

Persecution & Prayer

PHIL.4:4-7



The righteous have always suffered

▶ Matt. 23:29-34

▶ **29** “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs for the prophets and decorate the monuments of the righteous, ³⁰ and you say, ‘If we had been *living* in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in *shedding* the blood of the prophets.’³¹ So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of *the guilt* of your fathers. ³³ You snakes, you offspring of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell? ³⁴ “Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will flog in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city

The righteous will continue to be persecuted

- ▶ 2 Tim. 3:12-14
- ▶ **12** Indeed, all who want to live in a godly way in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. **13** But evil people and impostors will proceed *from bad to worse*, deceiving and being deceived. **14** You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*

Trials like persecution strengthen

- ▶ James 1:2-4
- ▶ ² Consider it all joy, my brothers *and sisters*, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

We should see persecution as a blessing

- ▶ Matt. 5:10-12
- ▶ ¹⁰ “Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ “Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in this same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Persecution makes us long for home

- ▶ Rom. 8:18
- ▶ **18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

Humble yourself & go to God

- ▶ 1 Peter 5:6-7
- ▶ ⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you.

Pray for the persecutors

- ▶ Matt. 5:43-47
- ▶ ⁴³ “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may prove yourselves to be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. ⁴⁶ For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Even the tax collectors, do they not do the same? ⁴⁷ And if you greet only your brothers *and* sisters, what more are you doing *than others*? Even the Gentiles, do they not do the same?

Bless persecutors & all men

▶ Rom.12:14

¹⁴ Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

▶ 1 Tim. 2:1-4

▶ First of all, then, I urge that requests, prayers, intercession, *and* thanksgiving be made in behalf of all people, ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who wants all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

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