



## Inward Power Controls Outward Acts

As Christ lives in us, we are able to overcome the world. When people persecute us, we rejoice:

*Matt 5:11 "Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

That we will suffer persecution is certain. Paul wrote in 2 Tim 3:12, "Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." The first response from a human point of view might be to strike back. Yet, with the spirit of the beatitudes living in us, we adopt the spirit of Christ. Peter explained how to do this in 1 Peter 4:1-4:

4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. 2 As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God. 3 For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do – living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry. 4 They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you.

Christ is the example that we should follow. Peter again wrote in 1 Peter 2:21-23

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

22 "He committed no sin,  
and no deceit was found in his mouth."

23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

## The Power of Christian Influence

*Matt 5:13-16 13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.*

*14 "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

As we become imitators and servants of Christ, our influence runs like salt throughout the world. We become like a city on a hill. Our influence is there for all to see. We do not need to press to concoct deeds worthy of righteousness; for we are righteous.

## Conclusion

Christians are to put on Christ. Paul wrote in Gal 3:27, "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." It is in this state that we become new creations according to 2 Cor 5:17-18, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation." This power from within keeps us from sin.

## Study Questions

1. What part of man does Christ change?
2. What do "the salt of the earth" and "light of the world" mean?
3. How does taking the beatitudes unto ourselves keep us from immorality?
4. How does one put on Christ?