

# Persecuted Peacemakers and Promises, Promises

## Chapter 8

### Audio lesson: Sermon on the Mount 8



Objective: To understand the eighth beatitude and learn how to respond to persecution.  
(Text: Matthew 5:1-10)



*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

—Matthew 5:10

There is a reason the beatitude about peacemakers is followed by a beatitude about persecution. Those who become ministers of reconciliation often suffer painful consequences because they have identified themselves with Jesus Christ. Being a peacemaker may put Jesus' disciples in the middle of dangerous fighting. Sometimes they even lose their lives. The disciple who has the "beautiful attitudes" confronts people with a model of what they should be. When people in the world are confronted with a true disciple, they can acknowledge that this is how they should live, or they can attack the disciple who is like Jesus. Very often, they do the latter.



1. The eighth beatitude says, "Blessed are those who are \_\_\_\_\_ for righteousness' sake, for theirs is \_\_\_\_\_."

2. True or **false**? This beatitude applies to anyone who is persecuted for any reason.

3. **True** or false? If someone loses his life for Jesus' sake, he is truly demonstrating that Jesus is his King.

*Unless otherwise noted, choose one best answer for each question.*

4. Read Acts 5:40-41. How did the apostles respond to persecution?
- They fled in fear.
  - They fought back.
  - They decided to obey the rulers.
  - They rejoiced for the privilege of suffering for Jesus.**

*When they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.*

—Acts 5:40-41

5. Read 1 Peter 4:12-14. According to verse 12, Christians should consider persecution to be:
- Strange and unusual
  - A sign of God's judgment
  - A normal and expected part of the Christian life**
  - Easy to handle
6. According to 1 Peter 4:14, suffering is a sign of what?
- The presence of God's Spirit in your life**
  - God's anger for your sins
  - That you are not getting along with the world as you should
  - The absence of God's Spirit and blessing in your life

*Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.*

—1 Peter 4:12-14

7. Why do you think the world attacks those who model the attitudes of Jesus? (*chose all that apply*)
- Those who model Jesus confront others with what they should be like.**
  - The attitudes of Jesus do not fit into the world's systems and cultures.**
  - The attitudes of Jesus are self-righteous and naturally offensive.
  - Sin and righteousness are always in conflict with each other.**
  - The attitudes of Jesus are intolerant and prejudiced.



What is your natural reaction to persecution? Can you think of ways to demonstrate God's character when you suffer? How?

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Thank God that He blesses those who are persecuted for His sake. Pray for those brothers and sisters who are suffering persecution for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus that they will remain faithful and strong. Ask Him to help you model the attitudes of Jesus and to give you strength when others reject you for being one of His followers.



## Going Deeper

1. Explain why the first four beatitudes are called the coming attitudes, and the second four the going attitudes? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. Pastor Woodward talks of four spiritual laws:

*I can't but He can, and I am in Him and He is in me,*

*I don't want to but He wants to, and I am in Him and He is in me,*

*I am not but He is, and I am in Him and He is in me,*

*I didn't but He did, because I was in Him and He was in me.*

How and why does each of these statements relate to a particular pair of the beatitudes? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. Does the eighth beatitude mean that the disciple of Jesus should seek to suffer for Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

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4. Pastor Woodward recommends that we memorize the beatitudes. Have you done so? If not, will you commit now to doing so? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. Have you known anyone who hates Jesus? Discuss. \_\_\_\_\_

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6. How do these people naturally react to those who openly identify with Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Pastor Woodward says, in regard to the Beatitudes, "We need a check-up from the neck up." How can we give ourselves a "check-up from the neck-up"? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. What do the first two beatitudes tell us about how God meets us? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. In what sense (how and why) will the poor in spirit receive the Kingdom of Heaven? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Why do those who openly identify with Jesus, those who demonstrate the “beautiful attitudes,” often suffer painful consequences? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. In what ways can persecution and suffering be a blessing? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. What is your natural reaction to persecution? Can you think of ways to demonstrate God’s character when you suffer? How? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Why does God promise that the meek will inherit the earth? \_\_\_\_\_

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14. Why did Pastor Woodward value night-call as a social worker? \_\_\_\_\_

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