

The GOOD LIFE

The Persecuted

Matthew 5:10-12

*"Blessed are those who are **persecuted** because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

*Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they **persecuted** the prophets who were before you."*

Matthew 5:10-12

Let's not be _____ when our faith is challenged.

- It's when, not if we are insulted and face challenges.
- Jesus tells us why we will be rejected.
- It's not you they're rejecting. It's the truth you represent.
- They're still after Jesus.

"Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

2 Timothy 3:12

We can be _____ no matter what challenge we face.

- You are never alone – Jesus is always standing with you.
- You're never standing alone when you're standing for him.
- You're part of a prestigious group of faith-filled saints.
- Remember who writes the final chapter.

"I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us."

Romans 8:18

On our worst days and in our hardest moments,
we know this: **It is worth it.**

The Good Life: The Persecuted

Matthew 5:10-12

Questions from Sermon on February 22, 2026

Getting to Know Me

1. As we finish this Beatitudes series, what has stood out most to you about Jesus' definition of "the good life"? Why has that stuck with you?
2. When has doing the right thing cost you something?

Digging Deeper

3. What is the hardest part for you about being identified as a Christian in today's culture – fear of rejection, misunderstanding, or feeling alone?
4. Read Matthew 5:10-12. What does Jesus say is true of us when we are persecuted for righteousness? What does he *not* say or promise in these moments?
5. Jesus tells us that persecution for our faith is a matter of "when — not if." When have you experienced pushback, ridicule, or distance from others because of your faith? What happened, and how did you respond in the moment?
6. What reasons does Jesus give for rejoicing in persecution? What does that say about where our security and identity come from?
7. There's a difference between suffering for righteousness and suffering because we are harsh, prideful, obnoxious, or unwise. How can we examine our own hearts to tell the difference? What are some warning signs that we might be creating unnecessary conflict?

8. Looking back at Sunday's message and notes, which truth about persecution or faithfulness speaks most to your current season of life? Why?
9. Jonathan pointed out on Sunday that more Christians have been martyred in the past century than any other period in history. How does that reality shape the way you view rejection or discomfort you experience for your faith? Does it minimize it, reframe it, or motivate you?
10. Paul wrote from prison: "*When I am weak, then I am strong*" and "*our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory.*" What would need to shift in your thinking or faith for you to genuinely view current struggles through that lens?

Making it Personal

11. Jesus calls us to love in ways that look foolish to the world. Where do you tend to play it safe – conflict, reputation, or relationships? What would it look like to take one faithful step toward risk this week?
12. When life is hard or unfair, do you tend to pull closer to Jesus—or quietly pull away? What usually drives that response?
13. What practical step will you take this week to cultivate an eternal perspective or to pray for and support the persecuted church?

Prayer

Read the Beatitudes of Matthew 5:3–12 slowly out loud.

Have each person take one and pray it over the group — not as a wish, but as a surrender. Ask God to make you the kind of people Jesus calls blessed.

We exist to glorify God by guiding people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

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*Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they **persecuted** the prophets who were before you."*

Matthew 5:10-12

Let's not be **SURPRISED** when our faith is challenged.

- It's when, not if we are insulted and face challenges.
- Jesus tells us why we will be rejected.
- It's not you they're rejecting. It's the truth you represent.
- They're still after Jesus.

"Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted."

2 Timothy 3:12

We can be **STRONG** no matter what challenge we face.

- You are never alone – Jesus is always standing with you.
- You're never standing alone when you're standing for him.
- You're part of a prestigious group of faith-filled saints.
- Remember who writes the final chapter.

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