



#Blessed

Summary and Goal

Jesus challenged conventional thinking, in His time and ours, about what it means to be “blessed.” In the Beatitudes, Jesus explained that His followers are blessed despite their present reality because of the sure future hope that is stored up for them in Christ.

Main Passages

Matthew 5:1-12

Session Outline

1. Be Aware (Matthew 5:1-12)
2. Be Conformed (Matthew 5:1-12)
3. Be Encouraged (Matthew 5:1-12)

Theological Theme

The Beatitudes hinge upon the theological concepts of justification, sanctification, and perseverance. Only those who have been justified can be in a state of blessedness. Those who are justified are sanctified, which is why they are humble, repentant, meek, righteous, merciful, and pure.

Christ Connection

These theological concepts are founded and rooted in Jesus’ finished work on the cross. No justification, sanctification, or perseverance is possible without our Savior and Mediator, Jesus Christ.

Missional Application

The most loving, kind, and compassionate actions a Christian can show toward others are praying that God would open their hearts to the gospel and, then, opening our mouths to humbly explain the gospel message. A person cannot be #blessed unless he or she is in Christ.

Historical Context of Matthew

Purpose

Matthew probably wrote his Gospel in order to preserve written eyewitness testimony about the ministry of Jesus. Matthew's Gospel emphasizes certain theological truths. First, Jesus is the Messiah, the long-awaited King of God's people. Second, Jesus is the new Abraham, the founder of a new spiritual Israel consisting of all people who choose to follow him. This new Israel will consist of both Jews and Gentiles. Third, Jesus is the new Moses, the deliverer and instructor of God's people. Fourth, Jesus is the Immanuel, the virgin-born Son of God who fulfills the promises of the OT.

Author

The author did not identify himself in the text. However, the title that ascribes this Gospel to Matthew appears in the earliest manuscripts and is possibly original. Titles became necessary to distinguish one Gospel from another when the four Gospels began to circulate as a single collection. Many early church fathers (Papias, Irenaeus, Pantaeus, and Origen) acknowledged Matthew as the author. Papias also contended that Matthew first wrote in Hebrew, implying that this Gospel was later translated into Greek.

Setting

Determining the date of composition of Matthew's Gospel depends largely on the relationship of the Gospels to one another. Most scholars believe that Matthew utilized Mark's Gospel in writing his own gospel. If this is correct, Matthew's Gospel must postdate Mark's. However, the date of Mark's Gospel is also shrouded in mystery. Irenaeus (ca AD 180) seems to claim that Mark wrote his Gospel after Peter's death in the mid-60s. However, Clement of Alexandria, who wrote only twenty years after Irenaeus, claimed that Mark wrote his Gospel while Peter was still alive. Given the ambiguity of the historical evidence, a decision must be based on other factors.

Special Features

This Gospel was written from a strong Jewish perspective to show that Jesus is the Messiah promised in the Old Testament.



Session Plan

#Blessed

Introduction

- ❓ What comes to mind when you hear the word blessed?
- ❓ How has your definition of what it means to be blessed been shaped by the Bible?

The Beatitudes introduce Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is the longest continual teaching recorded in the Gospels. The Beatitudes are short statements that summarize the essence of the Sermon on the Mount: those who are in Christ are characterized by a state of blessedness in this fallen world, humble submission to God's Word, and confident hope of eternal life with God.

1. Be Aware (Matthew 5:1-12)

Each Beatitude begins with the word "blessed." Jesus began with this word in every formulation of His introductory statement because it was His main point. As a side note, when we see a word repeated in a single Scripture passage, then we should take note. In this instance the word "blessed" is repeated nine times.

- ❓ How do Jesus' words in the Beatitudes contrast with modern conceptions of blessing? Why is it better to be blessed in the way Jesus said, even if it's not easier?
- ❓ Application: Has your understanding of blessing been wrong? Why or why not? How does the biblical view of blessing change the way you think about your circumstances?

2. Be Conformed (Matthew 5:1-12)

Christians are continually and personally sanctified by the same power of the Spirit dwelling in them and the application of God's Word to their lives. Christians are freed from slavery to sin, and the various desires that are rooted in their old nature are more and more weakened as they grow in

faith and grace. Further, their desire to be obedient to God's Word increases more and more. That's why Jesus could address Christians by using the characteristics that true Christians exhibit. Their increasing holiness is sure.

- ❓ What in the Beatitudes gives evidence that Jesus was speaking specifically of His followers and not of all people in general?
- ❓ Why is it important to make the distinction between Christians doing good works to earn their salvation compared with living in accordance with their true identity in Christ?
- ❓ What is sanctification? How is sanctification certain for all who trust in Jesus?
- ❓ Application: In what specific areas is the Lord sanctifying you? Where is He currently convicting you of need for change?

3. Be Encouraged (Matthew 5:1-12)

The Christian's future hope that is secured by Jesus' work on the cross is a great encouragement to Christians to stay faithful to God's Word. In fact, God's promises to His beloved are one of the mechanisms that God uses to keep His children from falling away.

- ❓ What promises did Jesus make to Christians in the Beatitudes?
- ❓ What was Jesus' purpose for expressing these great promises to Christians?
- ❓ Application: In what areas of your life do you need encouragement? If you are a Christian, how does the assurance of eternal life in heaven with your good Father help you? If you are not a Christian, how are you drawn to the hope of these promises?

Conclusion

- ❓ How does your understanding of blessing need to change based on today's study?
- ❓ In what ways is the Spirit of God conforming you to the image of Christ?
- ❓ Do promises of heaven encourage you? Why or why not? How can you let those precious promises of God have more influence over the way you see the world?



Expanded Session Content



#Blessed

Introduction

Superstars want the ball when the clock is running out and someone has to score. When NBA players huddle up to receive instructions from the coach, everyone knows that the ball is going to James Harden, LeBron James, or Kawhi Leonard. The pressure is there, the work is near impossible, and the hopes of tens of thousands of people rests on their shoulders. Yet, they want the ball. They are relaxed, focused, and confident. Why? Because they believe in their ability, lean on their training, and have confidence in their skill. These players are calm under fire because they believe that the thing in which they have confidence (themselves) is greater than the challenge that lies ahead.

Followers of Christ have even greater confidence, but it isn't because they are superstars and can rely on anything within themselves. Christians have peace, joy, and hope in the midst of the fiercest storms of life because they are moored to an unshakable anchor. Jesus Christ lived a perfect life in their place and then died a sinner's death in their place. Now, He intercedes for Christians before God the Father. Those who are in Christ rest in the grace, mercy, power, and promises of their Savior. They know that He will not fail or falter.

Jesus' words in Matthew 5:1-12 were meant to remind Christians that their hope isn't in themselves but in what their great God has done and will do.

-  What comes to mind when you hear the word blessed?
-  How has your definition of what it means to be blessed been shaped by the Bible?

Session Summary

The Beatitudes introduce Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The Sermon on the Mount is the longest continual teaching recorded in the Gospels. The Beatitudes are short statements that summarize the essence of the Sermon on the Mount: those who are in Christ are characterized by a state of blessedness in this fallen world, humble submission to God's Word, and confident hope of eternal life with God.

In the Beatitudes (and the Sermon on the Mount), Jesus directly addressed His disciples. He described what a life devoted to Him looks like (humble, meek, peaceable, pure, etc.). Yet, He did not say that people should make themselves become humble, meek, pure, and so on. Nor did He say that those things qualify people for eternal life. Rather, Jesus said that those who exhibit those qualities (Christians) will receive eternal life, not as a result of exhibiting those qualities, but because of their position in Christ. This isn't a cause and effect relationship; it is simply a correlation. If we don't understand this, then we will badly misunderstand and misapply what Jesus said in the Beatitudes.

1. Be Aware (Matthew 5:1-12)

Each Beatitude begins with the word “blessed.” Jesus began with this word in every formulation of His introductory statement because it was His main point. As a side note, when we see a word repeated in a single Scripture passage, then we should take note. In this instance the word “blessed” is repeated nine times.

Unfortunately, the word blessed has been redefined and watered-down by current usage to such a degree that we may not understand what Jesus meant here. For Jesus, blessed referred to a state of wellbeing in relation to God, which is secure now and forever. On the other hand, current usage of the word generally refers to material or circumstantial prosperity. The oft-trending #blessed is very rarely applied to statements of the assurance of eternal life with God in heaven or a deep abiding peace in the midst of unbearable pain or unjust persecution.

If we searched for social media posts tagged with #blessed, then we would more likely find references to job promotions, the purchase of a new car, a bathroom remodel, or someone's child receiving accolades for sports or grades. The term “blessed” has been gutted of its power and has become a bumper sticker to slap on to anything that makes us proud or happy in the moment.




How do Jesus' words in the Beatitudes contrast with modern conceptions of blessing? Why is it better to be blessed in the way Jesus said, even if it's not easier?

A straightforward reading of the Beatitudes leaves Christians with more assurance of hardship, struggle, and loss than it does material blessing here on earth. Jesus said that Christians are blessed when they are persecuted, mourn for sin, and hunger and thirst for righteousness. He said, “your reward is great in heaven.” People who say they are Christians and think they will gain materially because of their allegiance to Christ have received a false gospel and need correction in their understanding of the nature of Christ's work.

The True Gospel


One pitfall we must be careful not to tumble into while reading the Sermon on the Mount is to see Jesus' words from a “gospel of works” framework. We tend to understand the world in terms of merit, self-reliance, and achievement. The gospel of works says that if I will discipline myself and do what I ought to do, then all will go well with me, God will approve of me, and I will go to heaven one day. But, that point-of-view is a false view, and isn't the gospel of Jesus (though it very much is the message of every other religious system in the world).

True Christians cling to and rejoice in their blessed state of being reconciled to God. Those who have tasted the goodness of the biblical gospel wouldn't trade their blessed state with all the material blessing on earth. A Christian's treasure in heaven isn't riches or fame, it is God Himself who is Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, and Provider. The promise of this blessing isn't tied to their ability to be worthy of it. Christians are blessed because of their position before God that is secured through Jesus' good work on the cross. Christians depend completely on Jesus to be and remain blessed. Christians will persevere in their state of blessedness before God the Father because the gift of salvation that God has given them in Jesus is irrevocable.

 Application: Has your understanding of blessing been wrong? Why or why not? How does the biblical view of blessing change the way you think about your circumstances?

2. Be Conformed (Matthew 5:1-12)

Just before Jesus began the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew gave an account of Jesus' calling of the disciples (4:18-22). Then, to introduce the Sermon, Matthew described it this way, "He went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, 'Blessed . . .'" Jesus addressed all who would listen, but He was directly speaking to His disciples and, by extension, Christians today.

 What in the Beatitudes gives evidence that Jesus was speaking specifically of His followers and not of all people in general?

We know Jesus was talking about those who have been born again for three reasons. First, the context of the passage tells us that Jesus was speaking directly to His disciples. It's true that they weren't called Christians yet and Jesus had not yet completed His mission to save sinners through His substitutionary sacrifice. However, His disciples were those who were being drawn by God to the Son (John 6:44). These people were those who would believe on Christ's gospel first. Second, we know Jesus was talking about Christians because the descriptions He used are consistent with what a Christian life looks like. Christians are merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, and so on. Finally, we know Jesus was talking about Christians because He described a future hope that is only promised to Christians throughout the rest of the New Testament. Only Christians inherit the kingdom of Heaven. If we take all the Beatitudes together, then we get a description of what Christians have to look forward to.



Why is it important to make the distinction between Christians doing good works to earn their salvation compared with living in accordance with their true identity in Christ?

Many read the words “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” and think, “OK, well, if I ever want to see God, then I better keep my heart pure.” Or they may read, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called Sons of God” and think, “Well, if I want to be a child of God, then I should try to make peace.” This interpretation of the Beatitudes is a fruit of the influence of the world and of Satan. It may be helpful to read through the Beatitudes and replace all the descriptions with the word “Christian” to help you get the picture.

Another way to think of it is like this: A man who has a son might say, “I love that little blue-eyed boy. He will inherit my estate one day.” Now, we would never say that the boy will inherit the estate on account of his blue eyes. His inheritance is secured because of his relationship to his father. He has blue eyes because he is his father’s son (the father also has blue eyes), but those blue eyes are the result of his being a son not the cause of it.


People are humble, meek, merciful, pure, peaceable, and so on because they are Christians, not the other way around. A person doesn’t make him/herself a Christian by being those things. They become those things as a result of being saved by God the Father through Jesus Christ. This is known as sanctification.



What is sanctification? How is sanctification certain for all who trust in Jesus?


Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus. It commences after a person is born again, not before. Sanctification is progressive and doesn’t happen all at once. Also, like justification, sanctification is the work of God. Those who are united to Christ and saved have a new heart and a new spirit created in them through the power of Christ’s death and resurrection (Rom. 6:5-6).

Christians are continually and personally sanctified by the same power of the Spirit dwelling in them and the application of God’s Word to their lives. Christians are freed from slavery to sin, and the various desires that are rooted in their old nature are more and more weakened as they grow in faith and grace. Further, their desire to be obedient to God’s Word increases more and more. That’s why Jesus could address Christians by using the characteristics that true Christians exhibit. Their increasing holiness is sure.

-  Application: In what specific areas is the Lord sanctifying you? Where is He currently convicting you of need for change?

3. Be Encouraged (Matthew 5:1-12)


Jesus first noted what is experienced (blessed state). Then He described by whom it would be experienced (followers of Jesus). Finally, He explained why these people are blessed.

-  What promises did Jesus make to Christians in the Beatitudes?


The promises that Jesus gave to those found in Him are astounding:

- for the kingdom of heaven is theirs
- for they will be comforted
- for they will inherit the earth
- for they will be filled
- for they will be shown mercy; for they will see God
- for they will be called sons of God
- for the kingdom of heaven is theirs

We can see that Jesus must have been talking to those who have been born again based on the testimony of the rest of the New Testament. Only those who are saved can hope for those promises. The standard measure for interpreting Scripture is the Scripture itself. When there is a question concerning the full and right meaning of any part of Scripture it must be understood in the light of related passages.

-  What was Jesus' purpose for expressing these great promises to Christians?

The Christian's future hope that is secured by Jesus' work on the cross is a great encouragement to Christians to stay faithful to God's Word. In fact, God's promises to His beloved are one of the mechanisms that God uses to keep His children from falling away.

-  Application: In what areas of your life do you need encouragement? If you are a Christian, how does the assurance of eternal life in heaven with your good Father help you? If you are not a Christian, how are you drawn to the hope of these promises?

Conclusion

The Sermon on the Mount is unique because it is such a long, uninterrupted teaching of Jesus. While He was probably speaking to a large crowd, the fact that He called His disciples to gather around as He began teaching indicates that this message was especially directed to those whom the Father was drawing to Jesus.

One way to think about the Beatitudes is to notice that Jesus gave the same general message worded nine different ways. He essentially said that Christians are blessed because of the great and precious promises that have been secured for them. These were statements to help Christians remain faithful and joyful as they walk in obedience and submission to their Lord.

- ❓ How does your understanding of blessing need to change based on today's study?
- ❓ In what ways is the Spirit of God conforming you to the image of Christ?
- ❓ Do promises of heaven encourage you? Why or why not? How can you let those precious promises of God have more influence over the way you see the world?

Prayer of Response

Take time to pray with thanksgiving and praise. Give thanks to God for drawing people to Jesus and exchanging their hearts of stone with new hearts of flesh (Eze. 36). Thank God for the blessed state in which His people live no matter what is happening in life, good or bad. Ask God to continue the good work that He started in you by continuing to conform you to the image of Jesus Christ. Finally, praise God for the good future that He has promised to those who trust in Him, and ask Him to continually remind you of this as you seek His face.

Additional Resources

- *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* by Martyn Lloyd-Jones
- *Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and His Confrontation with the World* by D.A. Carson
- *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in Matthew* by David Platt

For Next Week

Session Title

- Raise the Bar

Main Passages

- Matthew 5:13-37

Session Outline

1. Where There's Fire, There's Smoke (Matthew 5:13-16)
2. God's Word Shows the Way (Matthew 5:17-20)
3. Not Just Hands, but Heart (Matthew 5:21-37)

Memorize

¹¹ You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me. ¹² Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

- Matthew 5:1-12

Daily Readings

- Monday - 1 Peter 1:14-16
- Tuesday - 2 Corinthians 7:1
- Wednesday - Hebrews 12:14
- Thursday - 1 John 3:6-10
- Friday - 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- Saturday - Romans 12:1

Extended Commentary

Matthew 5:1-12

5:1-2 Jesus ascended a mountain when he saw the crowds because he deemed the mountainside to be a better setting for teaching a large group. As the new Moses, his delivery of God's message from a mountaintop provides yet another parallel with the ancient Moses. The Greek words translated he went up on the mountain are used three times in the Greek OT (Ex 19:3; 24:18; 34:42), and all three fall in the section describing Moses's ascent of Mount Sinai. This fits with Matthew's repeated theme of drawing out parallels between Moses and Jesus. For instance, Jesus's birth paralleled several events surrounding Moses's birth. Herod attempted to kill the infant Christ by ordering the slaughter of Bethlehem's boys (Mt 2:16-18) much as Pharaoh ordered the execution of newborn male Israelites (Ex 1:15-18,22). Furthermore, the angel's pronouncement that danger had passed ("those who intended to kill the child are dead," Mt 2:20) is a clear echo of Ex 4:19, "All the men who wanted to kill you are dead."

5:3 Since Matthew introduces the Sermon on the Mount by highlighting the connection between Jesus and Moses, the Beatitudes (Mt 5:3-12) should probably be read against the backdrop of Moses's teachings. The only time the Septuagint (ancient Greek translation of the OT) used the adjective "Blessed" (Gk makarios) to translate Moses's words was in his blessing on Israel (Dt 33:29): "How happy [or "blessed"] you are, Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is the shield that protects you, the sword you boast in. Your enemies will cringe before you, and you will tread on their backs." Israel's blessing had both a historical and future focus. "Saved by the LORD" referred to Israel's exodus from Egypt. The remainder of the blessing assured the Israelites of success in their conquest of the promised land. Against this backdrop, the blessings of the new Moses identify Jesus's disciples as the new Israel who will enjoy a new exodus and conquest. The new Moses is a spiritual deliverer rather than a political one, and his promises must be understood in that light. In the Beatitudes, the new Moses pronounces spiritual salvation (exodus from slavery to sin) and promises spiritual victory (conquest and inheritance of a new promised land) to the new Israel. This background is confirmed by the allusion to Israel's exodus and conquest in the promise that the meek will "inherit the earth" (5:5).

In the OT, the poor were those who cried out for God's help, depended entirely on him for their needs, had a humble and contrite spirit, experienced his deliverance, and enjoyed his undeserved favor (Ps 86:1-5). In light of this background, Jesus was describing his disciples as unworthy sinners who depend on God's grace for salvation. Although the promises in Mt 5:4-9 are expressed in the future tense, the affirmation the kingdom of heaven is theirs is in the present tense (5:3,10). This suggests that the kingdom had already arrived through the coming of Jesus but that the fulfillment of many kingdom promises will occur only in the future. This future fulfillment awaits Christ's second coming. The statement "the kingdom of heaven is theirs" appears at the beginning and end of the main body of the Beatitudes (5:3,10). This bracketing

device suggests that the Beatitudes constitute promises only to those who belong to the kingdom. Isaiah 61:1 promised that Messiah would bring good news to the poor. This beatitude serves as a fulfillment of that prophecy (Lk 4:16-21).

5:4 This beatitude is also dependent on Is 61: “He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted . . . to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion; to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, festive oil instead of mourning, and splendid clothes instead of despair” (v. v. 1-3). The context of Is 61 portrays mourning as expressive of Israel’s sorrow over the exile that their sins had caused. In this light, Mt 5:4 expresses the grief of those suffering the consequences of sin. Theirs is an attitude of repentance.

5:5 Like the preceding Beatitudes, this one parallels Is 61. Isaiah 61:7 (LXX) uses the words “they will inherit the earth,” an exact parallel to Mt 5:5b. The first three Beatitudes thus confirm Jesus’s identity as the Servant of Is 61. This identification is important for understanding the sacrificial nature of Jesus’s death since Is 52:14-53:12 describes the Servant as suffering the punishment that sinners deserved (see Mt 8:17 and 12:17-21 which appeal to Is 53:4 and 42:1-4). This beatitude also echoes Ps 37:11 in which the humble are those who trust God and surrender to his authority even when they cannot make sense of their circumstances. Inherit the earth (land) in the OT refers to inheriting the promised land of Canaan. Thus most of Jesus’s hearers recognized that his disciples were a new Israel that would inherit the land promised to Abraham. In the context of the Sermon on the Mount and the Gospel of Matthew as a whole, “inheriting the earth” involves more than the promise of living in Palestine. It refers to living in a recreated earth over which Christ rules eternally. Matthew 19:28 anticipates the renewal of earth and assures Jesus’s disciples that they will enjoy great reward in the eternal kingdom.

5:6 Hunger and thirst are metaphors for a disciple’s fervent desire for righteousness. The words they will be filled are in the passive voice, indicating that righteousness is not something disciples can achieve by their own efforts. The verb here, like those in the promises of vv. 4,6-7 (and possibly v. 9), is a “divine passive” that describes an act of God. He alone imparts the righteousness for which disciples hunger and thirst. This is crucial to understanding the theology of the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus required his disciples to keep the least of the commandments (v. 19), surpass the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees (v. 20), and to “be perfect . . . as your heavenly Father is perfect” (v. 48). Such demands can be twisted into a false theology in which righteousness is achieved by works, but the righteousness Jesus demands of us is actually a divine gift given to his followers.

5:7 The merciful are those who relate to others with a forgiving and compassionate spirit (6:2-4; 18:21-35). God will show mercy to the merciful.

5:8 The words pure in heart refer to someone who is authentically righteous in the inner person. Righteousness can be faked, as was the case with the Pharisees (23:25-28). Jesus said true purity is attained when God grants it to the person who hungers and thirsts for it. Complete fulfillment of this divine promise will occur at Jesus’s return, but the identification of his disciples as those who are pure shows that dramatic transformation occurs even in this lifetime. The promise that Jesus’s disciples will see God looks forward to the time when they will literally behold God in all

his glory. The words are not to be interpreted figuratively as if they refer merely to special insight into God's nature or to a visionary experience. The new Moses promises his followers access to God that not even the ancient Moses was allowed to experience (Ex 33:12-23).

5:9 The ministry of peacemaking involves resolving conflict by making prompt apologies and acts of restitution, refusing to seek revenge, and humbly serving and loving one's enemies (vv. 21-26, 38-41, 43-48). The promise that peacemakers . . . will be called sons of God probably means that Jesus's authentic disciples emulate God by undertaking the ministry of reconciliation. Thus at the final judgment they shall be accepted as the sons (and daughters) of God.

5:10 The purest form of righteousness is pursued by disciples who know that their good deeds will demand great sacrifice and will result in pain rather than immediate reward. This is the epitome of the kingdom righteousness demanded by the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus pronounced that the kingdom of heaven belongs to those who suffer for righteousness. In the Greek text, theirs is shifted from its normal position at the end of the clause to the beginning instead. This gives the pronoun a special emphasis indicating that the kingdom belongs to righteous sufferers and to them alone. Those who always endeavor to evade persecution are not true disciples and will not have a share in the kingdom because true disciples follow Jesus even at the cost of their lives (16:24-27). The kingdom of heaven is the reign of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Righteous sufferers are subjects of God's rule through their submission to Jesus's authority. Jesus inaugurated this kingdom during his ministry, but it will be consummated in the end time.

5:11-12 Jesus's words show that persecution is typically either verbal or violent. Verbal forms include insult and slander. The word persecute includes acts of physical violence like the slap of Mt 5:39. Jesus promised that the cost of discipleship will be offset by the enormity of the reward the disciple enjoys in heaven. Jewish leaders rejected and vehemently persecuted the OT prophets, and Jesus repeatedly denounced this persecution (21:34-36; 23:29-37). By treating Jesus's followers in the same way they had treated the prophets, Jewish persecutors unwittingly bestowed on them a prophet's honor.¹

References

1. *CSB Study Bible: Christian Standard Bible*. Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017.

Author Bio

Martyn Lloyd-Jones (Studies in the Sermon on the Mount)

Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899–1981), minister of Westminster Chapel in London for thirty years, was one of the foremost preachers of his day. His many books have brought profound spiritual encouragement to millions around the world.

D.A. Carson (Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and His Confrontation with the World)

D. A. Carson (PhD, University of Cambridge) is research professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and is the author or editor of more than fifty books, including *The God Who Is There* and *How Long, O Lord?* He is one of the founders of The Gospel Coalition and an active guest lecturer in academic and church settings around the world.

David Platt (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in Matthew)

David Platt is the author of three New York Times bestsellers, including *Radical*. He is lead pastor at McLean Bible Church in metro Washington, D.C., the former president of the IMB (International Mission Board), and founder of Radical Inc., a global center for the unreached that serves churches in accomplishing the mission of Christ. Platt received his master of divinity (MDiv), master of theology (ThM), and doctor of philosophy (PhD) from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He lives in Virginia with his wife and their children.