

“Handling Opposition to Your Faith”

“Happy are those who are persecuted because they are good, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. When you are reviled and persecuted and lied about because you are my followers—wonderful! Be happy about it! Be very glad! for a tremendous reward awaits you up in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted too.” Matt. 5:10-12 (LB)

“Anyone who belongs to Christ Jesus and wants to live right will have trouble from others.” 2 Timothy 3:12 (CEV)

What To Do

1. DON'T BE SURPRISED

“Dear friends, don't be surprised or shocked when you go through painful trials that are like walking through fire, as though something unusual is happening to you.” 1 Peter 4:12 (CEV/TEV)

2. DON'T BE AFRAID

“If you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it, so don't be afraid and don't worry! Instead, worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if you are asked about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it.” 1 Peter 3:14-15 (NLT)

3. DON'T BE ASHAMED

“It is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Instead, thank God for the privilege of being called by his name!” 1 Peter 4:16 (NLT)

“Take a firm stand against Satan and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are.” 1 Peter 5:9 (NLT)

4. RECOGNIZE THE SOURCE OF THE OPPOSITION

“We're not fighting against human beings, but against wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly realm . . .” Eph. 6:12 (TEV)

“They called him every name in the book and he said nothing back. He suffered in silence, content to let God set things right.” 1 Peter 2:23 (Mes)

5. REFUSE TO RETALIATE

“Never pay back evil with more evil . . . If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. And never avenge yourself. Leave that to God, who has said, 'I'll be the judge and I'll take care of it.'” Romans 12:17-19

“Those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.” 1 Peter 4:19 (NIV)

6. RESPOND WITH A BLESSING

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:21 (ESV)

Jesus: “Love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you. If someone slaps you on one cheek, turn the other cheek.” Luke 6:27b-29a (NLT)