THE PERSECUTION
Forged By Fire #3
November 1, 2026

BIG IDEA: SATAN WON'T BOTHER YOU IF YOU _____ _____ ABOUT _____.

HOW TO RESPOND TO THE THREAT OF PERSECUTION
Acts 5:12-42

1. **Share the gospel as _____. (v. 12-21)**

2. **Value _____ God more than _____ authority. (v. 21-32)**

HOW TO SHARE THE GOSPEL IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

- **Pray for opportunities for _____.**

- **Test the waters for _____.**

- **Share the gospel with _____.**

3. **Love Jesus and lost people more than _____ and _____. (v. 40-42)**

DAILY DEVOTIONS FOR THIS WEEK

Monday: Read 2 Timothy 3:10-17. We usually focus on verses 16-17 in while skipping over 10-13. Paul referenced his sufferings in three cities (Acts 13-14). By being rescued Paul meant that he didn't die. By God's grace he survived being stoned in Lystra where Timothy was from. What do you think about v. 12? It seems to say, "to avoid persecution don't try to live a godly life." Would you do that? Christ followers shouldn't seek persecution, but they shouldn't be surprised when it comes.

Tuesday: Read Matt. 16:24-28. Here Jesus shares what He expects of "anyone who would come after me" (every Christ follower). Why does He say every follower must "take up his cross daily" and "lose His life for my sake". That seems extreme! What does that mean? Is it what Paul meant in 2 Tim. 3:12? Jesus doesn't sugar coat what it means to be a Christian. There will be suffering, but it will be worth it (v. 27).

Wednesday: Why do some people say and do hateful things to believers? Read John 15:18-27. If we live like Jesus and talk to people about Jesus, we can expect some to mistreat us. We have seen a growing amount of this in recent years. He wants us to accept that suffering is part of following Him. He sent "the Helper" (Holy Spirit) to strengthen us to continue witnessing despite persecution because it is a matter of eternal life or death for the ones to whom we witness.

Thursday: Read Matthew 5:10-12. How could persecution ever be a blessing? Why in the world would someone ever "rejoice and be glad" when someone "utters all kinds of evil against them falsely on Jesus' account?" It is hard for us to comprehend this, but Jesus promised a "great reward in heaven" for the persecuted.

Friday: After losing a son on the mission field and then visiting persecuted Christians in many countries missionary Nik Ripken wrote: "If we spend our lives so afraid of suffering, so averse to sacrifice, that we avoid even the risk of persecution...then we might never discover the true wonder, joy and power of a resurrection faith. Ironically, avoiding suffering could be the very thing that prevents us from partnering deeply with the Risen Jesus." *The Insanity of God* p. 308-309.