

THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

JULY 26, 2026

SCRIPTURE

And Saul approved of Stephen's execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentation over him. But Saul was ravaging the church, and entering house after house, he dragged off men and women and committed them to prison. Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. Acts 8:1-4

THE STORIES

Persecution has been part of the story of Christianity from its inception.

THE CAUSE

Persecution comes from living a godly life.

In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.
2 Timothy 3:12

"God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right." Matthew 5:10

Persecution comes from standing on God's Word.

"Persecution comes because of the Word." Matthew 13:21

THE EXPECTATION

"But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you." Luke 21:12

"You will be hated by all nations for My name's sake." Matthew 24:9

"If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also." John 15:20

THE PROGRESSION

Persecution usually begins with individuals, then groups, then government.

The Spirit of Christ is merciful, while the spirit of antichrist is merciless.

I was so obsessed with persecuting them that I ever hunted them down in foreign cities. Acts 26:11

I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison. Acts 22:4

THE RESPONSE

During persecution, there is a time to stand up and a time to stand down.

Regardless of what the moment calls for, our heart matters most!

“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” Matthew 5:44

THE PREPARATION

Remember to stay filled with the Spirit.

Remember who they are really persecuting.

Remember the call to endure.

Remember the Lord hasn’t forsaken you.

THE RESULTS

When persecution comes, it should inspire us to pray!

When persecution comes, it should inspire us to share the Gospel!

Persecution always results in the growth of the Church. No suffering is wasted!

When persecution comes, it should inspire us to give thanks!

When persecution comes, it should inspire us to live fully!