

## Sermon: Blessed are those who are persecuted

Matthew 5:10-12

### Why is persecution inevitable?

If you follow Jesus, \_\_\_\_\_.

John 15:20

Increasingly, disagreement is considered \_\_\_\_\_.

Your righteousness \_\_\_\_\_.

You will suffer \_\_\_\_\_.

1 Peter 3:15-17

Only \_\_\_\_\_ are blessed.

### Your response to persecution shows your faith

Acts 5:17-26

True believers \_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 5:27-40

The ultimate power is always \_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 5:41-42

### The result of persecution

Those who are persecuted *for Jesus' sake* receive \_\_\_\_\_.

## Study: Blessed are those who are persecuted

### Getting to know you

1. Sunday's sermon was on the blessing of persecution. Is there anything you would like to add, question, or comment on about the sermon?
2. Have you ever felt criticized or mistreated because of your faith in Christ? If so, how did you feel? How did you respond?

5. We noted in the sermon that we in the United States have faced a very low level of persecution compared to much of the world and much of church history. While this may be changing, it is still largely true. If persecution is necessary for the church, what might the church in America be lacking because of our relative safety?

6. As opposition grows in our culture, how would you like to respond? How would you like the church as a whole to respond?

### Going deeper

3. Read Colossians 1:24. Read James 1:2-4. How does this teach us to react to persecution?

4. What do you think Paul meant in Colossians 1:24 when he said he was filling "up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions"? What could be lacking in Christ's suffering? How does

### Going deeper

7. We have spiritual brothers and sisters who are facing levels of persecution including extreme levels. How should we respond to their situations?