

## **“Blessed are those who are persecuted...” Including Parents**

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*(Matthew 5:10) "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Only recently did I realize that these words of grace and hope from Jesus are for parents. Jesus was not speaking exclusively to parents, there are many people in many different positions in life, being persecuted for righteousness that Jesus is addressing here but the good parent certainly fits the bill.

Have you ever heard the words, "I hate you", come from the mouth of one of your little darlings, aging from 2-20? Has one of your little cherubs every hit you, bit you or almost know your teeth out with a head butt? Have you ever been ignored, ridiculed or taken advantage of by someone you have rearranged 20 years your life for? It could be said that if you have not experienced any of these types of things then perhaps you are not doing your job or you are in denial.

A parent is to love their child. Their job is to de-parent their child. The parent is to equip their child for the future, making sure that they can live their life as God has intended, making them less and less dependant on you. It is a multi-faceted job, encouraging and caring, protecting and providing, for their needs. The beloved child often does not make it an easy job. There are disagreements concerning, needs and wants, what is helpful and what is dangerous. We ourselves sometimes struggle with what we want for the child and what is the right thing for them.

The good parent is loving and friendly but not a "friend". They have a job to do and can not just let the child do whatever they wish; not to mention sometimes letting them fail not bailing them out, the relationship can sometimes be stressful.

Jesus' word here for the parent is two fold. First of all it is a word of encouragement to stay the course. We can not cave in to own beloved child's demands no matter how angry or sad they get. It is so tempting to want to treat them in such a way that they will like us. No parent wants their child to hate them; however the parent has a righteous calling, a Holy calling. God is counting on the parent to care for and equip his beloved children. The parent has to work prayerfully, making sure that they are working for God's will and not their own.

Jesus' word to the parent is also a blessing. God is concerned with righteousness. God will work with the parent in good times and difficult times. The parent is not alone. It is not a hopeless case. God sees your work and will bless it and bless you.

*Pastor Arthur Sharot*