

# PRAYING FOR THE PERSECUTED

## Prayer Guide

*“Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”*  
2 Timothy 3:12

The Scriptures give us many stories of God’s people experiencing persecution. From the early days of the Old Testament to the disciples in the New Testament, we see a common theme. Persecution will come. But as we read scripture, we see different ways God wanted His people to react to persecution. There are some stories, such as Esther (Esther 4), whom God raises to stand. Then there are others, like the believers in Acts 8, that show us there are times to scatter.

*“A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria. But Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into prison. **But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.**” Acts 8:1-4*

As our disciples are facing persecution, they are also facing a decision to stand or to scatter. Neither one is wrong. In fact as we can see in these stories, God told them to do both. This is the key for our disciple makers to listen to the Father for their next direction. Some days they may be told to stand while others the Lord desires to scatter them for a greater harvest.

### Here’s a story from the field where God allowed scattering to happen.

One of our leaders shares this story: “One day, a group of underground believers held a special meeting because we knew we were sending a sister out of the country that day. At the same time we were meeting, an important soccer game was taking place for our country. Everyone was watching or talking about the game—everyone but us. As we met, I began to receive text messages with game updates. Many friends were crying and angry to see our country losing. They were praying to God to help our soccer team win. However, we were crying and praying for a much different reason. Our dear sister was fleeing to go to a neighboring country.

Her husband and son were planning to kill her for becoming a follower of Jesus. She had run out of options, and her heart was broken. No mother wants to leave her children behind. As we wept and cried out to God in a secret area, our country was weeping for a much different reason. That day our country lost the soccer game and our people were devastated. But that day in our underground meeting, we met with God. As we cried out to Him, our song became ‘Glory to You, Oh Father, to You Holy Spirit.’ We knew we would see each other again, but we also knew it would be in heaven. I looked at my friend on her knees with her hands surrendered to God singing ‘Glory to You, Oh Father, to You Holy Spirit.’ That night we left knowing that even though our country was mourning over soccer, we are winners. We are more than conquerors. We run the race, we play the game and win the prize. Persecution cannot stop the gospel and cannot separate us from the love of God.”

Our disciple makers are learning there are days to stand and there are days to scatter. We rest upon the direction of our Lord Jesus to tell us which to choose. Even when persecution scatters us, we use it to continue the spread of this gospel.

### WILL YOU PRAY WITH US...

- If persecution scatters us, it will increase multiplication. (Acts 8:1)

*“The believers who had been scattered during the persecution after Stephen’s death traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch of Syria. They preached the word of God, but only to Jews. However, some of the believers who went to Antioch from Cyprus and Cyrene began preaching to the Gentiles about the Lord Jesus. The power of the Lord was with them, and a large number of these Gentiles believed and turned to the Lord.” (Acts 11:19-21)*

- Persecution will bring great joy! (Acts 5:41)

*“The apostles left the high council rejoicing that God had counted them worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus.”*

- We would speak only what the Father teaches us to say with greater discernment. “I do nothing on my own but say only what the Father taught me” John 8:28

- We would stand in boldness to do what the Father says.

*“After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:31)*

- We love those who persecute us.

*“Bless those who persecute you. Don’t curse them; pray that God will bless them.” Romans 12:14*

