirit speaks through a life, He always says, "Jesus." Those with ears to hear, hear "Jesus."

I believe there are at least four ways that we become identified with another:

1- To become identified with Christ is by common commitment or defense. This is commitment to a person under attack. We have all seen siblings fight like cats and dogs. If you ask them if they

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have a good thing to say about their sibling, they usually say, “No.” But if you let them go to a playground and a big bully comes on the scene threatening a younger sibling, the older sibling who never has a kind word to say about them becomes interested in a hurry. He becomes totally identified with the suffering of the younger sibling. “That is my brother and nobody is going to knock him around!”

It is also a commitment to the cause of righteousness. Every Christian has an Alamo. The men at the Alamo had to make a decision. A line was drawn, and they had to make a choice. They either could head to the hills out the back door, or they could cross that line and stay and die for what they believed. History has them totally identified with the cause of freedom. I believe that every Christian has the same decision to make at various points in their lives. Satan draws a line, and God looks down and says, “That is good.” You and I have to choose to either step across those lines or not. To step across those lines, we could, in essence, be saying, “I will die for what I believe.” Jesus says, “He that would save his own life and go out the back door of the Alamo will lose it. He who would lose it for My sake and step across that line, the same will save it.”

2- To become identified with Christ is by common response to testing. Jesus, on the cross, looked down and said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Then we see Stephen being stoned to death. As this was happening, he looked up into the very face of Jesus in the heavenlies and said, “Father, lay not this sin to their charge.” Total identification with the person of Jesus Christ in suffering is the key. Under given conditions, we can be so identified that others can see Jesus in our response. It can be the same way in a family. You often hear people say, “He has his father’s temper.” You may also hear, “She has her mom’s gentle response when she is rebuked. She smiles and says, ‘Yes, sir.’” Or you could reverse those in some cases.

I have something I do when I am caught with my hand in the cookie jar or when the heat is on, I always just grin with a silly looking grin. Last night as we were driving to my daughter’s graduation, we had a little surprise for my wife. It was a Mother’s Day gift. I can’t keep a secret at all. While we were driving, my wife asked, “What is it that you and Ron are up to?” Instead of coming off as Johnny Cool, saying something to avoid telling her, I broke out with a grin, which split my ears in two. She said, “You

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are up to something. You can't keep a straight face for anything." She knew something was up. The point is that my daughter has that same silly grin when you catch her at the wrong time doing the wrong thing or when trying to keep a secret. The whole idea is that we become identified even to the point of our responses.

3- We become identified is by common distinctives or standards. You might go to a game against Texas A&M and the University of Texas. Because of the distinctives, you won't have any trouble identifying who is cheering for the Longhorns or the Aggies. The Longhorns will be wearing orange and showing the Longhorn sign with their hands. The Aggies will be wearing maroon and they are the ones who stand up through the whole game. You will have no trouble distinguishing the opposing sides.

In Peter 4, Peter says, "We learn now that as believers there are some things we have as distinctives. There are some places we don't go anymore. There are some things we don't do anymore. There are things you don't allow yourself to be identified with anymore." In the change, you have put on a new uniform. He goes on to say, "The world will not identify with your new standards. They will harass you. They will persecute you. They will ridicule you. Your new distinctives will be seen as being on the other team. You are singing a new fight song. You are wearing new colors. You have moved to a new cheering section. You are marching to a new drummer." You are doing this not to call attention to yourself, but to identify yourself that you belong to the King.

4- We become identified with Christ is by common appearance. You may hear someone say, "He walks just like his daddy." Or, "She holds her head just like her mother." Sometimes you hear, "If you have seen him, you have seen his father." I have finally reached the age where now I have people coming into our store and their children are the age that they were when I first met them. It is eerie because their children are the spitting image of them at that same age. It scares me to death. I think, "Good grief, the time has gone by." The young person introduces themselves as the son or daughter of the person I knew. It looks like the same life reproduced in a younger way. The whole idea is that they are so identified by creation that they have a common appearance with their parents. If you have seen them you have seen their parent.

In Acts we see that same thing is true in the countenance of

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God in the Christian. It says,

You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence. (Acts 2:28 NKJV)

In II Corinthians we read,

the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away. (II Corinthians 3:7 NKJV)

We Christians have no veil over our faces. We can be mirrors that brightly reflect the glory of the Lord. As the Spirit of the Lord works within us, we become more and more and more like Him. (II Corinthians 3:18 TLB)

Then in II Corinthians in the Living Bible it goes on to say,

We don't go around preaching about ourselves, but about Christ Jesus, Lord. All we say of ourselves is that we are slaves because of what Jesus has done for us.

For God who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," has made us understand that it is the brightness of His glory that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

But this precious treasure, this light and power that now shines within us is held in a perishable container that is in our weak bodies. Everybody can see that the glorious power within us must be from God. It is not our own.

We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed and broken. We are perplexed because we don't know why things happen as they do, but we don't give up and quit.

We are hunted down but God never abandons us. We get knocked down but we get up again and keep going.

These bodies of ours are constantly facing death just as Jesus did. So it is clear to all that it is only the living Christ within us that keeps us safe. (II Corinthians 4:5-10 TLB)

In Luke 9:29 Jesus is on the Mount of Transfiguration. As He prayed, it says that His countenance was changed, and they could see God. Describing Stephen in Acts 6:15, the Scripture says, They looking steadfast upon him saw his face as it had been the face of an angel. Ecclesiastes 8:1 says that a man's wisdom causes his face to shine and the boldness of his face shall be changed. Jesus says to us, "I am your wisdom." It is hard to explain, but the man or the woman who spends time, much time alone with God, begins to look like God.

I know that no man has seen God at any time, but the

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countenance of God, the glory of God is available in the lives of people. There is a softness about their spirit. There is a kindness about their countenance. There is a power in their words. There is a love in their actions. I have seen people come into our store or in the mall or in different places, and I have said to my wife, "That person has got to be a Christian. They just glow." Particularly as people get older in life, if they have walked with God for years, you will see them and know at a glance that they look just like their Father. Their Father is God.

When we become totally identified with Him, He will be seen in our common commitment. He will be seen in our common response to testing. He will be seen in our common distinctives and standards. He will be seen even in our very countenance. When this happens, His friends will be our friends, and His life will be our life. His foes, those who cannot say yes to Him, will be our foes. They will reject those who so perfectly identify with Him. Jesus said it in John 15:16-27,

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.  
(John 15:16 NKJV)

The result of our appointment by God is a healthy fruit bearing. The product of a healthy tree is a powerful prayer life. This is what verse 16 is saying.

These things I command you, that you love one another.  
(John 15:17 NKJV)

This is a commandment. Within the body, there is to be identification, fish are to love fish. That is what it says.

If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.  
(John 15:18 NKJV)

Fish love fish, but snakes don't love fish. This is what it is saying super simplified. The reason is in verse 19.

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

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. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake,

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because they do not know Him who sent Me.

(John 15:19-21 NKJV)

What Jesus is saying is that there is perfect identification between the Father and the Son. If you reject the Father, you reject the Son. If you reject the Son, you have rejected the Father, there is no in between. He carries out the same principle to the believer. If the world rejects His children, they are rejecting Him. If they are rejecting Him, they are rejecting His children.

If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

(John 15:22 NKJV)

So now He gives the reason why the world rejects the Christian. They cannot stand the righteousness of God. In the presence of the righteousness of God, sin is exposed.

He who hates Me hates My Father also.

If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

(John 15:23-25 NKJV)

This is the key. There was nothing objectionable about the life of Christ. He lived a perfect life. They were not offended at His life; they were offended at His righteousness.

"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

(John 15:26,27 NKJV)

This is perfect identification from the Father to the Son to the Spirit. In Matthew 10 we read,

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

But beware of men, for they will deliver you up to councils and scourge you in their synagogues.

You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles."

(Matthew 10:16-18 NKJV)

"Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father

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his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.

And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved.

When they persecute you in this city, flee to another. For assuredly, I say to you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!?”  
(Matthew 10:21-25 NKJV)

In other words Jesus is saying, “Here I am the Son of God, and they are calling Me Satan. What do you think they are going to call you when you identify yourself with me?”

Therefore do not fear them. For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.

(Matthew 10:26 NKJV)

The key to it all is found in verse 40.

He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.  
(Matthew 10:40 NKJV)

You will be persecuted because you will be so totally identified with Jesus. Through the process of persecution, your identification will be intensified. It was so with Him. It was so with Paul. It was so with John. It will be so with us.

## II- SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Persecution produces spiritual growth and maturity. Persecution produces in the Christian spiritual transformation when the believer relaxes and lets it. The Christian growth process can be likened to a pressure cooker. A pressure cooker is a pot that sits on the stove that has a seal around it. The lid fits on real tight. A small valve on the top hisses when the pressure gets to a certain point, and it lets out steam.

The key is that the Christian life is like a pressure cooker. Christian growth results this way. The burner is thermostatically controlled by God. The seal is the seal of the Holy Spirit, and the top cannot blow off. The valve at the top is I Corinthians 10:13 that says that there is no test in your life, no pressure that can build up, that such is not common to man. But God is the faithful

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One, and He is not going to allow any pressure to come that will blow the lid off. This is a loose translation. With that pressure He will make a way of escape so that you can have a release valve. So the Christian experience in terms of growth is that we are being cooked in this pressure cooker. But God has a valve, and we are not going to get more pressure than we can handle.

At the bottom of the stove there are four knobs that God can turn. There are circumstances of life, the sowing and reaping valve, personal discipline and persecution. In this lesson, we are dealing with persecution. The circumstances of life may change such as losing your job or getting sick or being rejected. Pressure begins to grow. The sowing and reaping principle is everything we do that has a cause and effect syndrome. If you tell a lie and you get caught, you may say that God is putting pressure in your life. Yes, He is, but it is not a result of persecution. You are simply reaping what you have sown. Then there is the fire that comes from personal discipline. Whom the Lord loveth, He rebukes, He disciplines, He chastens. There are times when God simply brings discipline into our lives to get our attention and to get us back on the track. The last valve is persecution. This is undeserved suffering at the hands of enemies for His name's sake. These four valves turn up the pressure.

The product of that pressure cooker is four-fold:

Product 1- character. Character is the inner attitude and basic characteristics that reveal the nature that controls the man. We see this in James.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,  
knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.  
(James 1:2,3 NKJV)

Character. Let it happen. Let character have its perfect completion so that you can be mature as a Christian.

Product 2- obedience. The heart response of love leads to the outer response of submission. We see this obedience in Hebrews,

though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the  
things which He suffered. (Hebrews 5:8 NKJV)

Jesus, the living Son of God, learned obedience through testing and through suffering.

Product 3- spiritual hunger. This is the inner desire of the spirit to receive and to respond to the Word of God. This comes

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about through testing and persecution. We see this in Psalm 119,

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your word. (Psalm 119:67 NKJV)

Another Scripture says that I was glad that I was afflicted that I might learn thy statutes. Verse 161 says,

Princes persecute me without a cause, but my heart stands in awe of Your word. (Psalm 119:161 NKJV)

Persecution develops a need and hunger to return to the Word.

Product 4- maturity is produced. We see this in Hebrews,

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. (Hebrews 2:10 NKJV)

### III- SUPERNATURAL BEHAVIOR

There opportunity to experience supernatural behavior. It causes us to leap for joy when we are hunted down or pressed down because of our faith. Supernatural behavior equals behavior that is contrary to the natural man because it is controlled by the Spirit of God.

I won't read the story, but I want to talk about the story of Stephen when he was being stoned. His response was supernatural when he said, "Father, lay not this sin to their charge." He then looked up into the heavens and beheld the face of Jesus. He was able to praise God as he was being stoned to death. The result of that supernatural behavior among other things was a contributing factor in the conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

I Peter 2:19-3:17 is a familiar passage that tells Christians to get excited when they have to suffer without deserving it. As a result of that, they will have an opportunity to manifest the grace of God supernaturally. It is life on Two Mile Island. When Christians are persecuted and give glory to God and full control to God, they will experience the ability to respond to the test with a grace that is supernatural so that they themselves are surprised.

Have you ever had that happen? You are put in a bind or a situation where you are being persecuted or tested. The Spirit of God gives you such freedom and such a supernatural response that there is almost a glow about you. You don't know how to explain it yourself. When you look in the mirror, you say to

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yourself, “Is that me?” But that is God. If you are not yet leaping for joy, you simply have not fully grasped the picture.

### IV- TREASURES LAID UP IN HEAVEN – REWARDS

1- Persecution produces rewards or crowns in heaven. It is an eternal one and its benefits never end. Our primary passage in Matthew made this astonishing demand. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad and then Jesus gave us a two-fold basis for that unusual behavior. The first basis of these is great is your reward in heaven. We could stop here and spend a few weeks on this subject but I wouldn't be keeping my promise. We talked a few lessons ago about the Bema Seat of Christ and the gold, silver and precious stones that we will one day have to lay at the feet of Jesus in order to worship. In this lesson, let's just remind ourselves that persecution, rightly responded to, produces rewards in heaven as the Scripture tells. You may not fully understand that, but you don't have to. Just understand that when you are persecuted for your faith, you are a candidate for rewards in heaven.

2- Jesus' rewards are not for works but for three basic reasons: He fought the fight, finished the course, and He kept the faith. First of all, God is a rewarder of endurance. Let's look at James 1:12. God's rewards are not pitting one against another for what you can do, but as the passage in James says, “blessed is the man who endures tribulation for when he is tested, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him”. In II Timothy 4:6-8 we have a very important passage to spend a few minutes on. Paul is speaking to Timothy.

Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God.

(II Timothy 4:6-8 NKJV)

Have you ever wondered what Paul said he was going to be rewarded for in that passage? It was not his accomplishments, but, rather, three things. He said he was going to be rewarded because he fought a good fight. He engaged in the conflict. He saw the enemy coming, and he didn't run the other way. He stood there and said to himself, “Here comes a battle. I have two

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choices, cross the line or run out the back door. I have fought the good fight. I hung in there.” The second reason for the reward was because he finished the course. Not only did he stand in place when he saw the enemy coming, but he stood in place in the Spirit while the enemy fought. He finished his course and remained in place. Thirdly, he kept the faith. He believed when there was no human basis for believing. He determined the cost and made a commitment. He fought the fight, finished the course, he kept the faith.

As I mentioned before, we went to a graduation ceremony. It was an important moment for us as our daughter received her degree. It was an exciting time. It was a reward for endurance. All of the graduates finished the course. They had their eye on the goal. When a test came, they stayed in place because at the end there was a goal and a reward.

This is why God blesses us for endurance. There are rewards for endurance. There are also rewards for examples in leadership. I Peter 5 says,

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. (I Peter 5:1-4 NKJV)

Peter is telling the leaders not to let their flock run around like a bunch of loose sheep because the leaders are responsible for them. You don't get a whip and you don't do it for money. When those you serve see Jesus, the Jesus you serve rewards you. You feed them and lead them not with a dominating spirit but with a humble, sacrificial example of a shepherd. You do this not for money but for love. God who is love will reward you.

3- God gives rewards for people whose lives have been touched by yours. Philipians says,

Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

(Philipians 4:1 NKJV)

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Let's also look at I Thessalonians,

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

For you are our glory and joy.

(I Thessalonians 2:19,20 NKJV)

The Amplified Bible says, What is the victor's wreath we shall wear in the winner's circle? Then Paul says that the people who came to Christ and matured through his teaching were his crown and glory. These are the things that God rewards us for. Persecution and a right response will produce great rewards in heaven.

As I close, let me ask you two questions and then remind you of one principle.

1- Are you convinced that persecution is a blessing? Yes or no. This is hard to answer, isn't it?

2- Are you prepared in your own heart to receive it and rejoice in it when it comes? Maybe there is a reward in heaven for silence.

Now for the principle. Jesus educated His disciples before the fact, not in the midst of the storm. In Matthew 10, He was warning the Jews of what was to come. In Matthew 16, He warned Peter of what was to come. Jesus warned the disciples of the cross that was to come. His instructions on persecution were not to those who were suffering in the present alone, although He spoke words of encouragement to them. His instructions were to prepare the church for a coming time, more than one coming time. It is to prepare this church and this generation for the years ahead so that we will understand how to recognize persecution so that we would understand how to respond to it and what blessings to expect from the persecution. The Bible is an instruction book for the church. Jesus left us ample instruction where persecution was concerned. He did promise that in the last days perilous times would come.

We no doubt live in those last days. What manner of men and women ought we to be? We ought to be men and women whose lives are so identified with Jesus Christ that persecution is inevitable. We do not seek it, we seek Him. But in the seeking of Him, the Scriptures say, yea all that are godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, so rejoice and be exceeding glad and jump for joy. We need to count it a privilege to be counted worthy to suffer

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for His sake. As you do, He will heap upon you blessings. He will give you a greater level of identification with Him. He will give you a greater degree of spiritual transformation. He will give you treasures untold in heaven. He will give you special protection, provision, power and presence. He will give you blessings only reserved for those who endure persecution. These are the benefits of the kingdom of heaven. If you are persecuted, the kingdom of heaven is yours.

Note: Russell wrote each of these lessons in a manner that would enable him to clearly communicate them to his weekly class. The grammar or punctuation you encounter may not be technically perfect, but you will certainly “hear” his unique gift for making the message applicable to the common man in everyday situations.

It’s been said of him that he was really a writer who read his stuff. And that’s a very accurate statement!

May you be richly blessed as you “hear” as you read.

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