

News and Current Events :: Ministry founder: U.S. Christians 'absolutely not prepared' for persecution

Ministry founder: U.S. Christians 'absolutely not prepared' for persecution - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2008/1/2 14:28

Ministry founder: U.S. Christians 'absolutely not prepared' for persecution

The founder of Gospel for Asia says while persecution is increasing worldwide for Christians, he believes it will soon impact believers in America -- and K.P. Yohannan says they need to get ready for it.

Persecution against Christians is increasing worldwide, especially in countries such as India, where attacks on churches and Christians by Hindu extremists have increased dramatically. In fact, when missionaries graduate from Gospel for Asia (GFA) Bible colleges, they are told to expect persecution -- and perhaps even death -- for spreading the gospel.

According to GFA founder K.P. Yohannan, Christians in those countries expect such treatment and are prepared when the tough times come. But he believes Christians in America will soon be faced with persecution as well -- and he is fearful that many are not ready.

"The great falling-away from faith could be worst here in because people are absolutely not prepared to face suffering or persecution -- because we cannot imagine a gospel with the cross and the suffering in it," says Yohannan. "Yet the Bible teaches very strong about it. So as the Word of God says: He who has ears, let him hear."

The ministry leader is convinced that prosperity has caused many Christians in America to focus on material possession instead of surrendering all to Christ. The result, he says, is that American Christians have become "very naïve" in thinking that real persecution will never come their way.

"These are warning signs," he exclaims. "God is telling us we need to prepare our lives. And preachers going around saying that revival is coming, and everything is okay, and all these things? I think that people are set up for huge disaster and denying their faith when they face problems."

It is estimated that more than 16,000 Christians are martyred worldwide each year for their faith.

from: http://www.onenewsnow.com/2007/12/ministry_founder_us_christians.php

Re: Ministry founder: U.S. Christians 'absolutely not prepared' for persecu - posted by UniqueWebRev (), on: 2008/1/2 20:00

Quote:

 sermonindex wrote:

Ministry founder: U.S. Christians 'absolutely not prepared' for persecution

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 Yes, and more to come. Somehow, many in North America seem to think that 'It could never happen here!'

Other's just think we'll all get out without a scratch before the Anti-Christ(singular, world-leader) sits down in the Temple that some Jews are so hopefully building.

And as much as I'd like to get out on the Angel Express before anything happens to any of us, I am not afraid to admit...I'm afraid!

Even so...Come quickly, Jesus!

Blessings,

Forrest

Just thinking - posted by dohzman (), on: 2008/1/3 6:19

I'm not sure one can prepare for persecution. I do believe that you can disciple your thinking to stay the course and then do just that, but at the moment of the crisis event there will also be a supply of God's grace. Enduring hardship as a soldier of Christ is another thing, many in America have never counted the cost to follow Jesus, they will grow weary of the journey and just plain stop following Jesus, especially as He exacts a life style of self denial the longer one genuinely follows Him. I would say that in America the biggest obstacle will be the dissolution that will set into many who have been following Jesus under FALSE pretenses. As a country America has embraced a self centered gospel rather than a gospel of the cross.

Re: Just thinking, on: 2008/1/3 8:44

Quote:

-----I'm not sure one can prepare for persecution

I have to agree with you Dohzman. I am inclined to believe that if anyone has gone thru a series of extensive trials and hardships and if they endure that surely they will endure persecution. You gotta love the LORD in your trial or we'll only end up being complainers like Israel was in the wilderness.

Still, persecution will cause many to fall away. I just hope that I/we are not one of them.

Re: Just thinking - posted by psalm1, on: 2008/1/3 8:44

It does strike me as strange that the one who emptied himself to be born of a human and walked the earth, basically with nothing, lived and died as the ultimate sacrifice.

This is our leader our God and our example.

Persecution takes away options.

We can humble ourselves now or be humbled by

In a sense our destiny is determined by us.

David

Re:, on: 2008/1/3 11:57

Quote:

-----In a sense our destiny is determined by us.

The very thought of that is frightening, to think that our destiny is determined by us means that we're doomed. I know not the way, "His word is a light unto my path". I am not a source of light, the source of oil doesn't come from me. He has mercy on us at His own will, He hardens whom He hardeneth. Clay has no will in the hands of the potter. If I had free will I would have run from Christ long ago. However, I thank God that I don't. It's by His will that I am where I am and I am thankful for that.

Re: Just thinking - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2008/1/3 13:14

Quote:
-----I'm not sure one can prepare for persecution. I do believe that you can disciple your thinking to stay the course and than do just that , but at the moment of the crisis event there will also be a supply of God's grace. Enduring hardship as a soldier of Christ is another thing, many in America have never counted the cost to follow Jesus, they will grow weary of the journey and just plain stop following Jesus, especially as He exacts a life style of self denial the longer one genuinely follows Him. I would say that in America the biggest obstical will be the dissolution that will set into many who have been following Jesus under FALSE pretenses. As a country America has embraced a self centered gospel rather than a gospel of the cross.

I agree although I think this is the key: "I'm not sure one can prepare for persecution. I do believe that you can disciple your thinking to stay the course and than do just that" to whatever preparation there could possibly be done.

In the meantime, we need to be yoked together with the LORD and not worry.

Have a blessed year!
ginnyrose

Re: - posted by psalm1, on: 2008/1/3 13:34

compliments, Read the 7 letters to the 7 churches. Then tell me we have absolutely no impact on our own destiny. Would "future" be a more appropriate term?

Why would God have intercessors if it were not for answered prayer.
Moses stopped God From wiping out an entire race

David

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2008/1/4 20:25

Hi everyone.

The Lord said

Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

Re: - posted by dohzman (), on: 2008/1/4 23:06

Good word, good reminder :-)

Re: - posted by Tears_of_joy, on: 2008/1/4 23:41

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:
Hi everyone.

The Lord said

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Hello brother, The One who said that, He also said:

Mat 24:44 Therefore **be ye also ready***: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

*G2092

ἕτοιμος; fem. heto-me; neut. hētoimon, adj. Ready, **prepared** (Mat_22:4, Mat_22:8; Mat_24:44; Mar_14:15; Joh_7:6; 2Co_10:16). Preceding an inf. meaning ready to be done (1Pe_1:5); of persons (Mat_25:10); with prās (G4314), unto, with the acc., **ready for anything** (Tit_3:1; 1Pe_3:15); followed by the inf. meaning ready to do (Luk_22:33; Act_23:15); with the inf. implied (Act_23:21). **To become ready, be prepared** (Mat_24:44; Luk_12:40; Sept.: Exo_19:15; Exo_34:2). The expression en heto-mo; ἔχο; (en, in; heto-mo; ἔχο; , to have) **means to have in readiness, be prepared** (2Co_10:6).

Deriv.: hetoimazo; (G2090), **to prepare**; hetoimas-a (G2091), **preparation**; heto-mo;s (G2093), ready.

Syn.: prāthumos (G4289), predisposed, willing; kate;rtismōnos (the perf. pass. part. of katartizo; , **to prepare**), **prepared**; kateskeuasmōnos (the perf. pass. part. of kataskeuazo; , **to prepare**), **prepared**, made ready, **equipped**; pareskeuasmōnos (the perf. pass. part. of paraskeuazo; , **to prepare**), **make ready, prepared, ready**.

Antonym.: aparaskeōstos (G532), unprepared.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2008/1/5 3:26

Hi brother Kire,

Thank you for that.

Is that what we are doing here, getting ready?

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2008/1/5 3:32

Also brother Kire, isn't that passage talking about being ready for His return?

Do you think that would include speculating about persecution?

Thanks,

Chris

EDIT: by the way, I apologise if anyone saw me on-line and was waiting for me to reply. I fell asleep for a while.

Re: Ready - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/1/5 10:37

Quote:

-----*G2092

ἕτοιμος

hÃ©toimos; fem. hetoÃ-mē; neut. hÃ©toimon, adj. Ready, **prepared** (Mat_22:4, Mat_22:8; Mat_24:44; Mar_14:15; Joh_7:6; 2Co_10:16). Preceding an inf. meaning ready to be done (1Pe_1:5); of persons (Mat_25:10); with prÃ©s (G4314), unto, with the acc., **ready for anything** (Tit_3:1; 1Pe_3:15); followed by the inf. meaning ready to do (Luk_22:33; Act_23:15); with the inf. implied (Act_23:21). **To become ready, be prepared** (Mat_24:44; Luk_12:40; Sept.: Exo_19:15; Exo_34:2). The expression en hetoÃ-mō Ã©chō (en , in; hetoÃ-mō Ã©chō , to have) **means to have in readiness, be prepared** (2Co_10:6).

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"ready for anything "

Re:, on: 2008/1/5 10:37

They are still His people regardless, and He will deal with them.

Intercessions are for us. To make us, we plead unto God because He has not shown us the whole picture, we are left in the unknown and He gives us what we need to know, here a little and there a little.

When God wanted to destroy Israel, what do you think He was doing?

He was provoking Moses to respond and step in His way and intercede for the people. It's not God's will that any should perish. He was testing Moses to see what He had learned in His presence. Did Abraham learn anything in His presence when he was interceding for Sodom? Yes he did, for he said,

Quote:
-----Genesis 18:25 That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

God provokes His people to love and He looks for anyone that is willing to make up the hedge and stand in the gap, and He will come and be strong on their behalf. We are the ones that are being changed from glory to glory, not God. We are the ones that need changing.

God is in complete control, to believe otherwise is frightening.

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2008/1/5 11:26

Quote:

-----Is that what we are doing here, getting ready?

Good question Chris.

I am disturbed at how "prophecy" is becoming the dominant theme here at SI. In my experience, this trend invariably displaces a Christian's rest in biblical certainty with conjecture and even superstition. Once we start playing in the sandbox of guessing what is coming, we have no foundation of 'knowing' what we believe in our faith. We still claim we rest in the bible, but in truth we are bobbing on an ocean of feelings.

I've said this before but the point needs to be made again. The recent experience with our brothers Rhaman and Ironman is not just about them but also about us. My goodness, they've tried to repent but we won't let them, insisting they have prophesied afterall! How confusing this must be for them.

This need to look for prophetic glimpses of the future is extra-biblical and can only lead to erosion of our confidence in Christ. This nervous preoccupation with fortune telling is not the gift Paul was encouraging the church to practice. It is a superstition that says we are supposed to know what is going to happen every step of the way. Soon we find that almost everyone is elevating their own thoughts (fueled by everything but the bible) into messages, albeit vague and polluted, from heaven. They mistake their ordinary pathologies for extraordinary prophecies. The fact that they are wrong doesn't matter because everyone is fearing the same things, and that settles the matter. Once we depart from the simple biblical path we have little defense against our pathologies.

So all we can offer one another is "is it God or is this just me? I don't know but I'll share my vision anyway and place the burden on someone else." This is superstitious bondage. I've seen this play out many times in individuals and in local bodies. It's insidious.

If we are not careful SI will become the Elijahlist for pessimists.

I've mentioned this in another thread, and it bears repeating here; there is an eschatological theme in the gospel where we know that Jesus will overthrow this world as he crushes Satan under our feet. This thread of victory running from Genesis to Revelation is what we are given to rest in. The bible does not inform specifically us about America's dollar, or any other modern news story. To say it does, but that it is encoded or hidden is to do a terrible injury to the clarity of God's Word.

We need to get a grip on our emotions and imaginations. If persecution, or famine, or whatever does come, we can't afford to be led by these frantic prophets (so they say) who will only have even more speculation to offer the church. Instead, we will need leaders whose inner man is rooted not in CNN, but in disciplined and faithful knowledge of Scripture. Are we Christian men who seek to live firmly within the provision of scripture or are we pathological pagans trying to make sense of bones and entrails?

Repent Sermon Index of this nonsense. Otherwise you'll be little light in a world already filled with dark fears.

MC

Re: - posted by Tears_of_joy, on: 2008/1/5 11:57

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:
Hi brother Kire,

Thank you for that.

Hello brother Chris, I would like to add few more thoughts that I had last night (but went off-line), about my comment on your post.

You shared:

Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

I shared:

Mat 24:44 **Therefore be ye also ready:** for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

I think the we must see the context of the both verses. The context of the first verse is:

Mat 6:31 Therefore take no thought, saying, **What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?**

The context is here is not to care about our daily material things, eating, drinking, clothing.

The context of the second verse is the coming of our Lord which is preceded by persecution of the saints. And in that light our Lord is saying 'be ye ready'. We are not said to care about the material things. But obviously about something else, on which we have need to be ready, because the Lord said so. What it means to be ready and prepared? I think that's a good question with crucial importance.

Quote:

ChrisJD wrote:

Is that what we are doing here, getting ready?

I don't know brother. I would like to.

Before to see this thread, last year, I had in my heart to start a thread just about that, 'Preparing for the days coming'. I shared this with few saints. I was inspired when I sent you the PM with the Richard Wurmbands sermon. My point was all of us to share things, sermons, articles, passages, for encouragement of the Body seeing what our precious brothers has went through. Surely this has been given to us and we must not ignore it (I mean those testimonies).

And in every seasons and times,

2Co 12:9 And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee:** for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Re: Preparing for persecution - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2008/1/5 12:13

I posted this article on my xanga a couple of days ago and someone asked a good question: should we prepare for persecution or should we prepare to meet Jesus? Here is was my response:

My thoughts on preparing for persecution are pretty much the same as preparing to meet Jesus- because when I say 'preparing' I mean spiritually prepared. I mean holding all things on this earth with an open hand (material, relational, everything) When we hold to things too tight, we are making an idol out of them anyway. I believe that Jesus should look more lovely, more valuable to us than anything on earth.

I think K.P. Yohannan is saying that American Christians are not prepared because they are too attached to material things, to comfort- but also are spiritually unprepared to suffer. The messages coming out of many pulpits and books is that all trials, tests and suffering comes from the devil. All you have to do is look up the words 'test', 'tests', and 'trials' in the Bible and we can plainly see that God does allow us to be tested - for our good and His glory. So that we will grow in patience and perseverance- two things that are vital, not only to living the Christian life, but also vital for enduring persecution.

I like the way John Piper talks about having a 'wartime mentality' in some of his books. I can honestly say I do try to live with this mentality all the time. If I catch myself holding on to something too tight- if I think I can't bear to part with this or that (including family) then I know I've lost my wartime mentality and it's time to get back to Jesus being my greatest treasure alone.

"...that you develop a wartime mentality and lifestyle; that you never forget that life is short, that billions of people hang in the balance of heaven and hell everyday, that the love of money is spiritual suicide, that the goals of upward mobility (nicer clothes, cars, houses, vacations, food, hobbies) are a poor and dangerous substitute for the goals of living for Christ with all your might and maximizing your joy in ministry to people's needs." - John Piper

How wonderful if persecution never comes in our lifetime. How gracious God would be to keep our land free at this time. That very may well be the case. But we don't know if that will be the case in our children's generation or our grandchildren's generation. The thought pushes me even more to make sure my children's faith is solid- that they do not grow comfortable, that they learn about missionaries and great saints of old who suffered for their faith. It is sooo important that they do not get this idea that the Christian life is all about comfort and happiness and God forbid- the American dream. Yes, the Christian life is about joy and peace- but I believe that Christians can still have joy and peace amidst suffering, amidst trials and amidst persecution. Paul did. Peter did. Many others who have walked before us on this path have had immense joy and peace though they walked through the valley, were burned at the stake, hung, crucified, eaten by lions. --Ok, I'm sure you get my point :)

I don't like to sound depressing here. There is much to live for and much to be joyous about in this life. It's not something I think about everyday-"will persecution come today, next year, in 10 yrs?" But I do believe that if we are living with a wartime mentality, with an open hand and fully surrendered to the Lord, we won't worry about it- but we will be as prepared as we can be. God's grace will do the rest.

(<http://youtube.com/watch?vK5yJGFKYAFo>) John Piper- Wartime Lifestyle

In His love, Chanin

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2008/1/5 12:15

Hi brother Kire,

About the Matt 6:34 and the context. That is a good point, but I think verse 34 maybe enlarges subject to the evil of every day in general? Still, I take your point.

About Matt 24:44, doesn't the Lord indicate how they were to be prepared in the next verses? I think that persecution is mentioned in the beginning of the discourse, but I'm not sure that was in view there specifically?

Something that used to trouble me when I spent a lot of time looking into these things (the headlines, news watching, web sites and so on) was the source of the information I was getting. It almost seemed like there was a danger that I was listening to the enemies' plans and then repeating them as though they were certain to happen?

I said wait a minute, that just didn't seem right?

Take care for now,

Chris

Re: american dream - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2008/1/5 12:36

I do feel compelled to say something about the 'American dream' I mentioned in my last post. I have to be honest and say that when most people would look at our family and our home- it looks like the American dream. We didn't purpose to do this or seek it out. All I can say is that God has blessed my husband (and our family) with a wonderful business. My husband owns his own company (an electrical and mechanical company servicing industries such as Toyota, Home Depot, ect....) Have I felt guilty in the past for having what we have- yes. I am very cautious about getting everything we 'want' and trying to buy only what we need. But the Lord has reminded me many times of Dan's (my husband) opportunities to be a giver. And that is his main gift. Though he works a lot and is very involved with his company, he loves to give and help people out. God has used Dan's business many times to witness the love of Jesus to others. We have been able to be a blessing to others when needs arise.

If we wanted I know we could have a bigger house (and our house is not tiny now) and better cars (though we don't drive junkers). I could be getting my nails done and by expensive makeup and having someone clean my house, etc... But I choose to do only what is necessary. And by someone else's standard- that still may be too much.

My point is how we hang onto these things. Would I be heartbroken if we had to live in a tiny apartment (with 3 children) or only have 1 car, or buy all my clothes from Salvation Army? Those things don't define my life and my focus. I can be happy anywhere, with much or little (I've had very little and much). My prayer is that no matter how you live (with much or little) that you hold all these things with open hands. All things could be taken away at any moment.

I like how John Piper says that his idea of a wartime lifestyle is not necessarily a 'simple' life- which is fine if you choose that- but one where we use the things we do have in a way that shows that HE is our treasure and not those 'things'.

In His love, Chanin

Re: Coming to grips - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/1/5 13:26

MC,

You are speaking my mind ... in many places. It is difficult to break this self imposed silence but I concur and think you have touched on the essence that even this post has its ties to.

Do want to inject that what is going on with our brothers is however less a continuing ... assault on them as it may just be a process of working through the accounting of it all, had in mind something on the order of a debriefing if you will, not a dissecting. To bring some fairness to all of it, it has been a very long ... expression covering a lot of writing and defending so on and so forth in regards to their specifics of what is now past and finished. To bring the measure of sorting through it all that we have I think is both helpful and is bringing out a lot of very good understanding. To look at it broadly, really there hasn't been a hammering away at the specifics but far more the whole enchilada of the construct. We have gone out of our way here to express our love and concern, even our prayers for these brothers as they are indeed, it is this that has made the whole thing very difficult in one aspect.

On the one hand I can see the level of coming to their defense as one of true concern for the present state and all this as just too much beating of a dead horse. On the other and dare I include yourself MC, Clint, myself, others ... A concern for all this to just become so much smoothing over, forgive, forget and move on. There is that element but again I propose we have broadened the scope significantly and this here is precisely my thought and the even the quick amen earlier to what was post in regards to "Being ready for anything".

Absolutely MC, this is the great nagging issue of so much, this preoccupation with future events. For the life of me, and maybe I do need to go diligently searching to find it, but sometime last year before Adrian Rodgers left the bounds of this madness and arrived truly home had heard a message based around;

Ecc 3:14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it:

and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

Ecc 9:3 This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead.

Ecc 9:11 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

There is a great problem with this in that I cannot recall the exact verse and those above were only part of them. The essence was that the future belongs to God Himself and for the greater and greatest part He is not telling us. That was the very gist of the message. I know that does not sit well with ... let me use this accident I just happened on while searching ...

From the MKJV version extant; *Isa 19:3 And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst of it, and I will destroy its wisdom. And they shall seek to idols, and to the enchanters, and to the mediums, and to the future-tellers.* Notice, *future-tellers*)

I don't want to make anything more of it than just a notice. It just to stress the same point MC is after here. We do need to come to grips with this and pray that what is attempting to be forwarded here by some of us is just this essence of preoccupation with what is hidden from us and rightfully so ...

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Act 17:26-28

Please allow how much is not being said here. To return it to what Kire posted about being ready and that, *anything ...* If there is a prophetic 'word' to be adhered to it is certainly that in this day we are living in.

If I haven't before, will now admit that even up till the last moment there was still a sort of hesitating over what both our brothers had 'prophesied', I do mean 12/31/07, that the *possibility* existed that some event could have transpired, some terrible terrorist attack ... who knows. Though I may have intellectually and even spiritually 'doubted' it ... do you see the point MC is making? It is insidious, it creeps down into the thinking one way or another. Why? Because as much as I felt that at all this was so much ... call it what you may, and the level of defending and so forth that preceded it chiseled off the credibility amongst other things ... Still, they are my brothers, perhaps *I am off* went the thinking underneath, "you never know". It is all very subtle. The hesitation wasn't in regards to saving face, was quite willing to just go ahead anyway and start replying ahead of time of "D-Day" but hoping we all can see that this little catch isn't the point at all. The point is that it is like hedging a bet, if I go 'before' and state "this is not going to happen" while I hold a catch in my thoughts I am both presumptuous and lying, I am jumping the gun, hedging my bet that I am right. And if I am right it is a sigh of relief that I wasn't proven wrong ... whew, guessed good on that one. Trust me, I was well into betting on football, basketball, baseball for a time some years ago. I don't think the analogy is too far afield to be applied here at all. Rather than go on with this as to what if I am wrong or was wrong ... frankly it is much the same thing, I am concerned not at all over it perception wise, personally. It just seems to me that what we have here with so much of this and as MC has so well articulated is very much of the same elements, hedging bets, gambling with things we have no business with, reading into and reading out of scripture things that foster either our imaginations or the short circuited aspects of our combined spirituality and fallen imaginative heads. It goes towards as much conspiracy 'theory' as it does to whatever coming persecution may or may not be 'at hand'. It is not a wholesale dismissal but it is also not a un-Berean inability, how truly important is Paul's admonishen there. We need to be people of fact's and honesty when we have them and just as honest when they are in the realm of perhaps.

Anything is possible, not everything is imminent, much may not be. We just do not know until it is more pronounced. I think KP's original assessment is dead on and ironically it may be greatly overlooked, we are not ready perhaps because we can become preoccupied with tomorrow and 'what's coming' rather than being prepared to meet with the Lord of Glory in our very next breath.

Re: - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/1/5 20:00

Quote:
-----Anything is possible, not everything is imminent, much may not be. We just do not know until it is more pronounced. I think KP's original assessment is dead on and ironically it may be greatly overlooked, we are not ready perhaps because we can become preoccupied with tomorrow and 'what's coming' rather than being prepared to meet with the Lord of Glory in our very next breath.

Brother,

Is it possible we are not paying enough attention to the one who said,

Matthew 24:25

Behold, I have told you before.

He told us before so we would not be found as,

Matthew 24:50-51

The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

This is after,

Matthew 24:21-22

For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

The servant was still caught up with the cares of this world, why? He did not take heed to the words of Christ.

Matthew 24:25

Behold, I have told you before.

It is The Lord Jesus Christ who tells us to,

Matthew 24:42

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

"Behold, I have told you before."

Yes we must be ready, 'right now' for anything;
but the reason we watch, is because He, Christ our Lord has told us to do so.

Will we trust Him? If we do, we will be ready for anything.

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2008/1/5 20:23

Quote:
-----If persecution, or famine, or whatever does come, we can't afford to be led by these frantic prophets (so they say) who will only have even more speculation to offer the church. Instead, we will need leaders whose inner man is rooted not in CNN, but in disciplined and faithful knowledge of Scripture.

Amen and AMEN!

I've followed several SI threads in the last few months and...well...this really says it all folks.

Excellent word brother MC.

Re: silence - posted by broclint (), on: 2008/1/6 8:02

I too thought I would just let it rest for a while but had to add my two cents on this thread :-(

Mike B said: "...how truly important is Paul's admonishen there. We need to be people of fact's and honesty when we have them and just as honest when they are in the realm of perhaps.

Anything is possible, not everything is imminent, much may not be. We just do not know until it is more pronounced. I think KP's original assessment is dead on and ironically it may be greatly overlooked, we are not ready perhaps because we can become preoccupied with tomorrow and 'what's coming' rather than being prepared to meet with the Lord of Glory in our very next breath."

The point is well taken regarding the lack of preparation for suffering in this country, especially in comparison to those very well documented cases in *Voice of the Martyrs* and elsewhere. There is so much Lack of total commitment that made Daniel and his companions able and willing to say "we know our God... nevertheless". Sadly there is too much of what Vance Havner said in one of his messages, in this country, of the lack of the sense of the "firstness" of God in all things. There is the attitude of "I will but first..." and jobs, houses, lands, recreation, churchianity and a whole host of things are priority and obedience is arbitrary. I cannot see a whole lot of folk in this country willingly laying down their lives before taking a mark, when many if not most will not forego a \$2 raise for Christ.

As far as "conspiracy theories", there has been a conspiracy from the beginning that has never changed agendas. The agenda is to cast doubt upon the Word of God, then cause confusion regarding the Word of God, to reinterpret the Word of God until it is flatly denied, and then sell the illusion that it will be o.k. to totally disobey the Word of God. And Psalm 2 has laid out how that conspiracy has been transferred to "kings and rulers" through all these centuries, and in turn to the "people". We know that there is a plot to destroy Israel and a plot to destroy the church. Just exactly when all restraints are removed and like in the days of Ahab, God turns a final ruler over to "believe the lie" and an apostate church into total delusion, is known only to God. Edit to insert: the conspiracies will continue until: 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom,

That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him.

His dominion is an everlasting dominion,

Which shall not pass away,

And His kingdom the one

Which shall not be destroyed.

It is certainly scriptural to be discerning of the times: 1 Chronicles 12:32 (KJV) 32And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.

Matthew 16:2 - 3 (NKJV) 2He answered and said to them, "When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; 3and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.'" Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times.

But that discernment is not speculation but verity. There are things we can know beyond a shadow of doubt prophesied in the Word of God and being fulfilled around us. For example we can SEE natural Israel being re-gathered; we can see Jerusalem becoming a "cup of trembling" to the whole world, we can see the proliferation of false doctrine, the appetit

e for ear-tickling myths rather than truth alongside of a pure bride being prepared by persecutions (especially outside America). We can see the increasing dominance of antichristian religion and politics world-wide and their desire to instill a false messiah over all the earth. We can see the increase in knowledge prophesied by Daniel which due to the inventions of the last few decades have made us "one world" in a way totally unprecedented since the days of Rome where "all roads led to Rome" very literally. We can see the increased rebellion against the laws of God, "lawlessness" that is indeed becoming THE entrenched universal law... the casting aside the laws of God and literally making good evil and evil good on an international scale.

These are just a few of the very factual and literal happenings in our time...

We certainly do not want to fall into the trap of those during the times of Ezekiel when God spoke through him saying: Ezekiel 12:27 - 28 (NKJV) 27 "Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.' 28 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: 'None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak will be done,' says the Lord GOD.'"

But... as Brother Keith Daniels pointed out in a message regarding David and Goliath, Goliath became THE OBJECT between Israel and their God. They could only see how big Goliath was, but David could only see how little Goliath was upside God. In fact that was the same problem with their ancestors and Joshua and Caleb come to think of it. Just as surely as putting our hands in front of us, as small as they are, can shield the light of the sun from our eyes, focusing up on any object, whether it is prophecy, a single doctrine, or even a false doctrine for that matter, the object becomes bigger than the Son.

We also know what the Lord said to the early church: Acts 1:7 - 8 (NKJV) 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

There is KNOWLEDGE that belongs to God and RESPONSIBILITY that belongs to us.

The scripture that comes to mind in relation to all of this is what the Lord said in Luke 13 regarding "current events" of that day... We all die, we do not all have to perish. It is just our nature to get bent all out of shape over the sensational news (and obviously was in the time of Christ hence His question to that audience. As Mike B. has pointed out, every day and any day can be "our" day to face "anything" from what is called "natural disasters" to a fatal disease, to a wreck on the highway.

I remember my reaction after 9/11 and my response to it at my local church. The fact is that far more people perish around us on a daily basis in car wrecks, homicides or whatever else, than perished on 9/11 or than the number of our soldiers that have died in Iraq. It is just that when so many die in one place at one time we are jolted into seeing the fact that we are indeed mortals that can die at any moment. But after the initial shock of such an event we so easily get back to the business of believing the illusion "you shall not surely die" and go on with our complacency.

Wouldn't it be far more pleasing to God if we spent our time and energy in the DAILY perishing rather than the MAYBE ONE DAY SOON perishing? The fact is that not one of those around us is going to escape death and judgment ought to be of greater concern than when and how they are going to die. Wouldn't it be far more pleasing to God and far more logical also to spend our time on what we Know is happening to our friends, family and neighbors NOW, than a mysterious WHEN? Doesn't the eternal word say "Today is the day of salvation"? And did not the Savior say, "Work for the night is coming when no man can work...?"

Clint

Re: Future cast - posted by crsschk (), on: 2008/1/6 13:04

"The great falling-away from faith could be worst here in because people are absolutely not prepared to face suffering or persecution -- because we cannot imagine a gospel with the cross and the suffering in it," says Yohannan. "Yet the Bible teaches very strong about it. So as the Word of God says: He who has ears, let him hear."

The ministry leader is convinced that prosperity has caused many Christians in America to focus on material possessions instead of surrendering all to Christ. The result, he says, is that American Christians have become "very naïve" in thinking that real persecution will never come their way.

"These are warning signs," he exclaims. "God is telling us we need to prepare our lives. And preachers going around saying that revival is coming, and everything is okay, and all these things? I think that people are set up for huge disaster and denying their faith when they face problems."

Am finding a great deal of ... symmetry around many of the posts spanning some time now. To take out from what KP is stating and coming from him, well there is a great deal to be said right there ...

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revival is coming, and everything is okay

If there was some sort of catch all phrase to all of this it seems to be just taking things for granted. I find a tension in most all things, a healthy fear verses a paranoia. Gratitude and thankfulness in the realm of omissions, I mean by that *all the things that did not come to pass*, yesterday, this morning. Simple things, the 'staples', food ... shelter ... clothing. Hot water, electricity, the computer works again today and am able to both absorb and share, grapple with things and learn from all the Brethren. Indeed we are already blessed beyond belief. Rather than taking large stock and notice of this, the penchant as KP points out in so many areas is for *more*, more ... things?

The cross and suffering. Hmm, yes, what then? What now? Am just truly thinking out loud here. Divorce for instance amongst 'Christians', the sound of it alone so oxymoronic, due primarily to little to no suffering, suffering of opinion at the expense of overcoming love, patience ... understanding and an understanding that finds humility in not exerting one's 'rights'. The cross...

Suffering the imagination to the test of God's word. Suffering opinion to it. Suffering the challenge of knowledge that is even derived from it and reassessing, reconsidering, have I got this wrong? Suffering the emotions and the compulsions, the defenses, the penchant to 'win' over the desire of coming to the knowledge of the truth, to be 'of the same mind' that the Lord has high up on *His* desire for us? The cross there ...

It just goes on to so many things and if anything have been out to the woodshed of late and taught a few things. It is and if I am not too presumptuous was a very painful and ... excruciating spiritual discipline. It is not the first nor the last, just recent enough to have something to share I guess. It is a very good thing, the cross, suffering, it is God's way, *those He loves He ...* It is what was needed and dare I say even welcomed, so much so that I feared even asking prayer and to be honest it was more a fear that the prayers would be for a deliverance rather than what despite the pain of it all was a plea for the furnace to be turned up seven times hotter. I knew it was needed. Lest that get taken all apart into extremes am no fan of pain or needless suffering of anyone or anything, myself included. But I do not want to get all this too mixed up, am speaking of inward things that defy too much explanation, that ... far surpass emotion, it is just a deeper more penetrating work, doubt that many here have not experienced it, it has much of the elements that Carter Collin spoke of the message about "Show me my wretchedness" or "not" if you catch his meaning there.

So there is all that and yet ... I find we have to jump from this realm to another and look at what someone of the stature of KP Yohannan is speaking of, who *knows* of these things experientially, of those countries so dislike our own with the little opposition we truly have. Sure it's building, would suspect and go right alongside a great deal of what might be supposed, less 'prophetic' I think than so well expressed in all that Clint has just written here. The weather is obvious enough. I do fear a launching off into intellectual and might as well just call it the arm-chair quarter backing style of pontificating about things we just do not understand nor can we but with our ... imaginations. We are forced to use them in lieu of present pain and circumstance, true persecution. I find it very humbling indeed to just look upon it all and wonder, try and feel j

ust the slightest prick of conscience, what must this truly be like to be standing in their shoes? Then I also must take my personal, interior suffering and shove it up alongside all this and say ... "what of it?" Certainly it pales even if the suffering aspect is no less painful from my perspective. The facts seem to suggest that they do indeed need to be understood in a lesser quality and quantity.

That old adage about an opinion being at the mercy of experience, certainly is true. Have remarked that I am finding more and more that the scriptures express things that are by way of finding them out in experience over the realm of just 'living up to them', which we are certainly admonished ... I guess I just want to say, we find them to be so, when we do find them to be so ... :-?

Isn't that 'prophetic' in itself? That these things are so and really it is a matter of just ... being subject to them, experiencing them and being able or really having nothing other than to say, 'It is so, I have myself gone through this?'

Expectations. That word looms large over all these things. What to expect, what fuels our expectations our future considerations. To be prepared by way of 'ready for anything' or ready for the latest theory of how things will play out? There might be truth in them, but are they so? I find there is much fear in so much of speculation, much anxiety, worry, a displaced concern, it's out in front, just alluding our grasp ... it sounds like "What if? What if? What if?". And yet we have all the admonishments against these things throughout scripture, to *not do them* and yet we have ... 'prophets' telling us otherwise, "No, this is coming and that is coming ..." The inference and underlying is either one of 'expect great ... blessings' or prepare for devastation.

But now I must find myself returning back to even KP's experiential thought as it applies to 'us' or USA if you will. Is he correct? Should I be overtly concerned? Is it indeed 'coming'?

Clint was right here, drawing out some of the very scriptures to our understanding. Can't recall now if it was suggested or not but *watch and pray* came to mind yesterday. Something very succinct in that. Maybe, rather than attempting to try and draw all this to some conclusive end it is better to just leave it out there unfinished, just food for thought, am still thinking on it much in every way, this is just kind of a allowing of reading my mind here I guess.

But the notice mentioned about seeing so many things over the past few weeks and months ... I have expectations, I hope we all do. I just want them to be real and realistic, honesty and forthright, becoming of what we are, in spirit and in truth. There is almost a setting aside of all this just long enough to look at another aspect... Will we be ready? Maybe that hasn't really been stressed enough. Come what may and to leap over to the speculative for a moment, who will stand in the evil day? Who will be relied on when all around us does if it goes to pieces. Shouldn't it be us, of all people? Calm, cool and collected in the face of .. chaos? Look at the Lord, that is one of the most striking things I have ever grappled with and Oswald Chamber I believe was masterful at drawing great attention to this. How He was never 'moved' out of position from His disposition. I am becoming very convinced this is our great need, to have our disposition altered to His, in *all* things. That is the greatness of SermonIndex and I am finally through apologizing for it. This place is a wonder beyond wonders if it is just looked at in itself. So much thought *and experience*. These men, these brothers that have gone before have so much to teach us, to speak to us, to draw us back to foundational spiritual truths. Think of it, what draws us, what draws any one of you here? There are things that have happened experientially on a continuing basis all due to this truly 'small thing' that the Lord I am convinced has developed in and out of it. The world does not understand, many Christians do not I understand, shoot even I do not understand it all. But I have seen it and have partaken in it, watched it develop and grow within its confines, watched the saints change before my very eyes and even recently was blessed beyond measure to go and 'meet' with those who I have 'known' from eternity past, there is no other succinct way of putting it. It boggles the mind, but none of it was surprising, there are things that just defy proper explanation, it is a truly spiritual understanding. There are things that just cut straight through words and opinion and conjecture.

There are great hearts here, great as a deceitful heart can be, that is the great catch in all this prophetic utterance I believe, we just do not know our own deceptions well enough and will never know the capable depths, but at least enough to say to ourselves, 'perhaps I should hold my peace here' I may well still have not considered _____. That is what goes on here by and large, putting things, putting ourselves to the test, to the test of scripture, to the test of each other. Forget the clichés enough to just take all these things in and I think you will find that there is a desire to understand underneath all the other unfortunate compulsions and misunderstandings, the camp mind divisions that we are so preprogrammed into, everything being 'either/or', this or that, the baby with the bath water, so much for clichés' ...

More to the point. The post on reading your bibles. Is this not very much important? Right now. However and in whatever way we decide to go about it, I am intrigued and challenged and must admit that I have sacrificed it and gone off to a gr

eat more ... doodling around in it than I should. Whole books of the scriptures stand out large and have been something I recognized as very important, reading them through, all the way through. I don't want to go off on that here too much but it does seem that maybe we have neglected this and have become somewhat bound up in all the ancillary aspects of what is going on around us circumstantially, drawing off our attention ... and maybe much of the preoccupation with the future is part and parcel? Am just asking the question here, it is a note to self to borrow from MC.

But how else and what better way to get about doing something towards our readiness, come what may, come what may not. What an answer to the suggestion of a 'motto' for the year or even a trumping of a verse for the year? I must be truly honest, I don't like these ideas really and forgive me for saying so, but having a catch phrase for the year leaves me squirming a bit, the tendency is to forget all about it come say June. What then? Besides, there seems to be enough of titling things, having great banners of a handful of words, a verse, a subset of eye grabbing things for yet another program or construct out in the realm of Christendom itself. I am sorry, it just leaves something wanting, something almost throw away-ish to coin a term, another formulaic approach, kind of a piece of Christian junk mail that either stacks up or gets thrown into the recycle bin, which I assume all are doing due to 'global warming'. ;-)

Pardon the digression not trying to be didactic, different things work for different souls I am sure. Guess it is just will we still be holding to it come September? "This is the year of ____"

Maybe or may it be said this is the year we could look back on and say, for us, this is the year we got downright serious and really read our bibles, over and over again. A different sort of resolution, a real one, one that we held each other accountable to all year long. It will have to be a discipline but if we are able and quite capable it seems of holding each others feet to the fire in regards to prophecy and rightly so ... we were able to both remember and recall all that was said and bring an accounting to it as we have been doing. How much more might we do likewise come Jan. 2009 if the Lord tarries in reading the scriptures over the course of this year? And if we absolutely must use our projections and preoccupations with the future, maybe we can project something that we all might suspect as true ... Could you imagine just what this might all do to us and to those around us just by sheer adjustment in our character and disposition, never uttering a single solitary word, just in that 'body language' of ours by having our hearts and minds our intellect, everything altered by this Book. And then when we do open our mouths, what might spring forth? Can you imagine this? To know our God better, our Lord better ... would we be better prepared, better ready? My goodness, it seems like the answers are so completely obvious that it is foolishness that we haven't really stopped to think about it ... as I write this and realize it.

I am generally finding and expecting surprises from the Lord and that is largely since divorcing the mind from what I used to expect, you know, all these preprogrammed things we set up in these melons and then attempt to fulfill by way of ... goodness, what is it? Effort? Scurrying around the book for the "Aha's", I *knew* this was going to happen kinds of things? But it is everyday stuff, I still do it to my chagrin. Fantasy type things, those little subsets of 'This thing will play out just like this' while we tell ourselves 'See, I knew it, I knew this would happen'. So much rubbish in this contour of our make up, we less cast down evil imaginations as we do entertain them, feed them little choice nuggets of new bites and clippings from our travels. Where is *your* God in all this, the self indicting question I find. What of His disruptions and surprises? No room for them? Still trusting on our own understanding ...? Hmmm, that prophetic business keeps coming into play doesn't it?

Well, I guess it's been a good while since I presented a ramble here, think I will quit while I am ahead, if I am ... Time to change the signature, at least it will be my own accuser.

Re: - posted by ChrisJD (), on: 2008/1/6 14:04

Hi all,

Just a suggestion here, but for another perspective on this we could go through the book of Acts and compare what happened there with what the Lord told **them**, would happen. And also see how they responded.

Here's one example:

Matthew 24:9, Acts 7:59, 12:1-4, 28:22.

Here's another:

Matthew 24:44-45, Acts 11:19-21, 15:35, 28:30-31.

Chris

Re: Ministry founder: U.S. Christians 'absolutely not prepared' for persecu - posted by pastorfrin, on: 2008/1/7 9:55

If the subject is being prepared, then I believe this to be the answer.

“For me to live is Christ.”
— Philipians 1:21

The believer did not always live to Christ. He began to do so when God the Holy Spirit convinced him of sin, and when by grace he was brought to see the dying Saviour making a propitiation for his guilt. From the moment of the new and celestial birth the man begins to live to Christ. Jesus is to believers the one pearl of great price, for whom we are willing to part with all that we have. He has so completely won our love, that it beats alone for him; to his glory we would live, and in defence of his gospel we would die; he is the pattern of our life, and the model after which we would sculpture our character. Paul’s words mean more than most men think; they imply that the aim and end of his life was Christ—nay, his life itself was Jesus. In the words of an ancient saint, he did eat, and drink, and sleep eternal life. Jesus was his very breath, the soul of his soul, the heart of his heart, the life of his life. Can you say, as a professing Christian, that you live up to this idea? Can you honestly say that for you to live is Christ? Your business—are you doing it for Christ? Is it not done for self-aggrandizement and for family advantage? Do you ask, “Is that a mean reason?” For the Christian it is. He professes to live for Christ; how can he live for another object without committing a spiritual adultery? Many there are who carry out this principle in some measure; but who is there that dare say that he hath lived wholly for Christ as the apostle did? Yet, this alone is the true life of a Christian—its source, its sustenance, its fashion, its end, all gathered up in one word—Christ Jesus. Lord, accept me; I here present myself, praying to live only in thee and to thee. Let me be as the bullock which stands between the plough and the altar, to work or to be sacrificed; and let my motto be, “Ready for either.”

Spurgeon, C. H.

"Ready for either"