



**Educate
+ Engage**



GREATER
THAN



persecution

OVERVIEW

Life comes at us with many challenges. However, we have good news. God's love will help us conquer persecution.

Scripture Passage

Romans 8:35–37 (NKJV)

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

John 15:19–20 (NKJV)

If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

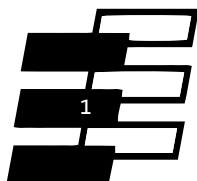
II Corinthians 12:9–10

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

EDUCATE

Have you ever thought about the power of a secret weapon? It's a weapon that no one knows you have. Not only is it a weapon, but it's a weapon with the element of surprise. Share about your favorite instance where someone used a secret weapon—it could be in sports or a comic book.

Spiritually speaking, each of us has a secret weapon as well. It's a weapon that guarantees our victory no matter what. In fact there's no stronger force in the universe than the secret weapon that you and I hold: it's the love of God.



Point 1: God's love gives us power even when we are persecuted.

Did you know that through God's love you can overcome anything and everything you face? Tonight, I believe Scripture is going to show us that no matter what we face—even and especially persecution—we are overcomers because of the love of God.

Romans 8:35–37 is our theme Scripture for this series, and God makes it very clear here: we can overcome anything—even persecution—because of the love of Christ.

Point 2: Persecution shows us we are walking in Jesus' footsteps.

Jesus explained in John 15:19–20 that if we are really living for Him, then persecution isn't a matter of if, it's a matter of when. Why? Because if Jesus faced persecution, then we are sure to face it as well.

Have you ever felt like the world hated you because of your faith and what you stand for? That's actually a sign you are headed in the right direction. Sometimes people think that when you face adversity or persecution it must be because you're doing something wrong, when in reality, Jesus tells us that this is what we will face if we head in the right direction.

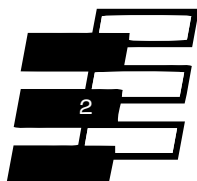
Share an experience from your own life of when you faced persecution because of what you believed.

Here's the good part—Scripture assures us that persecution isn't the end. We can conquer persecution through the love of God.

Point 3: God's grace will carry us through times of persecution.

The apostle Paul in the Bible faced all kinds of persecution, but he didn't say that he suffered through it. He said he delighted in it. Why is that? He knew that in persecution, God's power would be on full display.

The same is true for your life. Are you encountering persecution? (If you're not, be assured, you will.) This is simply an area in your life where God wants to put His power on full display. Even when you are weak, God's grace will get you through! Lean into God's grace and love when you encounter persecution and you will see God's power on full display in your life.



~~THE~~ ENGAGE

Are you facing persecution because of your faith in Christ? Lean into God's grace and love. God wants to show up on your behalf and put His power on display in your life. Tonight I want to challenge you to cast your cares on God!

