THE PERSECUTED CHURCH



2 TIMOTHY 3:10–17 NIV | Page 1847

How much do you think about crime every day?



Yet our lives are organized around avoiding it.



PERSECUTION IS...

Pressure to trade faithfulness to God for conformity to the world.

Persecution has much more effect on you than you think.

Consequently, it requires much more resistance than we direct toward it.



“In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus **will be persecuted.”**

2 Timothy 3:12 NIV84





POINT 1

Persecution is real and has real victims


4,849
believers killed for their faith
Open Doors, 2026


4,712
detained, imprisoned, or sentenced
Open Doors, 2026



388,000,000

Live under “High persecution” 1 in 7

Open Doors, 2026

Much of it is never counted.

1 in 80,000

Christians under pressure killed

1 in 24,000

U.S. murder rate

Being targeted is not the same as random crime.

All crime has a victim.
Persecution has a message.



POINT 2

Persecution works on incentives of fear (& relief)

One doesn’t have to harm **many** people to intimidate **most** people.

Each act tells the 80,000 how things are going to be.

TWO COVER STORIES

“We aren’t persecuting anyone.”

“They deserve it.”





POINT 3

So, continue in what you have learned



“But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of”

2 Timothy 3:14 NIV84



“All Scripture is God-breathed…

2 Timothy 3:16–17 NIV84



...so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

2 Timothy 3:16–17 NIV84




POINT 4
Choose preemptive solidarity

We are one body in Christ.



Even unsophisticated Christians are our brothers and sisters.



“They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens…**and now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No.**

Acts 16:37 NIV84

Are you willing, with Christ, to be “numbered with the transgressors”?

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