Beatitudes

# 8 Blessed are the Persecuted
(Matthew 5:10-12)

A. Three Items of Special Note.

1. This beatitude is the last beatitude.

2. This beatitude is immediately applied by Jesus.

3. This beatitude is still about a believer’s character.
B. The Spiritual Quality of being Persecuted for the Sake of Righteousness.

1. The Meaning of Persecuted

2. The Reason for Persecution—Righteousness
3. What is not “Righteous Persecution”

“We must also realize that it does not mean suffering persecution for religio-political reasons. Now it is the simple truth to say that there were Christian people in Nazi Germany who were not only ready to practise and live the Christian faith but who preached it in the open air and yet were not molested. But we know of certain others who were put into prisons and concentration camps, and we should be careful to see why this happened to them. And I think if you draw that distinction you will find it was generally something political. I need not point out that I am not attempting to excuse Hitlerism; but I am trying to remind every Christian person of this vital distinction. If you and I begin to mix our religion and politics, then we must not be surprised if we receive persecution. But I suggest that it will not of necessity be persecution for righteousness’ sake. This is something very distinct and particular, and one of the greatest dangers confronting us is that of not discriminating between these two things. There are Christian people in China and on the Continent at the present time to whom this is the most acute problem of all. Are they standing for righteousness’ sake, or for a cause? After all, they have their political views and ideas. They are citizens of that particular country. I am not saying that a man should not stand for his political principles; I am simply reminding you that the promise attached to this Beatitude does not apply to that. If you choose to suffer politically, go on and do so. But do not have a grudge against God if you find that this Beatitude, this promise, is not verified in your life. The Beatitude and the promise refer specifically to suffering for righteousness' sake. May God give us grace and wisdom and understanding to discriminate between our political prejudices and our spiritual principles.” D. Martin Lloyd-Jones, Studies in the Sermon on the Mount, p. 132, c. 1959.
4. The Relationship between Persecution and Righteousness.

C. The Promise to Those who are Persecuted for the Sake of Righteousness