

## Rejoicing in Persecution?

### Scripture Reading — Acts 5:17-32, 41

*The apostles ... [rejoiced] because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. Acts 5:41 —*

According to the video Shatter the Silence, at least 200 million Christians in about 60 countries are being persecuted for their faith.

Those of us who have always lived in countries where there is freedom of religion and worship cannot imagine what it's like to live under the threat of being tortured, imprisoned, or even killed simply because we confess Jesus as Savior and Lord. While we are free to complain about the temperature in our church buildings, or about the songs we sing, or about the length of a sermon, many brothers and sisters in faith throughout the world are suffering persecution and even death.

Of course, this should not take us by surprise. In John 15:18-20 the Lord Jesus predicted persecution: "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first... 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also." In fact, in Matthew 5:11-12, Jesus says, "Blessed are you when people ... persecute you ... because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven."

This promise explains why the disciples were able to rejoice because they had suffered disgrace for the Name of Jesus. This promise also makes it possible for persecuted Christians everywhere to be willing to suffer rather than deny their Lord.

### Prayer

*Father in heaven, today we pray for brothers and sisters who are being persecuted because they love you. Give them the grace to persevere, in your name.*

**Devotion topics:** [Life](#), [Christian Life](#), [Seeking God](#)

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