

**"PERSECUTION:
THE LOT OF ALL BELIEVERS"**

Introduction

1. Paul's last Letter
2. Even an Apostle had to suffer
3. Paul explains how we as believers, must in this life suffer

1. NOTE HOW BELIEVERS ARE HERE DESCRIBED

- 1) True Christians "live godly in Christ Jesus"
- 2) Implied here is the snare of Formalism:
 - (i) Baptism
 - (ii) mere Membership
 - (iii) Head Knowledge

APPLICATION: Hypocrites may have these things
- 3) To "live godly in Christ" involves:
 - (i) a heartly belief in Christian truth
 - (ii) a conscious obedience to Christ
 - (iii) a putting off and a putting on
 - (iv) a meek submission to God's will

DOCTRINE: All who so believe and live will suffer persecution. See v.10-11

2. REMEMBER THERE ARE VARIOUS FORMS OF PERSECUTION

- 1) There is something surprising here, because:
 - (i) the Lord's people are meek and gentle
 - (ii) they are affectionate and generous

OBSERVE: So, you would think they would be the most loved and cared for
- 2) But is not so – persecution has different forms:

- (i) unkind thoughts: Cain's hatred – Joseph's brothers – Saul's hatred of David – Judas for Christ
APPLICATION: This "enmity" is there in the unconverted
- (ii) unkind words: Ishmael of Isaac – Esau of Jacob – Saul's words to Jonathan – the things said about Christ by Jews
- (iii) unkind actions: Cruelty and murder – See Heb. 11 – the treatment of prophets + apostles – of Christ
APPLICATION: Nothing has changed today.

3. I GIVE REASONS WHY CHRISTIANS SO SUFFER

- 1) There are two "seeds" on earth
- 2) The unconverted man hates the believer:
 - (i) because he sees God in him
 - (ii) he knows he is different + godly
 - (iii) the believer condemns him
- 3) This is a profound difference
 - (i) light v. darkness
 - (ii) temple of God v. idols
 - (iii) child of God v. servant of Satan
- 4) No kindness or meekness on the believer's part will remove this "enmity"

PSALM

122: 1 – 9

124²: 1 – 8

7: 9 – 13

APPLICATION

1. Here is a mark of grace: Matthew 5
APPLICATION: Christ tells us to "rejoice"
2. Balance the pain you experience with the promised glory. So be comforted.
3. God teaches through persecution:
 - (i) to pray with conviction
 - (ii) to recognise our own depravity
 - (iii) to long for heaven glory

CONCLUSION

1. Be careful how you treat the Lord's people
2. They are Christ's sheep
3. Do not hurt them