

A Commentary on the Beatitudes

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This paper is prepared as a supplement to the Christian Science Bible Lesson on "Christ Jesus" for 31 August 2008. The Beatitudes are the focus of this Lesson. The Golden Text and the Responsive Reading are from the *Contemporary English Version* (CEV) of the Bible, and the Lesson-Sermon is from the *King James Version* (KJV) of the Bible.

The *Contemporary English Version* of the Bible was prepared and published in 1995 by the American Bible Society. "Alongside the TEV [*Today's English Version*], the CEV is the Bible that most completely incorporates the principles of meaning-driven translation espoused by Eugene Nida..

"No translation is more thoroughgoing in its meaning-driven principles than the CEV. Critics say it borders on paraphrase.

"The CEV uses everyday conversational English. Sentences are short, and the vocabulary is simplified. The CEV goes considerably further than the TEV in removing theological language." (David Dewey, [A User's Guide to Bible Translations](#). InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, 2004)

The word "Beatitude" is from the Latin "[blessed]." "Blessing literally means 'happy, fortunate, blissful'." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

The Beatitudes are "declarations typically associated with the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew (5:3-12) and the Sermon on the Plain in Luke (6:20-23). They are pronouncements that confer [a] blessing upon persons who are characterized by what they are (e.g., the poor) or do (e.g., the peacemakers).

"Luke has four Beatitudes balanced by four woes (6:20-26), and all take the form of direct address in the second person plural ('Blessed are you...'). Matthew has nine Beatitudes and no woes (5:3-12), and all but the last are in the third person plural ('Blessed are the...' or 'Blessed are those who...'). Beatitudes of both types are found in Hebrew and Greek literature." (Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible)

(Matt 5: 3-12)

- 3 *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 4 *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*
- 5 *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*
- 6 *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*
- 7 *Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.*
- 8 *Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*
- 9 *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*
- 10 *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
- 11 *Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*
- 12 *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.* (KJV)

"The first half of each beatitude depicts the community's present; the second half foretells the community's future;...." (Oxford Bible Commentary)

"The Beatitudes have been regarded as timeless rules for the good life....Matt. may well have expanded the original set, since several of his beatitudes do not appear in Luke." (Interpreter's One-volume Commentary)

Mason, Frank E. (CSB and Assistant Pastor), "**The Beatitudes**," BIBLE LESSONS, Christian Science Journal (February 1889), p. 570.

--The Sermon on the Mount was an inaugural discourse, as it were, for it set forth to the public and to the disciples the character of the kingdom Jesus declared was at hand.

--The Beatitudes were the ethical precepts of Jesus.

- They present a higher ideal of morality and a promise of joy and peace to his followers.

--Though the Beatitudes are eight in number, they present only seven distinct features.

• These seven-fold characteristics denote completeness. The seven-fold blessings are the reward for all who reach the heights of the teaching.

--Unlike the commandments, the Beatitudes are positive, while the former are negative in their statements. The commandments constantly repeat "thou shalt not" whereas the Beatitudes say "thou shalt."

--The commandments forbid, the Beatitudes enjoin.

McKenzie, Rev. William P. (CSB; "First Member;" Pleasant View Household; Trustee, CSPS; Lecturer; Editor, President; and Director), "**The Commandments and the Beatitudes**," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.37 (23 February 1935), p. 503.

--Teaching by means of beatitudes is often far beyond the comprehension of what is spoken of as the natural man, the one guided by selfish choice and human instincts; consequently, the first correction or betterment which some need to have comes from the law saying, "Thou shalt not."

--By Moses came the Ten Commandments suitable for checking the idolatrous tendencies of the tribal crowd and the following "mixed multitude" he was trying to train and discipline.

• It was necessary to forbid the disorders of the selfish, unclean, envious, lying, and murderous carnal mentality.

--Much of the teaching of Jesus was in the form of beatitudes.

• There is quite a difference between the law taking cognizance of evil modes and saying, "Thou shalt not," and the words of the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are ye."

Nay, Mrs. Mary Lee Gough (CSB), "**Living the Beatitudes**," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.68 (24 September 1966), p. 1673.

--To learn how to live the Beatitudes is to learn the secret of happiness.

• The very word "beatitude" means "a state of utmost bliss," and "to beatify" is "to make supremely happy."

---The Beatitudes are not directives to do something but gracious promises accompanying the task the human mind often finds difficult to compass: the task of being Christlike.

- They state basic spiritual law.

--To live the love and truth that Christ Jesus understood and manifested, and from which his marvelously successful lifework emerged, demonstrating the possibility of full salvation for all men, is the most exacting undertaking for the Christian.

- It is also the most rewarding.

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (KJV)

God blesses those people who depend only on him. They belong to the kingdom of heaven! (CEV)

God blesses those who realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is given to them. (NLT)

Blessed are those who feel poor in spirit! The Realm of heaven is theirs. (Moffatt)

How blessed are those who know their need of God; the Kingdom of heaven is theirs. (NEB)

"In the Beatitudes, Jesus describes the character of true faith. [With respect to] **poor in spirit**. The opposite of self-sufficiency, spiritual poverty includes the deep humility of recognizing one's utter spiritual bankruptcy apart from God....**theirs is the kingdom of heaven**...This opening verse of the sermon clearly presupposes the truth of salvation by grace." (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

"The poor in spirit (v.3) are the dispossessed people of the earth who have no reason for hope in this world. They may have given up on God, but Jesus says that God has not given up on them—indeed, the rule of heaven exists for their sake." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

"The **poor in spirit** are the opposite of the proud or haughty in spirit. These are those who have been humbled by the grace of God and have acknowledged their sin and therefore their dependence upon God to save them." (King James Bible Commentary)

Sinclair, Duncan (CSB, Associate Editor, and Editor), "**Blessed are the poor in spirit**," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.25 (19 May 1923), p. 751.

--The first of the Beatitudes uttered by Christ Jesus preserved to us in the wonderful fifth chapter of Matthew, is very far-reaching in scope: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

• In some respects it would almost seem to include all the other Beatitudes; for is not the kingdom of heaven that which the pure in heart, the mourner, the persecuted, the meek, all alike seek to enter, for comfort and peace, and dominion?

---Moreover, the first beatitude states the primary essential to spiritual progress along every line,—humility: it is "the poor in spirit" alone who can understand spiritual truth, and thereby enter the kingdom of heaven.

--In Retrospection and Introspection" (p.26) Mrs. Eddy, in the chapter called "The Great Discovery," says: "It [Divine Science] must be begotten of spirituality, since none but the pure in heart can see God, — the Principle of all things pure; and none but the 'poor in spirit' could first state this Principle, could know yet more of the nothingness of matter and the allness of Spirit, could utilize Truth, and absolutely reduce the demonstration of being, in Science, to the apprehension of the age."

Greene, Maude M., "**The Kingdom of Heaven**," Christian Science Journal, Vol.33 (April 1915), p. 23.

--Heaven is what every one wants and is seeking, even if he does not call it heaven.

• All this human strife and struggle is the effort to obtain a fuller and better sense of life, and the best of everything that it affords. This reaching out for the best is an instinctive impulse to gain the perfect, which means heaven.

---Mortal man, no matter how limited and unsatisfying his present condition, has always had this instinctive hope for betterment.

--Spirituality has always been the only basis and hope for immortality and heaven, and the teaching of Christian Science brings us a new basis and hope for the attaining of this spirituality.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. (KJV)
God blesses those people who grieve. They will find comfort! (CEV)
Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. (NIV)
Blessed are the mourners! they will be consoled. (Moffatt)
How blessed are the sorrowful; they shall find consolation. (NEB)

"Those that **mourn...shall be comforted**. The depth of the promise of these statements is almost inexhaustible. Those who mourn for sin shall be comforted in confession. Those who mourn for the human anguish of the lost shall be comforted by the compassion of God." (King James Bible Commentary)

"Those who mourn (v.4) are ones who have no cause for joy in life. Jesus promises them comfort when the rule of heaven is established." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

"Possibly those who mourn refers to persons who are bereaved, but if this beatitude is a parallel to the preceding, it may describe those who bewail the present state of affairs in God's world and long for the coming of the new age. God will comfort them by establishing his kingdom." (Interpreter's One-volume Commentary)

Jones, Elizabeth Earl (CSB), "**Blessed are they that mourn,**" Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.11 (27 February 1909), p. 503.

--The second beatitude reads, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted."

- Once when a sense of sadness knocked loudly at the door, there came also the query, What could Jesus have thought was "blessed" about mourning?

---The answer quickly unfolded, as answers do when we reason things out with God, for need and supply, spiritually understood, cannot be separated—they are forever the two that are one.

- It was then seen that the blessed thing about mourning is this, it is itself a dawning conviction of the utter insufficiency of things finite, and this conviction causes one to look higher, to seek satisfaction in the permanent facts of being, thus finding in the infinite ocean of Truth and Love all for which we sought in vain in the material realm.

---The spiritual facts of being richly supply comfort, peace, permanence, home, and, above all, an all-satisfying companionship with God.

"**They shall be comforted,**" THE BIBLE SPEAKS TO YOU: Radio Program No. 188, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.67 (13 November 1965), p. 2016.

--What a wonderful promise Christ Jesus gave to those burdened with sorrow when he said (Matt 5:4), "They shall be comforted."

--The important thing for all of us is to learn more of man's eternal, unchanging relationship to God.

- Then we can express more fully

 - God-given courage,

 - God-given confidence in good,

 - God-given confidence in ability, and spiritual joy.

- As we do this, we find that whatever we need humanly, whether it's right activity, occupation, right companionship—whatever the need is—will be supplied.

---Then Jesus' promise "they shall be comforted" becomes a living, vital reality right where we are.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. (KJV)

God blesses those people who are humble. The earth will belong to them! (CEV)

God blesses those who are gentle and lowly, for the whole earth will belong to them. (NLT)

Blessed are the humble! They will inherit the earth. (Moffatt)

How blessed are those of a gentle spirit; they shall have the earth for their possession. (NEB)

"This saying [v.5], which probably originated with Matt. or his special source, reads like a modification of Ps. 37:11." (Interpreter's One-volume Commentary)

"The meek (v.5) are the dispossessed people of the earth who have been humiliated and deprived of their share of the earth's resources. Jesus says they are blessed because God will not allow them to be so denied forever." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

"...the Western texts have 4 and 5 in reversed order, whereby 3 and 5 form a *parallelismus membrorum*. **inherit the earth** (or 'the land') as a parallel to 'receive the Kingdom' makes clear how the Kingdom is understood as the [realization] of Israel's hope." (Peake's Commentary)

Greenblat, Jakob, "[Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth](#)," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.27 (14 March 1925), p. 547.

--The word "meek" stands for, and is associated with, mildness of temper; not being easily provoked or irritated; given to forbearance under injuries; gentleness; humility; patience; being submissive to the divine will.

- If we open our consciousness to these qualities, we shall be blessed by becoming receptive to the spiritual good they bring; and thus we may "inherit the earth."

--"For they shall inherit the earth"! What a promise, even from the material point of view!

- But the spiritual meaning of the promise is incomparably greater.

---On page 585 of Science and Health our Leader defines "earth" as follows: "A sphere; a type of eternity and immortality, which are likewise without beginning or end. To material sense, earth is matter; to spiritual sense, it is a compound idea."...To "inherit the earth," then, means to understand and to know man's immortality and unity with God, in whom "we live, and move, and have our being."

Grounds, Kathryn Paulson, "[Who shall inherit the earth?](#)," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.66 (11 April 1964), p. 621.

--"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt 5:5).

- Here is Christ Jesus' unqualified estimate of meekness as indispensable to the character of a true Christian and as the precursor to inheriting the earth, or consciousness of spiritual reality.

---Those who are truly meek in the sense of gentleness, of humility and reverence before God, are indeed divine heirs, secure in the possession of God-bestowed good, of which they can never be dispossessed.

--"Who shall inherit the earth?" Who shall come into divine possession of all good, into the full expression of the Christ-power?

- Through the demonstration of the Christly quality of meekness, we exercise the Christly power of dominion over evil.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

(KJV)

God blesses those people who want to obey him more than to eat or drink. They will be given what they want! (CEV)

God blesses those who are hungry and thirsty for justice, for they will receive it in full. (NLT)

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for goodness! They will be satisfied. (Moffatt)

How blest are those who hunger and thirst to see right prevail; they shall be satisfied. (NEB)

"Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness [v.6] are those who long for God to put things right. They are starved for justice, and Jesus says their craving for life to be as it should will be satisfied." (HarperCollins Bible Commentary)

"While [Luke] speaks about hunger and thirst as such, not necessarily in a plain material sense, [Matt] understands it clearly as metaphorical... (as a reference to a messianic banquet, a reference which is woven together with the words about the poor in...Ps 37)." (Peake's Commentary)

"The word **hunger** is a strong word meaning intense desire. **Thirst** is perhaps a stronger word; only people in desert lands can properly understand pangs of thirst. In the time of Jesus water cisterns were a matter of life and death." (The Interpreter Bible)

Sinclair, Duncan (CSB, Associate Editor, and Editor), "**Hungering and Thirsting After Righteousness**," EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.25 (11 August 1923), p. 991.

--The fourth beatitude declares that it is they who "do hunger and thirst after righteousness" who shall be filled or satisfied.

- Spiritual law always requires that certain conditions be complied with; otherwise, mankind can not benefit from its activity.

---And may not to "hunger and thirst" here simply mean to be deeply desirous of? Then, is it not the sincere prayer for righteousness which receives the throne of grace, and receives the answer of our heavenly Father-Mother God,--His reward of spiritual understanding and peace?

- Mrs. Eddy asks in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p.2), "Are we benefited by praying?" And she replies in the next sentence, "Yes, the desire which goes forth hungering after righteousness is blessed of our Father, and it does not return unto us void."

---The requisite behind prayer is to "hunger and thirst after righteousness."

Jackson, Mrs. Lynn A. Gray (CSB and Lecturer, Lubbock, TX), "**...for they shall be filled**," Christian Science Journal, Vol.107 (March 1989), p. 13.

--Today there is a great need for spiritual education to lift each one of us.

- The desire to learn more about God and man needs to be satisfied.

---The "hunger and thirst after righteousness" needs to be filled. [Matt 5:6]

--Daily study is imperative to our spiritual growth.

--If we are genuinely striving to learn more about God and man...then class instruction and association meetings provide a vital opportunity.

--And whether one has been a Christian Scientist for one year or one hundred years—or has had class yesterday or years ago—he can still use what he learned in class to love more, heal better, follow Christ more closely.

--In the words of Christ Jesus, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." [Matt 5:6]

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. (KJV)

God blesses those people who are merciful. They will be treated with mercy! (CEV)

God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. (NLT)

Blessed are the merciful! They will find mercy. (Moffatt)

How blest are those who show mercy; mercy shall be shown to them. (NEB)

"Here we meet the 'principle of reciprocity' as used in the Gospels. 'Show mercy and mercy will be shown to you' (i.e. by God) circulated as a logion of Jesus outside the Gospels (an...unwritten saying)." (Peake's Commentary)

"This beatitude hardly seems as revolutionary as the others, and is therefore easier for us to accept. But when it was spoken, it was as drastic as the others in its overturning of accepted standards. The Romans despised pity. The Stoics might offer succor, but they looked askance at compassion. The Pharisees were harsh in their self-righteousness." (The Interpreter Bible)

"The merciful are the men and women who banish all feelings of revenge and ill will out of their hearts and who seek to cultivate an attitude of love and sympathy toward all mankind, especially toward the disfranchised and dispossessed." (Abingdon Bible Commentary)

Greenblat, Jakob, "[Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy](#)," Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.27 (18 October 1924), p. 126.

--The practical value of this beatitude, presented by the master Metaphysician in the simplest form of language, is inestimable.

- Here we have "mercy," an attribute of God, presented to us, as well as the means of obtaining it. But lest there should remain any doubt about what the word "merciful" means, besides his parables and his example, Jesus has left us this further instruction: "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven," thus pointing the way for us.

--Demonstration, not mere profession, is required.

- In order to be "merciful," we must refrain from judging and from condemning unjustly; furthermore, we must be forgiving.

Hobden, Frank, "[Blessed are the merciful](#)," POEM, Sentinel, Vol.50 (10 July 1948), p. 1206.

How oft, asked Peter, shall I forgive the brother
Who has sinned against me?
As many times as seven, he wondered.
How did the Master—he who later on the tree
Could say of those who cruelly nailed him there,
"Father, forgive them"—how did he reply?
Not seven times only, until seventy times seven; yea, always!
And so, dear God, Thou who art All-Love,
Help me to be forgiving, kind;
Judging not others, lest I too be judged;
Condemning not, for who am I to blame?
With Christlike charity may I be clad,
Treading with joy the royal way of Love,
With patience, meekness, and high purpose armed....

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. (KJV)

God blesses those people whose hearts are pure. They will see him! (CEV)

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. (NLT)

Blessed are the pure in heart! They will see God. (Moffatt)

How blest are those whose hearts are pure; they shall see God. (NEB)

"It would be ungrateful to pick and choose among the Beatitudes, but probably for most people this sixth beatitude is the 'bright particular star' in the constellation. It seems also the most inaccessible. We hardly know which is more beyond us, the condition or the promise—purity of heart or seeing God." (The Interpreter Bible)

"H. Wheeler Robinson points out that out of eight hundred and fifty-one occurrences of the word *heart* in the O.T. one third denote personality as a whole—the inner life, character. A proportion of the remaining two thirds denote the emotional aspects of personality, but in a very large number the intellectual and volitional functions of the conscious life are stressed. The word 'heart' in this beatitude is *the equivalent of personality*." (Abingdon Bible Commentary)

"To be 'pure in heart' is to be single in purpose, or whole-hearted. The reference is probably to [Deut 6:5]: cf. Ps 24:3-5, 51:10. For the expression 'see God' cf. Ps 17:15, and for the connexion between the beatific vision of God and the Messianic Hope Is 40:5, 52:7,8." (New Commentary on Holy Scripture)

Everly, Jack L., "[Blessed are the pure in heart](#)," OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO YOUNG PEOPLE, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.63 (28 January 1961), p. 146.

--Jesus said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8).

• This might be paraphrased, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see themselves as the image and likeness of God."

--According to the Bible (Gen. 1:27), "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

• It is for this reason that we must know God in order to understand what we really are.

---And Mrs. Eddy gives us this enlightening statement: "God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love" (Science and Health, p. 465).

--Man, then, in his real being is the idea of divine Mind, the image of infinite Spirit.

--By being "pure in heart" we are....blessed beyond measure by seeing more clearly God's nature and our own nature as His spiritual ideas.

---What greater blessing can come to us?

Twitchell, Pierrepont E., "[Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God](#)," POEM, Christian Science Journal, Vol.77 (August 1959), p.407.

If I expect the healing truth to pour
Into my heart, I must provide a place
Where innocence will dwell for evermore.
With open mind, with head upraised in trust,
With pure and gentle love, with unveiled face,
I shall lift thought to God and meek and mild,
Just find myself in Him. I really must
Become more like a simple little child.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. (KJV)
God blesses those people who make peace. They will be called his children! (CEV)
God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. (NLT)
Blessed are the peacemakers! they will be ranked sons of God. (Moffatt)
How blest are the peacemakers; God shall call them his sons. (NEB)

"This beatitude is placed last [in the Gospel of Luke] because the qualities described in the first seven are the essential prerequisites of the peacemaker. Its presence in the list shows the importance [Jesus] placed on the ideals of peace, for he is pre-eminently God's ambassador of reconciliation among men. The establishing of good will and harmony in home and in church, in community and in international relations calls for *peace makers*—men who can organize and carry into practice the ideals which they hold." (Abingdon Bible Commentary)

"The seventh Beatitude is probably suggested by [Duet] 20:10; [Isa] 48:22, 52:7,8. For 'sons of God' cf. [Deut 14:1, [Isa] 43:6." (New Commentary on Holy Scriptures)

The peacemakers "are the ones who are themselves at peace with God and live in peace with all men (cf. Rom 5:1). They are called 'the' peacemakers for these are not social reformers, but rather the ones reformed by the regenerating power of the gospel. They are peacemakers because they themselves are at peace with God" (King James Bible Commentary)

Hogue, Blanche Hersey, "[Blessed are the peacemakers,](#)" Christian Science Journal, Vol.25 (November 1907), p. 449.

--In the Gospel of Matthew, wherein it is recorded that Jesus addressed the people about him from a hillside in Galilee, the world reads precepts simple and tender in the spirit of their ministration, yet so exalted in ideal that they promise to cut away, in their performance, all the selfish sin of human kind.

- Among the activities which Jesus defines as blessed by the Father, stands one which speaks great quietness of heart: "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

--While peace may be taken, in its narrower meaning, to indicate just a cessation of hostilities or an establishment of neutrality between factions or individuals, the Christian finds peace to be more than a negative condition, he finds it to be a quality of mind and heart distinct in its nature and decisive in its effect.

"[Peacemakers—The Children of God,](#)" Christian Science Monitor (25 May 1993), p. 19.

--In his Sermon on the Mount, found in the Bible in Matthew's Gospel, Christ Jesus declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."

- Jesus is the master Christian and our Way-shower, and we can follow and benefit from his teachings and example.

- We are peacemakers to the degree that we prayerfully rebel against violence.

- Violence has no place in God's creation, the only reality.

- And striving to destroy violence by living as peacemakers even in the small things of our daily lives benefits others, as well as ourselves.

- As Mary Baker Eddy, the Founder of the Christian Science Church, points out in her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*: "The destruction of the claims of mortal mind through Science, by which man can escape from sin and mortality, blesses the whole human family."

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (KJV)

God blesses those people who are treated badly for doing right. They belong to the kingdom of heaven. (CEV)

God blesses those who are persecuted because they live for God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. (NLT)

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of goodness! The Realm of heaven is theirs. (Moffatt)

How blest are those who have suffered persecution for the cause of right; the kingdom of Heaven is theirs. (NEB)

"As Jesus develops [his] message [he] makes it clear that such a life causes [his] people to be in direct contrast to the world in which they live. Therefore [he] reminds, **Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake.**" (King James Bible Commentary)

"Those who will one day share in the kingdom are now expected to accept calmly the persecution and reviling which they will receive as a result of their devotion to Jesus and the work of the gospel." (Interpreters One-volume Commentary)

Sinclair, Duncan (CSB, Associate Editor, and Editor), "**Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake,**" EDITORIAL, Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.27 (8 November 1924), p. 190. (Reprinted Journal [February 1987])

--What a tremendous ring of courage resounds through the Beatitudes of the Master,--courage, calm and exultant, courage having its roots deep down in moral fiber, courage begotten of the most clarified understanding of real spiritual being that has ever enlightened humanity.

- The eighth beatitude is to be found in the fifth chapter of Matthew's gospel, and it runs:

"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 exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

--Now, it surely cannot be that Christ Jesus in that wonderful statement lauded persecution for persecution's sake.

- He who denounced evil in its every mode of practice, he who healed the woes of mankind, whatever they might claim to be, through his knowledge of God, divine Principle, and God's perfect law, cannot be suspected of advocating or approving any thought, word, or deed savoring the nature of persecution.

Baker, Elizabeth B., "**Rejoice, and be exceeding glad,**" Christian Science Sentinel, Vol.26 (24 May 1924), p. 764.

--If we carefully read the passages in the Bible where we are told to rejoice, we shall find that they are in the nature of a command.

- We are not told that we may rejoice if we wish; but, instead, we have no choice in the matter.

---Not only does this command to rejoice mean to be joyful and happy ourselves, be it means as well to gladden others.

- So, if at any time we seem to feel we have nothing to rejoice over, we should then try to gladden the lives of those around us. In proportion as we do this, we may feel sure we shall feel joy and gladness in our own lives.

---Jesus attached so much importance to rejoicing that he said in his great Sermon on the Mount, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad."

Abbreviations:

CEV Contemporary English Version
KJV King James Version
NIV New International Version
NEB New English Bible
NLT New Living Translation
TEV Today's English Version