

**To BE... or NOT...
Part 8**

*Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them. He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. **Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.** Matthew 5:1-12 (NIV)*

"When you are reviled and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers—wonderful! Be happy about it! Be very glad! for a tremendous reward awaits you up in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted too." Matthew 5:11-12 (TLB)

I am sending you like lambs into a pack of wolves. So be as wise as snakes and as innocent as doves. Matthew 10:16 (CEV)

Everyone will hate you because of me. But if you remain faithful until the end, you will be saved. Matthew 10:22 (CEV)

*Disciples are not better than their teacher, and slaves are not better than their master. It is enough for disciples to be like their teacher and for slaves to be like their master. **If people call the head of the family Satan, what will they say about the rest of the family?** Matthew 10:24-25 (CEV)*

Don't be afraid of anyone! Everything that is hidden will be found out, and every secret will be known. Matthew 10:26 (CEV)

Whatever I say to you in the dark, you must tell in the light. And you must announce from the housetops whatever I have whispered to you. Matthew 10:27 (CEV)

*Don't be afraid of people. They can kill you, but they cannot harm your soul. Instead, you should fear God who can destroy both your body and your soul in hell. Aren't two sparrows sold for only a penny? But your Father knows when any one of them falls to the ground. Even the hairs on your head are counted. **So don't be afraid!** You are worth much more than many sparrows. If you tell others*

that you belong to me, I will tell my Father in heaven that you are my followers. But if you reject me, I will tell my Father in heaven that you don't belong to me. Matthew 10:28-33(CEV)

*Don't think that I came to bring peace to the earth! **I came to bring trouble, not peace.** Matthew 10:34(CEV)*

***And unless you are willing to take up your cross and come with me, you are not fit to be my disciples.** Matthew 10:38 (CEV)*

***If you try to save your life, you will lose it. But if you give it up for me, you will surely find it.** Matthew 10:39 (CEV)*

*Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me. And anyone who welcomes me also welcomes the one who sent me. Anyone who welcomes a prophet, just because that person is a prophet, will be given the same reward as a prophet. Anyone who welcomes a good person, just because that person is good, will be given the same reward as a good person. **And anyone who gives one of my most humble followers a cup of cool water, just because that person is my follower, will surely be rewarded.** Matthew 10:40-42 (CEV)*

*Just think how much worse the punishment will be for those who have trampled on the Son of God, and have treated the blood of the covenant, which made us holy, as if it were common and unholy, and have insulted and disdained the Holy Spirit who brings God's mercy to us. For we know the one who said, **"I will take revenge. I will pay them back."** He also said, "The Lord will judge his own people." It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Think back on those early days when you first learned about Christ. **Remember how you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering. Sometimes you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten, and sometimes you helped others who were suffering the same things. You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever. So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you!** Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised. Hebrews 10:29-36 (NLT)*

***And now I am bound by the Spirit to go to Jerusalem. I don't know what awaits me, except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead. But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.** Acts 20:22-24 (NLT)*

For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.

Romans 8:16-18 (NLT)

Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him.

Philippians 1:28-29 (NLT)

I solemnly urge you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who will someday judge the living and the dead when he comes to set up his Kingdom: Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you. As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.

2 Timothy 4:1-8 (NLT)