

Beatitudes Series: *Entering the Kingdom*

Message Summary: Jesus is honest about persecution. He never said the Christian life would be “all peaches and cream”. There is going to be some persecution. If you face persecution, “rejoice!” Why? You identify with Jesus Christ. You’re in good company. You’re in the class of the prophets.

Turning up the Contrast

*“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...”* Matthew 5:10-12

Persecute: To harass, injure, grieve or afflict because of belief

- 1. Jesus is honest about persecution.**
Luke 21:12-19; John 15:20
 - A. Hated by the religious establishment.
 - B. Hated by the secular world.
 - C. Betrayed by family.
 - D. Death.
- 2. Early Church suffered persecution.**
Acts 8:1,4; 2 Corinthians 11:24-28; Hebrews 11:36-40
- 3. Today’s Christians rejoice for the honor of suffering persecution.**
Matthew 5:12, John 25:18-20; 2 Corinthians 4:7–5:1
- 4. Prepare to confess Christ under pressure of persecution.**
Matthew 10:32-39; Romans 12:14; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12-19

LIFEGROUP QUESTIONS

All LifeGroups are on Summer Break and begin September 10th

BEGIN IT (5min) Praise the Lord & pray that God leads the study.

OPEN IT (10min) What is something for which you were wrongly punished when you were growing up?

EXPLORE IT (60min) Review Sunday’s sermon outline together and any notes people have about the message. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19

1. What painful trials have you gone through as a believer?
2. When have you been insulted because of the name of Christ?
3. How is suffering as a wrongdoer (such as for murder or gossip) significantly different from suffering as a Christian?
4. Why might it be God’s will for someone to suffer for righteousness’ sake?

APPLY IT (15min) How can your LifeGroup pray for your witness for Christ to be more effective to non-Christians? To put it another way: How can you “turn up the contrast”?

