

Keys to Blessings  
Be Strong  
July 9, 2023

**Matthew 5:10** “Blessed are those who are **persecuted because of righteousness**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

**2 Timothy 3:12-13** In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted** while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

**Matthew 24:9** “Then you will be handed over to be **persecuted** and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me.”

Why are we persecuted?

- ✓ We \_\_\_\_\_ righteous.
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**Acts 16:17-18** She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.” She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “**In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!**” At that moment the **spirit left her**.

3 Ways Persecution Works:

1. It comes to steal your \_\_\_\_\_.

**Acts 16:19-21** When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

**Our Response:** Let persecution deepen your \_\_\_\_\_.

**Philippians 2:9-11** Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that **at the name of Jesus every knee should bow**, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2. It will try to kill your \_\_\_\_\_.

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**Acts 16:22-26** The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were **praying and singing hymns to God**, and the **other prisoners were listening** to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and **everyone's chains came loose**.

**Our Response:** Let persecution increase your awareness of your divine \_\_\_\_\_.

**2 Corinthians 4:7-10** But we have this **treasure** in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; **persecuted, but not abandoned**; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that **the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body**.

3. It will try to destroy your \_\_\_\_\_.

**Acts 16:27-34** The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!" The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**" They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—**you and your household**." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—**he and his whole household**.

**Our Response:** Let persecution lead to \_\_\_\_\_.

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10** But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, **in persecutions**, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then **I am strong**.

**John 15:18-20** "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, **you do not belong to the world**, but I have **chosen you OUT of the world**. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' **If they persecuted me, they will persecute you** also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also."

**Walk Away:** Persecution is not about you; it is about the \_\_\_\_\_ in you.

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