

Prep for Persecution

Does anyone believe that Christians are being persecuted here in the United States?

We know full well they are being kidnapped and murdered in some of the Muslim countries around the world, but are they truly being persecuted here in the Land of the Free and Home of the Brave? You bet we are.

The “creeping incrementalism” we have spoken of has gained more ground in the past decade or so since the Obama administration. Remember, how the Department of Health and Human Services persecuted a Christian Charity, Little Sisters of the Poor, because they refused to pay for abortion inducing drugs based on their religious beliefs? They finally won after several years of litigation and a Supreme Court decision in their favor. Such a legacy for a President to leave behind, an unearned Nobel and gender-neutral bathrooms. This pursuit of faith-based ideals has gone into overdrive now that his VP has taken over the Oval Office.

For years, Christian business owners had to withstand attacks on their livelihoods from the LGBTQ+ (they have to put a plus sign on their moniker as they add more letters by the week), also ending up in courts.

There was a baker and a florist who both stood their ground based on their faith.

The baker refused to make obscene cakes for a gay couple and the florist was

forced into retirement because she refused to compromise her faith. The baker prevailed in the U.S. Supreme Court.

I remember going to Tallahassee with a group once to pray for a high school principal and a coach who were arrested for praying in public at a football game. Over five thousand people showed up to protest outside the Federal Courthouse. Ironic, there was a plaque of the Ten Commandments hanging on the front wall by the entrance. Definitely no intelligent life inside.

The crowd was so large (and well behaved) we formed a line that wrapped around the block and the front met the end. We marched around the courthouse seven times like Jericho, praying. The judge sent word out that our antics would in no way affect the trial. They were both found not guilty so I guess she was wrong.

There was another coach, Joe Kennedy, from Bremerton High School in Washington that was also fired for praying at a football game. The Supreme Court ruled that “a government entity sought to punish an individual for engaging in a brief, quiet, personal religious observance doubly protected by the Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses of the First Amendment...the Constitution neither mandates nor tolerates that kind of discrimination. He later won a \$2 million dollar law suit.

Society may call this “discrimination” but it is persecution none the less. Is there a difference between discrimination and persecution?

Discrimination is defined by Dictionary.Com as: “an act or instance of discriminating, or of making a distinction. treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favor of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class, or category to which that person or thing belongs rather than on individual merit.”

Whereas Persecution is defined as: “the act of persecuting, the state of being persecuted. a program or campaign to exterminate, drive away, or subjugate people based on their membership in a religious, ethnic, social, or racial group.” A somewhat harsher treatment than merely discriminating.

Persecution against Christians because of their faith in Jesus Christ and love of God is certainly nothing new. Christ told us of this behavior before He was crucified.

John 15:18-21- “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. However, because you are not of the world, but I have personally chosen you out of the world, the world hates you for this. Remember the word that I spoke to you: a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they

kept My word, they will keep your word also. But they will do all these things to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him Who sent Me.”

How many of us experienced some form of discrimination when we began to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days? Maybe we were not persecuted but we were probably singled out as an “oddball.” The persecutions will undoubtedly increase as the world continues to slide into the abyss of moral decay, especially here in the U.S. where we “profess” to be a Christian Nation.

Look at the abominations that are rampant within our own nation. Flagrantly spitting in the Face of God with their perversions; homosexuality, gay marriage, sex with children, gender reassignment, abortions, transvestites, just to name a few.

Leviticus 18:22-25 “You shall not lie with mankind as with womankind. It is an *abomination to God*. And you shall not lie with any animal to defile yourself with it. And a woman shall not stand before an animal to lie down to it. It is a perversion. Do not defile yourselves in any of these things, for in all these the nations which I cast out before you are defiled. And the land is defiled. Therefore I visit its wickedness against it, and the land itself vomits out those who live in it.”

Leviticus 20:13- “If a man also lies with mankind, as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed ***an abomination***. *They shall surely be put to death*. Their blood *shall be* upon them.”

Romans 1:26-32- “For this cause, God abandoned them to disgraceful passions; for even their women changed the natural use *of sex* into that which is contrary to nature; And in the same manner also the men, having left the natural use *of sex* with the woman, were inflamed in their lustful passions toward one another—men with men shamelessly committing lewd *acts*, and receiving back within themselves a fitting penalty for their error. And in exact proportion as they did not consent to have God in *their* knowledge, God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral; Being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, guile, evil dispositions; whisperers, Slanderers, God-haters, insolent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things *and practices*; disobedient to parents, Void of understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable *and* unmerciful; Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who commit such things are worthy of death, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*.”

Do you think “Drag Queens” is just playing dress up? The whole woke and “pronoun” agenda has moved to the back burner in favor of getting the “drag

queens” to center stage to entertain our children and youth. No longer considered a mental illness, their perversions and wretched abominable behavior is now a matter of diversity and choice. Choice to murder the unborn is a biological right and not infanticide. Satan is laughing out loud in everyone’s face and no longer has to creep in the shadows but is blasted into our homes daily through the idiot box we call television.

Deuteronomy 22:5- “Anything that pertains to a man shall not be worn by a woman, neither shall a man put a woman’s garment on. ***For all that do so are abominable to the LORD your God.***” (Unless you are appointed to one of Biden’s cabinet positions) Why are they targeting children? They are pedophiles and want to indoctrinate kids into their perversion.

Matthew 18:6-7- “But whoever shall cause one of these little ones who believe in Me to offend, it would be better for him that a millstone be hung around his neck and he be sunk in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For it is necessary that offenses come, yet woe to that man by whom the offense comes!” That is one woe that will be worthy of a Polaroid (what is a Polaroid?) when these depraved individuals get fitted for their millstone necklace.

It seems they try to outdo themselves by introducing new perversions worse than the previous. A contest of outrageous sins. The list seems to be endless. Everything is centered around the self. "It's okay if I think it's right." Suddenly the righteous are wrong! And if you do not agree with them, you are judged. We are way beyond being asked to tolerate their insanity. Going along with their degenerate ideology with an ostrich mentality is how we ended up here in the first place.

Isaiah 5:20-23- "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil; who put darkness for light and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe unto *them that are wise in their own eyes*, and prudent in their own sight! Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink: Who justify the wicked for a bribe, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!"

We were created in the image of God. "And God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of heaven and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that crawls upon the earth." And God created man in His *own* image, in the image of God He created him. He created them male and female."

Genesis 1:26-27. God did not give out pamphlets with a multiple-choice gender assignment.

We can point the finger of blame to the liberal socialist agenda but we all know who is the wizard behind the curtain. Satan. Would he really have gained such a foothold if we did our due diligence as believers and doers of God's Word? Perhaps not. The perverting and subverting of His Word and way of life has cracked the very foundation of principles of which our nation was founded.

In our complacency we have turned a blind eye to their delusions and the erosions of our values. Being open-minded has led our "tolerance" of these sinful practices to flourish and now spin out of control. We can sit around and talk about how screwed up some politicians are, the high price of gas or inflation, but so long as we can muddle through in moderate comfort, we just coast along. The kettle has been boiling for awhile and we are finally taking notice.

We had better be wide awake to the reality that is in our face. Persecuting Christians is nothing new. The Romans crucified them, fed them to the lions and Nero used them as human torches. However, continuing to be "tolerant" did not work out well for the Jews in Nazi Germany in the 1930's. If people are being slandered and sued now for refusing to use specific pronouns to identify some

mentally challenged perversion, how bad will it become for our children and grandchildren 20 years from now? We have not suffered yet.

Hebrews 12:4-5- “You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin. And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reprovved by Him;” Now on the other hand, if you do undergo suffering for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. But you should not be afraid of their terror, and you should not let yourselves be intimidated;”

How can we best be prepared to face these challenges? Stand fast in our faith. We have God’s Word to arm ourselves with.

1 Peter 3:12-14- “Because the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their supplications. But *the face of the* Lord is against those who practice evil. And *is there* anyone who will harm you if you be followers of that which is good?

Galatians 5:1- “Therefore, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and do not be held again in a yoke of bondage.”

Philippians 4:1- “Therefore, my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and *my* crown, stand fast in *the* Lord, beloved.”

1 Thessalonians 3:7-8- “Through this *report* about you we were encouraged, brethren, in all our persecution and trouble—because of your faith; For now we live, if you stand firm in *the* Lord.”

We have courage and strength in The Lord. God has not given us a spirit of fear.

1 Corinthians 16:13- “Be watchful; stand fast in the faith; conduct yourselves with courage. Be strong *in the Lord.*”

2 Timothy 1:7- “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of sound mindedness.”

We may be chastised, criticized or even arrested someday but we need not fear and we must stand our ground.

Hebrews 12:11- “Now truly, no chastisement for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.”

James 1:12- “Blessed *is the* man who endures trials because, after he has been proved, he shall receive a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

Revelation 2:25-26- “But hold fast what you have until I come. And to the one who overcomes, and keeps My works unto *the* end, I will give authority over the nations;”

Revelation 3:11- “Behold, I am coming quickly; hold fast that which you have so that no one may take away your crown.”

Standing fast in our faith and growing ever closer to God is the foundation to build up our resources to face the impending storms. There are a few additional scriptures we need to follow that may seem even more difficult.

Pray for our enemies. Pray for those who persecute us.

Matthew 5:44- “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,” As difficult as this is, we must have a strong prayer life and forgive those who mistreat us. Jesus forgave those who crucified Him from the cross.

We must pray for our nation and its leaders. WOW! This one is a tough one. I am sure we would rather pray **Psalm 109** for most of them as we would all like to see the justice of God fall on those who pervert our way of life. But their judgment will come.

Proverbs 29:16- “When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increases; but the righteous shall see their fall.”

God would rather have them come to repentance.

1 Timothy 2:2-4- “For kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and respectability. For this *is* good and acceptable before God our Savior, Who desires all men to be saved and to come to *the* knowledge of *the* truth.”

We can no longer keep our heads buried in the sand.

Matthew 10:16- “Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” We must be bold when the time comes to speak up. Complacency is how we got here in the first place. We must not conform ourselves to this world.

Romans 12:2- “Do not conform yourselves to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in order that you may prove what is well pleasing and good, and the perfect will of God.”

We must no longer compromise and agree with a lie. If something is wrong and contrary to the Word of God, do we have the courage and faith to say so? Do not call a man wearing a dress a woman. Wrong is wrong no matter how they twist it or how they dress it up.

Joshua 1:9- “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage. Do not be afraid, neither be dismayed, for the LORD your God *is* with you in all places where you go.”

Proverbs 23:23- “Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.”

This should be read aloud in all churches professing to be Christian. It is nearly impossible for anyone to resist the devil when they work for him part-time on a Sunday morning standing behind a pulpit teaching false doctrine.

Galatians 1:8-9- “But if we, or even an angel from heaven, should preach a gospel to you *that* is contrary to what we have preached, LET HIM BE ACCURSED! As we have said before, I also now say again. If anyone is preaching a gospel contrary to what you have received, LET HIM BE ACCURSED!”

We have God on our side. We must trust in Him in all things. We need not fear man or his perversions.

Psalms 118:6- “The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?”

All of this that is taking place comes as no surprise.

Matthew 24:3-13- “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him alone, saying, “Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of Your coming, and of the completion of the age?” Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, “***Be on guard, so that no one deceives you.*** For many shall come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ’; and they shall deceive many.

And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you do not let these things disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these* things take place, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in *different* places. Now all these *things are* the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to

affliction, and shall kill you; and you shall be hated by all nations for My name's sake. And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another; And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; And because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold.

But the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved."

1 Timothy 4:1-2- "Now the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith, *and* shall follow deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons; Speaking lies in hypocrisy, their consciences having been cauterized *with a hot iron;*"

God has equipped us with the spiritual weaponry of His word to combat the wiles of the enemy.

Ephesians 6:11-18- "Put on the whole armor of God so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil Because we are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities *and* against powers, against the world rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual *power* of wickedness in high *places*.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having worked out all things, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girded about with truth, and wearing the breastplate of righteousness, And having your feet shod with *the* preparation of the gospel of peace. Besides all

these, take up the shield of the faith, with which you will have the power to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one; And put on the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; Praying at all times with all prayer and supplication in *the* Spirit, and in this very thing being watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints;”

We are in a war. But keep in mind the victory has already been won. We still must remain on high alert as the enemy is treacherous and will target the weak and unprepared. Seeing scripture come to fruition should strengthen our resolve and motivate us to grow ever closer to our God through prayer, Bible study, and fasting. We are not blazing any new trails as so many in the Bible have faced far more difficult trials, tests, and sacrifices. We have not been fed to the lions yet, nor scourged, or crucified. We have been spared and we have not heard the sound of Jack Boots in the night. Our faith in God and His way of life are being challenged at an ever increasing and alarming rate. But when and if these things occur in our lifetime, we will be ready and fully equipped. Prepared with God’s Word, His Holy Spirit, and the example of our Savior Jesus Christ to follow. Amen.

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