

“TORTURED FOR JESUS”

2 Timothy 3:10-12

Just about everyone wants to be liked. Most of us look for appreciation and respect from others in life. But the Bible reminds Christ-followers to expect opposition because of their faith. Someone said persecution is the “birthmark” of a Christian. Today, we examine four important insights that help us know how to react when we encounter spiritual opposition.

1. Realize it's inevitable

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

“...When we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.” 1 Thessalonians 3:4

“...If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also...” John 15:20b

2. Reflect the imitation of Christ

“While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he fell asleep.” Acts 7:59,60

3. Rejoice in the inheritance ahead

“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

“In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.” 1 Peter 1:6,7

4. Remember to get informed and pray

“Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.” 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

“He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and He will deliver us. On Him we have set our hope that He will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers.” 2 Corinthians 1:10-11a

CONCLUSION

- What am I willing to risk for Jesus?

PRIMARY RESOURCES USED FOR THIS SERMON INCLUDE:

“Their Blood Cries Out” by Rodney Plunket

“How Do We Use Persecution for the Glory of God?” by Adrian Rogers

“The Blessing No One Wants” by Ray Pritchard

“The World-Wide Persecution of Christians Today” by R.L. Hymers, Jr.

Websites:

www.persecution.com

www.opendoorusa.org