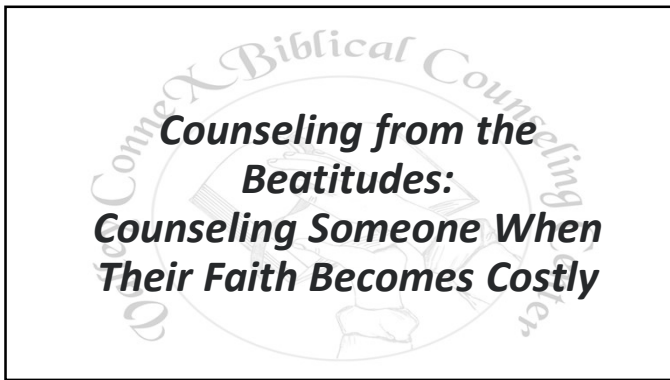
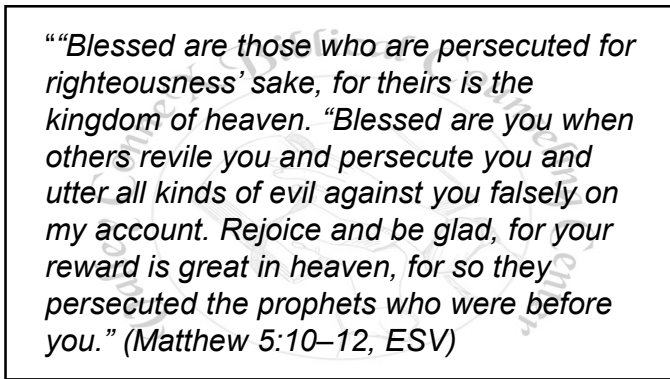


1



2



3

Blessed

- A life that rises above the cares of the world
- Freedom to live unencumbered by the forces of the world that would coerce and control
- The beatitudes reflect the radically renewed mind available for a follower of Jesus Christ

4

Blessed

- The main teaching of the beatitudes: That which is seen as limiting and restrictive in the world is overcome in the life of a follower of Jesus

5

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:10–12, ESV)

6

Do not confuse consequences for sinful behavior with negative reactions to faithfulness.

- God’s judgment is a result of sinful behavior.
 - *“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.” (Romans 1:18, ESV)*
- Persecution of a follower of Christ comes as a result of faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - *“Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,” (2 Timothy 3:12, ESV)*

7

The reality of suffering for the cause of Christ.

- 1 Peter 4:12-19
- John 15:18-16:4
- Acts 4:1-31; 5:17-42; 7:54-60; 8:1-3; 9:23-25; 12:1-17; 14:19-20; 16:16-40; 21:27-36

8


Some common persecution scenarios

- Unbelieving spouse
- Other family members
- Job loss or harassment
- Government harassment
- Former friends 1 Peter 4:3-6
- Adherent of other religions

9

Elements to address

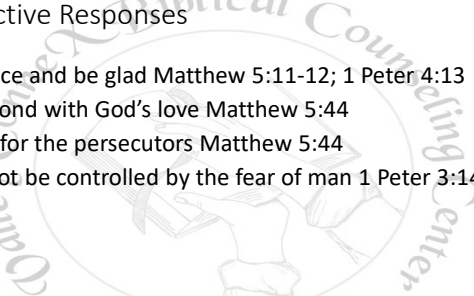
- Pride
- Forgiveness
- Resentment
- Justice
- Trust in God
- Perseverance



10

Proactive Responses

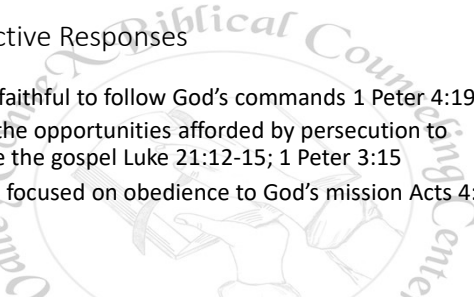
- Rejoice and be glad Matthew 5:11-12; 1 Peter 4:13
- Respond with God's love Matthew 5:44
- Pray for the persecutors Matthew 5:44
- Do not be controlled by the fear of man 1 Peter 3:14



11

Proactive Responses

- Stay faithful to follow God's commands 1 Peter 4:19
- Use the opportunities afforded by persecution to share the gospel Luke 21:12-15; 1 Peter 3:15
- Keep focused on obedience to God's mission Acts 4:31



12