

Living in the Kingdom of Heaven X
Matthew 5:10-12 *“Blessed are those who are persecuted...”*
Jerry Cisar—April 29, 2007

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

I. Blessed are the persecuted?

- o Acts 28:22
- o Matthew 10:22
- o Matthew 24:9
- o John 15:18-19
- o John 16:2

Why are we repackaging the church?

IV... Are persecuted

- A. What does it mean to be persecuted?
 1. insult you
 2. false accusations
 3. It might be physical harm, but it doesn't have to be.

B. It does **not** say, "Who are willing to be persecuted."

John Stott: *"Persecution is simply the clash between two irreconcilable value-systems. ...the values and standards of Jesus are in direct conflict with the commonly accepted values and standards of the world."*

- o 2 Timothy 3:12

- o Revelation 2:20-22

Tolerance of sin doesn't breed persecution...but neither does it promote righteousness.

V. Because of righteousness

A. Not because of weirdness...

B. Because of righteousness.

D.A. Carson: *a pattern of life in conformity to God's will.*

- o Ephesians 5:3-17

- o Genesis 4:1-7

- o 1 Peter 3:14-17

C. Persecution comes because of association with the Savior.

o Acts 5:41

o Phil 3:10

VI. Yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Drawing Lines

Making the connection between what we "know" about the Gospel and how we think and live.

- Can you identify ways in which we sometimes try to repackage the Gospel in such a way as to guarantee we won't offend people?
- Can you think of times when you may have brought persecution on yourself, not because of righteousness, but for other reasons?
- Have there been times when you have been accused of being legalistic or unloving because you were merely holding to the truth of God's word?
- Have you persecuted others because of their stand for righteousness?
- Do you find yourself trading the eternal blessedness of the persecuted for the short-term blessedness of being liked?
- Do you rejoice when someone speaks falsely of you because of Christ?