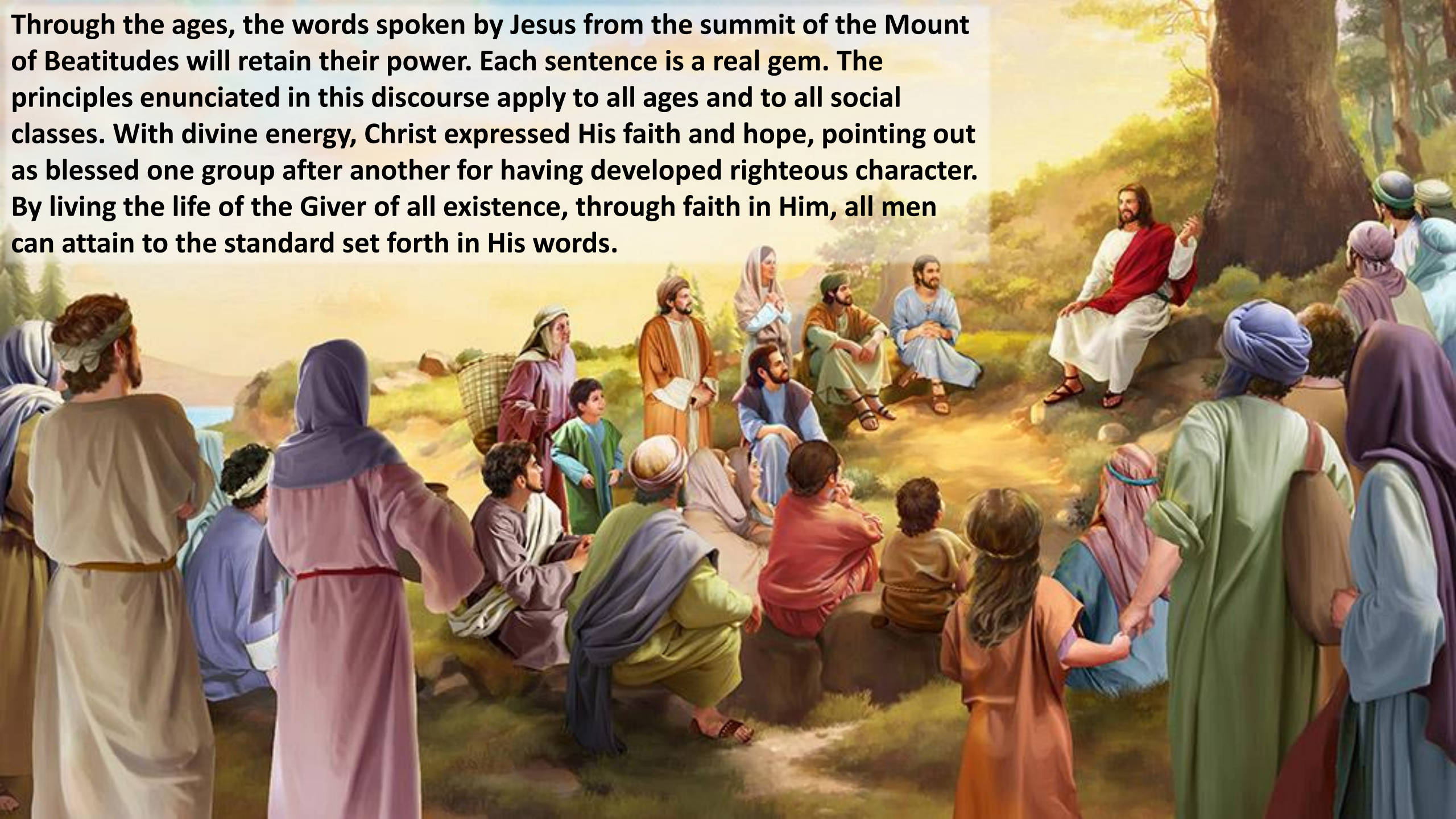


THE
BEATITUDES

Through the ages, the words spoken by Jesus from the summit of the Mount of Beatitudes will retain their power. Each sentence is a real gem. The principles enunciated in this discourse apply to all ages and to all social classes. With divine energy, Christ expressed His faith and hope, pointing out as blessed one group after another for having developed righteous character. By living the life of the Giver of all existence, through faith in Him, all men can attain to the standard set forth in His words.



1

Blessed are the poor in spirit

Those who understand well that it is impossible for them to be saved, and that they cannot do any righteous act by themselves, are those who appreciate the help offered to them by Christ. These are the poor in spirit, whom he calls blessed.



Matthew 5:3

for theirs is the kingdom of
heaven.

Christ opened before men the doors of the spiritual kingdom of His love, His grace and His justice. The banner of the Messiah's kingdom differs from other banners because it reveals to us the spiritual likeness of the Son of Man. His subjects are the poor in spirit, the meek, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake. Theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Although it is not yet finished, the work has begun in them that will make them "meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:" (Colossians 1:12).



2

Blessed are they that mourn

The weeping alluded to here is true sorrow of heart for having sinned, for his life has been a continual spectacle of ingratitude and rebellion. He abandoned his best Friend and abused the most precious gift in heaven.

Matthew 5:4

Those who mourn the loss of a loved one should remember the message of the resurrection. Those who weep over trials and difficulties remember to rest their hearts on Christ and meditate at all times on His goodness. He will lift the soul beyond everyday sorrow and perplexity into a kingdom of peace. Blessed are also those who weep with Jesus full of compassion for the sorrows of the world and grieve for the sins committed in it and, in weeping, do not think of themselves.

for they shall be
comforted.

God reveals our guilt to us so that we may take refuge in Christ and that, through Him, we may be freed from the bondage of sin, so that we may rejoice in the freedom of the children of God. With true contrition, we can reach the foot of the cross and lay our burdens there.

God does not want us to be overwhelmed with sadness, with anguished and broken hearts. He wants us to raise our eyes and see His loving face. The blessed Savior is near to many whose eyes are so full of tears that they cannot perceive Him. He longs to shake our hand; He wants us to look to Him with simple faith and allow Him to lead us. His heart knows our sorrows, afflictions, and trials. He has loved us with an everlasting love and has surrounded us with mercy. We can lean our hearts on Him and meditate at all times on His goodness. He will lift the soul beyond everyday sorrow and perplexity into a kingdom of peace.



3

Blessed are the meek



Matthew 5:5

To be meek means to remain patient and kind in the face of mistreatment. The meek person does not incite altercations, does not respond with anger, but calms bad moods and spreads a kindness felt by all within his circle. As long as the self lives, we will always be ready to protect it against insults and mortification; but when we have died to self and our life is hidden with Christ in God, we will not take to heart contempt and rebuffs. We will be deaf to reproaches and blind to derision and outrage.

**for they shall inherit
the earth.**



Through the desire for self-exaltation, sin entered the world, and our first parents lost dominion over this beautiful land, their kingdom. By self-denial, Christ redeems what was lost. And He tells us that we must overcome as He overcame (Revelation 3:21). By the humility and submission of self we can become joint heirs with him when the meek ones will "inherit the earth." —Psalm 37:11. There will be no sin, no death, no curse, righteousness and love will dwell there, and there will be peace.

4

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness



Matthew 5:6

Justice is love, and love is the light and life of God. God's righteousness is personified in Christ. By receiving it, we receive justice. If we feel need in our souls, if we hunger and thirst for righteousness, it is an indication that Christ moved our hearts to ask Him to do, through the Holy Spirit, what is impossible for us. As we perceive the perfection of our Savior's character, we will desire to be completely transformed and renewed in the likeness of His purity. The more we know about God, the higher our ideal of character, and all the more we shall be anxious to reflect his image.

for they shall be filled.



God's words are the sources of life that quench our thirst. As we seek these living springs, the Holy Spirit will bring us into fellowship with Christ. Truths already known will present themselves to our minds in a new aspect; certain passages of scripture will take on new meaning, as if illuminated by lightning. We will understand the relationship between other truths and the work of redemption, and we will know that Christ is leading us, that a divine Teacher is at our side.

5

Blessed are the merciful

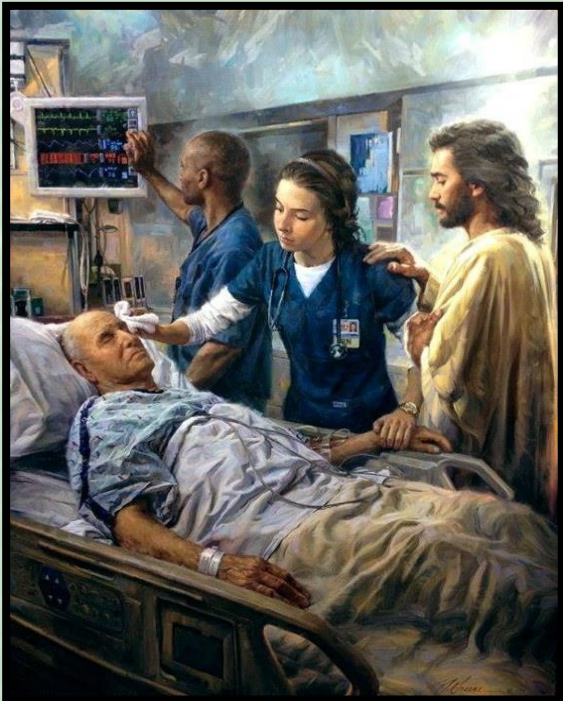
God himself is the source of all mercy. He calls himself "merciful, and pious." He doesn't treat us as we deserve. He does not ask us if we are worthy of His love;

Matthew 5:7

He simply pours out upon us the riches of His love to make us worthy. He is not vindictive. He does not want to punish, but to redeem. Even the severity seen in his providences is manifested to save the wayward. He longs earnestly to ease man's sorrows and anoint his wounds with His balm. The merciful are "partakers of the divine nature," and in them God's compassionate love is expressed. The merciful will seek to save and not condemn, they manifest compassion for with the poor, the suffering, and the oppressed.



for they shall obtain mercy.



There is sweet peace to the compassionate spirit, a blessed satisfaction in the life of selfless service for the welfare of others. The Holy Spirit who dwells in the soul and manifests Himself in the life will soften hardened hearts and awaken in them sympathy and tenderness. Whatever we sow, that we will reap. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness." (Psalm 41:1-3). He who has given his life to God to help His children is united to the One who has all the resources of the universe. The Lord will not abandon you in the hour of affliction or need, and you will be received into eternal dwellings.

6

Blessed are the pure in heart

The pure in heart is the one who lets Christ live in him and lets the Holy Spirit dwell in him and transform him. He has no selfishness or malice in his soul.

Matthew 5:8

He is disgusted by careless habits, vulgar language, and impure thoughts. It is free of sensuality and concupiscence. He is faithful in the thoughts and motives of the soul, free from pride and self-love; humble. The pure in heart see God from a new and attractive perspective, as their Redeemer. As they discern the purity and beauty of His character, they long to reflect His image. To them, God is a Father who longs to embrace a repentant child, and their hearts overflow with unspeakable joy and full glory.

for they shall see God.



The pure in heart perceive the Creator in the works of His mighty hand. In His written Word they see even more clearly the revelation of His mercy, His goodness and His grace.

The pure in heart live as in the presence of God during the days He grants them here on earth, and they will see Him face to face in the future and immortal state, just as Adam did when he walked and talked with Him in Eden. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face" (1 Corinthians 13:12).



7

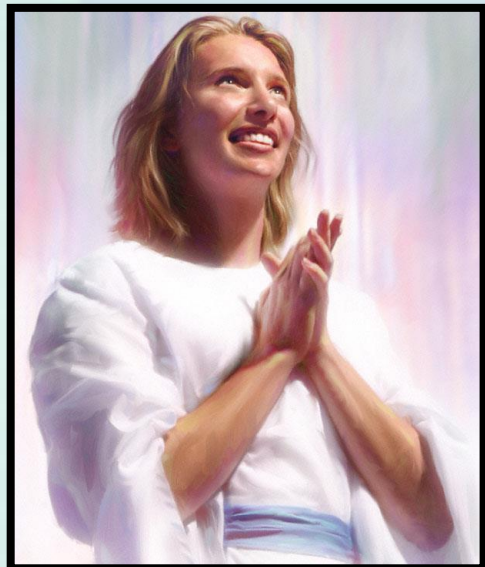
Blessed are the peacemakers

Christ is the "Prince of Peace," and His mission is to restore to heaven and earth the peace destroyed by sin. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"

Matthew 5:9

(Isaiah 9:6; Romans 5:1). Followers of Christ are sent out into the world with the message of peace. Whoever reveals the love of Christ by the unconscious and silent influence of a holy life; whoever incites others, by word or deed, to renounce sin and surrender to God, is a peacemaker. Whoever consents to renounce sin and opens his heart to the love of Christ will share in this heavenly peace. The heart that agrees with God partakes of the peace of heaven and will spread a blessed influence around it. The spirit of peace will settle like dew upon the weary and troubled hearts of the world.

for they shall be called the children of God.



The spirit of peace is proof of his relationship with heaven. The sweet taste of Christ envelops them. The fragrance of life and the beauty of character reveal to the world that they are children of God. His fellow men acknowledge that they have been with Jesus. "every one that loveth is born of God" "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" but "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (1 John 4:7; Romans 8:9,14).

8

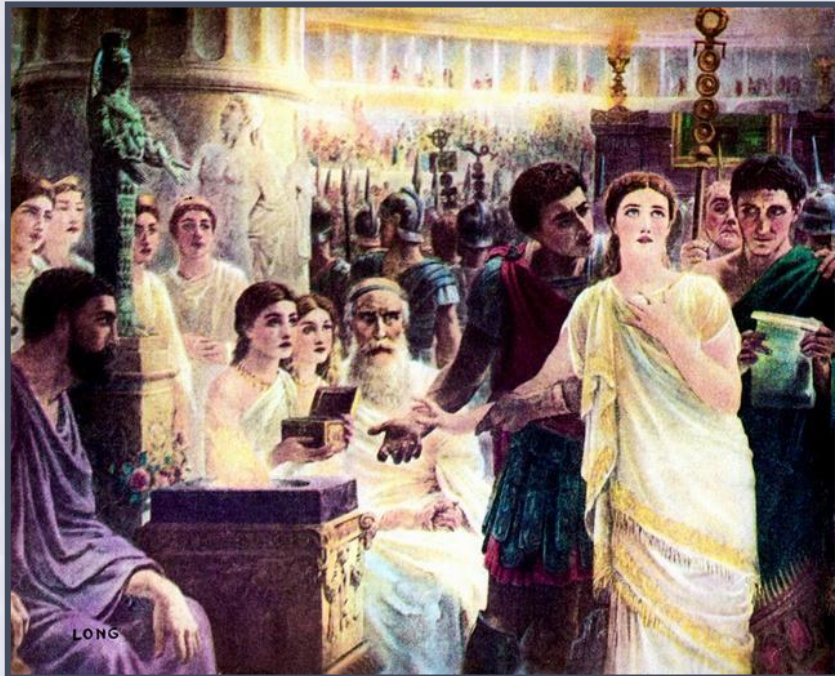
Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake



Matthew 5:10

Jesus does not offer his disciples the hope of worldly glory and riches, nor to live without tribulation. He presents to them the privilege of walking with their Master in paths of self-denial and reproach, because the world does not know them. When the love of Christ and the beauty of His holiness are presented, subjects are taken away from Satan's kingdom, and this incites the prince of evil to resist. Persecution and reproach await those who are dominated by the Spirit of Christ. Therefore, instead of causing them sorrow, persecution should fill Christ's disciples with joy; for it is proof that they follow in the footsteps of their Master.

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



By trials and persecutions, the glory or character of God is revealed in His elect. They walk in narrow paths and purify themselves in the furnace of affliction. They follow Christ through painful conflicts; they deny themselves and suffer harsh disappointments; but the pains they experience teach them the guilt and misfortune of sin, which they look upon with abhorrence. Being partakers of Christ's sufferings, they are destined to share in His glory as well. "These are they that have come out of the great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they stand before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them" (Rev. 7: 14-15).

9

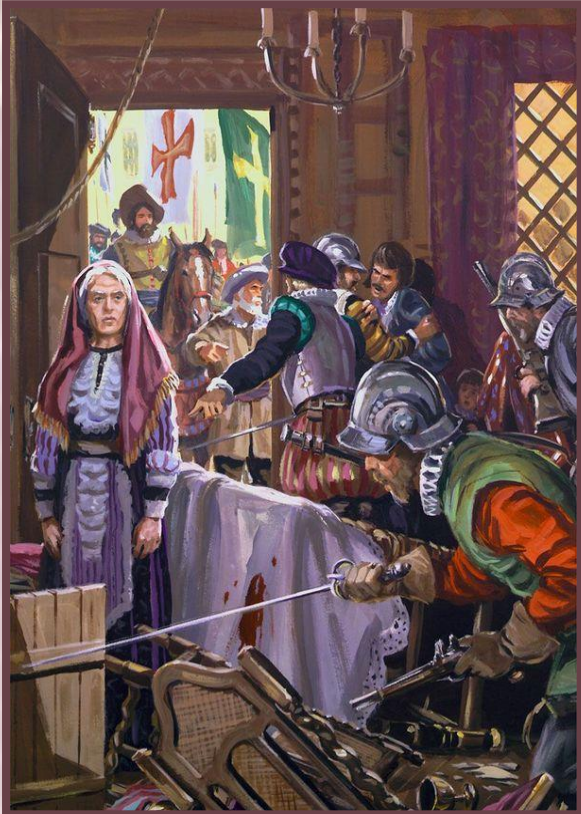
**Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you,
and persecute you, and shall say all manner
of evil against you falsely, for my sake.**

Matthew 5:11

From his fall, Satan worked by deceptive means. Just as he slandered God, he slanders his children through his agents. The Savior says, "the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me" (Psalm 69:9). In the same way they fall on their disciples.

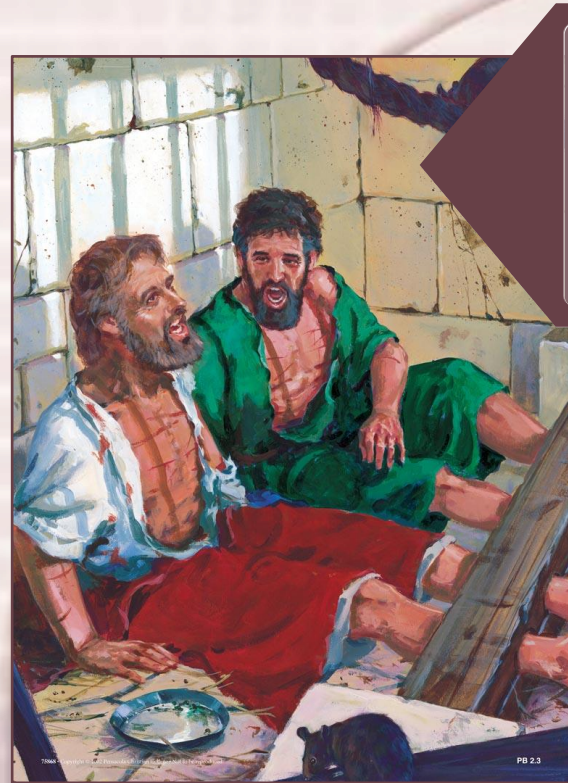


Although slander may blacken the name, it cannot stain the character. This is kept by God. As long as we do not consent to sin, there is no human or satanic power that can leave a stain on the soul. The man whose heart rests on God is, in the hour of the most distressing trials and in the most daunting circumstances, exactly the same as when he saw himself in prosperity, when he seemed to enjoy the light and favor of God. His words, his motives, his deeds, may be distorted and falsified, but he does not care; for him, other interests of greater importance are at stake. Like Moses, he stands "as seeing the Invisible One," not looking at "the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen" (Heb. 11:27; 2 Corinthians 4:18). Christ knows all that men have misunderstood and misinterpreted. With good reason, however hated and despised they may seem, their children may wait full of confidence and patience, for there is nothing secret that will not be revealed, and those who honor God will be honored by Him in the presence of men and angels.



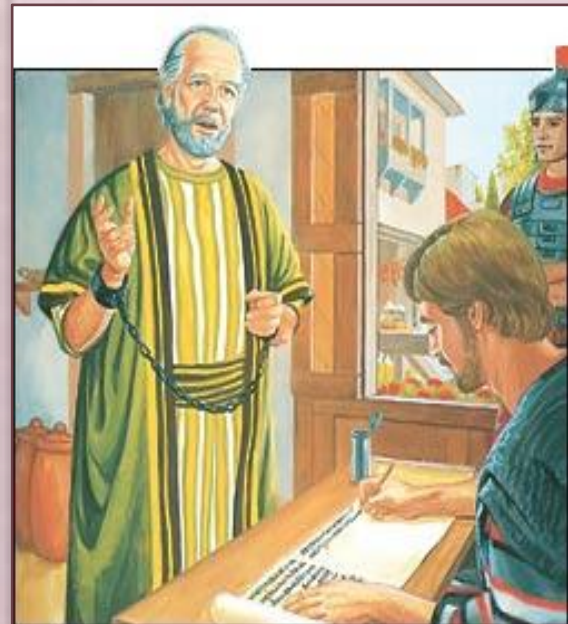
Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5:12



Great is the reward in heaven for those who testify for Christ in the midst of persecution and reproach. While men seek transitory goods, Jesus points them to a heavenly reward. It does not place everything in the life to come but begins right here. The Lord manifested himself to Abraham and said to him, "I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward." This is the reward of all who follow Christ. To see oneself in harmony with Emmanuel, "in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" and in whom "all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily," to know Him, to possess Him, while the heart opens more and more to receive His attributes, to know what His love and power are, to possess the inscrutable riches of Christ, better understand "what is the breadth, length, depth, and height," and "know the love of Christ, which surpasses all knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God," "this is the inheritance of the servants of the Lord, this is the righteousness they should expect from me, saith the Lord."

From Rome, Paul wrote without thinking about his chains as he saw the gospel spreading: "In this I rejoice, and I will rejoice again." The same words of Christ on the mountain resonate in Paul's message to the church in its persecutions: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say, Rejoice!"



The Christian life is beautiful if you learn to depend on God, and to see in every difficulty an opportunity to make you stronger; if you live with the assurance that you have a loving Father who is watching over you; if you patiently wait for their answers; and if you let the peace of heaven flood your heart before fear does. But I still have good news: “for great is your reward in heaven...” (Mt. 5:12) Living the Christian life is not in vain, you have an eternal reward in heaven if you live with complete fidelity.

