

# **Matthew 5:10-12**

September 16, 2018 – Rev. Rick Lyon

## **Intro**

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“Millions of American Christians pray in their churches each week, oblivious to the fact that Christians in many parts of the world suffer brutal torture, arrest, imprisonment and even death—their homes and communities laid waste—for no other reason than that they're Christians. The shocking, untold story of our time is that more Christians died in the 20<sup>th</sup> century simply for being Christians than in the first nineteen centuries [combined] after the birth of Christ.” *(Nina Shea, In The Lion's Den)*

Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. (**2 Timothy 3:12**)

"Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil because of the Son of Man." (**Luke 6:22**)

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## **1. The Reason for Persecution.**

### **#1 - Because of the life we live**

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**John 3:20** - "Everyone who does evil *hates the light*, and won't come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed."

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### **#2 - Because of the Lord we love.**

"If the world hates you, remember that *it hated Me* first... (Remember what I told you: 'A servant isn't greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they'll persecute you also." (**John 15:18, 20**)

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## **2. The Response to Persecution**

### **#1 - Don't retaliate**

**Romans 12:17, 19** - Don't repay anyone evil for evil... Don't take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it's written: "It's mine to avenge; I'll repay," says the Lord.

Peter: To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should *follow in His steps*. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth." When they hurled their insults at Him, *He didn't retaliate*; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly. (**1 Peter 2:21-23**)

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## **#2 - Show kindness**

**Romans 12:20-21** - If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink... Don't be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Abraham Lincoln: **"I destroy my enemies when I make them my friends."**

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## **#3 - Rejoice**

**2 Corinthians 4:17** - Our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that *far outweighs them all*.

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