

# HOW TO HANDLE OPPOSITION TO YOUR FAITH

## 8 Keys to a Blessed Life – Part 8

December 17, 2017

*“Great blessings belong to those who suffer persecution for doing what is right. God’s kingdom belongs to them.” – Matthew 5:10 ERV*

*Everyone who wants to live as God desires, in Christ Jesus, will be persecuted. – 2 Tim. 3:12 NCV*

### 3 THINGS TO REMEMBER

#### 1. Opposition can make me more like Jesus.

*JESUS: “If the world hates you, remember that they hated me first. If you belonged to the world, the world would love you as it loves its own people. But I have chosen you to be different from those in the world.... If people treated me badly, they will treat you badly too.” – John 15:18-20 ERV*

*Jesus was the Son of God, but he still suffered, and through his sufferings learned to obey whatever God says. – Hebrews 4:8 ERV*

#### 2. Opposition will deepen my faith.

*These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold.... 1 Peter 1:7 NLT*

#### 3. Opposition leads to greater rewards in heaven.

*“People will insult you and hurt you. They will lie and say all kinds of evil things about you because you follow me. But when they do, you will be blessed. Rejoice and be glad, because you have a great reward waiting for you in heaven. – Matt. 5:11-12 NCV*

### WHAT TO DO WHEN I FEEL PERSECUTED

#### 1. Don’t be surprised.

*Dear friends, don’t be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. – 1 Peter 4:12 NLT*

#### 2. Don’t be afraid.

*But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don’t worry or be afraid of their threats. Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. – 1 Peter 3:14-15 NLT*

#### 3. Don’t be ashamed.

*But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name! – 1 Peter 4:16 NLT*

*But you must resist the devil and stay strong in your faith. You know that all over the world the Lord's followers are suffering just as you are. – 1 Peter 5:9 CEV*

**4. Recognize the true source of the opposition.**

*Our fight is not against people on earth. We are fighting against the...spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly places. – Eph. 6:12 ERV*

*Stay away from foolish and stupid arguments. You know these arguments grow into bigger arguments. As a servant of the Lord, you must not argue. Be kind to everyone.... You must gently teach those who don't agree with you.... The devil has trapped them and now makes them do what he wants. But maybe they can wake up to see what is happening and free themselves from the devil's trap. – 2 Tim. 2:23-26 ERV*

**5. Refuse to retaliate.**

*If someone does wrong to you, do not pay him back by doing wrong to him. Try to do what everyone thinks is right. Do your best to live in peace with everyone. My friends, do not try to punish others when they do wrong, but wait for God to punish them with his anger. – Romans 12:17-19 NCV*

**6. Respond with a blessing.**

*Don't let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good. – Romans 12:21 NLT*

*Jesus: "...love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Ask God to bless the people who ask for bad things to happen to you. Pray for the people who are mean to you." – Luke 6:27-28 ERV*