



The Inconvenient Truth of (True) Happiness

Matthew 5:11-12

Matthew 5:3-12 (GNB)

“Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them! “Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them! “Happy are those who are humble; they will receive what God has promised! “Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully! “Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them! “Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God! “Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children! “Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

“Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how the prophets who lived before you were persecuted.

Matthew 5:11-12 (The Message)

Count yourself blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even! For though they don’t like it, I do! And all heaven applauds.”

I. True followers of Jesus will be persecuted.

Matthew 5:10-11 (HCSB)

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness... Blessed are you when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of Me.”

2 Timothy 3:12 (NIV)

“Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

John 15:18-21 (NIV)

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. ... They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.

II. Persecution should always bring happy rejoicing.

Matthew 5:11a (HCSB)

"Be glad and rejoice..."

I Peter 4:12-16 (NIV)

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you....if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

III. Persecution will ultimately result in a rich reward.

Matthew 5:12 (HCSB)

Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Philippians 3:20-4:1 (ESV)

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, ... Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, stand firm thus in the Lord.

"It is the ordinary lot of Christians to be hated by the majority of men." - John Calvin