**Life Team Bible Study**

For the week of Feb 16 – Persecution

**HANG**

* Have you ever been singled out negatively or picked on? Explain?
* What is our default response to being singled out or picked on?

**HEAR -** Marks of a disciple - **Matthew 5:3-10**

* Can you explain how each of the beatitudes build upon each other?

**\*\*The first and last end with the same blessing – what is it? (v3 & 10)**

**Notice the progressive nature of each: They build upon each other**

Starts - Poor in spirit – realizing your need for God

Leads to – Mourning – a recognition and conviction of our sinful condition

Leads to - Meekness – a humble life surrendered to Jesus

Leads to - Hunger & Thirst – a deep desire to know Jesus more

Results in - Merciful – a compassion for others

Result in - Pure heart – a desire to live a holy life

Results in - Peacemaker – seeks to bring the gospel of peace to others

Which will ultimately lead to – Persecution

**Let’s focus on the last one** **– Persecution**

* This is what we talk about Sunday. Was there anything that stood out to you or got your attention from Sunday?

**Matthew 5:10-12, Hebrews 11:35-38**

* What are ways the early church was persecuted?
* What are way Christians have been persecuted over the ages?
* What are ways Christians are currently persecuted - globally?

**In 21st century - 150,000 Christians were killed each year**

- Roughly 1,100,000 Christians were martyred worldwide, between 2000-2010

**Today more than 60 countries attack and persecute Christians**

320 killed every mth (1 every 6 minutes killed) / 214 churches destroyed each mth / 722 acts of violence a mth (imprisoned, raped, beaten, abducted, homes burned down, tortured, mutilated) / 215 million persecuted daily.

**Persecution had been greater the last 30 yrs than the first 300 yrs.**

* Christians are persecuted more than any other religion on the face of the earth face. Why do you think that is?

**2 Timothy 3:12, John 15:20, 1 Peter 4:12-14**

* According to these verses what are the reasons we will be persecuted?
* What are the most common types of persecution we face in our life?
* Can you share a time when you were persecuted for your faith?
* Do know someone who has gone through persecution for Christ?
* What type of persecutions do you think Christians will face in the future?

**Matthew 24:13, 2Tim. 2:12**

* What do these verses tell us to do about persecution? **Endure!**

**James 1:2-4, I Peter 5:10**

* What does persecution produce in us according to - James 1:2-4
* How might persecution be a blessing?

**1 Peter 5:10 After you’ve suffered Christ himself will:**

1. Restore (complete you) 2. Confirm (secure you)

3. Strengthen (make you stronger) 4. established (grounded)

**How to live in a world of Christian persecution - Philippians 1:15-28**

**Paul is writing from prison. Arrested for preaching the gospel.**

1. **Realize its reality – 1:15-18, 29**
* Is it hard for you to know that you will suffer in this life for God? Why?

Accept that good will sometimes result in suffering

1. **Pray for those persecuted - 1:19**
* Why do you think it is important to know about suffering globally?
* How would you rate your compassion factor on a scale from 1-10?
* How can we encourage the persecuted and those feeling beat down?
1. **Seek to honor Jesus no matter what happens – 1:20**
* What are ways we can honor God in the middle of persecution?
1. **Accept your mission no matter where is takes you – 1:21-26**
* What is Paul saying about living or dying in this passage?
1. **Live a life of holiness faithfully – 1:27**
* How would you define, “conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the Gospel”?
1. **Don’t live in fear – 1:28**
* How is it possible to live without fear in the face of persecution?
1. **Trust that God will deal with them – 1:28**
* How is it comforting to know that God will take care of you and deal with those who persecute you? What is our role?

**HANG**

* What are the most common types of persecution we face?
* Can you share a time when you were persecuted for your faith?
* Pray for the persecuted church – here and globally

**HOME**

Look up each of the following websites, read and pray about how you can be a part of helping the global persecuted church.

[www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com) / [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org)

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**After you’ve suffered Christ himself will: I Peter 5:10**

1. Restore (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you) 2. Confirm (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you)

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**How to live a world of Christin persecution - Philippines 1:15-28**

1. **Realize it’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – 1:15-18, 29**
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5. **Live a life \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ faithfully – 1:27**
6. **Don’t live \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – 1:28**
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