

# The Beatitudes

by Earl R. Clark

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*The Beatitudes are spiritual laws that govern the kingdom of Christ and have the same force in the spiritual realm as natural law has in the natural realm.*

**Duration:** 45:38

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:3-9, Romans 8:18, Ephesians 4:24

**Topics:** "Beatitudes"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being witnesses for God and teaching others the truths that He gives us. The sermon focuses on the Beatitudes, specifically the inward characteristics and outward manifestations of a follower of Christ. The preacher highlights the principle of starting out by being lovable and doing kind things for others in order to receive love and kindness in return. The sermon concludes with a personal story of the preacher facing opposition while preaching the word of God, but remaining calm and not responding to the insults.

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## Transcript

This is our first visit to Park of the Palms, and we're delighted to be coming here. Our warmth and pleasure of meeting with the Lord's people and remembering the Lord has made us feel like we must have been here before we feel so much at home with you in the Lord. We're particularly happy because, as some of you may have heard, my daughter and her husband will be coming down next month to the University of Florida in Gainesville, where Dave will be doing graduate studies, and it's their hope and ours that they'll be fellowshiping with you people here at least as often as they can get over.

They have a car, and they do plan to come over next month. We hope that you will be meeting Dave and Marilyn Sanders. This morning we'd like to turn to the 5th chapter of Matthew's gospel, and we'll read the first 12 verses of Matthew 5. While we're turning, may I compliment you on your lovely chapel.

Matthew 5, verse 1, And seeing the multitudes, he, that is, the Lord Jesus, went up into a mountain. And when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do 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 or the sons of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." Now I suppose some of us perhaps memorized these Beatitudes when we were children in Sunday school. I remember that I did, and all those words came out of my mouth at the teacher's command, but I didn't know very much about what they meant.

And of course, at that time before I was saved, there wasn't very much that they could mean to me, because until you know the Lord Jesus, until you know the King who is giving these principles of his kingdom, it's very difficult to understand them or to give very much meaning to them. But once you know Christ, once he's your Lord, your Savior, and your King, then these words begin to have a significance that the world could never understand, because these words are spoken for and to the citizens of Christ's kingdom. I know many people wonder about the Sermon on the Mount, and they say, well, is it for us in this day of grace? Is it for the church, or is it for the millennial period, or is it for Israel? We don't understand, and it's a little difficult sometimes to apply every word here to any of these periods.

But of course, every scripture is given for our instruction, is it not? And there must be something here for us. I believe that the Sermon on the Mount is the foundation for the spiritual kingdom of which Christ is the King, and a spiritual kingdom, dear friends, is one that is characterized by subjects who are spiritual, and that is to say by those who are indwelt and powered by the Holy Spirit of God. Now, every believer in Christ we read in this book that God has given us is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

If we are spiritual in the outward sense, that is, in our behavior, it's because we've allowed the Spirit of God to take control of our lives. And if we are unspiritual in our outward behavior, we are nevertheless children of God and indwelt by His Holy Spirit, and in a positional sense at least, we are spiritual because we have the power, if only we would permit it to govern our lives, we have the power to walk in the strength and the holiness and the beauty of Christ by virtue of that gift of the Spirit that He has given us. These Beatitudes, then, it seems to me, should have a great deal of significance to us as citizens of the kingdom of God, and of course I'm speaking here to those who know Christ as Savior at the moment.

The word blessed is characteristic of them, is it not? And of course all blessing in this sense comes from God, does it not? From the Father, who bestows these blessings upon us because He loves us, and it's His will and His desire that we should be in the full enjoyment of every blessing that He can give, and every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father, including these blessings. Being blessed, of course, is being happy, happy because you are the recipient of some good thing as a gift from God. As the Beatitudes are opened up to us here, we read that these are spiritual laws that govern the kingdom of Christ, and a spiritual law has the same force in the spiritual realm as natural law has in the natural realm.

In other words, a certain consequence will follow given a certain circumstance, and it will follow with the same inevitability in the spiritual realm as it does in the natural realm. And we're quite used to these things in the natural realm. We hardly think about them.

We know, as Newton told us long ago, that if you throw something up into the air that the power of gravity will bring it down again. And when we think about these spacecrafts that are launched out and do not come down again, that's not any exception to the law of gravity, is it? But rather their behavior is exactly

predictable according to the laws of gravity and the size of the forces involved in these things. They're all very carefully calculated by our space scientists down in Cape Kennedy and elsewhere, and they know exactly what's going to happen when they launch a spacecraft out into the great beyond from the human point of view, simply because these laws always hold.

And this is just as true of God's laws in the spiritual realm as it is of God's laws in the natural realm. It's the same God who has established them all. Now we read that the Lord Jesus, seeing the multitudes, went up into a mountain.

I think this is very interesting that this is prefaced by that little phrase, seeing the multitudes, because up there on the mountain He didn't teach the multitudes, did He? He was up there on the mountaintop teaching His disciples, the few, not the many, but it was in view of His seeing the multitudes. Because, you see, the Lord Jesus in His human form, that is, with the restrictions of humanity placed upon Him, or rather taken voluntarily, in view of that He couldn't reach all the multitudes Himself personally, but He had compassion on the multitudes we read. And in view of that, He took His disciples apart and He trained them and He taught them in order that they, being many more than He, could reach many more.

Now, isn't this the pattern of Scripture? That each of us who comes to Christ as a disciple, that is, as a follower, and who will sit at His feet, the Lord trains and teaches in order that we may reach others. And I don't think that process ever ends as long as we're here upon this earth. I believe that's why God leaves us upon this earth as long as He does, in order that each of us during the whole of our lifetime might be witnesses for Him and that we might teach others the precious truths that He gives to us.

And so He opened His mouth and taught His disciples, because He had not forgotten the multitudes, but would train His followers to reach them. And He said to them, "...Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, and down through the rest of these Beatitudes." Now, if you will note, the first four of these Beatitudes tell us about inward characteristics of the subjects of Christ's kingdom. Those are in verses 3, 4, 5 and 6, the inward characteristics of the follower of Christ.

In verses 5 and 7, 8 and 9 you have three more Beatitudes which are outward manifestations of the character of the believer. And so the first four are the inward characteristics, the next three are the outward manifestations of character, so the seven together give the basic elements of character of those who are Christ's. And then they are followed by two other Beatitudes in verses 10, 11 and 12, the first of which tells us about devotion to a principle, and the second tells us about devotion to a person.

And that person is the living exemplification of that principle, so that really these last two Beatitudes form one truth, both of them having to do with devotion to Christ and His cause, and both, therefore, leading to persecution in this world, because these Beatitudes assume His rejection. Now, are they not for us in this day? Because this is the day of the rejection of Christ as King, as Lord, as the Son of God, and as Savior. And when we are identified with Him, that same rejection that He experiences will be to an extent our portion as well.

Now, we're very familiar with this truth, but here it is laid out for us in this portion that many say has nothing to do with the church. I don't think that's exactly true. I think there's very much for us here.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. And many people will say, well, this and these other things that follow here are very interesting truths and they'd be very wonderful, but they don't work in this world of ours. You can't really apply them, because when you do, you find that people take

advantage of you.

Well, these truths are for His own. They're not for the world. They're not for everyone.

Archbishop McGee said many years ago that England could not be governed by the Sermon on the Mount, and this is true, I have no doubt. You'd better watch out who you give your coat to, because he's very likely to take your nightshirt as well, if he can get it. You can't treat the people of the world the same way as you treat those who follow Christ, because they're governed by a different set of principles.

They're not concerned with the glory of Christ. They're not concerned with obeying His commandments. They don't love Him as we love Him, who know Him, and they don't follow Him.

But we do, and all of these principles apply to us and can be worked out in our lives to some extent without reference to the fact that the world does not hear these words and does not obey them and does not follow them. Because as we follow these principles, we will find that the consequences, the blessings that are attached to them will flow to us, and we shall enjoy them and benefit from them, in spite of the fact that the world will have nothing to do with them. But it will lead, as the last two verses to the last three verses tell us, to the world viewing us in a way that is not entirely to our liking, perhaps.

That is, the world will find that we, by our very lives, are in a sense criticizing their manner of living by showing them a better way to live, which they don't want. They don't want the way of righteousness. And this leads the world, of course, to a mood of persecuting those who follow Christ.

This is no surprise to any of you. You've been experiencing this type of thing for many, many years. But I say, let's not be discouraged by the attitude of the world toward the Christian, because the blessings that God sends to us are here nevertheless.

Look at them now, if you will, with me, please. Verse 3, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. There are not many of these Beatitudes that tell us that we have something right here and now.

Most of them tell us something that shall be, but this first one says there's something that is ours. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Now, what does it mean to be poor in spirit? I think what our brother was speaking about in the earlier meeting this morning has application here.

Being poor in spirit is in some sense, or to some extent, acknowledging our own weakness, is it not? Those weaknesses that are characteristic of humanity, characteristic of mankind, to acknowledge them before God is to practice this principle of being poor in spirit. And, of course, the most important one of all here is to be poor in spirit in the sense of surrendering ourselves to God. That is acknowledging that we have no right or no claim upon God because we are sinners and have lost our right to own or to claim a relationship with God, and this gives us a poverty of spirit in the sense that we are spiritually impoverished.

We are not like Laodicea that says we are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, but before God we can say, like David said at one time, that we are utterly without any good thing, or as Paul would say, in me, that is, in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing. What is the result of this confession, of this surrender to God? The result is that the kingdom of heaven becomes ours, not exactly heaven itself in the final sense, but the enjoyment of the blessings of Christ, the enjoyment of the benefits that come from following him are ours as soon as we decide that we will be governed by him and not by self. Now, blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

We remember that the Lord Jesus himself was called the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Lord himself was a man who mourned, and we remember that he mourned over Jerusalem, and he said, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how I would have gathered thee under my wings as a hen gathers three chicks, but ye would not. And he went over the city of Jerusalem.

Why? Because of their sinful condition, because of their unrepentance, because they were not poor of spirit. They would not surrender to God, but they would have their own way, and the Lord Jesus must weep over them. I think when you and I mourn as children of God, as followers of Christ, we mourn, first of all, for the fact that we ourselves have a sinful nature which, though surrendered to God, still asserts itself from time to time, and we find ourselves, as Paul says in the seventh chapter of Romans, doing those things that I would not, and before God we're sorry for these things.

But then it has a wider application of mourning also for the sins of the whole world, as the Lord Jesus mourned over Jerusalem, and of taking upon ourselves in some measure that burden that comes when we realize that the majority of men and women, and boys and girls, too, in this world are headed for an eternity, lost eternity, an eternity in hell. And dear friends, how much do we sour over this? How much do we really pray before God with true mourning and sorrow of spirit for those around about us who we know that are outside of Christ and are not bound for heaven with us, but are bound for that awful place of doom where the fires are not quenched and the worm dieth not? Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. And I know of no comfort for this type of mourning that's so wonderful and so sweet as it is to have the joy of leading some soul to Christ, and the comfort that comes from that, of knowing that at least one soul has been delivered from the terrible torments of hell into the glorious blessings and liberty and enjoyment of the things of Christ.

Well, there's comfort there for mourning, but it's those that go forth bearing precious seed, weeping, who come again, is it not, rejoicing. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Now we know that meekness is not weakness.

We can see that so beautifully characterized in Moses' life, because Moses was a meek man, but he was not a weak man. He was a strong leader, but he was meek in the sense that he trusted not in his own strength, but he depended upon God. Meekness, I think, is self-emptying, putting self out of the picture in order that God might come in in the fullness of His power and His strength to work through you and me that which we could never accomplish in the strength of the flesh alone, of giving ourselves into God's hand that He might use us here in this earth in such a way as to bring blessing to others.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Notice that those that mourn shall be comforted, those that are meek shall inherit the earth. Now, I don't think we inherit the earth during this age of grace, during this church age, but when the Lord Jesus shall come and His kingdom shall be manifest and He rules indeed over all the earth, then we know that the church comes with Him as the bride and is associated with Him in that rule.

Of course, this has an application to the Jews who will inherit the earth. Israel will inherit the earth at that time, but that's for them. I think the other is for us.

But this principle, you know, being a principle that God has established applies in every avenue of life. We've spoken about it briefly in relation to the spiritual side of things, because that, of course, is what we're primarily interested in as Christians. But I note that this principle applies in the field of science as well.

I'm sometimes called a photographic scientist. I'm really more of an engineer than a scientist, but I have enough connection with it to realize that it is the scientist or the engineer who has a meek attitude toward his work who is the one who can discover the best way to do the job. Just in this sense, I guess the world has a phrase for it.

The guy that knows it all never learns anything. Isn't that true? But it's the person who realizes that there may yet be something to learn, regardless of how much he may already know, who is mentally in a position to receive some further truth, some further light. And I find that this works very well, that at any time when I think that I have a situation fully under control, that I know all there is to know about this particular problem, I'm in trouble.

But at any time when I am ready to hear the advice of those who work under my direction, perhaps from those that I'm associated with outside, perhaps from some who are above me, at any time that I'm ready to hear what they have to say and consider it and give it good weight, then I may learn something that I didn't know that may help me to solve a particular problem. Now, that is a meekness of spirit, I think, that personally I find it difficult to achieve. I like to think that I'm fully on top of the situation.

I don't need any help from anybody. I can do this job, but it's not true. And I think, was it Job who said to his friends that not all the wisdom in the world resides with you three brethren, and certainly not with any one of us, whether we're thinking of spiritual things or whether we're thinking of engineering jobs or some other daily task.

We can all benefit from the help and the advice and the support of others. Don't you think that's why God has gathered his people together into assemblies, into churches, congregations? Because in spiritual things we need each other's help. Fellowship is a delightful thing, and we enjoy it, but it's also a necessary thing for us, so that each of us can learn a little from the rest.

Now, as we look at verse 6, we read, Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. And if in verse 5 we have self-emptying, in verse 6 we have a refilling, do we not? We empty out that which we receive, which we've obtained from Adam, that which is of self, and we receive something much better, something from God. He will fill us.

We hunger and thirst after righteousness. God has promised that he will provide. Sometimes I wonder about the world around about us in this relationship of hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

We don't see much of it there, do we? We don't see men really looking to be filled with righteousness, but we see men by and large around about us who are seeking that which is good for self. We see self-seeking men who are seeking that which is good for self. And it's well disturbing, to say the very least, to see this type of thing in high places, governmental places.

And yet as I read the newspapers, whether in Rochester or in Florida, it seems to me that so many of our people in high places today are not governed by the principle of what is right, but they are governed by the principle of what is convenient, of what they can get away with, of what the people will support them in, of what will get votes. And nothing else seems to count today. And I think this is a very dangerous situation, whether in the local or the state or the national field or the international field.

I suppose there are many examples of it, and I won't really take time, because we don't have time, to go into this. But just to call to your attention and many of you probably have been thinking about this, I'm sure,

that the thing that governs in the world is not what is right, but what the people want. What the majority wants governs.

I hope this principle doesn't obtain in relation to God's people. There's a tendency, at least in our assemblies back up north, there's a tendency for government according to this principle of what the majority wants. But I think good leadership, whether it's in national affairs or in assembly affairs, should be determined upon the basis of what is right in the sight of God, of what is for the glory of Christ, because in the long run this is the thing that will be for our benefit as well and will bring to us that filling, that satisfaction, that enjoyment of the things of God that we can't have any other way.

Verse 7 tells us, "...blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Mercy in this sense, I think, is the expression of love toward other people, and as we express our love by acts of love toward other people, we find that the inevitable consequence of that is that we ourselves shall obtain mercy. Is it not true that if you want to be loved, you must start out by being lovable? If we want to have people do kind things for us, the best way is to start out doing kind things for them, and then we'll reap our reward. I think this is a very wonderful principle here.

There is a fourfold blessing there in verse 7. There is a blessing for the giver in giving, for it's more blessed to give than to receive. There is a blessing for the recipient in receiving the kindness, and then there is a blessing for the recipient in giving, because after he's received, he's going to become the giver. And then there is a blessing for the original giver in receiving, and so there is a fourfold blessing there in verse 7. Verse 8 tells us, "...blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." We've been doing some work over in Rainbow Springs, some underwater photography, and yesterday over in Crystal River Springs.

The water coming out of those springs is very delightful. It so happened that the first time that I went down in Rainbow Springs, I had a leaky regulator on my scuba tank, and I was getting more water through it than I was air. Well, I came up and changed to another regulator that was working properly, and it was no trouble.

But in the meantime, I had quite a good taste of Rainbow Springs water, because once you breathe it into your mouth and you're underwater, there's hardly anything to do with it but to swallow it. Well, it was very good-tasting water, I'm glad to say. But James says that you don't get water like that and bad water out of the same spring.

You don't get bitter water and sweet water out of the same well. And that's what our lives are to be like, is it not? I wonder what people see in us. Do they wonder how we can be so briny, so salty, so bitter at one time and so sweet at another time? But consistency in purity is something that the world can scarcely help but take note of, isn't that true? But there's another consequence besides that.

We shall see God. When our hearts are pure, there's no cloud between us and God. You remember Isaiah said, Your sins have separated between you and your God, and your iniquities have hid His face from you.

But when we're consistent in purity and in our walk before the world and before God, then we have fellowship with God, don't we? And we enjoy the closeness of His presence. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Now, who's going to call us that when we're peacemakers except the people of the world? We're getting to the point where our witness is expanding to the point where the world cannot help but take note of us as being children of God.

Being a peacemaker must be a great thing, eh? We're talking here about interpersonal relationships now with other people, and it says we shall be called the sons of God. And you know, in the Scriptures, the relationship between father and son is that relationship which, in our idiom, we call a child of God. And that relationship is a chip off the old block.

Every son in Scripture is expected to portray his father in his own life, and when we speak of Christ as being the son of God, it's exactly in that sense, is it not, that he reveals the Father to us by his life, because like father, like son. And that's the principle that governs in Scripture, and the Orientals are far more aware of this than we Westerners are, but that's what's involved here. Why will we be known as sons of God if we are peacemakers? It's because God is a peacemaker and we are being like our father when we have a tendency, among other people, to promote peace.

Here again, this applies widely in the world, but it also applies among the large people, does it not? Those among the large people who promote harmony and unity, they're peacemakers, and it may be at times that there are two brethren who are at odds about something or another, and if another brother can bring them together and promote peace, he's being like our father God in heaven. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteous mistake. Now you see, we've gone beyond these first seven beatitudes that give the inward and the outward character of the believer, and we're getting down to the place of taking our stand before the world, standing for righteousness which condemns the world.

Not like the politician who's out for votes and who overlooks the lawlessness of some constituent in order to guarantee his vote, but like those who stand for what's right, whatever the cost, whatever it may mean to me personally as a child of God, I'm to stand for that which is right and to stand against all dishonesty and all cheating and all lying and everything that is wrong, everything that's un-Christlike. When I do this, the world may not be too happy with me. They may feel I like to drink and carouse around and things of that sort, and when you won't go with me, you are in some sense saying that I'm wrong in doing these things, and that's exactly what we intend to say.

And if they're not going to like it, well, it's just too bad, isn't it? Because we're going to stand for God, regardless of what it costs. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Here we have it again already.

Most of these things we're waiting for. They'll come when Christ comes, or they'll come when God calls us home to heaven. But some of these things come right now, and this is one of them.

We enjoy the kingdom of heaven when we stand up for God. We're blessed in so doing. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and shall persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake.

And he says, under these circumstances of being persecuted by the world, rejoice. Can you rejoice when men are hating you and reviling you and calling you all sorts of names? Can you rejoice under those circumstances? Surely we can if we realize, well, the reason for this is that I'm on God's side and they're against Him. Whose side would you rather be on? Because it is a choice, isn't it? You can't be on both.

Would you rather be on the side of the world and be popular with them, or would you rather be on God's side and have His blessing, His approval, and His love expressed in fellowship with you? Each of us has to make that choice, not just once, but we make it. I was going to say daily, but even that's not enough. We make it many times a day, don't we, in our contacts with the people of this world.

I remember a few years ago that I had the opportunity of speaking publicly in Union Square in New York City. It's a kind of a Hyde Park place where you get up on sort of a soapbox type of a deal, you know, and heckling is definitely permitted. Heckling is part of the game.

If people aren't heckling you, they're not listening to you. Well, there was a great big man, broad-shouldered fellow, who was up there preaching away. He was dressed in sort of ragged clothes and not necessarily altogether too clean, and this was in order to identify with the poor and downtrodden people in the heart of New York City.

And his message I listened to for a little while and recognized it as being the message of Jehovah's Witnesses, although he never called himself that. As heckling was permitted, I decided that I would challenge him, and I whipped out a New Testament and I read a bit from Revelation to prove that the Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah. And of course he wouldn't have it, but I maintained, having checked with him first that he believed that the Bible is true.

I re-read the words and said, The Lord Jesus Christ is saying here that he is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, he who was and who is and who is to come. And I said, That's exactly the meaning of the word Jehovah. He says, No, that's not the meaning of that word.

I said, There are Hebrew scholars here. I recognize them by their broad-brimmed hats and their beards, you know, some from the Williamsburg area, the Hadassic Jews who know the scripture from beginning to end. That is the Old Testament.

So I said, There are Hebrew scholars here who are more capable of explaining the name of the word Jehovah than either you or I who are Gentiles. Let's ask them. And I turned to them and I said, What is the meaning of the word Jehovah? They said, It's exactly what you said.

Well, you should have heard that Jehovah's Witness man revile me. He called me every name that he could think of. He held back hardly anything in the way of reviling, because he had nothing more that he could say to defend himself.

The only thing he could do was to try to get rid of me. But I didn't care what he called me. I didn't know the man.

I didn't care what he thought of me. I didn't care what the crowd thought of me. Why should I? So I stood there and I started to grin at him while he was calling me all of these names.

And after he was all through, I said, Well, you've got me all wrong. I said, In the first place, you said that I'm a professional religionist. I said, Here's my Kodak pass.

I'm an employee of the Eastman Kodak company here on business. I'm not a professional religionist at all. I said, I'm not the other things that you said about me either.

Well, you know, he wouldn't wait for me to finish. He just started screaming again. And I said, All right, he doesn't want to hear what I have to say, but maybe some of the rest of you do.

I said, If you do, supposing we go over to another corner of the park and we'll look at some of the things that the word of God has to say. Well, that was about half past nine in the evening at one o'clock that morning. I left the park having spent all of that time preaching the word of God to a crowd of people who

followed me.

Instead of listening to him, about half of his crowd went with me and we had a delightful time as I was heading for the subway to go uptown to my hotel. At that point, there was a fellow followed me and he said, I don't know you, but he said, There's one thing that I want to say to you before you leave. He said, How did you ever manage? How could you stand up and have that man call you all those vile things and not say anything back? I said, Well, I can tell you the secret of that.

I said, It's not me. I could never do it. But I said, The Lord Jesus Christ is my Savior.

I have his spirit growing within me. He was reviled and reviled not again. He is my master, and as I follow him, he gives me the power to do what he did.

You can see that this sort of thing has a real effect. I gave this man some tracts, a booklet, the reason why. I don't know whether God saved him or not, but I trust that the Spirit of God did reach him through that evening's work.

Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted the prophets which were before you." Now, we've gone through these Beatitudes. We found that the pathway here, which is the pathway of the just, is one that leads to rejoicing. It leads to blessing.

It leads to happiness. It's the path that the Lord followed. It led him to the cross, but then there was the joy that followed after the cross, that joy that was set before him, the joy of bringing us to the Father in the fullness of his beauty, his character, and his righteousness.

And it's our privilege as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, at times, to have a share in that great work of bringing others to the Lord Jesus Christ and through him to the Father. In closing, I'd just like, if we may, to sing one verse of Hymn 398, a song about the Lord's return. I think some of these blessings that we've been reading about we will enjoy then rather than now, but we remember that the sufferings of this present little while are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall follow.

Hymn 398, just the first verse, please. Hymn 398, verse 1, Verily, let me, it may be at morn, when the day is light, Blessed God, our Father, we thank thee that thou dost teach us from thy word, so that we may become more like him, our God, in whom thou art well pleased. O Father, we pray that thou wilt help us that we might day by day so walk as to please thee, and to express before this world something of the glory and the beauty of our Savior, for thou hast predestinated us that we should grow into his likeness.

Blessed Father, we thank thee for the Spirit of God that leads us and guides us and instructs us so that this may be accomplished, for it's beyond us, our God, to be Godlike or Christlike, but we thank thee that it's not outside of thy power to mold us and to make us into the image of Christ, that we may stand before the world as children of God, those, our Father, who stand for righteousness and who portray before the world thy desire and thy mind and thy laws for mankind. Help us, then, as we seek to stand for Christ. Help us that we may enjoy day by day the fullness of the blessings, our Father, that thou dost delight to bestow upon us, and which, our Father, we are free to receive when we walk with our blessed Savior and with thyself in that fellowship of light and love in life.

Grant thy blessing to us, we pray, as we part. For we give thee thanks and praise in the holy and precious name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

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