

## “PERSECUTED FOR CHRIST”

Series: “THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS”, Part 8 of 8  
Sunday, October 30, 2022 at 9:00 & 11:00 AM

Text: Matthew 5:10-12

**Big Idea: We witness for Christ best when, sustained by His grace, we faithfully endure persecution.**

“The blessed life is a profoundly satisfying life of flourishing, regardless of our external circumstances.”

Matthew 5:10, “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:11-12, “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.”

### I. IS PERSECUTION REAL, OR ARE WE JUST IMAGINING THIS?

Matthew 5:11a, “Blessed are you when people insult you.”

Matthew 5:11b, “... and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.”

John 16:33b, “In this world you will have trouble.”

Matthew 10:16a, “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves.”

2 Timothy 3:12, “In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”

## II. WHY ARE CHRISTIANS PERSECUTED?

### A. Spiritual blindness.

1 Corinthians 2:14, "The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

2 Corinthians 4:3-4, "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." {NASV}

1 Corinthians 12:3, "Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit."

### B. Sinful human nature.

Acts 7:51, "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!"

## III. HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO PERSECUTION?

Matthew 5:11-12a, "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."

### A. Your reward in heaven is great.

Matthew 5:12, "Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven."

Matthew 6:19-20, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Matthew 5:12b, "For in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

**B. You are not alone.**

Luke 6:26, "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for that is how their fathers treated the false prophets."