

The Privilege of Persecution

“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” - Matt. 5:10-12

How to Develop a Persecution Complex:

1. Be strongly opinionated.
2. Be a God cop.
3. Be a superior Christian.
4. Be a real martyr.
5. Be committed to causes more than to Christ.
6. Be a _____ (your personal favourite here)

Being Persecuted For the Right Reasons:

1. For Righteousness’ Sake —

*“Blessed are those who are persecuted **because of righteousness**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” - Matthew 5:10*

2. For Christ’s Sake —

*“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you **because of me**.” - Matthew 5:11*

3. For Being Committed to Christ and Right —

- It will create opposition & conflict

“In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” - 2 Timothy 3:12

“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him.”

- Philippians 1:29

- It will cause hatred and exclusion

“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.”

- John 15:18-20

Christ’s Response to Persecution:

“When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.”

- 1 Peter 2:23

“But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you.”

- Luke 6:27,28

1. To enemies → Love them.
2. To hatred → Do good to them.
3. To cursing → Bless them.
4. To mistreatment → Pray for them.

Application Project:

1. Do I tend to have one of these persecution complexes?

Which one?

What causes me to be this way?

2. Two people to whom I need to give a Christ-like response are...

The Person → **The Offense** → **The response I need to give**

3. My prayer: Lord help me to respond as you would respond...

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