

## Luke 21:12-13

*But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.*

How many love to be persecuted for righteousness sake, raise your hands?  
We all hopefully know the Beatitudes and one of them says:

† **Matthew 5:10** *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

But we read that and wonder, “How can I be blessed or even feel blessed when I am being persecuted?” Which is an honest question. But when I read today’s devotional verses, it started to come to light for me, and I found the answer in verse 13, which says, “***But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony.***”

You see, we sometimes see persecution as a means of punishment or testing, but how many times have we been persecuted for the sake of testifying of Jesus and all that He has done for us?

In the book of John, the disciples asked Jesus in regards to a man who was born blind: ***And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" John 9:2 and Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." John 9:3-5***

Simply, we do not always know why we go through certain things in our life, be them good or bad (in our eyes) But as a Christian, we should see them as opportunities to be strengthened, and to grow in the Lord. But if we spend more time complaining to others about what we are going through, how is that bringing glory to God?

I think of my teenage son, who has been going to the gym and working out almost every day of the week. He could had just sat there and complained how he was out of shape and flabby and tired all the time and that he needed to go to the gym and work out. But by doing so, it would not accomplish anything, other then everyone around him getting tired of him saying what he needed to do, but not doing it. No, he knew what he needed to do, and found out quickly that it’s a painful process until your muscles get used to working out, and he has hung in there and does it anyway.

The same is true for us, we know when we are persecuted, we can either whine and cry about it to everyone, or we can learn by it and grow spiritually from it. We should also be using it as an opportunity to bring glory to the Lord, because He is with us as we are going through the persecution.

How much of a witness is it to others when all you do is complain about what you are going through, verses telling them of how the Lord is getting you through whatever it is?

† **Psalm 34:1-4** *I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the LORD; The humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together. I sought the LORD, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears.*