

Blessed Are The Persecuted

October 2, 2014

Matthew 5:3-12

- 3 Blessed are the **POOR IN SPIRIT**: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed are they that **MOURN**: for they shall be comforted.
- 5 Blessed are the **MEEK**: for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 Blessed are they which do **HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS**: for they shall be filled.
- 7 Blessed are the **MERCIFUL**: for they shall obtain mercy.
- 8 Blessed are the **PURE IN HEART**: for they shall see God.
- 9 Blessed are the **PEACEMAKERS**: for they shall be called the children of God.
- 10 Blessed are they which are **PERSECUTED** for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, **for my sake**.
- 12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for **great is your reward in heaven**: for **so persecuted they the prophets which were before you**.

- **persecuted** (*dioko*) to put to flight, to pursue, aggressively chase like a hunter

By the wisdom and purposes of God, the Church faces different trials in different regions.

The Seven Churches of Revelation 2-3:

- (1) **Ephesus** (Revelation 2:1-7) - the church that had forsaken its first love (2:4).
- (2) **Smyrna** (Revelation 2:8-11) - the church that would suffer persecution (2:10).
- (3) **Pergamum** (Revelation 2:12-17) - the church that had false doctrine (2:16).
- (4) **Thyatira** (Revelation 2:18-29) - the church that had a false prophetess (2:20).
- (5) **Sardis** (Revelation 3:1-6) - the church that had fallen asleep (3:2).
- (6) **Philadelphia** (Revelation 3:7-13) - the church that had endured patiently (3:10).
- (7) **Laodicea** (Revelation 3:14-22) - the church with the lukewarm faith (3:16).

Revelation 2:8-11 (*Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna around A.D. 155.*)

- 8 And unto the angel of the **church in Smyrna** write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;
- 9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.
- 10 **Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.**
- 11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; **He that overcometh** shall not be hurt of the second death.

Revelation 3:14-22

14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

17 **Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:**

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 **To him that overcometh** will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The Church faces different trials in different regions:

- *Don't make comparisons nor draw conclusions that one group or one temptation is superior or inferior to another.*
- *As the Church, we would not be complete without the temptations of those persecuted for their faith, and they would not be complete without our temptations of resisting worldly pleasure, ease and prosperity.*
- *We would not embrace all persecuted people as Bible Christians. Many embrace a mixture of Christianity, false doctrine and other religions. Many are persecuted for just being "non-Muslim."*

2 Corinthians 10:7

"**Do ye look on things after the outward appearance?** If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's."

2 Corinthians 10:12

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they **measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.**"

John 21:21-22

21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and **what shall this man do?**

22 Jesus saith unto him, **If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.**

Hebrews 13:1-3

3 **Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.**