



August 9, 2026

Standing Firm When the World Pushes Back

Matthew 5:10-12

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

**Big Idea: “Persecution is a sign of following Jesus because living by God’s standards puts
believers at odds with the world.”**

1. Persecution is the _____ result of following Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:12

2. Persecution varies in _____.

Matthew 5:10-11; Hebrews 11:35-38

3. Persecution comes from _____ God’s principles.

1 John 5:19

4. Two ways to avoid persecution.

a. _____.

b. Don’t be _____.

Philippians 1:9-10; Hebrews 5:14

5. Compromise blocks us from _____.

Matthew 5:12; Acts 5:41; Luke 6:26

ADMIT

BELIEVE

CHOOSE

Reflection and Discussion

1. When you hear Jesus say, "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness," what part of that statement is most challenging or surprising to you?
2. The sermon says persecution is the natural result of following Jesus, not something Christians should seek out. How can we tell the difference between suffering because we are living faithfully and suffering because we are being careless, harsh, or self-righteous?
3. Where do you see the biggest tension between the values of Jesus and the values of our surrounding culture right now?
4. The sermon says persecution comes from living God's principles, not merely from calling ourselves Christians. What is one area where obedience to Jesus needs to become more visible in your daily life?
5. Two ways to avoid persecution mentioned in the sermon are compromise and lack of discernment. Which of those is the greater temptation for you, and why?