

***Intro:***

Main Point of Text: Jesus says the most telling sign that you are a true citizen of His Kingdom is your suffering for Him.

Sermon Point: *Persecution Proves Whose and Who You Are.*

***Move 1: If you are a true citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven, the world will really persecute you.***

Vss. 1, 2, 3: “persecute/persecuted”: Greek, “pursue”; mainly explained in Vs. 11: “revile”, “say all manner of evil against you falsely”: reproach and slander. The Devil is a liar/accuser/adversary. The Devil is the prince of this world (Eph. 2:2). He attacks those not of this world. And he is painfully crafty. Who were the Prophets persecuted by? Visible Church. Don’t let this disturb you, but strengthen you. 2 Tim. 2:3; Acts 14:22; John 16:33: *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* When the world persecutes you, and when worldly people in the Church persecute you, it is a good sign that you are not of the world. *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* (John 15:19) Rev. 1:9.

***Move 2: The world really persecutes you when you really love and live for Jesus.***

1 Cor. 13:3. Not for your self righteousness/own name’s sake. For Christ’s. Vs. 10: “for righteousness”. Vs. 11: “for my sake”. 1 Pet. 3:14-18; 4:15-16, 19. When suffer for righteousness, you reflect the Suffering Servant. Gal. 2:20. You are not worldly because you are godly. You are Christ-like. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.* (2 Tim. 3:12) *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me.* (John 15:20-21)

***Move 3: Rejoice when you face real persecution for Christ, because it means you are in Christ.***

Vs. 12: “rejoice/exult”. What! After being beaten for preaching the Gospel ... *they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.* (Acts 5:40-41) Why? Because you won’t suffer forever, and you are more than conquerors. The wicked world will suffer defeat. Luke 6:26. “kingdom of heaven”, vs. 12, the closing bookend of vs. 3. Your suffering will be relieved. You won’t suffer forever in hell. “great reward in heaven”. Greater than earthly suffering: Rom. 8:17-18; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Pet. 4:13: *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.* Prophets are good company: Acts 7:52; James 5:10; Hebrews 11.

Your persecution proves you are Christ's, because you identify with Him:

- *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.* (John 17:16)
- *For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.* (Psalm 69:9)
- Jesus is the final Prophet. Phil 3:10: fellowship of His sufferings. Jesus was the "suffering servant" of Isa. 53: *He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief:* (Isa 53:3) Acts 9:44: those who persecute the Church are persecuting Christ. *If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:* (2 Tim. 2:12)

Luke 13:1-5: Jews thought suffering a sign of God's displeasure. God said of His Son just before He was led by the Holy Spirit to be persecuted by the Devil: "This is my Son, with whom I am well pleased.

### ***Conclusion:***

Remember Who was behind Job's suffering. Satan. But what brought on each wave of persecution and suffering from Satan? Conversation with God: Job 1:8; Job 1:1.

Job's enduring of the tribulations, even against the bad advice/persecution of his wife and friends: Job 1:20-22; Job 2:3; Job 2:10; Job. 13:15-16; Job 19:26.

And it can be said of you who suffer the most for Jesus/and you can say in and for Jesus, Job 23:10.

***Persecution Proves Whose and Who You Are.***