

**General Topics :: It's about Jesus by Nik Ripken****It's about Jesus by Nik Ripken - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/12 14:31**

Many followers of Jesus are unaware of one of the lesser-known benefits concerning persecution. Persecution is a reflection of a great harvest. One of the fastest ways to discover where an unexpected harvest is taking place globally is to watch and listen for persecution. One of the principles of persecution is that often the bad guys know when God is up to something long before the church is even aware. This is a sad fact. Often the church, especially the church in the West, is not expecting God to do the unexpected; so we are unaware when God shows up in an outside of the formal church manner. Satan is so fearful of any unusual activity of the Holy Spirit that he is always on his guard; ready to hinder and harm any unusual activity of God.

Satan is fearfully watching for the activity of God; more so than the church.

Many believers in the West, especially pastors, say to me that persecution is coming to America. When I ask them to elaborate on their statements, they talk about their stances on abortion and homosexuality in an ever-increasing liberal governmental and cultural environment as evidence to a growing hostility toward Christianity. Is this what the church in the West wants to be known for? Is it our social stances that define us? Are our conservative social stances concerning homosexuality and abortion defining for who is a follower of Jesus? Is there not a fatal flaw in such an interpretation?

Conservative Christianity's stance in opposition to homosexuality and abortion is the same stance you would find in Saudi Arabia.

One must stand firm in regard to social issues in an ever-increasing non-biblical environment. Yet we cannot be defined by social stances that are in harmony with some of the most conservative Islamic countries on the planet. Believers in persecution can avoid being persecuted if they simply leave two things alone. If they will leave Jesus alone and witness alone they can avoid persecution. But they refuse. They insist on picking up Jesus as their Lord and Savior and they refuse to keep Him to themselves. Let's be honest; in much of the world if one simply accepts Jesus as their Lord and Savior, keeping Him privately to yourself, then you can die at an old age in your sleep. If one refuses to pick up and witness then they can live in relative safety as a Christian in places as hostile as Saudi Arabia and North Korea.

Where there is a great harvest there is great persecution. And you can flip that around; where there is little harvest, little witness, there is little persecution.

Social stances are a lot safer. Social stances can increase your audience both politically and religiously. Social stances are important. Yet social stances do not make one a follower of Jesus; just ask a follower of Islam in Saudi Arabia.

What should define us? It's two things. We have decided to follow Jesus and we have, secondly, determined that we will never keep Him to ourselves.

**Re: It's about Jesus by Nik Ripken - posted by dolfan (), on: 2014/5/12 14:43**

Amen.

**Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/5/12 15:06**

Is Jesus Worth It?

<http://nikripen.com/wp-content/themes/nikripen/downloads/audio/The%20Toughest%20Man%20I%20Ever%20Met.mp3>