

Introduction:

1. If I were to ask you to name some blessings in your life, what would you say? I think we could list a number of blessings, like our health, our jobs, our family and friends, salvation through Jesus, and our spiritual family. Most of us are aware of these blessings and appreciate them.
2. But I don't want to talk about any of these blessings this morning. Rather, I want us to consider some unexpected blessings that Jesus wants us to know about and appreciate.
3. This month we have been learning some unexpected things about Jesus. We have been challenged with what we have learned. What we will learn this morning about some things that Jesus called blessings will challenge our faith, and how we view certain things in life. These blessings are unexpected but are blessings that Jesus wants us to know about.

The Lesson:

I. Being a mourner

- A. Jesus taught that we will be blessed when we mourn, [Matthew 5:4](#).
 1. Most people don't think that mourning is a blessing. But Jesus does. What type of mourning is Jesus referring to? How is mourning a way for us to be blessed? Let's be clear about something. The mourning Jesus is referring to is not over the death of a pet, or even a loved one. Rather, it's over our sins. We are to grieve when we sin against God. That's because God hates sin, [Habakkuk 1:13](#). Sin separates us from God, [Isaiah 59:2](#). When we sin we grieve the Holy Spirit, [Ephesians 4:30](#). Sin is terrible. Sin inflicts pain, guilt, and shackles men with burdens. Sin, if not repented of, will send us to hell!
 2. Our guilt over what we have done should cause us to mourn and seek God's forgiveness.
 3. This is exactly what King David did when he was broken and crushed because of his evil deeds, [Psalm 32:3](#). The pain of sin finally brought him to God to seek forgiveness. As a result, he was blessed, [Psalm 32:5, 1-2](#). He enjoyed the peace that he was right with God.
- B. We need to be broken when it comes to our sins.
 1. Many Christian lives are in turmoil because of sin. Many will miss out on the forgiveness of God. That's because they refuse to be broken and admit their short comings to God. Instead of being cut to the heart because of sin, they harden their hearts. They are like the Pharisee who didn't acknowledge his short comings, [Luke 18:9-14](#). The Pharisee did what was easy. He admitted all the things he did right. We need to be like the tax collector. He was broken and mourned because of his sins.
 2. The truth is if we have not mourned over our sins, then we really don't know how bad sin is. It is better for us to mourn over our sins now and receive forgiveness, than to mourn over our sins in hell for eternity, because we refused to be broken. We need to appreciate this unexpected blessing because our souls are at stake.

II. Being a servant

- A. Jesus taught that those who are servants will be blessed, [John 13:5-17](#).
 1. Before Jesus died on the cross, He needed to teach His apostles one more lesson. When He departed they were to be servants in the kingdom. He taught them this example by washing their feet, [John 13:5](#). Being a servant is how they would be blessed. This would be an unexpected blessing for the apostles. They didn't want to be second, and serve others. They wanted to be first, [Luke 22:24-30](#). That's why this is an unexpected blessing. The teaching of Jesus goes against what so many people desire.
 2. Thankfully, the apostles would learn this important lesson. After this example, there's no mention of the apostles striving to be first. What we see is them being servants. As a result they were blessed. Here's how. They would know that they were friends of Jesus, [John 15:14](#). They were blessed with the joy of bringing souls to Jesus and helping people make it to heaven. Being a servant gave them the blessing of fellowship with other saints, [2 Peter 3:1, 8, 14](#). The apostles would learn that it's not about being first. It's about serving others.
- B. Being a servant is what Jesus wants us to do.

1. But this is challenging for many. Being a servant means sacrificing our time and energy. It means thinking about others before ourselves. When we do these things we will be blessed. Not with bonuses, recognition, or a corner office. But we will know that we are friends with Jesus because we are obeying Him, [John 15:14](#).
2. Knowing that we are making a difference in someone's life is a blessing.
3. This week we will have the opportunity to serve. It may come in the form of a Bible study, picking a member up for services, visiting someone, taking food to someone, or praying with someone. Helping others at times can become tiresome. But when our hands and feet grow weary, let's remember what we will enjoy from this unexpected blessing.

III. Being persecuted

- A. Jesus taught that those who are persecuted for Him would be blessed, [Matthew 5:10-12](#).
 1. This is an unexpected way to be blessed. These words of Jesus are shocking to many. Many think that Jesus wouldn't allow His followers to experience tough times. Many think that there is no way that a person can really rejoice when they are persecuted.
 2. The truth is Jesus allowed His disciples to endure hard times, [Acts 5:40](#). When tough times came, the apostles counted it an honor to be dishonored, [Acts 5:41-42](#). Despite the pain, threats, and mocking, they continued to preach Jesus. They were persecuted, yet they were blessed. But in what way?
 - a. Knowing that they were honoring God with their righteous conduct.
 - b. Knowing that they might have an opportunity to influence others around them.
 - c. Knowing that they would have a reward that would make it all worthwhile: heaven.
 3. Being persecuted was an unexpected blessing.
- B. This is a blessing that Jesus wants us to know and appreciate.
 1. But who wants to endure pain? A lot of people who come to Jesus think they will never have any more problems because they are a Christian.
 2. If you listen to preachers on the television, you will think that becoming a Christian includes getting a new car, fur coat, dream vacation, and a house. The reality is we may have more problems because we are followers of Christ. People will hate us just like they hated Jesus. There's no denying that we will be persecuted.
 - a. Young people you will face persecution from friends regarding your stance because want to live a life of purity. But Jesus says don't be ashamed and quit. Rather, rejoice and stand firm in your faith.
 - b. Many of us will be persecuted by family because we left a denomination that we grew up in. Some will make us feel bad and think that we have betrayed our family, simply for following the truth. When this happens Jesus doesn't want us to quit. Rather, He wants us to rejoice and stand strong.
 3. When persecution happens it is a blessing for us. But how?
 - a. Our faith will grow stronger, [Romans 5:3-4](#). Enduring tough times will help us to rely even more on Jesus, [2 Corinthians 12:10](#).
 - b. Our enduring persecution gives us opportunity to glorify God, [1 Peter 2:12](#).
 - c. Our commitment to remain with Jesus during tough times might influence others around us to come to Jesus.
 - d. Ultimately, we will enjoy that great reward of eternal life.
 4. People say that pain and persecution are bad. Jesus said persecution is a blessing. As we go through the storms of life and suffer for Jesus, let's rejoice and draw closer to Jesus. We have a great reward waiting for us on the other side of life.

Conclusion:

1. I'm thankful He was willing to be persecuted for our benefit. I'm thankful He became a servant, and died for us.
2. Because of Him we have been blessed with the gift of eternal life if we believe in Him, [John 20:28](#).