

SITTING IN THE PRESENCE OF JESUS, CHANGES US!

MATTHEW CH5:11-12

RE-CAP

The context of the “Sermon on the Mount” is one where JESUS has demonstrated power over Satan Ch4:1-11, power over calling His disciples Ch4:18-22, and power over the demonic Ch4:24 along with power over illness and sickness Ch4:24! JESUS is about to give a powerful message over the *reality* and *availability* of “Kingdom Life” for His followers!

The word “Blessed” in the Greek “**Markarios**”, meaning “joy or happy”, suggesting that there is something about being favoured by God, that results in joy and happiness! When God places His favour on a person, the “joy and/or happiness” that is on offer, is available now, and fully permanent in the future, for the disciples of JESUS! So one way to consider this word “Blessed” is, not so much as, on hopes of what shall be (although that is an aspect of it!), but “congratulations” now from and by JESUS, *on what is!* It is like JESUS is literally saying “Congratulations for being!”

But “congratulations”, for what?

Dr. A . T. Pierson puts it this way “When an artist draws a picture, each line may be graceful and masterful, but it is the union of the lines that reveals their mutual relation; it is the combination of the various artistic delineations and minute touches that gives us the complete portrait. So here, though each separate aspect has its own peculiar beauty and grace and shows the hand of a master, it is only when we take all the lines in combination that we get the full portrait of a true subject and citizen in the Kingdom of God.” (Pink, A.W., The Beatitudes and the Lord's prayer pg11+12)

ILLUSTRATION

The “Mapati” medal! Emphasis on how gruelling the race was!

JESUS' NINETH BLESSING! V11

V11 – Radical discipleship is following JESUS, which will lead to *pain!* Here JESUS explains something of the verbal persecution His disciples will face as they pursue Him! Our culture says that “sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me!” What a lie! People calling us names, does hurt! People insulting us does hurt! People making up lies about us does hurt!

People called JESUS names, made up lies about JESUS. Followers of JESUS can expect the same!

What kind of things can we expect in our culture, whether work, family or community? Firstly people constantly use our Saviour's name as a swear word! Yes as a swear word! Secondly, what kind of things are said to us in these three areas,

work, family and community? They're bible bashers? They're do gooders? They're no fun anymore? They're hypocrites? Thirdly, it can be worse than this! People will lie about you because of JESUS! ***IMITATING JESUS WILL BRING ABOUT VERBAL PAIN!***

V12 – Radical discipleship is following JESUS, which will lead to the ***prize!*** Persecution is the “sign” that the Kingdom is real and ours, even though we cannot see it “fully” now! Again JESUS has the end game in mind, to encourage His followers! The great reward! Remember the medal! With the medal/reward in mind, always, we can face persecution “rejoicing and with gladness!” if we keep our eyes firmly fixed on JESUS. JESUS does not encourage us to bring about persecution, nor does He tell us to run away from it. JESUS tells us to face it with rejoicing and gladness! ***IMITATING JESUS WILL BRING THE REWARD!***

V3-12 – Radical discipleship is following JESUS, which leads to ***pupils!*** Remember how the sermon on the mount starts, JESUS is teaching! His teaching produces “pupils”. His teaching will draw or repel!

Those that are drawn will want to be taught! His teaching will be radically different from any teaching you have ever received! JESUS will teach us to understand how He wants us to live, what we should be pursuing as His pupils! This is what the sermon on the mount is all about “lifestyle norms” of the Kingdom! True pupils of JESUS will want to be taught by Him! ***IMITATING JESUS WILL BRING US TO BE LIKE JESUS!***

APPLICATION

Let's remember the two aspects of “THE KINGDOM”, the “already now” aspect and the “not yet” aspect!

Let's remember that imitating JESUS will lead to pain, and suffering as His disciples will be persecuted!

Let's remember what Scripture says about heaven!

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| 1 John Ch3:2 | - | We will see JESUS! |
| 1 John Ch3:2 | - | We will be like JESUS! |
| Revelation Ch7:9 | - | The Church, a great multitude! |
| Revelation Ch22:3-4 | - | No longer under a curse! |
| Revelation Ch22:3-4 | - | He will be with us! |
| Luke Ch23:43 | - | It will be “paradise” |