



February 17, 2019
“The Blessing In The Midst of Persecution”
Matthew 5:10-12

This week, Pastor David continued the “Sermon On The Mount” series. Re-read those verses as you consider these questions.

- How do you define “persecution”? How is that different from inconvenience and/or criticism?
- How do you find yourself compromising your witness for things far short of that type of suffering?
- What would you be willing to suffer for the cause of Christ? (PAUSE BEFORE YOU ANSWER) *Sacrifice something you enjoy? End a friendship? Status/Recognition/Likes on social media? A promotion at work? Staying silent in a difficult/controversial conversation?*

In your time with God this week,

1. Thank God for the freedom you have to worship Him openly in our country.
2. Ask God to prepare you to face increased criticism, inconvenience and, potentially, true persecution for His sake.
3. Commit to visiting www.opendoors.org, learning more about persecuted Christians throughout the world, and praying for their work/witness for Christ.



ADDITIONAL DISCOVERY:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." -Matthew 5:10-12

"In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." – John 16:33

"We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at sea. We are far too easily pleased."

- C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*

"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness." - James 1:2-3



Open Doors Organization – www.opendoors.org

“Approximately 215 million Christians face significant levels of persecution in the world today, according to Open Doors. Researchers for the organization estimate 1 in 12 Christians live where their faith is ‘illegal, forbidden, or punished’.”

EVERY MONTH...

255 Christians are killed

104 Christians are abducted

180 Christian women are assaulted

66 churches are attacked

160 Christians are detained without trial and imprisoned