

# 4 - Early Struggles: Persecution

“You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends;  
and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.  
But not a hair of your head shall be lost.  
By your patience possess your souls.”  
~ Luke 21:16-19 ~

“Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.”  
~ 2 Timothy 3:12 ~

## **I. God of a Suffering People**

### **A. From the Beginning (almost)**

### **B. The New Testament Era**

## **II. God's Use of Suffering in His People**

### **A. That He Sovereignly Appoints It**

1. The Sovereign Appointment of the Sufferings of Christ
2. The Sovereign Call to Participate in the Sufferings of Christ

### **B. Why He Sovereignly Appoints It**

## **III. The Early Chapter of a Suffering People**

### **A. The Apostolic Era**

### **B. The Neronian Persecution (Nero, 54-68)**

### **C. The Fall of Jerusalem - 70AD**

1. Redemptive Historical Significance
2. Political Significance

### **D. Sporadic Imperial Persecution**

1. Titus and Domitian
  - a. Titus (79 – 81)
  - b. Domitian (81 – 96)
2. Trajan (98 – 117)
3. Other Severe Seasons
  - a. Marcus Aurelius (161-180)

- b. Decius (249-251)
- c. Valerian (253-260)
- d. Diocletian (303-305)
- e. Galerius (305-311)

4. Edict of Toleration - 311

#### **IV. Some Lessons for the Church Today**

**A. Expectation**

**B. Sobriety**

**C. Courage**

**D. Love**