The NT approach to undeserved opposition or oppression

This teaching can sound uncaring to those who are in the midst of suffering. It is not intended to supersede the importance of listening, caring, loving and helping. But at the appropriate stage it can be helpful to those enduring oppression, persecution and other trials.

1. Recognise what is happening

a. We are sharing in the sufferings of Christ
   Matt 10:24-25; John 15:18-20; 2 Cor 1:3-7; 1Peter 2:19-23; 4:12-19.

b. God has a loving purpose in allowing it
   Rom 8:28; Heb 12:4-13; 1 Peter 3:14

c. It is a preparation for glory
   2 Cor 4:16-18

2. React in faith

a. Rejoice in the blessing which comes through undeserved suffering
   Matt 5:11, Luke 6:22-23; Php 4:4; Col 5:16; James 1:2-4, 12.

b. Give thanks in the circumstances
   Eph 5:20; Col 3:17; 5:18

c. Take up cross
   Matt 16:24

d. Endure in the power of the Spirit
   2 Cor 1:8-9; 4:8-9; 6:4-10; 1 Peter 2:19-23

e. Reject false condemnation by others but trust in God to exonerate.
   1 Cor 4:3-5

3. React in love

This is not an option but a command John 15:12, 17; Gal 5:14; Col 3:14

a. Avoid retaliation
   1 Peter 3:9, 14-17 Control of one's tongue James 1:26; 3:9-10

b. Avoid selfish anger
   Matt 5:21; 1 Cor 13:5; Eph 4:26, 31; Col 3:8

c. Avoid quarrelling
   1 Cor 2:1-4

d. Avoid grumbling
   James 5:9

e. Avoid judgmentalism
   Matt 7:1; Luke 6:37

f. Avoid false accusation (slander)
1 Cor 5:11; 6:10; Col 3:8; 2 Tim 3:3; Titus 3:2; James 4:11; 1 Peter 2:1

g. Avoid resentment
1 Co 13:5; Eph 4:31; 2 Tim 3:3; 1 Peter 2:1; 1 John 2:11; 4:8, 11, 16, 20-21

h. Have a forgiving attitude
Matt 18:32-35; Luke 6:37; Rom 12:17, 19; Eph 4:32; Col 3:13

i. Be merciful Luke 6:36; Gal 6:1; James 2:13

j. Seek to make peace Matt 5:9 23-24; 1 Cor 1:10; Eph 4:3; Titus 3:2

k. Make a defence for the sake of the Kingdom

- Paul's Roman citizenship Acts 22:25
- Paul's practical support 1 Cor 9:1-15
- Paul's apostleship 2 Cor 11:5, 21-28; 12:11-12