

Articles and Sermons :: Prepare For Persecution: A Message From Billy Graham

Prepare For Persecution: A Message From Billy Graham - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2015/11/7 1:07

This article was originally written in 1957, but the words ring true today.

In the event of a national catastrophe, much confusion, terror and consternation would reign. What would the Christian do? What should our attitude be? Which way would we turn if the country in which we live were suddenly wrecked and all the props gone?

As a whole, our nation does not know what privation is. We do not know what sacrifice is. We do not know what suffering is. Suppose persecution were to come to the church in America, as it has come in other countries.

The immunity to persecution that Christians in our country have experienced in the past two or three centuries is unusual. Christ strongly warned Christians that to follow Him would not be popular, and that in most circumstances it would mean cross-bearing and persecution.

The Bible says that all who "desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). Jesus said that as the time of His return draws nigh, "They will lay their hands on you and persecute you" (Luke 21:12). We have no scriptural foundation for believing that we can forever escape being persecuted for Christ's sake. The normal condition for Christians is that we should suffer persecution. Are you willing to face persecution and death for Christ's sake?

What Would You Do?

Since we have experienced little religious persecution in this country, it is likely that under pressure many would deny Christ. Those who shout the loudest about their faith may surrender soonest. Many who boast of being courageous would be cowardly. Many who say, "Though all others deny Christ, yet I will never deny Him," would be the first to warm their hands at the campfires of the enemy.

Jesus, in speaking of the last times, warned, "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake" (Matthew 24:9). The Scripture says, "because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold" (Matthew 24:12).

The Apostle Paul, referring to the coming evil day, said, "Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13).

Here are five ways to fortify yourself so that you will be able to stand in that day.

read more: <http://billygraham.org/decision-magazine/november-2015/prepare-for-persecution-a-message-from-billy-graham/>

Re: Prepare For Persecution: A Message From Billy Graham, on: 2015/11/7 7:24

The type of people that persecuted Jesus the most are the people that said they loved God and proclaimed Him as their Father. These are the people that are most likely to persecute true followers of God and other people and we see that this is exactly what has been done, down through the ages right up until this present day. And they do it in the Lord's name.

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

The same ones that deceive will be those who persecute.

Matt 24:5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

Luke 21:16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death.

The false Christ and false church always harness the secular powers to do their dirty work.

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

Don't look to the secular world but rather to the religious world. Better still, come out of that which seems to be of Christ but is not. And most of all, make sure you are of Christ.

2Cor 13:5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

Re: Prepare For Persecution: A Message From Billy Graham, on: 2015/11/7 8:30

"The Apostle Paul, referring to the coming evil day, said, 'Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand' (Ephesians 6:13)."

This is what the Lord has burned into my spirit and bones. The phrase "stand fast," is what I have been using to end many of the words the Lord has given me lately. I believe our calling in the last days is to simply stand fast and there will be nothing simple about it. When persecution comes everything will be stripped away, and the process has already begun. It won't be about ministries and reputations and theologies, it will be about loving God and loving His Word and being willing to stand upon it, willing to live it and willing to die for it. When the winds of religious and secular persecution come together, it creates a perfect storm for genuine saints. Who will stand when the only hiding place is Christ and Him alone? I believe many will.

The same Spirit that burned in the heart of Stephen, the apostles and the martyrs down through the ages burns in the heart of every genuine saint. What separates us from the saints of the last two thousand years? Nothing! We are one Body. The only thing that differentiates us from them is circumstances and opportunity. It is not because they were special or we are special its because of the Spirit of God and the overcoming Christ. The winds of persecution that are now beginning to blow will fan the flames of the refining fires.

But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness. (Mal 3:2-3)

The same Spirit that burned in the hearts of the three Hebrew children burns in the hearts of genuine saints. That Spirit gave those children the courage to say that even if they die in the fire prepared for them they would never bow down to the gods of this world. And who did they meet in the very midst of the fire? Jesus. And what did the world, represented by the king acknowledge when they emerged from the fire? "There is no other God that can deliver after this sort."

The wheat indeed shall be separated from the tares and that by fire. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. And the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. (Mat 24:10-14)

God is preparing his witnesses/martyrs so that the world will see and know, and then the end shall come.....bro Frank

Re: , on: 2015/11/7 8:42

Amen, Frank.

Who will continue to stand when the things we trust in that we think are of God are stripped away? God is faithful to remove the things in our life that can be shaken.

Hebrews 12:26-28

Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Grace is available for us to stand if we humbly let go of the things that the Lord is "shaking" away.

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

Re: , on: 2015/11/7 8:45

A few weeks ago 11 precious saints were martyred by ISIS. They were part of a ministry team. The team leader begged them to leave the region. But the members of this team said we must stay and minister the gospel. The team leader respected their decision but prayed intensely for them out of a grieving heart. For he knew or what would happen to them.

ISIS did invade the area. The members of this team were found. I will spare you the horrendous tortures and martyrdom they went through.

But one thing to note. As ISIS was brutally beheading some of the brothers they were imploring their persecutors to come to Christ. Each of them died with the name of Jesus on their lips. One report says as a sister was being brutally raped by an ISIS member. She kept saying I forgive you in the name of Jesus Christ. She kept imploring her rapist to come to Christ.

My brothers and sisters I ask you who got the victory that day. Was it the evil one who had martyr these precious saints? Or was it Jesus who triumph over the enemy through the love of the slain Saints for their enemies? I think we all know the answer to that question. For all we have to do is look at the Lamb of God who was slain on the cross for us. For He said Father forgive them for they know not what they do. Ultimately this is the triumph of the persecuted church. This is the face of the saint that will overcome the evil one Indian times.

Re: , on: 2015/11/7 8:53

Last winter 21 believers were martyred for their faith in Christ in Libya. These precious saints died with one name on their lips. In Arabic they call that name Isa. We call Him Jesus. At the moment of their death it made no difference what the belief system of these saints were. For in their hearts only name that mattered was Jesus.

Re: , on: 2015/11/7 9:08

Quote:

-----by bearmaster on 2015/11/7 8:45:21

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Amen.

Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Re: - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2015/11/7 9:27

The Bear is back! God is good! :-)

Re: , on: 2015/11/7 12:27

Hey Bill bro. Brother good to be back.

Re: - posted by Jasmine, on: 2015/11/7 15:51

9 precious saints were gunned down in their church during a bible study in Charleston South Carolina this last past June . I guess the only difference in the persecution that is to come is that it will be for everybody who is naming the name of Christ...

Re: , on: 2015/11/7 16:52

Jasmine that report could have come out of Kenya or Nigeria. Because of the prayer group I lead I read countless stories of the jihadists who go into churches and gun down saints. Yet we recognize this as a work of the devil against the Bride of Christ.

Yet to speak of the martyrdom of 9 precious Saints in South Carolina. It is termed a racial hate crime. Even by Christians .

Yes it is a hate crime. But it is a hate crime of Satan making war against the Bride of Christ.

This is also the same situation that occurred in Roseburg Oregon. The spin doctors are telling us that these young people were not martyred for their faith in Christ. But that the gunman was shooting anybody and everybody. Yet witnesses say the gunman would ask the students what their religion was. If the answer Christian. He said you will meet your God in a few minutes.

I just saw the preview to the movie God is not Dead Part 2. This movie will appear in April of next year. The movie will have a powerful message in that it focuses around a public school teacher who will declare her faith in Christ. Even though the movie may be fictional. We know that Christian students and teachers are persecuted in the public arena.

Yet when the blood of saints has been spilled even here in America. The truth itself is stronger than what we may see on the movie screen.

Simply my thoughts.....

Re: - posted by Jasmine, on: 2015/11/7 18:17

bearmaster *hugs*

Thank you for that bearmaster. Yeah they tried to spin it but those of us who could see knew better. When the family members came forward with forgiveness that lit a whole different fire amongst those African Americans who aren't born again. Age old divisions were again made very clear amongst African Americans. Our faith came under attack and many of us in the faith had to stand up and squash some stuff because they were coming for us. There was a real viciousness in the air. Those of us born again got called all kinds of names. Even some who said they are Christian and go to church felt the family members shouldn't have forgiven at least not so soon. I thought to myself how quickly people forget how Jesus hung on that cross saying, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Jesus said that while HANGING ON THE CROSS. I think about that

Regardless of how tragic the situation is, we are still required to be in Christ and live His Word. That may be easier said than done but it's true. It's none of this put God down and then pick Him back up when I want...when it's convenient. I'm looking around me and I feel like covers are being pulled left and right. Lord help me...Lord help us all...straight is the gate and narrow is the way for real...smh...