

ABUNDANT KINGDOM LIVING: THE PERSECUTED

For the week of February 16, 2020

Full message available at highpoint.church/currentseries

GOAL:

To understand and practice the discipline of suffering for abundant Kingdom living.

GET GOING:

- Retrace your steps today. What are items you used or advertisements you encountered that embed a culture of comfort (vs. accepting suffering as part of our normal, Christian faith)?
- Jim Elliot is a missionary who died sharing the gospel with the Huaorani people of Ecuador. He says, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.” What part of that quote challenges your thinking the most?
- Share a time when you or someone you know decided to suffer with joy because they were able to identify with Jesus’ suffering.

Memory Verse

“But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled” (1 Peter 3:14).



KEEP GROWING:

- Jesus says, “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake...” In other words, blessed are those who are persecuted because they live rightly before God and others. In what ways have you seen someone wrongly attribute their own faults/wrong choices as persecution from God (Galatians 6:7)? How have you wrongly attributed the consequences of your own wrong choice(s) as persecution from God?
- Throughout the beatitudes, all promises outside of Matthew 5:3 (“theirs is the kingdom of heaven”) and Matthew 5:9 (“theirs is the kingdom of heaven”) are future tense (“they shall be comforted”). Why do you think that is? How does Jesus’ present reign over a believer’s life provide flourishing (i.e. blessing)?
- Read Matthew 5:11-12; 2 Timothy 3:12; Luke 6:22. In what ways do these verses draw a direct correlation between following Jesus and being hated by the world?
- On your own or as a group, set aside time to read all of 1 Peter (just 5 chapters). Notice how often the words “suffering,” “trials,” “sorrow,” “beaten,” “tested,” “slandered,” “insulted,” etc., appear through the letter. What surprises you most about your findings? In what ways do your findings affirm or challenge your understanding of Christianity and prosperity?
- Read John 15:19-20. In what ways have you experienced suffering (e.g. verbal, physical, relational, economic...) because of your faith?

Bonus Challenge

If we have not and are not experiencing tension/suffering for following Jesus, we must evaluate whether we are truly following Jesus or looking more like the world. Suffering comes in different forms (e.g. verbal, physical, relational, economic...) or by choosing right action, right choices, and the right attitudes that are different from the world.

What is one area of your life that God is calling you to suffer for the sake of the gospel/your own flourishing?

