

Beatitudes

Matthew 5:3-12

Pastor David Deutsch's 7 point Introduction to the Beatitudes

- All true Christians bear the marks of each of the Beatitudes to some degree. The Beatitudes are not stepping-stones, rather they are descriptions of what Christians are and should continue to grow in. It is not a description of works to achieve salvation, but rather a response after salvation.
 - Two words to understand for a right interpretation of scripture.
 - **Indicative** describes what is (Beatitudes are indicative)
 - **Imperative** commands to do
 - Three words to deal with Scriptures, which speak of attributes of Christians
 - **Possess** by grace we possess all (be it Beatitudes, fruit of the Spirit, etc.)
 - **Progress** since all areas are not mature, we must progress in them
 - **Pursue** we take part in sanctification, because we love God and desire His will (Col 3:1)
- All Christians are meant to manifest all 8 of the Beatitudes. We will not necessarily manifest them to the same degree.
- None of the Beatitudes refer to “natural tendencies” in anyone, they are gifts of God.
- Characteristics set out differences between believers and unbelievers. Note that those things, which are necessary for life, are what the unbelievers live for. These are not what believers are to live for, we live for the kingdom, and God provides for our needs. (Matthew 6:32-33)
- Language used is Old Testament Language, since Jesus is explaining the Old Testament. We must not put modern interpretation on the words, but rather look at the Old Testament meaning. In particular the Beatitudes draw on Psalms and Isaiah. (E.g.: Matthew 5:3 draws on Psalms 34:6, 40:17, 69:33, 107:39-41, and Isaiah 57:15, 66:1-2, 61:1). What appears to be “new” is not a change, it is just the true meaning being clarified by the perfect preacher (Christ) with the accurate interpretation. (Matthew 5:17)
- (a) Things promised are not arbitrary, they fit with the character God gives. For example:

Character	Reward
Poor	Kingdom
Hunger	Satisfied
- (b) They are fulfilled partially now, fully later.
- Blessed is not “happy”, as this is not the Old Testament use. A person, who is blessed, is the privileged recipient of divine favor and grace. Must think covenantally, therefore blessing (blessed) is the opposite of cursing. (Deuteronomy 27-28)

**In Short the Beatitudes tell us where God's grace has been,
not how to make it come.**

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Matthew 5:3

Blessed *are* the poor in spirit, for **theirs** is the kingdom of the heavens. (Darby)

μακαριοι οι πτωχοι τω πνευματι οτι αυτων εστιν η βασιλεια των ουρανων (Textus Receptus)

Pastor David discussed already what blessed means, that being God's covenantal love.

Who are the poor in spirit?

People have suggested the following:

1. Materially poor (Linked with Luke 6:20)
2. Self-effacing (looking and acting spiritually poor)
3. Burdened with life's cares/depressed (low spirits)
4. Low self esteem (poor spirits)
5. Lacking in righteousness (spiritually poor)
6. Lacking knowledge (lacking in spiritual development, which includes knowledge)
7. Mean spirited (bad spirit)

All of these are wrong. Why?

1. Analogy of Scripture: God does not pick based on our characteristic.
 1. **Poor** "Two things do I ask of thee; deny me them not before I die: Remove far from me vanity and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the bread of my daily need: lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is Jehovah? or lest I be poor and steal, and outrage the name of my God." Proverbs 30:7-9, Dby.
 2. **Self-effacing** "And when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, downcast in countenance; for they disfigure their faces, so that they may appear fasting to men: verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But *thou*, when fasting, anoint thy head and wash thy face, so that thou mayest not appear fasting unto men, but to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father who sees in secret shall render it to thee." Matthew 6:16-18, Dby.
 3. **Troubled** "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Be not careful therefore for the morrow, for the morrow shall be careful about itself. Sufficient to the day is its own evil." Matthew 6:33,34, Dby.
 4. **Low Esteem** "Jesus says to him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father unless by me." John 14:6, Dby.
 5. **Unrighteous** "For there is revealed wrath of God from heaven upon all impiety, and unrighteousness of men holding the truth in unrighteousness." Romans 1:18, Dby.
A famous challenge from atheists is, "Christianity is a crutch for the weak." What would you say to this? John Piper responded to such a challenge by "Yes." Is a crutch bad when you need it? The atheist challenge suggests they don't need God. That is the error. Calling Christianity a crutch is too kind to us, it is life for the dead, not help for the weak. We should not try to defend Christianity by saying it is not for the weak (or dead) but rather that all are weak (or dead) and Christians are those being helped not hating the helper.
 6. **Unwise** "For this reason be not foolish, but understanding what is the will of the Lord." Ephesians 5:17, Dby.
 7. **Mean** "but, according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up to thyself wrath, in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who shall render to each according to his works:" Romans 2:5,6, Dby.

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- Greek wording: poor = ptokhos. Does not just mean lacking. More fully it means so lacking as to be powerless and thus having to trust in another. It was used of beggars. Lack is not enough. Knowing you can't handle the lack but another can is not enough. You must trust in the one who can provide what cannot. This ties in perfectly with the end, which more fully says "theirs and only theirs is the kingdom of the Heavens." Note the exclusivity, which Pastor David mentioned in the introduction. All Christians have this, and all of us need more.

Two aspects to the right interpretation

- (immediate, towards this life and world) One who finds no solace in the things of the world, who is beaten down by trials and surrounded by foes, but trusts in God to see them through (shows link to Luke 6:20)
- (ultimate, towards God alone) One who recognizes their spiritual poverty and the holiness of God and cries out for salvation.

Error to beware of

Of the errors above, the danger of a self-effacing, false humility is greatest to those who understand what it looks like. It sounds so spiritual, but it usually seeks the other to view you as "spiritual." This is an ever-present danger, and you often won't notice it until when people don't respond as we want. This calls for us to examine ourselves and to seek only God's approval. Stems from knowing how it should look, not knowing God deeply. This is what we want to look at in our groups. Go through the two areas on the Coram Deo application sheet. The goal is a practical application of theology.

Coram Deo

- Below there is a small list of scriptures that discusses what God is like and what man is like. Pick one or two from each as a group and discuss how we can maintain a right view of God and man in our daily lives.

God	Man
Exodus 34:5-8	Genesis 6:1-8
Deuteronomy 0:17-18	1 Kings 8:46
1 Samuel 2:1-10	Psalm 51:3-5
Psalm 8	Psalm 130:3
Psalm 18:1-18	Isaiah 53:6
James 1:17	Luke 18:18-19
Revelation 4,5	Romans 3:10-18
Revelation 15:1-8	James 1:13-15

- I have listed several people who were either poor in spirit or haughty in spirit. Pick one or two that interests you as a group. Discuss what made their attitudes right or wrong. How can we live like them (or not like them if they were haughty) without becoming self-effacing (false humility)?

Centurion: Matthew 8:5-13, Luke 7:1-10
 Woman of Tyre:..... Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30
 Unworthy Servant:..... Luke 17:5-10
 Pharisee and Tax Collector:..... Luke 18:9-14
 Rich Ruler:..... Luke 18:18-27
 Isaiah: Isaiah 6:1-7
 Peter:..... Luke 5:4-11
 Paul: 1 Timothy 1:12-17
 Job:..... Job 42:1-6

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Matthew 5:4

Blessed they that mourn, for **they** shall be comforted. (Darby)

μακαριοι οι πενθουντες οτι αυτοι παρακληθησονται (Textus Receptus)

The first two beatitudes are drawn heavily from Isaiah 61:1-3. Jesus read this in Nazareth a short while before giving the Sermon on the Mount, and said it was fulfilled in Him at that time (Jesus stopped reading 1/2 way through verse 2). Note the emphasis on both of the first beatitudes. Read Luke 6:20-26. Note also that Jesus not only gives blessings, but also cursings, and the cursings cover those who are the opposite.

Who are the mourners in spirit? People have suggested the following:

1. Unhappy or dissatisfied with this world and life
2. Suffering loss, particularly of loved ones
3. Regretting and making restitution for sin
4. Suffering for Christ

All are wrong:

1. Read 1 Kings 21:1-10.
2. Read Matthew 8:21-22.
3. Read Matthew 27:3-5.
4. Read Matthew 5:11.

Right understanding

Here Jesus is getting at sadness over sin, which drives us to the Savior. Nothing less will do. Two important concepts can be drawn from the original Greek.

1. Word for mourn is from the root 'pentheo', the strongest word for mourning in the Greek. This is no surface show, and in fact does not connote any accompanying behavior. This is the intensity of sadness, which accompanies the death of a loved one. Pentheo is sadness so strong you can't move, it literally destroys you. Read Psalm 51:15-17, Joel 2:12-17.
2. The word for mourn is in a present active participle. It could thus be read: "Blessed are they who are continually broken in mourning over sin..." This does not mean we felt bad about sin once. Sin always breaks our hearts, because it is treason against our most beloved, God.

What sin causes us such distress? Several suggestions are:

1. Sin in our lives.
2. Sin in the local church (other believers we know).
3. Sin in the catholic church (not Roman Catholic, rather the larger church in our age).
4. Sin in people of the world.
5. Sin in the things of the world.

All are right

1. Read Psalm 38:1-10.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 4:18-5:5.
3. Read Deuteronomy 9:18-21.
4. Read Matthew 23:37-39, Jonah 4:9-11.
5. Read 1 John 2:15-17.

Is Heaven our only comfort?

Heaven clearly is a comfort, but is there something else? The word translated comforted is parakaleo, you might be familiar with parakletos.

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1. We might recall that Jesus is our parakletos in 1 John 2:1. When the centurion comes to Jesus beseeching Him in Matthew 8:5, he is actually seeking Jesus to parakaleo him.
2. The Holy Spirit is called our parakletos four times in John 14-16.
3. The Father is the God of all paraklesis (He even parakaleo us) in 2 Corinthians 2:3-6.
4. The scriptures paraklesis us in Romans 15:4.
5. Faithful preaching paraklesis us in 1 Corinthians 14:3.
6. Read 2 Corinthians 2:5-11.

The word means not only to comfort but to come alongside and help. In a real sense we are thus comforted here. God in all His fullness comes alongside us. He lifts our head, and we are comforted in Him. God also uses fellow believers to comfort us.

Coram Deo

For our application, we want to look at two different passages. Read the passages either individually or as a group, then discuss them.

1. Read John 8:1-11. What was the attitude of the Pharisees? What should it have been? Why did they bring the woman to Him? Should sin just be avoided? What should be done and why? Is there a difference in how we act to those who claim the name of Christ and those who don't?
2. Read Luke 7:36-50. What was the woman's attitude? How was her remorse different from Judas? Why does Jesus forgive her? How is her love the basis of her sorrow and her comfort? How does our love of God effect our hatred of sin?
3. What are the three Ps, pastor David said were vital to understanding attributes of Christians? How do we understand mourning and comforting in light of the three Ps?
1. If you have time Read Matthew 26:69-27:10 and compare and contrast Peter and Judas with respect to this verse (Matthew 5:4)? What makes the difference? What was the source of their sorrows?

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Matthew 5:5

Blessed the meek, for **they** shall inherit the earth. (Darby)

μακαριοι οι πραειω οτι αυτοι κληρονομησουσιν την γην. (Textus Receptus)

Picture a meek person. Make two columns with the numbers 1-5 between them, and rate the meek person from 1 (total alignment with column 1) to 5 (total alignment with column 2).

No Anger	1	2	3	4	5	Rage
Spineless	1	2	3	4	5	In control
Humble	1	2	3	4	5	Prideful
Weak	1	2	3	4	5	Powerful
Timid	1	2	3	4	5	Decisive

The Biblical image of meekness (and the original meaning of praus) would rate 3,5,1,5,5. Not what most people expect. The first three look at the meaning of the word.

1. Aristotle taught that meekness was the mean between extremes like no anger and rage. The idea is that a meek person is balanced. Meekness does not lack a reaction, see for instance John 2:13-17.
2. The Greeks used it of domesticated animals trained to their master's voice. Read Psalm 32:8-11. Horses were pictured as headstrong, and mules as stubborn. Jesus says we will know His voice, and that we will obey Him. A meek person is perfectly in control, and follows God's leading.
3. Praus (or the base word: praotes) was the opposite of hypselokardia. Hypselokardia literally means lofty-hearted. A lofty-hearted person is one who sees himself as having great intrinsic value. Praus is thus lowly-heartedness- a humble recognition of the surpassing greatness of God and the honor, glory, and service owed Him.
4. The Greek word does not deal with weakness or power in the usual sense. Note that total weakness could not fit with meekness as above. Meekness allows for action. A meek person can act, they just act in perfect obedience to God. In the Bible, every person who is meek also has great power. Meekness speaks of laying aside the privileges of power, not laying aside power. Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Numbers 12:1-13, and Philipians 2:1-11.
5. Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-5:7. Was Paul timid or decisive? Should elders be meek? Are elders decisive? Meek people are decisive because this is required to be in control. The meek are decisive because they have bound their will and desire to God. The meek aren't timid because they love others and want them to love God.

This beatitude draws from Psalms 37. Read Psalm 37:7-11. Look at how the meek are described:

1. Resting in God
2. Waiting patiently on God
3. Not fretting
4. Ceasing from anger
5. Forsaking wrath
6. Delighted in peace

Note that both assertions and negations are used in the description. What does this suggest? True meekness is a slippery concept and totally foreign to fallen man, hence the need for so many comparisons and contrasts. Meekness is not natural coolness or nice-ness. There is nothing natural in meekness.

Meekness is a gift of God. Note that Psalm 37 states that in a little while the wicked would be removed and the meek would enjoy peace. A thousand years of tribulation preceded the coming of Christ. Read Habakkuk 1:1-4. John MacArthur summarized the solution of four of the notable groups when Christ lived:

1. Pharisees- Spiritual (victorious messiah)

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2. Sadducees- Materialistic (economic and political)
3. Zealots- Military (rebellion and assassination)
4. Essenes- Monastic (withdraw from society)

Jesus went against all and said the meek will inherit the earth. Meek are in the world but not of the world. A.W. Pink put it as “the opposite of self-will toward God and of ill-will toward men” and that is a good way of putting it. Read Hebrews 11:1-6,13-16. We are to yearn for God and care enough for men that we witness to them about the Lord.

1. Turn the other Cheek (Matthew 5:38-42)
2. Love your enemies (Matthew 5:43-48)
3. Don't Worry (Matthew 6:25-34)
4. Don't Judge (Matthew 7:1-5)

What do we inherit?

Contentment (Philippians 4:10-13)

All is for our best (Romans 8:28)

Looks ultimately to heaven (2 Peter 3:11-14)

The Meek

No Anger	1	2	3	4	5	Rage
Spineless	1	2	3	4	5	In control
Humble	1	2	3	4	5	Prideful
Weak	1	2	3	4	5	Powerful
Timid	1	2	3	4	5	Decisive

Coram Deo

Read all of Psalm 37 as a group. It is one of the best explanations of meekness in the Bible. Discuss the assertions (waiting on the Lord) and negations (not fretting) that describe the meek. How are the meek contrasted with the wicked? What does it mean to possess this to some degree? How can we seek to progress in meekness? How do we pursue this? Some have linked meekness to gentleness in Galatians 5:22-23. Does meekness seem to cover multiple of the fruits of the Spirit? How can this be?

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Matthew 5:6

Blessed they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for **they** shall be filled. (Darby)

μακαριοι οι πεινωντες και διθωντες την δικαιοσυνην οτι αυτοι χορτασθησονται. (Textus Receptus)

Read Isaiah 55:1-5. Notice in particular what the end of chapter 54 is talking about. The ideas are not unrelated.

1. Hunger and thirst
2. Several things could be meant by this phrase in English
3. To be hungry and thirsty – this would mean those for whom God put a hunger for the things of righteousness.
4. To want something – this would mean those who desire to be righteous.
5. To need something to sustain life – this would mean those who recognize their need for righteousness before a Holy God.
6. To desire something so much that without it would mean death – this would mean those who are so caught up in passionate desire for the righteousness of God that they would perish for the lack of it and face death to get it.
7. Only (iv) can be the answer:
8. The words are active, not passive. It is true that the hunger was given to them by God, but this is not what Jesus is referring to. Technically the first three give is the hunger pangs, this starts the desire to be filled.
9. This does not speak of someone who is late for dinner. This looks to someone who is starving to death and dying of thirst. The case of righteousness is accusative rather than genitive, thus we are not to hunger and thirst for “some righteousness” but to desire “as much as we can have”. Read Psalm 42:1-2, 63:1.
10. This does not look to only needs. This does not refer to the dead or empty. Hunger and thirst are states and actions of the living. We are not to be those who just eat to keep from starving, rather we are those eating a great banquet, and desiring it so much we can’t get our fill of it.
11. Read Matthew 6:24-34.
12. This calls for introspection.
13. Hunger is a sign of life.
14. Hunger is a sign of health.
15. Thomas Guthrie: “If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord’s table, any person better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of heaven – take alarm!”
16. Righteousness
17. Justification
18. From the same word in the Greek (Dikaios)
19. Desire to be right with God and rid of sin for His glory.
20. Cannot be from yourself
21. Sanctification
22. Read Ephesians 2:8-10
23. Jesus developed a theme
24. Not just for us
25. Filled
26. Passive voice – not something you do, something that is done to you.

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Matthew 5:7

Blessed the merciful, for **they** shall find mercy. (Darby)

οι ελεημονεω οτι αυτοι ελεηψησονται. (Textus Receptus)

Read Psalm 18:25, 37:26, 41:1-4, 112:4&9, Micah 6:8, Isaiah 58:6-12.

A first look at what mercy is:

- Compassion about needs
- Sympathy for people
- Action to help
- It is not compassion, that would be “oiktirmos” (2 Corinthians 1:3).
- It is not sympathy, that would be “splanchnozomai” (Matthew 9:36).
- It is an action that is motivated by compassion and sympathy. The word is “eleeo”, and it is considered stronger in that it acts to alleviate the problem. This does not mean the others are inferior! Note both of the scriptures quoted are with reference to God. God’s best is not always seen in removing the problem but in His being with us.

Read 1 John 3:16-19. This sets out three important ideas:

1. Absence should cause fear and self examination. (James 1:19-27).
2. Emotion without action is false. (James 2:13-24).
3. Presence should cause joy and assurance. (1 John 4:7-21)

So what exactly is mercy?

- Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35).
- Charity (Galatians 2:9-10)
- Evangelism (Jude 20-23)
- Not separate: Matthew 4:23, 9:1-8, 11:1-6.

Read 1 John 4:7-21, James 1:25-27, Proverbs 19:17. Motivation

- God loved us first (ours is a response)
- God’s presence with us
- Conformed into Christ’s image
- Assurance of salvation
- Consistent with new nature
- God commanded it
- It pleases God
- Giving to God

Reward

- Not salvation: we do not earn it. This is one of the least understood phrases.
- Good for you (Proverbs 11:17) – do not reduce to social gospel, self help, or karma. This looks to the peace of resting in Christ and following after Him.
- Material- (Proverbs 11:24) – not give to get. God takes care of His own physically and spiritually. Looks to our salvation (James 2:12-13) – not earned but confirmed.

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Matthew 5:8

Blessed the pure in heart, for **they** shall see God. (Darby)

μακαριοι οι καθαροι τη καρδια οτι αυτοι τον θεον οψονται. (Textus Receptus)

Three key words

Katharoi (pure, purified, cleansed, purged)

Matthew 23:26 (pharisee)

- physically (not mixed or alloyed, purified by fire; vine cleansed by pruning and so fitted to bear fruit)
- ritually (clean, the use of which is not forbidden; imparts no uncleanness)
- ethically (free from corrupt desire, sin, and guilt; free from every admixture of what is false, sincere genuine; blameless, innocent; unstained with the guilt of anything)

It is interesting to note the distinction between two synonyms

- hagnos (pure, uncontaminated) can relate to mixed or alloyed, but looks more to having no fault
- eilikrines (unalloyed, pure) looks more to tested in sun light, shown to be pure

Kardia (heart, soul, mind, inner man, center)

Desires: Matthew 5:28

Thoughts: Matthew 9:4

True self: Matthew 12:34-35

Center: Matthew 12:40

Where true conversion happens: Matthew 13:15-19

Best definition: 1 Peter 3:3-4

Phrase pure heart: 1 Timothy 1:3-11, 2 Timothy 2:20-26, 1 Peter 1:13-23

Optomai (see)

None: John 1:18 (no one)

Salvation: Jeremiah 29:13, 2 Corinthians 4:4

Jesus: John 14:9

Creation: Psalm 8:1-3

History: Psalm 22:28

Prayer: Recall 2 Timothy 2:22, Proverbs 15:29

Service: 1 Corinthians 15:58

Circumstances: Romans 8:28-9

Troubles: Hebrews 11:27

Miracles: John 11:40 (Lazarus)

Others have: Acts 7:2 (Abraham), Acts 7:35 (Moses)

Fully seen in Hebrews 11:1-3

Heaven: 1 John 3:2, 1 Corinthians 13:12

– not earned but confirmed.

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Matthew 5:9

Blessed the peace-makers, for **they** shall be called sons of God. (Darby)
μακαριοι οι ειρηνοποιοι οτι αυτοι υιοι ψευς κληψησονται. (Textus Receptus)

Peacemakers (only here) Related ideas

Romans 12:18
Romans 14:17-19
2 Corinthians 13:11
Galatians 5:22-26
2 Timothy 2:22-26
Hebrews 12:14
James 3:16-18

Son of God: (Most apply to Jesus) Some to us:

Luke 20:34-36
John 1:10-13
John 11:50-52
Acts 2:37-41
Romans 8:10-25
Romans 9:6-13
Romans 9:25-29
2 Corinthians 6:14-18
Ephesians 5:1-10
Galatians 3:19-4:7
Philipians 2:12-16
Hebrews 12:4-8
1 Peter 1:13-16
1 John 2:28-3:13
1 John 5:1-5
Revelation 21:1-8

Sons of disobedience

Ephesians 2:1-3
Colossians 3:6

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Matthew 5:10

Blessed they who are persecuted on account of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. (Darby)
μακαριοι οι δεδιωγμενοι ενεκεν δικαιοσυνησ οτι αυτων εστιν η βασιλεια των ουρανων (TR)

READ Matthew 5:1-16

What does it mean to be persecuted? The Greek word here is *diō*, and the following have been suggested as meanings:

- To pursue
- To prosecute
- To persecute
- To pursue with repeated acts of enmity
- To drive away
- To harass
- To treat wrongly

They are all true! This word is a very general word for a variety of troubles one person inflicts on another. To see some of the Old Testament foundations of this read Psalm 7, 119:81-88.

Let's now look at how persecution is treated in the New Testament.

Retaliation	Matthew 5:38-42	Moses	Hebrews 11:24-28
Love enemies	Matthew 5:43-48	Saints of OT persecuted	Hebrews 11:35-37
Beatitudes	Luke 6:20-26	Pesevere	James 5:9-11
Love enemies	Luke 6:27-38	Persecution refines faith	I Peter 1:3-9
Persecution	John 15:18-16:4	Living before the world	I Peter 2:11-12
Trouble in the world	John 16:33	Suffering for right	1 Peter 3:13-17
Hardships before entering	Acts 14:21-25	Armed by Christ's suffering	I Peter 4:1-6
Light afflictions	II Corinthians 4:16-18	Suffering for Christ	I Peter 4:12-19
Persecution in life	I Thessalonians 2:13-16	Submit to God and trust	I Peter 5:5-11
Warned of persecution	I Thessalonians 3:1-5	Don't love world	I John 2:15-17
Persecution will come	II Timothy 3:10-17	Behavior in the past	II Chronicles 36:15-21