

Persecution Comes

by Don McClure

The Beatitudes are a series of blessings that transform a human being into someone who is truly happy and fulfilled, but this transformation often leads to persecution.

Duration: 42:35

Scripture: Matthew 5:3-8, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Beatitudes", "Righteousness"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the Beatitudes from Matthew chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount. He describes these blessings as the central message of the Bible. The Beatitudes are a series of blessings that are bestowed upon those who approach God with humility and contrition. The preacher emphasizes the importance of a contrite spirit and a hunger and thirst for righteousness, as these qualities lead to a transformation and filling with God's presence. He also highlights the significance of mercy, forgiveness, and purity of heart in experiencing the blessings of God.

Transcript

Turn with me if you will to Matthew chapter 5 as we continue on in the Sermon on the Mount. While you're turning to it I'll review just a little because we've actually been away from it for a few weeks and so just to bring us up-to-date as to where we are in it. Here as Jesus is giving to us the central message I suppose of the Bible, greatest sermon I suppose debatably ever preached undebatably I suppose ever preached, but it begins with what is known as the Beatitudes.

And these Beatitudes are a series of blessings in a sense that happens to a person that finds himself truly essentially doing business with God on his terms. And here in these Beatitudes Jesus is literally transforming a human being as you will recall if for those of you that have been going through it with us. There it tells us that Jesus as he stood up there and he began to preach.

There he said, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. And here through these Beatitudes that we have been through so far as you will recall, I'm sure you do, and but just in case there's one that has slipped your mind. Here essentially in the first three there Jesus is simply reducing a man to reality.

So often we have such a terrible time coming to grips with the with the real truth of what a man is and the only time we'll ever know that for sure is when we measure ourself not by one another but we measure ourself by God. For any man who measures himself by God he'll immediately be poor in spirit. When we realize I was created in his image and then I look at myself now and I look back to what I was created to be, I've got to stop and say what has happened to my spirit? I was once in his image, his love, his life, his power, his majesty, his identity.

I was somebody that you could literally look at man and know what God was like. When God said in Genesis 127 let us create man after our own image. 126 I think.

What, what, you look it up yourself. You can find it. It's in the Bible.

But anyway there when he, when he tells us there that's what I was made to be. But yet because of sin we have fallen and the most important thing is first of all I become poor in spirit. I realize something has happened.

Then I take responsibility for my own failures in life and if I do I'll mourn. I'll grieve. There'll be something that happened to realize God I have sinned.

I have failed. I have missed the mark. I obviously you know have taken over my own life.

I have been ruling it. I have been running it and I run it right into the ground. And therefore Jesus said a man that's going to be truly happy is a man who's poor in spirit and he mourns over it.

He grieves over it and that grief will produce a meekness. For he says oh how happy are the meek for they shall inherit the earth. Here now and instead of coming before God and my pride or my arrogance and my demands and I want I'll have and you owe me.

I now come before God. Don't give me what I what I what you owe me. Don't give me what I've got coming.

God do you have anything else you can possibly do and we come in brokenness. We come in humility. We come in breaking and in meekness before God.

God loves meekness. A broken and a contrite heart God will not despise. He loves a contrite spirit.

Somebody who comes in humility and says God would you please be merciful unto me a sinner. Then Jesus said I'll tell you that man is on the road to happiness for then he says oh how happy are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled. The first three drained a man but then once were drained of all the old and where there's a godly sorrow within us it produces an insatiable hunger and thirst for God himself.

In there as we begin to hunger for him he fills us with nothing less than himself. In there as we find ourselves filled with him the revelation and the joy of that fullness results in now we begin to see some of the most wonderful and deep and profound qualities of God's character being fashioned and formed within

us for then he says oh how happy are the merciful. Now there is somebody that they're looking at their own heart their own life and and because God has been so merciful unto them they now forgive others as they have been forgiven.

They now have found a message for anybody and everybody else whose life is being driven by their own selfish pride and arrogance. They now can tell them wait a minute what you need is to turn away from yourself and seek a humility and a brokenness before God. Take responsibility for your own sins and come before God in humility and I'll tell you if you do he'll fill you and he'll forgive you and he'll transform you and then he'll begin to pour his very nature into you.

In there that then the next step that he has to say oh how happy are the pure in heart. Somebody whose life now there's a purity there's a singleness of I there's a singleness of heart and of heart and of desire for them I want to be more and more like my God who has loved me and given himself for me Jesus and I'll tell you that's a man that's going to be wonderfully happy. He then says oh how happy are the peacemakers for they should be called the children of God.

Now there is somebody who can actually virtually go to anybody in the world anybody where there's an internal battle where their own life is is raging in in hopelessness or in struggle fighting against God fighting against themselves fighting against one another and they of all people know the message of peace they are a peacemaker. They can sit down with anybody as I can tell you exactly what's wrong with you. I can tell you exactly where your your heartache and where your grief is.

I can tell you exactly where the frustration is within your life and it isn't somebody else outside your skin. It isn't another person it isn't another events outside the deepest battle the deepest war is raging within your own heart. You need to be able to turn over your heart to God to find his power to let him break you and let him fashion you and mold you and make you and fill you with himself.

Now Jesus said oh how happy are the peacemakers that person can go out and say I know not simply how to have peace and enter into peace myself I can come into a home or a life or other people that are broken and struggling and shattered and where there's battles and wars that rage and I can bring peace. A lot of people they can only they were always hoping we can go where there already is peace. But the child of God is actually somebody there he loves to go where there isn't.

He loves to go around lives where they're ripped and they're torn and they're struggling and there's great heartache because he's got the most wonderful gift in the world. He's got the ability to help and to minister to somebody to bring peace. It's one of the great evidences of true happiness of true fullness of God within one's heart with one's life is to want to actually look at areas and places and needs you know of lives and to bring peace.

Can you imagine if you went to you know to college and then on to medical school and you were got all the training to be a brain surgeon or a heart surgeon and you had all of this training and you could do it you could do the greatest and most intricate of all surgeries would you like to find yourself being a you know a paramedic or something you know out there you know just rushing up and picking people in and rolling them off for somebody else or wouldn't you rather be looking for people say I want to find people whose hearts are broken or dying where they're everything in it is falling apart within them where their arteries are all in trouble where they're they're not functioning and be able to actually open up the chest cavity and go in there and operate and heal and put them back together and close them up. We wouldn't mind that. We'd love that if we had that training we had that capacity.

At the same time though not having that capacity. If you're about to have a heart attack I recommend you don't call me. You know the I can come and give you the last rights or wrongs or whatever else you may have coming but don't but don't if it particularly if you haven't had a heart attack and are dying yet if I approach you with the knife then you ought to have one because I wouldn't know what to do.

I can maybe open you up but I never have any idea what I'm looking at inside and I'd be scared to death to come across your heart if it's in trouble but if I had the training and so also somebody that is really being transformed by Christ themselves through these things they have been trained they've been equipped and now they are actually looking for mission fields for their own life their own message to be able to go where is their heartache and grief and divisions and strife and misery and to be able to go with the message of hope and then Jesus goes on where we pick it up tonight and we get a little bit more complicated for some but by the way I usually never take surveys but just to take one tonight how many of you believe your Bible just raise your hand if you believe the Bible oh

wonderful then this will be easy because I think you know some people they don't believe the Bible and it's really ridiculous but I'm glad to realize all of you do because here Jesus says something that some people might not agree with but you all do and so this is wonderful but then he turns he says blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness oh how happy are those that are persecuted for righteousness say for theirs is the kingdom of heaven you're excited already aren't you and he says all happy blessed are you and men to revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake rejoice and be exceedingly glad great is your reward for so in heaven for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you and isn't that exciting news that you get

to go be persecuted and reviled and have people say all manner of evil against you falsely you can hardly wait to get out of here and go have it happen I'm sure so we can just close now no actually it's amazing how so often we profess and we do believe the Bible but yet sometimes the Bible says some things that everything within it says I don't want that kind of happiness but here Jesus is literally saying there to the person there that with there with one of the most amazing things about a person here you get somebody who's there there they they they're poor in spirit they mourn over it they become meek before God their hunger and thirst they filled with God they now actually become merciful they have a pure heart they're now a peacemaker and such a wonderful peacemaker that people

actually call them children of God the for he shall be called the children of God and then the most amazing thing after all these wonderful things Jesus then turns he says oh by the way oh happy are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake theirs is the kingdom of heaven oh how happy are ye when men shall revile you you revile you persecute you say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake he says rejoice and be exceedingly glad he actually looks now at a person he says the most amazing thing happens to a person now at this point and he says that actually instead of being loved by the world admired by the world taken in by the world respected by the world that the world now looks at this person and says man are you ever wonderful are you ever dynamic are you ever awesome

and gives him applause and gives them Nobel Peace Prizes and gives him awards name city parks after him and streets after him instead of that here Jesus said what will actually next happen to you if you are really a person that has gone through the aspects of the Beatitudes he says the most amazing thing will now occur people won't like you instead of being in loved and admired and respected and applauded and having cities and towns named after you and people rushing to your feet to say help me they actually will turn and they will begin to persecute you revile you it will begin to say all manner of evil against you falsely

and you see this is such an interesting thing but basically what has happened through the Beatitudes just to kind of sum it up is that the the it through the process

of the Beatitudes something has happened to a human being where they are no longer anything of what they once were the their own ruler their own king their own master that's been broken they're through with that I don't want to run my own life they now have that they actually mourn over their sin their sin of their ego and their pride in their self-righteousness and it's produced a meekness who you humility in them before God and me and crying out to God and God now begins to pour his very life with it and there's been an entire transference of power your own personal throne has been relinquished you surrendered your life to Christ you've been raised and resurrected and restored he's regenerated his nature back within you he's pouring his love and his life and his nature and his character

in you and his and the fruit of his spirit and the power of his spirit and through all of these process what has simply happened is that the old man has died and he's been replaced by Jesus Christ as King and as Lord and you may think that the whole world all around us would welcome this news of Jesus taking over our lives you would think that that the choice between who we were outside of Christ what we did and what we were all about as opposed to now who we are in Christ it would be a slam-dunk you know easy choice to make I choose the Christian you know when you are out there carousing and fighting and yelling and screaming and drinking and beating up on anybody and everybody and and ruining everybody's life and blowing your life and bringing tension wherever you went as opposed to now

you would think everybody say look at this you want to follow God you want to build a home you want to live peaceably and joyfully and righteously you think the world would say this is an easy choice I like this one but amazingly amazingly the thing that has actually happened through this is that now all of a sudden a person that was once there far from God and living in darkness and could walk around all the rest of the world in their darkness around them and they liked him now all of a sudden because men love darkness and their deeds are evil now a Christian walks in and the light of his life begins to convict and condemn others the light of his life begins to come and make one profound statement to everybody else around you it begins to declare that if the other people do not want the

life of Christ if they do not want to get off their own high horse if they don't want to you know dismantle their own throne if they don't want to turn their life over to God and let God lead and guide and fill and bless their life that's the deepest sin of all and the amazing thing is that rather than people welcoming it they hate it the amazing thing that happened is Jesus once said a servant is not greater than his Lord they have hated me and they will hate you hear what happened when Jesus came in his own body and as he walked around he had a way of separating you know husband against wife and parent against child and in-law against in-law and there were people as they ended up having to take sides either they were for him because they wanted his love in his life and they wanted his

throne they wanted to be transformed they wanted the kingdom of heaven they wanted forgiveness of sins they wanted an eternal hope or they wanted to go back into their own darkness and say no thank you as a matter of fact not only no thank you either you go away or I'll put you away and that's what they did to him they killed him and now the amazing thing that happens is that now that once again Jesus Christ has been given another body not his own this time but now is owned by by by surrender his own by gift we now present our bodies to him a living sacrifice we say Jesus here's my body I'm through with it I'm done with it every time I dry I sat on the throne I made the decisions I ran my own life I did my own thing I ran in the ground and I'm tired of it and I want to present my body to

you a living sacrifice would you mind taking it over and he says sure but I'll also live in it the same way I lived my own also there by the way that I want to live within it I'm gonna let the life of God and the love of God want to flow through it and reign within it and when somebody comes to realizing there that when now they surrender their life to Jesus Christ and he does take them and he fills them and he lives within them and he begins to reign within them that there'll be an awfully lot of people who say no thanks there'll be an awfully lot of people that'll it'll look at you and not care for what you're all about I'll never forget one time many years ago was when I was on staff back here the last time and had to come back to see if I could do it right this time but anyway when I

was here last time in the early 70s I'll never forget one Sunday morning there's a you did after it was in the prayer room over here after one service and I came walking out to go over to it was about time to start the next service and I came walking across the front of here to go over to the other side and as I came walking by I hear this voice you know it says McClure you just like one of the like what is I'm walking by and I look and here's a fellow about four rows back and I looked over at him and he looked at me and our eyes met and he and this is I'm walking by here he he looks and he had this look like what are you doing here and he why worked his way out of the aisle and I said hey Alan that was his name and I and I said how are you and he says great and he and and all of a sudden

I realized the last time I believe I'd set eyes on him was when I was in college I was in a fraternity and all I could remember I don't know which one of us probably helped the other one get home but we had that kind of a relationship whether I helped him get home or he helped me get home and that was the last memory I can think of having and so next thing I know here he is working his way I'm walking and he looks at me he's what are you doing here and I didn't know what to say I said I said well I go to church here I was a truth kind of and he says you do and I said yeah what are you doing here and he says well a friend brought me said I needed to come here and I said it's probably true you know and things in the well I was I said look I said let me grab you right after the next service

I gotta go and I and well then I went back and they said hey we need you come do announcements and so I come the next thing I know I come walk back out for the next service he's still sitting there the service just he watches me come sit down next to Chuck and he had one of these looks like oh boy I don't know who you're calling baby but this is really good but the interesting thing is is we had a number of opportunities after that to talk and to share and we who were such great friends at once used to do all sorts of sports together and partying together and all sorts of experiences to get all sorts of laughs and memories and things together the next thing you know is that because of what it transpired in my life I was no longer of interest to him I found that to be true with most all my

friends when I came to Christ all these guys that you thought was as great friends ended up not to care for you at all because when you came along and you spoke of another world in another life and this is something that a Christian has got to come to grips with he's got to count the cost Jesus there he made it very clear when somebody begins to follow him so if anyone come after me and hating on his mother father wife children yay even his own life he isn't worthy of me now obviously Jesus never taught us to hate anybody he made it very clear by the rest of the scriptures we're to love our mother and father we're to honor and we're to love all even our enemies but here when Jesus said if any man come after me and hate not his mother father wife children even his own life to me what I

believe very simply saying is listen if you're gonna come after me and you're gonna follow me and there is any other relationship any other friendship anything else in the whole world yay even your own life that

means more to you any other relationship that would ever take precedence over ours he says then you need to hate that relationship not the person but hate the fact that there's another being other than God another force another quality another relationship other than God actually takes precedence over his his right to rule after he's redeemed to shed his blood for us paid the price that he has in here we find ourselves so often backing off from other relationships quieting down you know not having the courage to stand for our relationship with Christ around others because we fear

the relationship we're insecure and whatever thing is we don't want to jeopardize thing and how it ought to be that a Christian looks and they realize Jesus anything that would ever come between you and me any person in a relationship any desire anything that would ever take precedence over you I hate it I hate his force I hate his power I hate the threat that it has against your throne within my life and we have to do that and the person there that counts the cost that pray that pays the price they'll give up whatever it is in all the world to follow him that's a person that by virtue of doing that the rest of the world's gonna look at them who holds on to all of its things all of its priorities all of its sins all of its pleasures all of its thrones all of its own pride and arrogance

and party is gonna look and your very existence will threaten them your very life and value to somebody else will look at you and they'll see somebody that loves the Lord with all their heart mind soul and their strength they'll see somebody whose life is surrendered to him they're filled with him and his mercy and the purity of his heart and his peace so reigns within them and the viewer very presence around them will convict them of the life that they ought to be living the image that they were created to enjoy and to be experiencing it and they're sitting against it they're running from it they're violating it and here Jesus said for you and I says you ought to cost to count the cost and of course in the New Testament they understood this the disciples the Apostles they understood this

very very clear I mean even you know Paul when he says all that I may know him Paul looked in Jesus was so real to him all that I may know him and the power of his resurrection the fellowship of his sufferings if that by any means I might be made attainable unto his death he looked there and he says God I just want to be so filled with you I don't care if I live I don't care if I die I want a life that is so surrendered to you that you can just take me right up to the tomb and I'll drop into it I'll yield my life I'll surrender it as you surrendered yours and when a person begins to realize this is the happiest person in the world Jesus said whosoever would save his life will lose it but whosoever loses life for my sake this angel save it when something happens within us where we realize

God I've spent my life trying to save it tired it's the most exhausting project in the world I now want to lose it give it to you Jesus said that'll be the happiest day you'll ever know when finally they're broken is finally a yield but we should never be amazed at the sufferings that would ever come we should never be you know it in the rejections and the persecutions that come unfortunately sometimes we are although Peter commented about it in his epistle in first Peter 4:12 Peter says beloved think it not strange concerning the fire try a fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you rejoice in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings that when his glory shall be revealed ye may be glad also with exceeding joy if ye be reproached for the name

of Christ happy are ye for the spirit of the glory and for the spirit of glory and of God rest is upon you and on their part is evil spoken of but on you your part and him is glorified here Peter writes and he said you know when you've got the opportunity to so identify with your Lord and Savior you get to be a partaker of his sufferings where the same attitude that the world once had about him it now happens to you what a

thrilling thing what a wonderful thing you are now discovering and sharing in his glory you know one of the most amazing things in all the Bible to me as a sense it is of course as they began to understand this the the early church they got so excited about these promises that the Bible of course in Acts chapter 1 it actually tells us that there was a hundred and twenty

people so committed to wanting to surrender their life to the Lord Jesus Christ to let him take over the throne to rule and reign entirely within them that there was a hundred and twenty up in an upper room were absolutely convinced of the truth of Jesus Christ and those hundred and twenty who were convinced of the truth of him in Acts chapter 1 entered into the good of him in Acts chapter 2 he by the power of his Holy Spirit came took over their lives flooded their soul began to fill them in such a way as they went out with a newfound glory and life and power and the next thing you know in Acts chapter 3 those who found themselves convinced of the truth of it in Acts chapter 2 entered into the good of it and then they demonstrate the fact of it when they're Peter and John at the gate

beautiful they come walking up fix their eyes on a man silver and gold have I none but such as I have in the name of Jesus rise and they're the man he reached Peter reaches down takes his I'd take lead takes me lifts him up the man is up walking and leaping and praising God is now they demonstrated here Peter listening experiencing the very same things that he had seen Jesus do and the things that he had shared in the life that he lived in another body outside of him but now at Pentecost he'd open his heart been filled with Christ in such a way as now he was living his life through him and then that gave them the right in the rest of Acts chapter 3 and in Acts chapter 4 to preach in the power of it now when everybody turned and took notices how do you do this they said oh we didn't do

this wasn't by anyone in us or any goodness within us he says but all of this was by the power of Jesus Christ whom you crucified as he lays it out to follow that you tried to get rid of he's alive and he's doing quite well thank you very much in this there now the convinced of the truth they entered into the good preached demonstrate the fact that they preached in the power of it the next thing you know the Sadducees and the high priest they all they end up thrown in jail overnight thrown in prison trying to stop this thing they were very upset you see they had spent a tremendous amount of effort only a couple of months earlier to kill Jesus and they thought they did a good job of it they thought he was finished and now all of a sudden he's back and he's all over the place he's living in

people's lives and they bring him in they said listen you'll no more preach in the name of Jesus it's alright if you do this stuff but don't credit him for it he said I'm sorry I beg your pardon but whether we obey God or we obey man you be the judge they simply looked and said I'm sorry but nothing will ever take precedence over Jesus he's King and he's Lord of our lives and he did it and we'll credit him for it and we'll reveal his life and his love wherever we go he's all we're about from now on out and here the amazing thing after they you know they threatened them and thrown him in prison and done all this it was just the beginning of persecution but the most amazing thing it tells us the church gathers together they all come together and they start worshiping and praising God

because of the fact that literally Jesus Christ was alive in them they actually looked and said they want to beat us they want to threaten us now they're after us they thought they killed him and now they're actually mistaking us for him talk about an excited mistaken identity they now looked around and said this is living and they were ones there that were so thrilled they were so taken in with the opportunity to literally find out this was why they were alive this is why you're alive this is why I'm alive this is why the Lord wants to take us and to make us where we are poor in spirit and we do mourn about it and it produces a meekness

within us that creates a tremendous hunger that he now fills us with himself gives us there a merciful heart a pure heart a peaceful life now sends us

out and there he sends us out that we would have lives so entirely you know to surrender to him that the world would see him again through us and here that that is why you're alive Jesus wants to take us and fill us with his spirit and fill us with his love and fill us with his life give us his throne and as he does it just isn't so I can just go home and kind of sit around turn out the lights and see if I can glow in the dark on my own or something whoa so I can maybe go out and you know fill up my kids you know a little rubber pool and see if I can walk across the top of it on water you know or something he he lives his life within us Jesus he gave himself for us on the cross that he might give himself to us that he might live his life through us and here Jesus said if you if you if

you allow me to give myself for you and to give myself to you then let me live my life through you and by the way the same thing they did to me the last time they'll do it again only this time you can share it with me you can go along I'll use your lips to share instead of my own I'll use your heart to love I'll use your hand to reach out to others I'll use your eyes to look into their heart and tell them God loves them I'll use you you know to share the hope of eternity and yes in the process there will be those who don't like it but he says oh how happy will you be when you are persecuted for righteousness sake when you are persecuted because you know real righteousness and as we even sang earlier tonight you know that not by my righteousness but by thy blood I've been redeemed you know

when we can look and say my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness and here when I am persecuted because of the righteousness of God of Christ living in me and he says you know that you will be persecuted you will be rejected now let me make it clear he didn't say here oh how happy or blessed are they that are persecuted for being obnoxious or blessed are they that are prayer you're persecuted for being stupid or weird or fanatical there I haven't sure we've all met and seen people that they seem almost to thrive on that when I was in San Jose there's a following come to our church a few times a year and every time the guy had come he was a character he was a character he ran for mayor he tried to you know you get you know a bunch of signatures to get on the

ballot he ran for city council and he used to go down to the city council oftentimes and he would stand up there and he would want to preach Christ and he would tell him he says you're all a bunch of wretched sinners and until you know you repent you turn your life over to Christ and some of the things he said were kind of true no question of not kind of they were true but he did things in such a way in such a way that he was so obnoxious about it he went down there was one time in the paper he went in and he told him he says until you guys in this city council got enough courage to deal with the homos and the queers and the weirdos in this city he said you got no right to be around here well I I kind of agreed but I it isn't the way you kind of want to say things people have a tendency

to kind of look at you and say you know something I don't like you in fact I'd like to kill you but not because I see Jesus in you I just see a weird fanatic one time I was in getting in McDonald's I was about to get just in line just standing there up and ordering and I turned around the fellow walked in and I turned oh no here he is and as he and and there's about three or four people behind me and he yells out a pastor Don yes I praise Jesus hey do you suppose everybody in McDonald's is saved yet I'll bet you sure preach to him no not just yet but I'm sure you will I said that too and he did and in the process of it you could it had it was kind of like taking your fingernails on a chalkboard you know as a guy yeah it wasn't something he said amen preach that again in fact that's so

good let's take up an offering you know or something you know you know it was no let's just make a sacrifice right here and offer somebody but here that but Jesus there he's saying that you are persecuted for righteousness that you so reveal the love and the redemption and the hope and the message of Christ that people understand that what it is that they're rejecting isn't some weirdo or some obnoxious fanatic they're looking at somebody that is gentle and merciful and loving and joyful and peaceful and kind and long-suffering who cares for them with all their heart and Jesus said I'll tell you that kind of a person when they come along they're gonna boy you started late tonight or something because it's not this late really the Chuck you need to give me one of those atomic clocks or

something because this thing's this thing's way off but the okay okay it's a full hour ahead okay I do have some notes I just never got to him let me but let me but here Jesus is he simply closing he looks at us and there as he looks at the person that be out of duty says do you know who you are yet do you know why you really exist has it settled in sometimes I think we as Christians on one hand we're an amazing paradox because there's half of us that we are with our own nature where we love the Lord and we worship him and he's hoping he's life and he's everything to us and yet at the same time when it comes down to the cost of wanting to follow him and enter into the greatest joy of all the greatest hope of our existence why we really live so many times we are so preoccupied with our own

comforts and our own pleasures and our own place and station in life that somehow another we end up losing our own hope and the full reason for which we live to be somebody that we find ourself oh it's a struggle and the disciples they had to go and pray for boldness they saw the person keep persecution coming and it was real and it could be traumatic but they same time looks as this is why I'm alive I am with soon this light won't you know as well somebody once said you know soon one life will have come and passed and only what's done for Christ will last when we find there the reason my heart beats the reason the blood flows is not to go out there and play the same old games that everybody else lives for in place and to be cut out caught up in the same priorities and mistakes of

identity that they're caught up in I found heaven as Paul once told the church he said let heaven fill your thoughts live for heaven for the kingdom of heaven to reveal it and let your light so shine as we'll look at next week before men but that we would find ourselves really truly wanting to live for him years ago when my kids were young and starting to pressure us to you know go to movies we weren't so much into him one time we thought okay here's we'll do we'll go get a video we'll get popcorn and we'll have you know a movie night and so they went down and then the movie had just come out Superman and they wanted to see Superman they had their little Superman underwear and capes and everything and so they wanted to see Superman and here you know of course the story of Superboy and

Superman and all this but as the thing began so amazing because here's young Clark Kent he's just a kid and he's in high school and he's the water boy for the football team and here he is as the water boy you know and there's the football players and there's all the pom-pom girls and the yellow leaders and all that and they're all googly eyes over the football players and waiting for them to finish practice and practice is over and all the girls get in the convertible and go driving off with young with all these football players and Clark is left there to clean up the you know and all the equipment manager and put everything away and he kind of turns he watches the convertible drive off and he turns around there's a football there and he goes over he kicks the thing to Japan or somewhere

just takes off and and then and then it took him about two and a half seconds as if he puts everything away and it's in his lock and then he goes running home and on the way he passes a train and all this

other stuff just flying you know their speed of light you know or something and the next thing you know he's leaning up against a post they're back home and next up comes this convertible that left at the beginning with the girls in it and they come driving up they say Clark they're astounded they look at him and said how did you get here and he says I ran and they saw that Clark so funny and then they turn and go driving on Clark's walking up the stairs up the driveway and his dad sees him there you know the guy who found him when he landed from Krypton or wherever anyway and and he

walks down he looks at him he sees the disappointment on his face and and he says what's wrong he says dad why won't you let me play football I'd score every time I'd be great I could do it why won't you let me I'll never forget he turned and he looked at him and he says Clark I don't know why you're here but I do know it's not to play football and you know I sat there and ended up turn it off and my kids give me a whole sermon on this thing they didn't appreciate it any more than you probably will but to me the average Christian the average Christian is somebody there that we whatever we do have we want to take it out on the world's field and play their game with it and we get wrapped up and that's why we're alive and how I think the average Christian I'd like to sit there and say you

know and I can say not like he said his dad said I don't know why you're here the Bible says I'll tell you why you're here and it's not to play football and it's not to play their games it's to live for him and whatever it cost to rejoice and be exceedingly glad for great is your reward in heaven for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you Jesus said you want to know the greatest joy of all you want to know the greatest crown those that one day will awaken his likeness those that find there that love not their life even unto death revelation tells us and the special reward there that people have that get within their life Lord I don't want to just you know see how long I can keep my heart beaten in the blood flowing I want to live for you with all my heart and I want you to

live in me and I want your love and your life and your power to live and flow unreservedly everywhere I go live through me work neighborhood in the office and we cry for boldness and we long for the strength but as he gives it that's the person that's alive the only person I think is ever really alive in this life as the one who's dead dead to this world dead to the South they will know a greater joy than anyone else amen

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