



Blessed are the Persecuted

Word

Key Term:

Persecution = harassment or punishment designed to injure, grieve, or afflict because of a belief

Read the following:

- Matthew 5:10-12, 2 Timothy 3:12
 - Before this study, how would you have defined persecution? How does your previous definition differ or relate to the one given?
 - From the 2 Tim passage above, who does Paul say will be persecuted?
 - How does this concept of “a godly life” tie into the rest of the beatitudes?
- Hebrews 11:13-16
 - Hebrews 11 is the passage known as the Hall of Faith. This chapter highlights Biblical characters who lived out the godly life that Jesus calls his followers to in the Beatitudes. Jesus’ words in the Beatitudes point us to another reality and another kingdom. How does the second half of Matthew 5:10 connect with the passage given in Hebrews?
- What do these passages teach us about God’s heart?

World

- If “blessed are those who are persecuted for my name” is the beatitude of Jesus, what would the beatitude of the world be?
- If you told an unbelieving friend about this call from Jesus, what would their response be?
- Our culture is willing to deal with discomfort if the ultimate result is greater comfort in this life.
 - Example - Choosing a difficult college degree that will eventually end in financial gain to lead to a comfortable retirement. Sound familiar?
 - Example - Working 80 hour weeks in your 20s so you can retire in your 40s.
- How is Jesus’ statement of “blessed are the persecuted” a counter-cultural way of viewing life?

Us

- Jesus seems to be calling us towards discomfort. Do you agree? Why or why not?
- If we are not living out following Jesus in practical, everyday ways, there is no potential for persecution. Have you ever experienced persecution for following Christ, based on our definition above? Have you ever chosen an “easier way” so that you won’t face persecution?
- What are some small actions you can take to boldly out a “godly life”, even in situations that may cause persecution?

Choosing to live a life apart from Christ will guarantee a life with no persecution. Everyone who chooses to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, but theirs is the kingdom of heaven.