

# PRAYER IN TIMES OF PERSECUTION

But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you... (Matt 5:44).

AFTER READING THIS VERSE, the first question that comes to mind is: Why? Why should I pray for those who persecute me? And a close second is, How? How can I? They really hurt me! What incentive do I have to do this, other than it's desired and commanded by God? Certainly it's a hard thing to do: Doing good for those who hurt you is not normal. We would rather curse them, but that is prohibited (Rom 12:14). The answer lies in the fact that praying for the benefit of others is a good work that will be rewarded in heaven—a way of laying up treasure in heaven.

COMPARE PRAYER WITH THE DOCTRINES OF SERVICE, GOOD WORKS, AND REWARDS; IMPRECATORY PRAYER IS MODELED AFTER REWARDS PROMISED FOR GOOD WORKS IN MATTHEW 6:1–18

