

Devotions For Students

Lesson 3: Our Attitude In Persecution

DAY 1

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me." – Matthew 5:11

We tend to think a lot about the hard times we experience in life. If we're not careful, we can apply verses like this one life's tough times. But the problem is, that's not exactly what this verse is saying.

Read Matthew 5:10-12. This verse is Jesus giving us a tremendous promise. He is saying that when we are insulted, when we are made fun of, when we are left out or marginalized because of Christ, we are actually blessed! We are favored.

Notice what this favor is a result of: being persecuted because of Christ. The problem is that for too many of us, we experience hard times and trials but we don't really experience persecution. A family member gets sick, or our parents go through a divorce, or we find ourselves disappointed by an outcome we hoped we wouldn't get. All of these things are hard. And God is with us through our trials, no doubt. But it's not the same as undergoing a trial simply because we stand up to the world and say, "I'm with Christ."

Too often, we deprive ourselves of blessings because we are scared to take a stand. We rob God of the opportunity to show us favor because we wuss out when it comes time to stand up for Him. We lose the opportunity to grow because we run from difficulty.

As you go through your day and week ahead, prepare yourself to stand up for Christ when the time comes. You'll get your chance, don't worry. And when you do, don't back down. Stand up for Christ. And do so knowing that God will bless you as a result.

DAY 2

Think about a time in your life when you went through a tough time. Write about it below, or in your journal or your device's note taking app.

Can you think of something this trial helped teach you about God? Or about how God was with you in the midst of your tough circumstance? Write about it below, or in your journal or your device's note taking app.

How did this help you move forward in your life? How did it help you know more about God and to be closer to Him in the days and months after your trial was over?

Pray to God, thanking Him for using your trials to draw you closer to Him.

DAY 3

Read the quote:

“The Christian is more formed from his trials than from his enjoyments.” -

William Jay

Think About This . . .

- What does this mean to you?
- How have you seen this be true in your life?

DAY 4

Choose an adult, maybe a parent or someone in your church, and ask if he or she has ever experienced any real persecution for their faith. Ask if they'll share what it felt like to go through their experience. Have them share with you what this did to their relationship with God.

When you've finished consider your own life. Think about how you have or haven't experienced persecution for God's sake. Compare your experiences to the person you talked to. If someone came up to you and asked you the same questions, how would you answer?

DAY 5

As this is the final day of devotions for this week, take a few minutes and use the space below to express your thoughts to God, especially as they pertain to what you've learned about persecution.

Write a prayer. Draw a picture. Ask questions. Whatever you do, take this time to express to God your understanding of persecution and how your understanding has changed the way you know and relate to Him.

