

Wretched Worldview

**Persecution:
Always Be Prepared**

Study Guide

Introduction

Welcome to the study guide for Wretched Worldview's *Persecution: Always Be Prepared* DVD. This guide has been created to help you maximize the content of the *Persecution: Always Be Prepared* DVD.

The chapter questions are intended to be used in a homeschool setting, but can also be used for small groups or Sunday school classes. For the homeschool student, the answers should include biblical references when possible.

The Going Deeper questions are designed to encourage deeper thinking and understanding of the subject. The goal is to strengthen the viewers' biblical worldview and instill skills to think biblically.

An answer guide and essay test are also available in this download.

A Word from Wretched

The times, they are definitely changing.

One doesn't have to be a social scientist to recognize the country has changed dramatically. The nation that was founded by Christians now views Christians as enemy #1. It seems we are no longer citizens, but foreigners in our own country.

While this does not excite us, the Bible tells us that this is actually normative. American Christians have enjoyed unprecedented freedom and now appear to be living in a type of environment that the Bible tells us to expect.

The great news is that God's Word gives us plentiful, profound and powerful advice for living in an increasingly hostile world.

How now shall we live in this brave new world? Exactly the way the Bible tells us to.

What you are about to study will help you respond to an antagonistic culture, and not simply be annoyed that our country is crumbling. These lessons will encourage you to align your thinking with God's desire and intended purpose for persecution.

Get ready. These are exciting times, scary times, and times that are loaded with opportunity for us to participate in God's plan for persecution.

Todd Friel
Host of Wretched Radio & TV

CHAPTER ONE: Peter's Shocking Instruction

1. Briefly describe the first widespread persecution of Christians in the first century as recorded by Foxe's Book of Martyrs. Where did it occur? Who was ruling at the time? What was the result for Christianity?
2. Briefly describe the second widespread persecution of Christians in the first century. Include the same details as above.
3. Why is it important to know how Christians were being treated when Peter wrote his first epistle?
4. What are some of the main points Peter writes to persecuted Christians in the first chapter of his letter?

GOING DEEPER:

1. Write a brief description of what you learn about Peter from these gospel accounts:
Mark 1:16-18, 29-31, 3:16
John 1:40-42, 20:1-7; 21:15-17
Matthew 17:1-13, 26:30-35, 69-75.

2. How does Peter describe the Christians to whom he is writing?
 - a. Look up the definition of an alien. What does it mean in this context?
 - b. Look up these verses and summarize why Peter referred to his readers as aliens:
John 15:18-19, 18:36
Ephesians 2:19
Philippians 3:20
Hebrews 11:13-16
1 Peter 2:11
 - c. Read Ephesians 1:3-8a and list everything God has done for Believers.
 - d. According to Ephesians 1:4-6, why did God do all this?
3. How is the Trinity involved in our salvation according to verse 2?
 - a. How is 2 Thess. 2:13-14 similar to 1 Peter 1:2?
4. What does Peter desire for the recipients to have in fullest measure?
5. Considering that the recipients of Peter's letter were undergoing persecution, how do you think the opening verses of the letter would have brought them comfort?

CHAPTER TWO: The Best is Yet to Come

1. According to Dr. MacArthur, what has the Lord promised to those who know Him and love Him in this life?
2. What are some of the lies our culture tells us? Why are these not true?
3. As Christians, what is the remedy for dealing with lost hope in this life, whether it comes in the form of disappointment, trouble or persecution?
4. How does Peter describe this inheritance in I Peter 1:4?

GOING DEEPER:

1. Let's learn a bit more about this inheritance that Peter says is imperishable, undefiled, will not fade away and is reserved in heaven for us. Look up the following verses and summarize what each has to say about this inheritance.
Psalm 16:5 –

Matthew 25:34 –

Acts 20:32 –

Acts 26:18 (read verses 16-17 for context) –

Ephesians 1:18 -

Ephesians 5:5 –

Colossians 3:23-24 -

Hebrews 9:15 -
2. How can we be sure that we'll receive this inheritance? What does Ephesians 1:13-14 tell us?
 - a. Explain in your own words what a pledge or guarantee is. Then explain how the Holy Spirit acts as a pledge, or guarantee, for Believers.

3. The word *perishable* is used several times throughout I Peter 1. (Other translations may use the word *corruptible*.) *Imperishable* is used in verse 4 and is implied in several other verses. Look up these words in a dictionary and write their definitions below.

- a. Read through I Peter 1 to find the references to *perishable*. List below what is being described as perishable and, by contrast, what is imperishable and how that relates to our salvation.

Perishable	Imperishable

4. How would the verses above, having to do with what is perishable and imperishable, be an encouragement for the persecuted Christians?

CHAPTER THREE: The Promise of Persecution

1. Todd quotes a promise from the Bible regarding those who live godly in Christ Jesus. Find the verse and write it below.
2. What was the context for the book of I Peter? And how did Christians suffer persecution in the first 300 years following Christ's death?
3. Why will there always be persecution of Christians?
4. Describe the different ways Christians experience persecution.
5. Why did Dr. MacArthur say it would be good for the church in America if Christians were being killed for their faith?

GOING DEEPER:

1. Read through I Peter 1 again. How would you describe the Christians to whom Peter is writing? How are they responding to their suffering and persecution? How are they relating to God through it? Cite the verses to support your answer.

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CHAPTER FOUR: Be Holy!

1. What are the three things from I Peter 1 that Peter wants the persecuted Christians to remember?
2. According to Todd, why are we (Christians) here? In other words, what is our job description? Does it change when we are being persecuted?
3. In light of the plight of the Christians Peter was writing to, why does he begin chapter 2 the way he does (verse 1)?
4. How do Christians grow in holiness? Cite the verse from chapter 2 that gives the answer.
5. What helps Christians keep a godly perspective of their persecutors?
6. What does Peter call Christians in verse 9 of chapter 2?
7. For what purpose does God make Christians a people for His own possession, according to verse 9?

GOING DEEPER:

1. I Peter chapter 2 begins with the word *therefore*. Whenever you see that word, you should stop and ask yourself, what is it there for? So, in the context of I Peter 2, what is the word *therefore* there for?

- a. Why are Believers a people for God's own possession?

- b. Look back over the list above. How do you think the persecuted Christians in Peter's day would have responded to this description of themselves?

- c. What about you? If you're a believer in Jesus Christ, how can the above list encourage you in your faith?

If you're not a believer in Jesus Christ, that is, if you've never repented of your sins and trusted in Christ's death and resurrection for your eternal salvation, are you concerned that the Bible says there is a doom that awaits you – an eternal judgment? If you want to better understand whom Jesus Christ is and what you must do to be saved, please go to wretched.tv for helpful and free information.

CHAPTER FIVE: Patiently Endure

1. Why might God allow persecution against Christians to come to America and how does this tie with I Peter 2:12?
2. According to 1 Peter 2, why should we as Christians submit to an unjust or unreasonable employer who dislikes us because of our faith? Which verse or verses from chapter 2 support your answer?
3. What are the three things to remember when suffering persecution, according to Dr. MacArthur?
4. Dr. MacArthur quoted Jesus telling us not to be anxious about what to say when we're arrested because the Holy Spirit will give us the words to speak. This admonition is found in three of the Gospels (two are direct references, the third is similar but slightly different). Find these references and write them below. How is one of them different from the other two?
5. How will the Holy Spirit help us to endure persecution?

6. Why does Dr. MacArthur say that death is the ultimate triumph for Christians? Give Scripture to support your answer.
7. How should Christians view Muslims who are persecuting them?
8. How can we as Christians remember to love our enemies?

GOING DEEPER:

1. Peter uses the phrase *for this finds favor* twice in chapter 2. Find the two verses that use this phrase and write down what Peter is referring to.
2. The end of chapter 2 presents Jesus as the example for Christians to follow in how they should endure unjust suffering. List everything you learn about why Christ's suffering was unjust and how He responded to it.
3. In writing about Christ's suffering, Peter quotes from Isaiah 53 several times in the last five verses of chapter two. Read through Isaiah 53 slowly and thoughtfully. Remember this is what Jesus suffered on *your* behalf.

When you're done, list below everything the text says about what Christ suffered, why He suffered, and what His suffering accomplished.

What Christ Suffered:

Why Christ Suffered:

What Christ's Suffering Accomplished (verses 11 & 12)

4. What is the comparison Isaiah uses to help us understand Christ's response to His suffering?
5. According to I Peter 2:24, what was the purpose for Christ's suffering on the cross?
6. How would the description of Jesus in 1 Peter 2:25 bring comfort to suffering Christians?

CHAPTER SIX: The Fruits of Persecution

1. What does the doctrine of sovereignty have to do with persecution of Christians?
2. According to James 1:2-4, what is the benefit of trials in our lives?
3. What is the benefit of trials in James 1:12?
4. According to Dr. MacArthur, persecution is a noble expectation. What does he mean by this?
5. How is persecution helpful to the Church?

GOING DEEPER:

We're going to take an in-depth look at the life of Joseph, a man who suffered greatly in his life, but whose sufferings were sovereignly used by God to accomplish God's divine plan and purpose for His people.

1. Joseph's story begins in Genesis 37. Joseph's father is Jacob (or Israel), and Joseph is the second youngest of twelve brothers.

Read verses 1-11 and write a brief synopsis of Joseph's relationship with his father and brothers. Use a commentary to discover the significance of the tunic that Israel gave Joseph, and include that information in your synopsis.

2. Read the rest of chapter 37 and list every detail that shows God's sovereignty in the events that unfold.

3. Read chapter 39 and note every reference to the phrase “the Lord was with Joseph” and record what impact that had on his circumstances.

The Lord was with Joseph and showed him favor, but notice what God didn't do for Joseph. He didn't remove him from his unjust circumstances. He didn't make a way for Joseph to be returned to his father. He blessed Joseph in the midst of his enslavement and mistreatment for the purpose of His greater divine plan for the future children of Israel.

4. Read Genesis 40-41
 - a. What is the “insult to injury” that happens to Joseph in chapter 40?
 - b. What are the circumstances surrounding Joseph's release from his imprisonment? How long after the events of chapter 40 does this happen?
 - c. Which verses in Chapter 41 tell you that God is sovereign over the weather and uses it for His purposes?
 - d. How old was Joseph when he was made second-in-command in Egypt? How many years had he been in Egypt at this point?

5. Read Genesis 42-44.
 - a. What is the significance of 42:6 and 43:26 and 28?
 - b. What do you learn from 42:21 about how Joseph responded when he was sold into slavery?
6. Read Genesis 45.
 - a. Who does Joseph say is responsible for him being in Egypt? For what purpose?
 - b. After Israel dies, Joseph's brothers fear that he will finally exact his revenge against them. Read Genesis 50:20-21 for Joseph's response. Why do you think he was able to respond this way?
7. What can you learn from Joseph in regards to how you view God's sovereignty in your trials and hardships?
8. Read James 1:12. How was Joseph able to persevere throughout the trials in his life?

CHAPTER SEVEN: The Witness of Submission

1. Briefly detail the extraordinary circumstances that surrounded the beheading of James, the son of Zebedee as told in Foxe's Book of Martyrs.
2. Explain I Peter 3:1,2 & 7 in light of the context of I Peter.
3. Write out verse 15 and explain it in the context of the book of I Peter.
4. Why is it important for Christians to keep a good conscience during times of persecution, according to I Peter 3:16-17?
5. At the end of chapter 3, Peter reminds his fellow Christians of Christ's suffering. What does he want them to remember?

GOING DEEPER:

1. I Peter 3:1-12 comes from one of the psalms. Which one is it that Peter is quoting from?
2. Read through the entire Psalm. Why do you think Peter quoted from this psalm?
3. How does David begin this psalm, particularly verses 1-3?
 - a. Why do you think David begins this way?
4. In this psalm, David gives many examples of how God responds to people in distress. Beginning with verse 6, list how David describes these people and how God responds to them. The first one is done for you.

To whom does God respond?	What does God do?
Verse 6 - The poor man	Hears his cry and saves him from his troubles.

5. Read I Peter 3:14&17. Is there a conflict of truth between these Scripture passages? How can you biblically reconcile the truth that God calls suffering for the sake of righteousness a blessing and something He may actually will for the Believer, with the promises in this psalm that He will rescue His people from all their troubles?

CHAPTER EIGHT: Living a Holy Life Amidst Persecution

1. Historically speaking, what were the publicly stated reasons that Christians were persecuted?
2. Briefly detail how the Apostles James the Less, Matthias, Andrew and Mark were martyred.
3. What is Peter's consistent and repeated message to persecuted Christians to whom he was writing?
4. According to I Peter 4:3-4, why are some of the Christians experiencing persecution?
5. In the midst of persecution, what does Peter tell the Christians to do in 4:7-11?
6. Why these particular instructions to the Christians, instead of more specifically referencing their suffering?

GOING DEEPER:

1. What is your understanding of what it means to be holy?
2. Before we look at Scripture passages on holiness, we're going to look at the Hebrew definition of the word in the Old Testament.

There are two ways you can find this information:

- 1) Look up the word in a Strong's concordance or a Word Study Dictionary.
- 2) Go online to blueletterbible.org and follow these steps:

- In the large box that says, "Search the Bible", type in *holy* and select NASB for Bible version, then hit the search icon.
- When the new page comes up, select the small box that says "Strong's" located in the blue dashboard area.
- Now you'll see a listing with all the verses that use the word *holy* (which will be highlighted in red). Next to the word *holy*, you'll see its Strong's number in blue. When you click on the number, it will give you its definition and other helpful information.

a. What is the Strong's number for holy in Hebrew?

b. What is its definition?

(The Greek meaning has the same idea, one of being separate and set apart. *Sanctify* is a similar word, meaning being set apart for God.)

c. How does this definition line up with your understanding of holiness?

3. Keeping in mind the definition of being holy, let's look at holiness in the Old Testament. Read the following verses and record what you learn.

Exodus 19:1-6 –

Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2-

Leviticus 20:26-

Deuteronomy 7:6-8-

a. Did any of these verses sound familiar? Which verses from I Peter quote directly from some of the verses above?

b. According to these verses, what was Israel separated from? And for what purpose were they set-apart?

4. Now let's look at holiness in the New Testament. Keep in mind that *sanctify* has a similar meaning to *holy*, so some translations use *sanctify* in place of *holy*.

I Corinthians 3:16-17 –

I Corinthians 6:9-11 -

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 –

Hebrews 3:1 -

2 Timothy 1:9 -

I Peter 2:5 -

Romans 6:5-7 & 11 give you further insight into what Believers are separated from and how it was accomplished.

- a. What are Believers separated from? And for what purpose are they set apart?

Have you been separated from sin and set apart for God? If God has saved you, then this is your spiritual reality and your life will give evidence of this through your love for God and obedience to His Word. If you're unsure of your salvation, please take time to examine your heart and your life. 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you- unless you fail the test?"

CHAPTER NINE: Holiness vs. Morality

1. What is the consistent theme of I Peter?
2. According to Pastor Azurdia, what is the difference between morality and holiness?
3. Pastor Azurdia gave a list of differences between the moral person and the holy person. Fill in the chart below with his list and then add any more differences that you can think of.

The Moral Person	The Holy Person

Galatians 2:20 –

Ephesians 4:22-24 –

Philippians 1:21-24–

4. Colossians 3:12-17 is a description of how those who have been chosen by God, and are holy and beloved, should live. List each imperative given in this chapter.

5. How do the verses from questions 3 and 4 help you better understand the command given in Romans 12:1?

6. Look over Pastor Azurdia's list of differences between the moral person and the holy person. How do the verses you read in this Going Deeper section address these differences?

CHAPTER TEN: Sanctified Through The Word

1. According to Peter's epistle, how do we grow in holiness?
2. Pastor Azurdia said, "The Bible is not finally or fully understood unless we appreciate it in its own Christocentric emphasis." What did he mean by this statement?
3. How does understanding the Bible's Christocentric emphasis explain how Peter began his letter to persecuted Christians?
4. Todd lists a chain of events that can happen when we don't read the Bible rightly, with its emphasis on the gospel. List that chain of events, and then explain where he gets this "chain" from.
5. Pastor Azurdia said The Word is not a magic book. What did he mean by this statement?
6. What is the point of our sanctification through the Scriptures? What does this have to do with persecution?

GOING DEEPER:

Sanctification is the process of being set apart, or made holy, for God's service. Two things are important to remember. One, it's a process. It happens over the course of a lifetime. No one is sanctified overnight. Two, no one ever reaches the end of sanctification in their lifetime. In other words, no one ever completely conquers sin in this life. According to I John 1:8, anyone who says he is without sin is a liar. So it's a lifelong process of being separated from the power of sin in our lives, and being set apart for God's holy use.

But who does the sanctifying, God or us?

1. Read the following verses and summarize what you learn about who, or what, produces holiness in our lives and how that is accomplished.

- a. Philippians 2:13; I Thess. 5:23-24; Hebrews 13:20-21:

- b. I Corinthians 1:30; Hebrews 2:12, 12:2:

- c. I Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2:

- d. John 17:17; Ephesians 5:25-27:

- e. Romans 6:12-13; 2 Cor. 7:1; Philippians 2:12; Hebrews 12:1-2

2. Based upon what you learned in Question 1, how would you explain who is responsible for a Believer's sanctification?

3. How do Believers grow in their sanctification? Read each verse and write down what you learn.
Matthew 4:4; John 17:17 –

Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6 –

Hebrews 10:24-25 –

Matthew 28:19-20 –
4. In Colossians 1:9-12, Paul writes out his prayer for the Colossian believers. As you read it, you'll see that it is very much a prayer for their sanctification. List everything he prays for them to do or to be.
 - a. Note that *knowledge* is used twice in Paul's prayer. How do Believers gain knowledge of God's will and of God Himself?
5. If you are a Believer in Jesus Christ, how is your sanctification going? Can you see progress in your fight against sin's power in your life? Are you daily yielding to the Lord in His work of sanctification in your life? Do you see the fruit of the Spirit reflected in your attitude and character? Take a few minutes to prayerfully examine your life and write out your thoughts. When you are finished, spend some time in prayer, and talk to the Lord about your sanctification.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: Designed by God

1. Briefly recap the book of I Peter, up to chapter 5.

Chapter One:

Chapter Two:

Chapter Three:

Chapter Four:

2. How did Dr. MacArthur answer the question, "Why does the world want to harm Christians?"
3. What was persecution designed by God to accomplish in a Believer's life? And for what end result?
4. Briefly describe the martyrdom of Paul and Jude.
5. In the context of I Peter, what is the importance of his instructions to elders to shepherd the flock in 5:2?
6. What are the two repeated admonitions throughout I Peter?
7. What is Peter's prescription in Chapter 5 for the persecuted Christians who may be anxious or fearful? Write out the verse.

GOING DEEPER:

1. In I Peter 5:5, Peter tells his readers to “clothe themselves with humility toward one another”. This is an interesting phrase, and one worth understanding. To discover its meaning, look up the verse in a Bible commentary, or go to blueletterbible.org and following the instructions from Chapter 8. This time however, type the verse in the Search Box and then select the Strong’s number after the word clothe. Write down everything you learn under the “Outline of Biblical Usage” section:
 - a. Now look at the Strong’s word for humility. What is its definition?
2. What reason does Peter give for them to clothe themselves with humility toward one another?
3. The last part of verse 5 is a quote from the Old Testament and is used in another New Testament book. Find where else it is used in the New Testament.
4. Look at the surrounding verses in both passages (I Peter 5:5 and your answer to question 3). Is there a similar command in the surrounding verses? Write out the verses that are similar.
5. What is the connection between pride and the devil? Read the following verses that describe Satan before and after God cast him out of heaven. What caused his downfall?
Ezekiel 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-14
6. Referring back to I Peter 5, how is the devil described? What is he doing?

- a. Using a Strong's concordance or blueletterbible.org, look up the definitions of *adversary* and *devil* in I Peter 5:8, and record them here.
 - b. Who is the devil accusing or slandering? Read Revelation 12:10 for the answer.
7. How might the devil try to devour the persecuted Christians to whom Peter is writing? Use verses from chapter 5 to support your answer.
8. What is Peter's last line of this letter?
- a. Do you think the persecuted Christians felt God's peace after reading this letter?

CHAPTER TWELVE: When the Theological Rubber Meets the Road

1. Why does Peter have more theology than practical application in his epistle?
2. How does Dr. MacArthur apply Peter's teaching on persecution? What two things did he say to do in persecution?
3. What is the result of the blood of the martyrs?
4. How does one get ready for persecution?
5. Why is it important to prepare for persecution?

GOING DEEPER:

1. The epistle of I John begins with John explaining how he and the other apostles were eyewitnesses to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Read I John 1:1-3 and list everything that made them eyewitnesses.
 - a. Look up the transliteration of witness (or testify) in I John 1:2 using a Strong's concordance or blueletterbible.org. The transliteration is the English spelling of the Greek word. What is the transliteration of witness in I John 1:2? Does it remind you of another word in English?
- Interesting fact: In its original Greek, this word simply means someone who bears witness or testifies of something. But because so many of the early witnesses for Christ were killed for their testimony, this word became synonymous with someone who dies for their faith.*
2. John 17 is often called The High Priestly Prayer. On the night Jesus was betrayed, He prayed for Himself in regards to His upcoming suffering and death, and also interceded on behalf of His disciples as His time with them was coming to an end. Jesus also mentioned those who

would believe in Him through the word of His disciples (verse 20). That includes all Believers right down to this present day!

Read John 17:13-21 to see what Jesus prayed for those who believe in Him.

- a. Why will the world hate Christians?
 - b. What did God ask and not ask of the Father in verse 15?
 - c. What does Jesus say about God's word in this passage?
 - d. Notice Jesus mentions being sent into the world. Who sent whom?
 - e. What is Jesus' desire for His disciples and all Believers as they endure the hatred of the world? (Check out the opening and closing verse of this particular passage.)
 - f. What is the result of the Believers being united in God the Father and God the Son?
3. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ (you have repented of your sins and trust in Christ alone for salvation), then Jesus' prayer in John 17 is for you. Read the entire chapter thinking of Jesus interceding on your behalf before the Father. Don't rush through this! Take the time to read this chapter slowly, reflectively, and prayerfully. When you are done, write a prayer back to the Father in response to what you have just read.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: What is Your Thing?

1. One last time, recap the book of I Peter by briefly summarizing each chapter.

Chapter One:

Chapter Two:

Chapter Three:

Chapter Four:

Chapter Five:

2. What did Jesus come to do? Find the verse that Todd quotes and write it below.
3. What did Jesus command us to do? Find the verse Todd quotes and write it below.
4. Briefly describe how Peter was martyred.
5. So...what is your thing?

GOING DEEPER:

1. Read through the entire book of I Peter one more time. As you do, look for the specific references to Christians suffering, trials, being slandered, etc. Write out the verses below.

2. Look through the above verses and list how the Christian is to respond to suffering and unjust treatment and why they are to have such a response.

How the Christian is to Respond	Why?

3. Spend some time reflecting on the list above. You may not have had to endure outright persecution in your life, but you've no doubt been treated unjustly at one time or another for being a Christian. Did you respond biblically? Why or why not? Write out your thoughts and then spend time praying about how you can more biblically respond to those who mistreat you.

4. Thinking about everything you learned in this DVD on persecution from the context of I Peter, write out what you would say to a fellow Believer who is enduring persecution or unjust suffering right now. Be sure to support your thoughts with Scripture.

If you want further information about how to become a Christian, please go to www.wretched.tv. You'll find helpful (and free!) information on what it means to be a Christian and how you can know for sure you're saved.