

## The Roots and Reality of Persecution

Outline – November 19, 2023  
Matthew 5:10-11, John 15:18-25

### The Question and Answer That Has Led to War and Persecution: Who is God?

- I. **An overview of this question**
  - A. Isaiah 14: Satan wanted to be God
    1. I will ascend above the highest
    2. I will make myself like The Most High
  - B. In the garden, humanity wanted to be as God (knowing good from evil)
  - C. In Joshua 24:14-15 (which God will you choose)
  - D. In 1 Kings 18:21 (the choice of God or Baal)
  - E. During the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians had to choose
    1. Caesar is Lord
    2. Jesus is Lord
  - F. The question today is... is Allah God or is Yahweh God?
- II. **Jesus said persecution would be a reality**
  - A. Darkness hates the light
  - B. Deception hates the truth
  - C. Death hates life
  - D. Demonic hates God
  - E. Defiance hates obedience
- III. **Where does persecution come from? (7 primary areas)**
  - A. Non-believers
  - B. The religious (lost)
  - C. The religious (hurting/confused)
  - D. The lukewarm
  - E. Family with non-biblical views
  - F. Government
  - G. Future Antichrist
- IV. **How persecution comes into our lives (as it was, so it shall be)**
  - A. 10 ways:
    1. Restricting (our rights, privileges and opportunities)
    2. Legally prohibiting
    3. Deriding/Insulting
    4. Abusing
    5. Canceling (cancel culture)
    6. Censoring
    7. Redefining words, terms

8. Excluding
9. Ignoring
10. Killing

B. In the first 300 years of the church, followers of Jesus faced persecution from religious leaders (Saul of Tarsus) and government (Nero, Domitian)

**V. Why/When does persecution come?**

- A. When you proclaim/stand for Jesus as Lord
- B. When you teach others (Jesus is Lord)
- C. When you go against the cultural norm (stand on Scripture)
- D. When you say, "The Bible says"
  1. This infuriates forces of darkness
  2. These forces recognize the power and authority of Scripture

**VI. How to face persecution**

- A. Expect it
  1. For what we believe
  2. For how we walk
  3. For who we follow
  4. For the rebirth we experience
  5. The world hated Jesus
    - a. He is Lord
    - b. He exposes darkness
    - c. He brings truth
    - d. He destroys the word of the devil
- B. Endure it
  1. With grace and truth
  2. With fellowship
  3. With joy
  4. With power from the Holy Spirit
  5. With confidence of God
- C. Enlist the following:
  1. The power of The Spirit of God
  2. The truth of The Word of God
  3. The salvation of the gospel of God
- D. Story of Stephen
- E. Story of 40 brave soldiers for Christ

**Persecution Will Come  
As It Was, So It Shall Be  
Your Redemption Draws Near**