

Paradox
Week 9 - Worthy of Persecution
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Matthew 5:10-12 (ESV) – Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kind of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Unique Beatitude

- *It goes from second person to third person.*
- *It is a double beatitude.*
- *Persecution: A hunting term meaning to pursue something with the intent to harass or do harm.*

Christians should expect persecution.

John R.W. Stott - *"Since all the beatitudes describe what every Christian disciple is intended to be, we must conclude that the condition of being despised and rejected, slandered and persecuted, is as much a normal mark of Christian discipleship as being pure in heart or merciful. Every Christian is to be a peacemaker, and every Christian is to expect opposition."*

2 Timothy 3:10-12 (ESV) - You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted..."

1 Peter 4:14-15 (ESV) - If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler.

Why should we seek to live lives worthy of persecution?

1. Persecution Propels the Gospel Forward

Philippians 1:12-14 (ESV) - I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

2. Persecution Puts Us in Great Company

Hebrews 11:35-38 (ESV) - ... Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking and flogging, and even chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep and goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated—of whom the world was not worthy—wandering about in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

3. Persecution Aligns Us with Jesus

1 Peter 4:12-19 (ESV) – Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

John 15:18-20 (ESV) – “If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.”

Are you living a life worthy of persecution?



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