

Briefing Document: Matthew-Lesson 43

"THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT-Happy Are the Persecuted"

October 19, 2025

Executive Summary

This document synthesizes the key themes from a church service and sermon presented by NewLifeBenson, centered on Lesson 43 of a series on the Sermon on the Mount. The core teaching, derived from Matthew 5:10-12, argues that authentic Christian discipleship, as defined by the Beatitudes, inevitably leads to persecution from the world. The speaker identifies three specific forms of this persecution: harassment (being chased away), revilement (vicious mockery), and false accusation (slander). The central thesis is that believers should not seek to avoid this treatment but must cultivate an "attitude" of willingness to endure it. This persecution is not a personal attack, but a reaction to the righteousness of Christ which the believer's life reflects. The sermon contrasts the internal, attitude-based nature of the Beatitudes with external, works-based religion, and calls for believers to be bold, confrontational witnesses rather than "sneaky preachers" who prioritize being liked. The ultimate reward for enduring persecution is the "kingdom of heaven," an eternal future that cannot be taken away. The service also included congregational worship, church announcements, personal anecdotes, and prayer requests.

I. Context and Overview

The source material is a transcript of a church service broadcast on October 19, 2025. The central component is a sermon, designated as Lesson 43 in an ongoing series examining the five great discourses in the Gospel of Matthew.

- **Primary Text:** Matthew 5:10-12
- **Sermon Title/Topic:** "Happy Are the Persecuted"
- **Key Speaker:** Steve (referred to as "pastor")
- **Other Participants:** Janie (led worship), Nathan Coleman (special music), Roger (closing remarks), Steve Adams (led prayer).

II. Worship and Community Engagement

The service was structured with significant participation in worship, fellowship announcements, and community prayer.

Worship and Music

- **Congregational Hymns:** The service, designated a "hymn Sunday," included:

- “Victory in Jesus”
- “To God Be the Glory”
- “Spirit of the Living God”

• **Background on “Spirit of the Living God”:** A brief history of this hymn was provided. It was written by Daniel Iverson in 1926 and was inspired by 2 Corinthians 3:17 (“Now the Lord is that spirit and where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty”). The hymn is described as a plea for renewal and divine intervention, transcending denominational boundaries.

• **Special Music:** Nathan Coleman performed a song with the central message, “How Could You Say No?” He prefaced the song by quoting Matthew 11:28-29, inviting the weary and burdened to find rest in Jesus.

Church Announcements and Activities

Activity	Date / Time	Details	Contact Person
Fundamentals of Faith Class	After AM message	Educational class on core beliefs.	N/A
Outreach Team	Friday at 9 AM	Meet at the church for outreach activities.	N/A
New Life Women’s Fellowship	The 25 th	To be held at Rene’s house; sign-up in the foyer.	N/A
October Festival Helpers	October 29 th	Volunteers needed to assist with the festival.	Renee
OCC Boxes Collection	Deadline: Nov 9 th	Congregants are asked to keep collecting and bringing in boxes.	N/A
Team Trivia Night	N/A	Held at First Baptist.	Pam Martens

Prayer Requests and Praises

- **Prayer for Steve Adams’ Wife, Eva:** For comfort as she continues to grieve the death of Helen.
- **Prayer for Steve Adams (Prayer Requester):** For protection and wisdom in his new job at Pierce Sunsites Fire and Medical, which begins the next day.

- **Prayer for the President:** Due to the discovery of a "hunting nest" near where Air Force One was located.
- **Praise from Kim:** For her sister Mickey being cancer-free after chemotherapy; for her husband's potential release from the hospital; and for the love shown by the church.
- **Prayer for Valinda:** She was at the ER for dehydration, low potassium, and a possible bug.
- **Prayer for Bill Goldsmith:** Experiencing "terrible nose bleeds."

III. Core Sermon Analysis: The Beatitude of Persecution

The sermon provided a detailed exegesis of Matthew 5:10-12, arguing that persecution is a guaranteed consequence of living a "beatitude style of life."

The Three Forms of Persecution

The speaker identifies three ways believers will be wronged by the world:

1. **To Be Persecuted:** The Greek term originally meant "to pursue or drive or chase someone away." In this context, it signifies harassment and evil treatment. This leads to believers being ostracized and unable to "co-mingle with the world" unless they are actively witnessing.
2. **To Be Reviled:** The Greek *onei* literally means "to cast in one's teeth" or "throw something in somebody's face." This is described as abuse that is "vile, vicious, and mocking." The mocking of Jesus on the cross (Matthew 27:44) is cited as an example.
3. **To Be Falsely Accused:** The speaker identifies this as the most difficult form of persecution to endure. It involves having lies and false things said about you that require a defense. A historical smear campaign against Jesus, alleging he was the illegitimate son of a Roman soldier, was used as an example.

Theological Framework for Persecution

The Reason: Hatred of Christ's Standard

The sermon stresses that persecution is not personal. The world does not hate the believer; it hates Christ and the standard of righteousness He represents.

- **Verse 10:** Persecution comes "for **righteousness** sake."
- **Verse 11:** It comes "for **my** sake."

The world had grown comfortable in its sinfulness until Jesus, the "perfect man," appeared. His perfection served as a rebuke, destroying the world's self-confidence. The world's response was to eliminate the standard by killing him. Believers, by allowing Christ to live through them,

reintroduce that unattainable standard, which offends the world and provokes a desire to remove it.

The Response: An Attitude of Willingness

The sermon's central point is that the believer's posture toward persecution should be one of willing acceptance.

- **Greek Analysis:** The use of the passive participle in the Greek text is interpreted to indicate a "permissive" willingness. The perfect tense suggests this should be a "constant attitude." The verse is translated as, "Blessed are those who allow themselves to be persecuted."
- **A Stumbling Block:** The speaker acknowledges this is a difficult concept and admits his own struggle, citing a personal desire "to be popular" and "for people to like me." He firmly rejects this impulse, stating, "God don't need no sneaky preachers."

The Price and the Reward

- **The Price of Discipleship:** Following Jesus requires a willingness to "take up that cross," a symbol of death. The sermon lists the martyrdoms of apostles like Andrew (crucified with cords for a slower death), Peter (crucified upside down), James, Matthew, and others as historical evidence of this price.
- **The Inviolable Reward:** The promise for those who endure persecution is "the kingdom of heaven" (v. 10). The sermon concludes this point by stating that while the world can take everything a person has, "they'll never be able to take your future away from you."

IV. Key Quotes and Anecdotes

The sermon was punctuated by memorable statements and personal stories to illustrate its points.

Notable Quotes

- **On Human Depravity (quoting Arthur Pink):** "It is strong proof of human depravity that men's curses and Christ blessings should meet on the same person."
- **On Worldly Opposition:** "The people that God blesses... the world curses. And that just shows how far they are from God."
- **On Confrontational Witnessing:** "I can justify myself by saying 'Well if I'm popular with them today and they like me enough then I can speak the gospel into their life tomorrow.' Beloved let me tell you something okay god don't need no sneaky preachers and God don't need no sneaky prophets and he doesn't need sneaky witnesses or evangelist. What God needs are those who are willing to confront."

Illustrative Anecdotes

- **Charlie Kirk:** Mentioned as a contemporary example of someone who endures daily death threats because he "confronted the evil of the world with love" for righteousness' sake.
- **Fishing Trip:** The speaker shared a personal story about a recent fishing trip, which he described as a "retreat" or "recharging." He humorously referred to it as a "full combat sport" after sustaining minor injuries and refuted "disparaging remarks" made about his fishing abilities in his absence by showing a picture of one of the 17 fish he caught.
- **Preaching on the Golf Course:** The speaker recounted how identifying himself as a "preacher teacher" on the golf course sometimes makes other players "itchy" and uncomfortable, to the point that some have quit playing with him.

V. Concluding Themes and Future Topics

The service concluded with a call to action and a look ahead to future sermon topics, framing current events within an eschatological context.

- **Call to Boldness:** The final prayer expressed a hope that the congregation would guard against lowering its standards, be "bold and resolute," and live in a way that discomforts those around them, leading them to seek peace with God. It included a strong warning against becoming a "despicable lukewarm church that might cause Jesus Christ to spew us out of his mouth."
- **Future Eschatological Topics:** The speaker mentioned a recent peace treaty signed by the president, questioning if it could be the "peace treaty of the Antichrist." This served as a segue into announcing the topic for the evening service: an examination of the end times, focusing on **the collection of the nation Israel** (beginning in 1948) and the **second dispersion of the nation Israel** that will happen in the future.