



# THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

## PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

### “THE WHY OF PERSECUTION”

#### Part 9 of Relationship Series

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Jesus said that persecution is a blessing (Mt. 5:10-12, Sermon on the Mount). However, it is a blessing that no one wants; it is something that most of us would rather not talk about. Like Jesus and the early Christians, Stephen (Acts 7-8), Paul (Acts 9), as well as Sis. Techie and Bro. Bobby Rodriguez (Elder-Founders of the Lord’s Flock Community), all of us have to undergo tests and trials for the sake of righteousness (Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 3:12). Indeed, if we belong to the Lord, troubles, tests, and persecutions are inevitable. Let us surrender everything to God and His blessing is assured.

#### 1. The “Why” of Persecution

- 1.1 Jesus was persecuted first. He was persecuted in all kinds of times, places, and manners. The Bible tells us that we will have to undergo persecution because of God (Jn. 16:33; 1 Thes. 3:4).
- 1.2 We are persecuted because our actions are odd, obnoxious, and self-righteous; these are inconsistent with righteousness. We are likely getting what we deserve and we do not deserve a blessing for them.

#### 2. The “Who” of Persecution

- 2.1 Persecution comes from unbelievers of Jesus. Satan is here to destroy God’s works and His followers; he may use people and situations to work against us.

#### 3. The Purpose of Persecution

- 3.1 To help spread the Word of God (Acts 8:4). After the death of Stephen, a severe persecution of the church in Jerusalem broke out, and all those who had been scattered went about preaching the Word.

- 3.2 To fulfill Jesus’ command (Acts 1:8). We should not be tempted to complain despite our painful and difficult circumstances. We should joyfully proclaim the Word of God and be witnesses to others and to the ends of the earth.

#### 4. Attitude When Persecuted

- 4.1 Keep our eyes and hearts focused on the Lord no matter what (Is. 41:10; Prov. 3:5; Mt. 10:19-20; 2 Cor. 4:16-18).
- 4.2 Pray. Praying for those who have hurt us is not only obedience to God’s Word but also an opportunity for Him to work in our hearts and with other people.
- 4.3 Completely rely upon God’s strength. God will give us strength when we feel weak and broken (2 Cor. 12:10).
- 4.4 Recognize that we are fighting a spiritual battle. Paul writes that the best way to fight the spiritual battle is to put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6:10).

#### Conclusion:

The blessing Jesus pronounces here is for those who have been persecuted because of righteousness because of Him; it is not for the disciples who have been persecuted for just any reason. If others cause us pain because we take discipleship seriously or because we want to be like God, we need not react. Truly, He knows the truth and He is true to His Words; He will bless us.

#### Reflection:

1. What kind of persecution are you undergoing today?
2. Is it because of your actions or because of righteousness?

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