

”Blessed are the persecuted...”



To the leader:

Open your group in prayer, and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions in the notes, or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions at the end of the page.

On Sunday, Billy concluded our Upside-Down series by talking about Jesus’ statement of “blessed are those who are persecuted”. I think we can all agree that we wish that life was easy and didn’t have to deal with the many trials that arise? Some believe that after you give your life to Christ, life gets easier. That simply is not the case. Billy talked about how Jesus, in fact, told His disciples that they would be hated and even persecuted because of Him. We learned that we need to live boldly in the face of persecution. We should do so because it shows we are living for Christ, strengthening our faith and saving up for a future reward. Along with living boldly in the face of persecution, we mustn’t forget to do what is right regardless and trust God with the results. The truth is, if you live for Jesus, you will be persecuted. How will you handle it?

Live boldly in the face of persecution!

- ◆ Has there ever been a time where you were persecuted or outcast because of your faith?
- ◆ In what way do you encourage both yourself and others to live boldly in the face of trials and tribulations?

Let’s review the points from the message Sunday:

1. Live boldly in the face of persecution
— Rejoice in it because...

It shows I am living for Christ

- ◆ What are some characteristics of someone who is a threat to Satan and his kingdom?
- ◆ What characteristics are lacking in your life?

It strengthens my faith

- ◆ In what way have you experienced your faith getting stronger as a result of opposition?

It will be rewarded

- ◆ Of what value do trials and tribulation bring to your faith? What promise do we have?
2. Do what is right regardless of it
 - ◆ In what way have you experienced the temptation of the retaliation and comfort seeking?
 - ◆ Of what value does avoiding such traps bring to your faith?
 3. Trust God with the results through it
 - ◆ In what way does 1 Peter 1:5-7 speak to the benefit and promise of trusting God with the results of persecution you may be facing?

Now what?

Make it known you are a Christian

- ◆ In what way have you shied away from making your faith known to others in the past?
- ◆ What are some ways that you can boldly share the love of Jesus with others?

Get in the game with serving

- ◆ In what way are you using your gifts and abilities for God’s Kingdom?
- ◆ What are some ways that you can maximize your serving?

Going public through baptism

- ◆ For those of you that have been baptized, in what way has that step of obedience bettered your faith?
- ◆ If you haven’t been baptized, check out the Next Steps tab at www.woostergrace.org to find more information!

Three Essential Questions

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you’ve learned today?*