

You're Blessed

When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

"You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

"You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

"You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

"You're blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

"You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

"You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.

"Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even!—for though they don't like it, I do! And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.

This passage is from what is commonly called the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus took those of his followers who were most committed to Him up on a high hill. His followers climbed with Him until they reached a quiet place. This is a metaphor, but the metaphor is essential to understand what Jesus taught them. Following Jesus, walking close to Him, being committed to Him is the first step in being Blessed.

What is the mountain that Jesus is asking you to climb today?

Are you committed enough to Jesus to go with him up the mountain?

So often we want to see God's Blessing now. We don't want to wait, we don't want to put in the difficult work of climbing the mountain. But as we saw in our last study, it is the commitment to do the hard things, to carry them through until the job is done and the mountain is conquered that brings Blessing. It is losing what is most dear to you, being at the end of your rope with nowhere to turn, caring for others no matter what the circumstances and even to your own detriment, those are just some of the hard commitments that Jesus asks us to make.

Are you ready to be His committed follower?

God, Creator and Sustainer of my being, grant me the strength to climb the mountain in front of me, so I can follow the path of Jesus to find the riches of Your Kingdom. Amen.