

Persecution

Worth It – Living The Worthy Life – Part 4
Allan Hamblin – September 16, 2018

*“Indeed, **all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,**”*

2Tim. 3:12 (ESV)

Q: What is “Persecution”?

- Persecution only occurs when someone is hurting you or trying to hurt you, verbally or physically, because of **outright hostility** toward you.
- Persecution happens when someone **knows what you stand for** and objects to it enough to criticize you, attack you verbally or physically, and maybe even kill you.

*“**Blessed** are those who are persecuted for **righteousness’ sake.** for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹**Blessed are you** when others **revile you and persecute you** and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely **on my account.** ¹² Rejoice and be glad, **for your reward is great in heaven,** for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

Matt. 5:10-12 (ESV)

Q: Why are you in a “good place” when you are persecuted for righteousness and/or Jesus?

1. **“your reward is great in heaven”** and rewards in heaven last forever!

- *“But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”*

Matt. 6:20 (NIV)

2. It confirms you are living a **holy life**, and not a **common one!**

- *“for so they persecuted the prophets...” (Vs. 12)*
- *“If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.”*

1Peter 4:14 (ESV)

I Walk Worthy of Persecution When I...

1. Welcome Purification.

*“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. ¹³ But rejoice insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. ... ¹⁶ Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. ¹⁷ For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; ... ¹⁹ Therefore let those who suffer according to God’s will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator **while doing good.**”*

1Pet. 4:12-19 (ESV)

- “The **fiery trial**” is a word that means “**smelting**”, which is part of refining or purifying.
- We have to trust God and **KEEP DOING GOOD!**

2. Pray, instead of Pout or Pounce!

*“But I say to you, Love your enemies and **pray for those who persecute you,** ⁴⁵ so that **you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.** For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? ⁴⁸ **You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.**”*

Matt 5:44-48 (ESV)

- “**Perfect**” is the Greek word “**teleios**”; it means complete or mature.

3. I take Pleasure in the Pressure.

*“Therefore **I take pleasure** in weaknesses, in injuries, in necessities, **in persecutions**, in distresses, **for Christ’s sake.** For when I am weak, then am I strong.”*

2Cor. 12:10 (WEB)