

SPIRITUAL TASK—STRENGTH THROUGH TRIALS (Matthew 5)

by the Rev. David Roth at the New Church of Boulder Valley

Story The Sermon on the Mount begins by the Lord outlining what the true blessings of our life are. Today we discussed the eighth one: “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.”

Meaning The eighth key to happiness is to understand that if you do choose to live a life aligned with the Lord's teachings that you will experience trials and temptations along the way. These will be light or grievous depending on whether they are ideas you believe in or loves you hold in your heart that are challenged. We are told spiritual temptations go to the point of despair and then it is lifted and new life is experienced along with peace and joy. “The old self must die before the new one can be conceived.”

Task If you find yourself experiencing a struggle do several things. 1. Recognize what is happening. 2. Accept that the outcome of going through it will be positive even if the process is painful. 3. Pray for help to get through the temptation, not be removed from it. 4. Hold fast to what you know to be the right course—don't be diverted. 5. Remind yourself that it is a temporary condition. 6. Try being excited for the challenge since it is a sign of growth.