

Use Your Voice To Rejoice

Matthew 5:10-12

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

12 "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in Heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

The word translated "persecute" (didiomenoi) in Greek literally means "to pursue in a hostile manner."

"Revile" which means "to defame" and it carries the idea of criticizing severely with the aim of discrediting.

I. How does a Christian rejoice in persecutions?

II. What are the things we need to know that will allow rejoicing in persecution?

1. We can rejoice in persecution because we know that it is a confirmation of our identity!

John 15:18-20

18 Jesus warned his disciples to expect persecution, "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."

2 Timothy 3:12 - "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."

1 Peter 4:12-14

12 "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you;

13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified."

Acts 5:41 - "... they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

2. We can rejoice in persecution because we know that God uses persecution to perfect us!

1 Peter 1:6-8

6 "In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."

3. We can rejoice in persecution because we know that it gives us the opportunity to demonstrate the supernatural power of the Christian life!

4. We can rejoice in persecution because we know about the promise of rewards!

2 Cor. 4:16-18 –

16 "Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

5. We can rejoice in persecution because we know that Jesus is near when we are suffering!

Isaiah 63:9 we read, "...In all of their affliction He was afflicted, And the angel of His presence saved them."

And at the time of the Judges, God shared the hurt of his people...

Judges 10:16 - "that he could no longer endure the misery" of his people.

Dan. 2:24-25 - "...Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?....I see four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire...and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God"

Matthew 28:20 - "...and lo, I am with you always even until the end of the age"