

# **Growth Group Questions**

*6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, June 21, 2026*

## **Introduction**

In some places Christians face persecution that can end in death. In other places their lives are safe but they might be shut out of certain benefits or jobs or political offices. In still other areas the persecution is more personal, with overt hostility replaced by quieter suspicion, contempt, or disdain. What are the dangers to Christians in each of those three kinds of persecution?

## **Into the Word** – Jeremiah 20:7-13

1. Jeremiah was given a difficult ministry. He was to proclaim violence and destruction for Israel unless they repented of their sin. According to v. 8, what did his preaching get him?
2. One might think the alternative for Jeremiah then was not to preach. But according to verse 9, what problem did that bring?
3. Perhaps you know the feeling of “burning in our bones” at remaining silent about Jesus. Have you ever felt regret after a conversation ends and you didn’t speak up? If a person has never felt that what alarms might that set off as they consider the depth of their own faith?
4. It’s instructive for us to realize both who gave Jeremiah this hard task and who he looks to in verses 11-13 for strength to carry it out. Identify both.
5. Based on these words and the Gospel reading, should being a Christian be easy or hard? Discuss the difference between “Confident Christianity” and “Comfortable Christianity”.

## **Into the Word** – 2 Timothy 4:1-8

6. What charge does Paul give to young Pastor Timothy in v. 2? How does “great patience and careful instruction” sometimes get forgotten, and what damage can that do?
7. Even when Timothy does the right thing, what does Paul tell him to expect in verses 3 & 4? Can you think of examples of this today?
8. Paul wrote this letter during his second imprisonment in Rome. What was he expecting to happen (v. 6) but what was he hopeful for (v. 8)? What do we learn from this as we face persecution?

## **Into the Word** – Matthew 10:5a, 21-23

9. What hardships did Jesus tell the Twelve they would face as they went out in his name? Why would they face these?
10. Christians are to be bold, but not foolish in our proclamation of Jesus. What option does Jesus give in verse 23 for the suffering believer?
11. The end of verse 23 trips people up sometimes. It clearly refers to Jesus’ second coming but the apostles are all dead. The solution is in who he’s referring to by the word “you.” Can you figure it out?

**Closing Prayer:** Jesus, be with your children everywhere who face persecution and difficulty for their faith. Bless every believer with peace in your promise of a lasting home in heaven. Amen.