



# TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

**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.**

*Matthew 5:10-12*

## The persecuted

You like getting teased, right? Everyone loves getting bullied. No? Doesn't it make your day to be called nasty names and get laughed at, pushed around, and hurt? So why would Jesus say that we are blessed when others do these things to us?

Hold on. That's not exactly what Jesus is saying. He's not saying that if you get bullied and persecuted for any reason you should consider yourself blessed. If you are bullied because you bullied someone else, you're just getting what you deserve. If people do not like you because you act like a snob, you brought that on yourself.

But, if the reason you are persecuted is because of Christ, because of righteousness, it's different. This means that you are seeking to live a Christian life and follow God's commands out of love for the God who has saved you. When you're persecuted for living this way, Jesus says, "blessed."

Why? Well, first it means that you know your Savior. There is no greater blessing than that. Through Christ the kingdom of heaven is yours. There is our reward. Our reward was won for us by Jesus who freely gives us forgiveness, peace with God, and endless joy with God.

There's one other thing. Persecution will come because you are a Christian. It will hurt. It will be painful. It may even leave scars, physical or emotional. As the world hated Jesus, so it hates those who follow Jesus and display that faith openly with their lives.

I tell you this so that when persecution comes, you can bear it instead of fighting back, getting angry with God, or worse, giving up the faith altogether. Instead, endure. Hang in there. Through faith in Christ, heaven is just around the corner.

**Prayer: Dearest Jesus, when persecution comes, help me be faithful even to the point of death that I may enter heaven. Amen.**