

The Beatitudes

“Blessed are you when people hate you....” Luke chapter 6 verse 22

Surely Jesus is going too far here. How is it a good thing when people hate us? But he goes further, laying it on thick; “...when they exclude you, insult you and slander your name as evil because of the Son of Man.”

Why would this happen? Because when we come to faith in Christ, we become the light of the world, and light illuminates what is going on in darkness, and Jesus said that people love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. People who reject God do not want the light of his truth to shine on their lives. The lives of those who live in obedience to God are an implied criticism of those who don't, and so draw their disapproval.

So although we may find ourselves the objects of people's hatred, and although they may often not welcome our company and even speak against us because of our faith, Jesus says this is cause for rejoicing. Why? Because it means that there is a great reward for us in heaven. We are associating ourselves with the prophets, great men and women of God, who were treated the same way.

But conversely, there were also false prophets, who courted popularity and favour by saying the things that people wanted to hear. Everyone will have to stand before God one day to give an account of their lives. I would not want to be in the position of someone who has spoken as truth things that are not in order to have people speak well of me.

Prayer

Father, thank you that when we live our lives by faith in Jesus, we are living in the life and the truth. May we fully accept that such a way of life will not make us popular with many, who prefer to live in darkness and untruth. Help us to have the courage to stand in love for your truth, and to look to the blessings that we will one day enjoy in heaven, and also to the many blessings that you bring into our lives now. In Jesus' name, amen.

All these devotionals can be found on our website inghamitechurch.org on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.