

The King's Purpose for You, Step Nine

Brandon Phillips / General

The King and His Glory / Matthew 5

In the His introduction to His Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7), the King's Manifesto for His Kingdom, King Jesus reveals nine steps to your purpose and ultimate blessing in this life and beyond.

Pre-sermon Comments

[Isaiah 53:3](#) (LSB) ³ He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

[Hebrews 4:15-16](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things like we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

[Hebrews 12:2](#) (LSB) ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

[Ephesians 1:7-10](#) (LSB) ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our transgressions, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and insight, ⁹ making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Him ¹⁰ for an administration of the fullness of the times, *that is*, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth in Him.

Proposition and Outline

Step One: Possess True Poverty ([Matt 5:3](#)) [Review]

Step Two: Persevere in Learning What Offends God ([Matt 5:4](#)) [Review]

Step Three: Pursue Lowliness ([Matt 5:5](#)) [Review]

Step Four: Pursue Righteousness ([Matt 5:6](#)) [Review]

Step Five: Prefer Mercy ([Matt 5:7](#)) [Review]

Step Six: Pursue Inward Purity ([Matt 5:8](#)) [Review]

Step Seven: Pursue Peace (Be a Peacemaker) ([Matt 5:9](#)) [Review]

Step Eight and Eight A: Patiently Endure Persecution, Slander, and Libel for Righteousness' Sake ([Matt 5:10](#))

Introduction

The cruelties used in this persecution were such that many of the spectators shuddered with horror at the sight, and were astonished at the intrepidity of the sufferers. Some of the martyrs were obliged to pass, with their already wounded feet, over thorns, nails, sharp shells, etc. upon their points, others were scourged until their sinews and veins lay bare, and after suffering the most excruciating tortures that could be devised, they were destroyed by the most terrible deaths. ~ John Fox

Germanicus, a young man, but a true Christian, being delivered to the wild beasts on account of his faith, behaved with such astonishing courage that several pagans became converts to a faith which inspired such fortitude. ~ John Foxe

- Polycarp's friends "collected his bones and as much of his remains as possible, and caused them to be decently interred." ~ John Foxe

Januarius, the eldest, was scourged, and pressed to death with weights ~ John Foxe

Felix and Philip, the two next had their brains dashed out with clubs ~ John Foxe

Silvanus, the fourth was murdered by being thrown from a precipice; and the three younger sons, Alexander, Vitalis, and Martial, were beheaded. The mother was beheaded with the same sword as the three latter. ~ John Foxe

The Word of God never yet prospered in the world without opposition. ~ **Iain Murray**

Sermon Text

[Matthew 5:1-12](#) (LSB) ¹ Now when Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. ² And He opened His mouth and *began to* teach them, saying, ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the lowly, for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. ¹⁰ **Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** ¹¹ **“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.** ¹² **“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**

Review

The first four steps

[Ephesians 1:13-14](#) (LSB) ¹³ In Him, you also, after listening to the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, unto the redemption of *God’s own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

2 Corinthians 5:17 LSB

¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

Steps five through seven

[Matthew 5:6](#) (LSB) ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

[Matthew 5:7](#) (LSB) ⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

[Matthew 5:8](#) (LSB) ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

[Matthew 5:9](#) (LSB) ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

[John 15:18–20](#) (LSB) ¹⁸ “If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before *it hated* you. ¹⁹ “If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you. ²⁰ “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

Last Steps: Patiently Endure Persecution, Slander, and Libel for Righteousness’ Sake ([Matt 5:10-11](#))

Matthew 5:10 LSB

¹⁰ Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[2 Timothy 3:12](#) (LSB) ¹² Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Though they be never so meek, merciful, pure in heart, their piety will not shield them from sufferings. They must hang their harp on the willows and take the cross. The way to heaven is by way of thorns and blood.... Set it down

as a maxim, if you will follow Christ you must see the swords and staves. ~
Thomas Watson

What is persecution?

The Definition of Persecution

The genuine Christian says - "I will take up my cross and follow Christ no matter the cost. I will do His work no matter the difficulty. I will proclaim His mighty name no matter the opposition."

The Nature of Persecution

Categories of Persecution

[Luke 11:47-51](#) (LSB) ⁴⁷ "Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets, but your fathers killed them. ⁴⁸ "So you are witnesses and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build *their tombs.* ⁴⁹ "For this reason also the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they will kill and *some* they will persecute, ⁵⁰ so that the blood of all the prophets, shed since the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.'

[Matthew 23:32-35](#) (LSB) ³² "Fill up, then, the measure *of the guilt* of your fathers. ³³ "You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell? ³⁴ "On account of this, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will flog in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ so that upon you may fall *the guilt* of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

Physical Persecution

Deprivation (Hunger and thirst)

[2 Corinthians 11:27](#) (LSB) ²⁷ I have been in labor and hardship, in many sleepless nights, in starvation and thirst, often hungry, in cold and without enough clothing.

[2 Timothy 4:13](#) (LSB) ¹³ When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the scrolls, especially the parchments.

Physical beatings and martyrdom

[Luke 11:51](#) (LSB) ⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the house of God; yes, I tell you, it shall be charged against this generation.’

[Genesis 4:8](#) (LSB) ⁸ Then Cain spoke to Abel his brother; and it happened when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

[Genesis 3:15](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

[1 John 3:12](#) (LSB) ¹² not as Cain, *who* was of the evil one and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his brother’s were righteous.

[2 Chronicles 24:20–21](#) (LSB) ²⁰ Now the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said to them, “Thus says God, ‘Why do you trespass against the commandments of Yahweh and do not succeed? Because you have forsaken Yahweh, He has also forsaken you.’” ²¹ So they conspired against him and at the command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of Yahweh.

[Acts 7:52–53](#) (LSB) ⁵² “And which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; ⁵³ you who received the Law as ordained by angels, and yet did not observe it.”

Acts 7:54 LSB

⁵⁴ Now when they heard this, they became furious in their hearts, and they *began gnashing their teeth at him.*

[Romans 1:32](#) (LSB) ³² and although they know the righteous requirement of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice *them*.

[Acts 7:57-60](#) (LSB) ⁵⁷ But crying out with a loud voice, they covered their ears and rushed at him with one accord. ⁵⁸ And when they had driven him out of the city, they *began stoning him*; and the witnesses laid aside their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he was calling out and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” ⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” And having said this, he fell asleep.

[Acts 14:19-20](#) (LSB) ¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and after winning over the crowds and stoning Paul, they were dragging him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. ²⁰ But while the disciples stood around him, he rose up and entered the city. The next day he went away with Barnabas to Derbe.

[Acts 16:22-24](#) (LSB)²² And the crowd joined together to attack them, and the chief magistrates, tearing their garments off of them, proceeded to order *them to be beaten with rods.* ²³ And when they had inflicted them with many wounds, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely, ²⁴ who, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

Subjection to imprisonment and other harsh conditions

[2 Timothy 4:6-7](#) (LSB) ⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.

[Matthew 14:3-12](#) (LSB) ³ For when Herod had John arrested, he bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. ⁴ For John had been saying to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.” ⁵ And although

Herod wanted to put him to death, he feared the crowd, because they were regarding John as a prophet. ⁶ But when Herod's birthday came, the daughter of Herodias danced before *them* and pleased Herod, ⁷ so *much* that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. ⁸ Now having been prompted by her mother, she said, "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist." ⁹ And although he was grieved, the king commanded *it* to be given because of his oaths, and because of his dinner guests. ¹⁰ And he sent and had John beheaded in the prison. And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. ¹¹ And his disciples came and took away the body and buried it; and they went and reported to Jesus. ¹²

Verbal Insults

[Matthew 5:11](#) (LSB) ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

[Mark 14:64-65](#) (LSB) ⁶⁴ "You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. ⁶⁵ And some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, "Prophecy!" And the officers received Him with slaps *in the face*.

[2 Chronicles 36:15-16](#) (LSB) ¹⁵ And Yahweh, the God of their fathers, sent *word* to them again and again by the hand of His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His habitation; ¹⁶ but they continually mocked the messengers of God, despised His words and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of Yahweh arose against His people, until there was no remedy.

[Acts 17:32-34](#) (LSB) ³² Now when they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some began to sneer, but others said, "We shall hear you again concerning this." ³³ In this way, Paul went out of their midst. ³⁴ But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

False Accusations

[Matthew 5:11](#) (LSB) ¹¹ “Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.

Slander

[1 Peter 3:13–18](#) (LSB) ¹³ And who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. AND DO NOT FEAR THEIR FEAR, AND DO NOT BE TROUBLED, ¹⁵ but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always *being* ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and fear, ¹⁶ having a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who disparage your good conduct in Christ will be put to shame. ¹⁷ For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer for doing good rather than for doing wrong. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, *the* righteous for *the* unrighteous, so that He might bring you to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

Libel

[Proverbs 18:17](#) (LSB) ¹⁷ The first to plead his case *seems* right, *Until* another comes and examines him.

Do I need to seek persecution?

[Matthew 5:10](#) (LSB) ¹⁰ Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

We are not to do anything that calls for persecution. But by just being like Christ persecution becomes inevitable. ~ Martyn Lloyd Jones

Can I avoid persecution?

God does not want His gospel altered under pretense of its being less demanding, less righteous, or less truthful than it is. He does not want witnesses who lead the unsaved into thinking that the Christ life costs nothing. A synthetic gospel, a man-made seed, produces no real fruit. ~ John MacArthur

[Matthew 5:12](#) (LSB) ¹² “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Persecutions are in a way seals of adoption to the children of God. ~ **John Calvin**

[Hebrews 11:32–38](#) (LSB) ³² And what more shall I say? For time will fail me if I recount Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, as well as David and Samuel and the prophets, ³³ who through faith conquered kingdoms, performed righteousness, obtained promises, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, were made strong from weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight. ³⁵ Women received *back* their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, so that they might obtain a better resurrection; ³⁶ and others experienced mockings and floggings, yes, also chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were tempted, they were put to death with the sword. They went about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, mistreated ³⁸ (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in desolate places and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

Conclusion

Avoiding persecution is dangerous to your soul!

[Luke 6:26](#) (LSB) ²⁶ Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers were doing the same things to the false prophets.

It is preferable to have the whole world against thee, than Jesus offended with thee. ~ **Thomas à Kempis**

If persecution should arise, you must be willing to part with all that you possess, with your liberty, with your life itself, for Christ, or you cannot be his disciple. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Your reward will be great!

[Matthew 5:12](#) (LSB) ¹² “Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

[James 1:12](#) (LSB) ¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him.

You can kill us, but you can't hurt us. ~ **Justin Martyr**

[Ephesians 3:20-21](#) (LSB) ²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or understand, according to the power that works within us, ²¹ to Him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

[Hebrews 12:1-4](#) (LSB) ¹ Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, laying aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary, fainting in heart. ⁴ You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin.

More Quotes on being persecuted for the sake of righteousness!

Persecution is simply the clash between two irreconcilable value-systems. ~ John Stott

Persecution is an attempt to produce worldly peace by force. ~ Brandon Phillips

The doctrine that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners is no more to be wounded by the sword of persecution than is the ocean to be scarred by the keels of navies. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The fire of God can't be damped out by the waters of man's persecution. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Persecution is one of the surest and most tangible evidences of salvation. Persecution is not incidental to faithful Christian living but is certain evidence of it. ~ John MacArthur

Persecution is like the goldsmith's hallmark on real silver and gold; it is one of the marks of a converted man. ~ **J. C. Ryle**

The weight of glory makes persecution light. ~ **Thomas Watson**

Persecution is the legacy bequeathed by Christ to his people. ~ **Thomas Watson**

The church of Christ has been founded by shedding its own blood, not that of others; by enduring outrage, not by inflicting it. Persecutions have made it grow; martyrdoms have crowned it. ~ **Jerome**

In the history of the church the most severe persecution has 4K!come from religionists. ~ **John Walvoord**

Again, in these times religion has become jolly good fun right here in this present world, and what's the hurry about heaven anyway? Christianity, contrary to what some had thought, is another and higher form of entertainment. Christ has done all the suffering. He has shed all the tears and carried all the crosses; we have but to enjoy the benefits of His heartbreak in the form of religious pleasures modeled after the world but carried on in the name of Jesus. History reveals that times of suffering for the Church have also been times of looking upward. Tribulation has always sobered God's people and encouraged them to look for and yearn after the return of their Lord. Our present preoccupation with this world may be a warning of bitter days to come. God will wean us from the earth some way—the easy way if possible, the hard way if necessary. It is up to us. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

Scars are the price which every believer pays for his loyalty to Christ. ~ **William Hendriksen**

Never did the church so much prosper and so truly thrive as when she was baptized in blood. The ship of the church never sails so gloriously along as

when the bloody spray of her martyrs falls on her deck. We must suffer and we must die, if we are ever to conquer this world for Christ. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

If we are serious about our Christian witness, the day may be near when we may be persecuted—even killed—for our faith. We should be stirred, as John was stirred, as we witness this vast company of God’s saints in heaven who have come through earth’s great tribulation. I am not saying we are not Christians. I am only trying to find out why we are so far from revival and refreshing and renewal. I am only trying to determine why we are so far from recognizing the urgency of God’s will laid upon us by the Holy Spirit. If we belong to Jesus Christ, we should never compromise our spiritual decisions on the basis of “What is this going to cost me?” We ought only to ask, “What is my spiritual duty and my spiritual privilege before God?” ~ **A. W. Tozer**

People remark how favored the church is in this country. It does not have to face persecution and rejection. If the truth were known, our freedom from persecution is because we have taken the easy, the popular way. If we would love righteousness until it became an overpowering passion, if we would renounce everything that is evil, our day of popularity and pleasantness would quickly end. The world would soon turn on us. We are too nice! We are too tolerant! We are too anxious to be popular! We are too quick to make excuses for sin in its many forms! If I could stir Christians around me to love God and hate sin, even to the point of being a bit of a nuisance, I would rejoice. If some Christian were to call me for counsel saying he or she is being persecuted for Jesus’ sake, I would say with feeling, “Thank God!” ~ **A. W. Tozer**

The servant of Christ must never be surprised if he has to drink of the same cup with his Lord. ~ **J. C. Ryle**

“Eighty and six years have I now served Christ, and he has never done me the least wrong; how, then, can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?” ~ **Polycarp**

“It is a strong proof of human depravity that men’s curses and Christ’s blessings should meet on the same persons.” ~ Arthur Pink

If you were not strangers here the hounds of the world would not bark at you. ~ **Samuel Rutherford**

If there be glory laid up for them that die in the Lord. Much more shall they be glorified that die for the Lord. ~ **Richard Baxter**

Take care if the world does hate you that it hates you without cause. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

A whiff of persecution sometimes puts backbone into otherwise timid Christians. ~ **D. A. Carson**

Never expect to find this world anything better than a wilderness. ~ **Jonathan Edwards**

Christ's followers cannot expect better treatment in the world than their Master had. ~ **Matthew Henry**

If the devil were wise enough and would stand by in silence and let the gospel be preached, he would suffer less harm. For when there is no battle for the gospel it rusts and it finds no cause and no occasion to show its vigor and power. Therefore, nothing better can befall the gospel than that the world should fight it with force and cunning. ~ **Martin Luther**

Trials from the enemies of Jesus confirm our faith. Those who are never tried usually possess a poor, tottering faith. But trial, especially persecution, is like the rough March wind which goes howling through the forest. While the young oaks are almost torn up by the roots at first, it loosens the soil for them, and they send out more rootlets, till they get such a firm grip that they defy the hurricane. That which shakes them at first strengthens them afterwards. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

God sometimes raises up many faithful ministers out of the ashes of one. ~ **Matthew Henry**

Wherever you see persecution, there is more than a probability that truth is on the persecuted side. ~ **Hugh Latimer**

The martyrs were bound, imprisoned, scourged, racked, burnt, rent, butchered—and they multiplied. ~ **Augustine of Hippo**